

King Edward VI College, Stourbridge

# Modern History



Introductory Activity Pack 2020

## Introduction

Welcome to the Modern History course at King Ed's. There are six teachers of Modern History who are looking forward to meeting you when you start your course and working with you to expand your understanding of the Early Modern World.

We are:

Nick Barley

Jo Caney (subject leader)

Jane Jukes

Vinai Solanki

Carys Spicer

Melanie Thomas

The course contains of three taught units and a coursework unit. Each of the pictures on the front cover of this introductory pack links to one of the taught units.

- In the top left-hand is Tsar Alexander II of Russia. We'll be studying Russia between 1855 and 1964 and in this pack, you will have the chance to start getting to know Alexander II.
- Top right are two leading suffragettes Annie Kenny and Christobel Pankhurst who campaigned for women to have the vote in Britain before the First World War. Later in this pack, there is an activity to allow you to explore the importance of the different types of campaign for female suffrage before the first world war.
- The bottom picture shows George Washington who earned his reputation as a military commander during the American Revolutionary War against Britain before becoming the first president of the independent United States in 1789. There are many legends surrounding the foundation of the USA and you will try to sort out the fact from the legend in this introductory pack.

The purpose of this pack is to provide you with a flavour of the work you will be doing during your time as a history student at King Eds and to give you an introduction to the Modern period. Do your best with it, but don't get stressed about it if you get stuck on a particular thing. Just move on to the next thing. (If you come across words you don't understand - then look them up).

Here are a few ideas of some things you can read if you want to find out a bit more before September.

The Making of Modern Britain by Andrew Marr

The Road to Wigan Pier by George Orwell

The American Revolution: A Very Short Introduction by Robert J Allison

A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich by Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Russian History: A Very Short Introduction by Geoffrey Hosking

You can also keep an eye on our Twitter feed where we link to interesting things we find about our history courses. We are @kedsthhistory



**Tsar Alexander II of Russia, 1855-1881**

In the pages that follow, there are a number of sources about Alexander's character and upbringing.

Read and annotate them carefully. Then fill in the form that follows as a sort of CV as if it were Alexander II's application form for the job of Tsar of Russia. You might like to do some internet research about Alexander II as well.

**Make sure you use ALL of the sources at least once, preferably more often.**

**Source 1: A.F.Tiutcheva, Jan 1856**

The Tsar is the best of men. He would be a wonderful sovereign in a well-organised country and in a time of peace... But he lacks the temperament of a reformer. The empress lacks initiative as well. They are too kind, too pure, to understand people and to rule them. They do not have the energy or the impulse to take charge of events and direct them as they see fit; they lack passion.... Without realising it himself, he has become involved in a struggle with powerful forces and dreadful elements he does not understand. They (the royal couple) do not know where they are going.

**Source 2 : R.Sherman & R.Pearce, Russia 1815-1881 (2002)**

Alexander had one great advantage over his father when he came to the throne; he had been prepared for the task. Nicholas had been determined that his son should be fully trained for the task of ruling Russia. He had planned his son's education in all its aspects with great care. In this area he had been rather more successful than in many others.

Alexander was 37 at the time of his father's death. He had received a broad education, had travelled widely and had been given extensive practical advice in government. He had been the first member of the imperial family to visit Siberia. This visit had given him some understanding of the conditions suffered by those in exile. He had served on the Council of State for 14 years and on numerous lesser committees, including the secret committees concerned with serfdom and the railways. This gave him a depth of knowledge about Russia's problems. Alexander had also been left in charge of state affairs on a number of occasions in his father's absence, which had provided him with direct experience of the problems of ruling the country.

Alexander was rather more humane and sensitive than his father and inspired rather less awe in those around him. Nonetheless he believed in autocracy as the way forward for his people. He was patriotic, religious and conservative in outlook, but his experience of government convinced him of the need for change in many aspects of the structure of the state. To come to the throne in the midst of the Crimean War, which was in effect a disastrous defeat, may seem an inauspicious beginning to his reign. Paradoxically, however, it was to aid him in his desire to bring about real change in Russia.

**Source 3: W.E.Mosse, Alexander II and the Modernization of Russia (1958)**

Alexander II was the best prepared heir the Russian throne had ever had. Like his uncle and namesake<sup>1</sup>, he had been exposed to both liberal and military influences, he was handsome and charming and he also seemed to lack consistency and will. His father's last words to him were 'hold on to everything!' and, unlike his uncle, Alexander II never doubted that Russia required autocratic government.

On the other hand, he differed from his father in recognizing the need for delegation. No sooner had he ascended the throne than it became evident that a break with the past was in preparation. In publishing the terms of the Treaty of Paris, he also proclaimed that a programme of social reforms was imminent.

