**HISTORY – GRADE 8**

**WHY DO WE DO HISTORY?**

You have probably studied some history in primary school and you may have found it fascinating to learn about the past or you may have been thoroughly bored, but either way if you were asked to explain what history is really about and why we do it I think you would find that a difficult question to answer. This first unit aims to get you thinking about why history is important and what the important issues and ideas are that we will be looking at in this subject.

One of the best ways to learn everything is to discover the information yourself rather than just to be told something and to think instead of just memorising so we will start this journey by exploring a number of grouped questions and discussing and exchanging ideas. Then afterwards you will be given a note summarising some of the information we have discovered.

Each of the groups of questions below deals with an aspect of what history is about and how historians work. Read through the questions, think about them then write out your thoughts in response to them in the space that is provided

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Think of and share at least two occasions in the past week when you have told someone a story about something that happened to you? Why did you tell the stories?

Does everybody view past events in the same way? Explain your answer?

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1. Why would a sports coach watch movies of his opponents’ previous games? Do you think there is any value in doing so?

Can we ever learn anything useful from the past? What and how?

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1. Think of the oldest person that you know personally. Can you name two things that they would have been familiar with when they were your age that have virtually disappeared nowadays?

Name two ways in which events that happened before you were born have had a direct impact on you personally.

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1. Have you ever been involved in a conflict with other people? Describe it briefly: what led up to it, what happened during the conflict, how did it affect you and how was it sorted out in the end?

What do you think causes wars and conflicts between people groups and countries, and why do people continue to have wars?

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1. Is it possible to ever find out what “*really*” happened when something is past? How can we build an understanding of what might have actually happened?

What do you understand by the meaning of the word “evidence”? What sorts of things can be considered as evidence about something that has happened?

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1. If you could travel backwards in time at what single event would you most like to be present? Why?

If you could change one thing from the past what would you change and how would you change it? Why?

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1. Why do changes take place in society? How do such changes affect people? Can you think of one big change that you have lived through or noticed and how did it affect your life?

Since we do not know what is going to happen in the future is there any reason why we should not be anxious and afraid of what we cannot control?

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1. When God says in Scripture, “Look to the rock from which you were hewn?” what do you think it means and why would God say that to His people?

When we think about the past which is more important: the events that took place or the people involved and their characters? Explain your answer.

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1. Is there any way in which you think God shows his character to people through things that have happened in the past?

Some people say that it doesn’t really matter whether Jesus actually really lived or not what is important is the message that he represents and the meaning behind the story? Do you agree or not?

What difference does it make whether Jesus was an actual historical figure and whether the events in the gospels actually happened or not? Explain your views.

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