---

<sup>1</sup> Tsar Alexander I (1810-1825)

Furthermore, he made it clear that the methods of his father were in abeyance. He released the surviving Decembrist and Petrashevskyites from exile. Many thousands of people were removed from police supervision. He lifted the restrictions imposed by his father on university students, and he put in hand a revision of the censorship regulations. To suspend recruiting, to remit tax arrears, to show more tolerance *vis-a-vis* Poland and the Catholic Church also augured well for the new reign.

More than anything else, Alexander wanted to restore Russia's shattered military prestige. His most articulate soldier, the forty-year-old General Dmitry Miliutin, explained that what was required was a smaller, better trained and equipped, and more mobile army backed by a system of reserves. He was bold enough to add that such a reform was impeded by serfdom.

**Source 4: J.N. Westwood, *Endurance and Endeavour*, (1981)**

Born in 1818, bombed in 1881, Alexander II at his accession was thirty-six, and was destined to reign for twenty-six years. Nicholas I had ensured that his son and heir was better prepared than he had been for the high office which awaited him. From the age of six to sixteen, Alexander's education was supervised by a broad-minded army general. Beating was not considered the best way to instil knowledge; his tutors were expected to be tolerant and to gain Alexander's interest.

The academic side of the heir's education was supervised by the poet Zhukovsky, whose concern for the well-being of the common people is presumed to have been the source of Alexander's own sensibilities. Thus his upbringing not only equipped him with the essentials as a knowledge of languages, of history and of the duties of a ruler, but also with a perceptive and humane attitude towards the world in general.

At the age of nineteen he started on his travels. He was the first member of the royal family to visit Siberia, where his encounter with the lives of convicts and exiles led to a certain improvement in their lot after he became tsar. Then to Europe, where he became engaged to a German princess, the marriage taking place in 1842. Some years later, he visited the Caucasus, and won a St George Cross for bravery when mountain tribes launched an unexpected but unsuccessful assault on his party.

With the possible exceptions of Khrushchev and Gorbachev, no Russian ruler brought so much relief to so many of his people as did Alexander II, autocratic and conservative though he was. His father had groomed him for the succession by appointing him to a number of committees and councils, including the Council of State and committees dealing with serfdom, railways and others. In these, his opinion was often contrary to the more liberal members. In Nicholas's many absences, Alexander was left in charge of routine state affairs. Thus when he came to the throne he was already familiar with procedures and problems.

**Source 5: H.Seton-Watson, The Russian Empire 1801-1917 (1967)**

Alexander II came to the throne at the age of thirty-seven. His father had ensured that his upbringing would be happier than his own had been. The poet Zhukovsky was placed in charge of his studies, and the tutor most closely attached to his person, from 1824 to 1834, was General K.K.Merder. Both were humane and sensitive, averse to harsh discipline, concerned with their pupil's abilities and character by winning his confidence and arousing his interest. Alexander was completely devoted to Merder, whose noble qualities as a man and as a teacher are attested by Zhukovsky. From these men he received not only a good training in the civil and military duties of a ruler, and the knowledge of foreign languages and literature considered necessary to a prince, but also a humane and understanding outlook on life. In 1837, Alexander made a long journey through Russia, including Siberia, which he was the first member of the Imperial family to visit. Next year he visited Europe and became betrothed to a princess of Hesse-Darmstadt.

Application for the position of: <b>TSAR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS</b>	
Authority responsible for making the appointment: <b>GOD</b>	
Essential qualities for the position: <b>eldest surviving son of the recently deceased Tsar</b>	
Name	Alexander Nicholaevitch Romanov
Date of Birth	29 <sup>th</sup> April 1818
Name of Father	Nicholas Pavlovitch Romanov, Tsar and Supreme Autocrat of All the Russias
Date of Father's death	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 1855
Name of Wife	Mary of Hesse-Darmstadt, now known as Maria Alexandrovna
Date of Marriage	Spring 1841
Details of education	



Details of other training

Details of other relevant experience

Personal qualities

What did Alexander II think about the extent of the power and authority that a Tsar should be able to exercise?

What did Alexander II think about the situation Russia was in and what ideas did he have about tackling the challenges and difficulties of ruling Russia?

Overall suitability for the job



If you'd like more information about Alexander II, you could listen to this podcast and take some notes before you complete the task.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p003k9b2>

You could also continue your research on the internet.

Based on the what you've found out from his CV, how well suited was Alexander II to the role of Tsar? Write a paragraph in the space below to explain what you think his strengths and weaknesses as Tsar are likely to be.

## **LEGENDS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: CAN YOU SEPARATE LEGEND FROM REALITY?**

The American History course looks at the events leading up to the birth of a new country. When the course begins in 1740, there were 13 British colonies on the Eastern side of North America which were subject to the English Crown. In 1776, these thirteen colonies issued the Declaration of Independence and in 1789, George Washington became the new country's first president.

These things are true but there are also lots of stories surrounding the foundation of the United States which have become the stuff of legend. Many people believe these legends to be true, but they are not, or only parts of them are true.

This exercise is designed to get you to do some introductory research on your own. Feel free to use whatever sources of information you can find – books, magazines, TV, encyclopaedias, the internet. It is also designed to get you to do some thinking. Have a go at finding out about each of the legends below and what the real story was. Bring your answers to your first American History lesson where we will talk about them.

The four legends you need to find out about are as follows:

- 1) George Washington and the Cherry Tree
- 2) Paul Revere's Night Ride – April 18<sup>th</sup> 1775
- 3) The Boston Tea Party – December 16<sup>th</sup> 1773
- 4) George Washington throwing a silver dollar across the Potomac River

<b>Legend</b>	<b>Reality</b>
<b>George Washington and the Cherry Tree</b>	
<b>Paul Revere's Night Ride</b>	



# WOMEN AND THE VOTE

One of the most important events in the British history course is the victory for women in gaining the vote in 1918. Before this half the population had never been able to vote for their local MP. Whilst the act in 1918 didn't extend to all women – allowing them the vote opened the door for eventual voting equality.

The importance of this event is not debated but the reasons it came about are. We are going to look at some of the different reasons put forward to explain why women got the vote here.

To begin with, however we start with a different question. Have you ever seen or read X-Men? To those of you that haven't, the stories chronicle the ongoing strained relationship between humankind and mutants. Within this world there are two key mutants who lead ideologically opposed armies: Professor X and Magneto. Professor X looks to have a peaceful relationship with humans. He wants them to live together in harmony on a relationship based on respect and trust. The only way to achieve this is through dialogue, patience and understanding. Magneto disagrees. He believes mutants should be seen as a superior being to the humans and should take control through force.

The underlying point however is that Professor X and Magneto want the same thing, they are just trying to achieve it in two very different ways. Both want mutants to be safe, proud of their powers and to live without fear. So which one is correct in their method? In this fictional scenario Professor X is usually right (Hollywood couldn't allow a baddie to win now, could it?) but throughout history we have seen this same battle – militancy vs non-militancy – play out for real. Martin Luther King's methods and approach were contradicted by those of Malcolm X. Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh. Nelson Mandela had Sipiwe Mvuyane and the suffragists had the suffragettes. It is this last one we are looking to consider here. Both wanted women to gain the vote and yet they looked to achieve it in very different ways.

## WHO'S WHO

To begin with you should look to research the following people. You should look to find some basic information about them which should include – dates active, methods, group affiliations

Millicent Fawcett	Emmeline Pankhurst
Emily Davison	Mary Humphrey-Ward
Sophia Duleep Singh	Kitty Marion

Using the information above can you categorise any of the people who:

Do not believe in militant methods

Believe in militant methods

Believe in militant methods but did not participate themselves

Do not believe women should have the vote

Looked to use both peaceful and militant methods

Based on what you have done so far and any knowledge you might already have of the topic can you write a short paragraph explaining which of the 6 people was most likely to help women win the vote. In this paragraph you should look to state the person and provide some justification as to why you believe they were most likely to lead to change.

Below are two short arguments. One argues that militancy helped give women the vote whilst the other did not. Read both arguments and underline any key reasons they provide.

## DID THE SUFFRAGETTES REALLY WIN VOTES FOR WOMEN?

### ARGUMENT 1: THE SUFFRAGETTES WERE CRUCIAL

The Suffragettes waged a very literal battle to overcome bigotry and win the vote for women. Yes, they resorted to violent tactics, from smashing windows and arson attacks to setting off bombs and even attacking works of art. We're not debating the rights and wrongs of their methods. We're debating whether or not their activism was essential to victory. It's painfully clear that it was.

Even the gentlemen of the press realised the Suffragettes were necessary for getting women's voice heard. "By what means but screaming, knocking, and rioting, did men themselves ever gain what they were pleased to call their rights?" asked the Daily Mirror in 1906. That same year, Millicent Fawcett, who represented the older, less militant wing of the suffrage movement, admitted that the rabble-rousing Suffragettes "have done more during the last 12 months... than we have been able to accomplish in the same number of years."

The people who spoke out most aggressively against the Suffragettes now sound like the worst kinds of patriarchal dinosaurs. One aristocrat, speaking in the House of Commons, said that "militant women" would "bring disgrace and discredit upon their sex" and that "it is not cricket for women to use force." As far as men like him were concerned, the only women who deserved the vote were "quiet, retiring" women. Sounds hilarious now, but not so much to those trying to assert their individuality and autonomy in that oppressive era.

But would women have been given the vote anyway, thanks to a general evolution in social freedom, and the after-effects of World War One? Perhaps, in time. But the Suffragettes crucially forced the hand of the government.

Here's Professor June Purvis, editor of Women's History Review and author of Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography: "That women went to prison for a cause they believed in and endured the torture of forcible feeding, challenged sexist stereotypes that the female sex was feeble, irrational and uninterested in politics. Even from 1912, when more illegal tactics were adopted, such as setting fire to empty buildings, gender stereotypes were challenged."

She goes on to say, "In 1918, when the women's clause of the Representation of the People Act was being discussed in the House of Lords, the Marquess of Crewe was not the only peer who argued that he had no desire for the pre-war militancy of the Suffragettes to return, that now was the best time to settle the matter."

If you still doubt their importance, compare Britain to France, which didn't have a well-organised Suffragette movement, and didn't grant women the vote until as late as 1944. Says it all, really.

## ARGUMENT 2: THE SUFFRAGETTES WERE NOT CRUCIAL

Here's an unfashionable truth that flies in the face of the more black-and-white, goodies vs baddies view of the Suffragettes' struggle: many, many people were completely open to the idea of women getting the vote, even before the militant activism began. As Jad Adams, author of *Women and the Vote: A World History* puts it: "In the early Twentieth Century few people were adamantly opposed to women's suffrage. Mainly they thought it was inevitable."

Indeed, it could easily be argued that the violence of the Suffragettes actually alienated potential sympathisers and slowed the struggle for women's voting rights. Think of the words of *The Guardian* newspaper in 1912, which reacted to news of militant antics by describing "the madness of the militants... who profess to represent the noble and serious cause of political enfranchisement of women, but in fact do their utmost to degrade and hinder it."

And little wonder. Buildings were being set ablaze, acid was being poured into pillar boxes, and a bomb was even set off in Westminster Abbey. Fortunately, the winds of change were blowing. Our nation's notion of democracy was maturing, and even the violent agitations of the Suffragettes couldn't impede progress. Especially as World War One allowed women to literally flex their muscles in jobs previously reserved only for men.

Working in factories and farms, offices and hospitals, buses and trams, women suddenly had a new confidence and a new social visibility. It was this rebuke to the idea of a "woman's proper place", together with the need for electoral reform in the wake of the war, which was the real reason women got the vote in 1918. Here's Jad Adams again, to sum this argument up:

"Seven countries gave women the vote before Britain did in 1918. Another seven gave women the vote the same year women over 30, who had property, got the vote in Britain. I argue that if Suffragette-style violence wasn't necessary anywhere else, I don't believe it was necessary in the UK."

Both arguments adapted from <https://yesterday.uktv.co.uk/blogs/article/suffragettes-win-votes/>

**Now that you have read the arguments can you write short paragraphs on the following:**

What you believe is the strongest argument from the first passage (give reasons for your choice)

What you believe is the strongest argument from the second passage (give reasons for your choice)

When you start at History at King Ed's we will look into this topic in more detail and help you develop your essay writing skills to debate the importance of militancy in helping women achieve the vote. But it's worth thinking about these issues. How should historians approach the actions of the militant suffragettes? Should they be celebrated as fighting valiantly for the cause of freedom or condemned for carrying out acts of violence?

From a modern perspective some of those women that engaged in militancy would be seen as terrorists. They planted bombs at train stations, churches (because the Church of England was against women getting the vote) the Royal Observatory in Edinburgh and the Bank of England amongst other places and in 1913, bombed the house of David Lloyd George, who was the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/06/feminism-women-vote-suffragette-democracy-protests-political-theatre> (shortened link <https://tinyurl.com/y9dchfj2>)

Does this article give equal credence to both methods of achieving the vote or does it describe one as more successful than the other?

How do you think historians should view the militant protestors who were part of the campaign for women to have the vote? Write a short paragraph supporting one of the following viewpoints:

- Those that engaged in militant protest to get the vote were justified in resorting to violence because they were fighting for a just cause;

OR

- Those that engaged in militant protest should not be celebrated as this just gives support to others that carrying out acts of violence is the way to get what you want;

OR

- We should not celebrate those that engaged in militant protest but recognise their role and focus on those that looked to use peaceful methods.

If you'd like to find out more about the campaign in Britain for women to have the vote, here are a couple of podcasts you could listen to and perhaps take some notes.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00jigg8>

<https://www.historyextra.com/period/20th-century/were-the-suffragettes-terrorists/>

And we'd like to end by offering you some suggestions of things to read, watch and listen to about all sorts of history not just the topics that you will be studying with us during your time at King Ed's. The list on the next few pages has been drawn up by all the history teachers and things we have thoroughly enjoyed and learned a lot from. This is purely optional and for enjoyment!

# Expanding your historical horizons

## **Something to read**

### The Nature of History

"The Historian's Craft" by Marc Bloch

"What is History?" by E.H. Carr

"History: A Very Short Introduction" by John H. Arnold

"The Pursuit of History" by John Tosh

### Sweeping Historical Overview

"Sapiens" by Yuval Harari

"Silk Roads" by Peter Frankopan

"A Little History of the World" by E.H. Gombrich

"A History of the World" by Andrew Marr

"The Better Angels of our nature: The Decline of Violence in History and its causes" by Steven Pinker

"Guns, Germs and Steel: A short history of everybody for the last 13,000 years" by Jared Diamond.

"The Little Ice Age: How Climate Made History 1300-1850" by Brian Fagan

"Dominion: The Making of the Western Mind" by Tom Holland

"The Secret World: A History of Intelligence" by Christopher Andrew

### Fascinating stories

"Longitude" by Dava Sobel

"Selling Hitler" by Robert Harris

"On the Map: Why the World Looks the Way it Does" by Simon Garfield

"The Spy and the Traitor: The Greatest Espionage Story of the Cold War" by Ben McIntyre

"Enigma: The Battle for the Code" by Hugh Sebag-Montefiore

"The Secret War: Spies, Codes, and Guerillas 1939-45" by Max Hastings

"Blood Done Sign My Name" by Timothy B. Tyson – a true story of the killing of a black man in North Carolina in 1970

### Interesting people

"Martin Luther" by Lyndal Roper

"Wild Swans" by Jung Chang

"Empress Orchid" by Anchee Min

"Long Road to Freedom" by Nelson Mandela

"Alexander Hamilton" by Ron Chernow

"The Hottentot Venus: The Life and Death of Saartjie Baartman: Born 1789 - Buried 2002" by Rachel Holmes

"Michelangelo" by Martin Gayford

"Leonardo da Vinci" by Walter Isaacson

### What was it like to be there?

"The Time Travellers Guide to Medieval England" by Ian Mortimer (there are other titles in this series which cover different points in history)

"Travellers in the Third Reich: The Rise of Fascism through the eyes of everyday people" by Julia Boyd



“We danced all night: A social history of Britain between the Wars” by Martin Pugh  
“Citizen Sailors: The Royal Navy in the Second World War” by Glyn Pryor  
“The Bang Bang Club: Snapshots of a hidden war” by Greg Marinovich and Joao Silva – about the experiences of 4 photographers in the township wars in South Africa in the early 90s.

And if things had turned out differently...

“What might have been: Leading Historians on Twelve ‘What Ifs’ of History” edited by Andrew Roberts. You might argue that not all of the contributors are professional historians but there are some interesting thought experiments here about what might have happened if key historical turning points had gone the other way.

Something to make you smile

“An Utterly Impartial History of Britain: (or 2000 Years Of Upper Class Idiots In Charge)” by John O’Farrell

Historical Fiction

Reading a good historical novel can spark your interest in a period or place that you’ve not studied before and make you want to go on to find out how the fictional accounts differ from the work of academic historians. Here are just a few ideas to get you started in no particular order....

The big (in all senses of the word) historical novel of 2020 is Hilary Mantel’s “*The Mirror and the Light*” third in a series about Henry VIII’s chief minister Thomas Cromwell. The first two have won the Booker prize, and there is a good chance this one will as well.

Like Mantel’s work, Hans Fallada’s “*Alone in Berlin*” set in that city in 1940 really evokes a sense of what the past might have been like.

“*The Makioka Sisters*” by Junichiro Tanizaki evokes life for a family living in Osaka, Japan in 1930s.

“*The Water Dancer*” by Ta-Nehisi Coates tells the story of Hiram Baker, born on a slave plantation in Virginia. You could also look at “*The Underground Railroad*” by Colson Whitehead which tells the story of a young woman who tries to escape from a life of bondage to the North of the United States.

For a sweeping historical narrative, Ken Follett’s “*Pillars of the Earth*” cannot be beaten. It is the first in a trilogy and focuses on the construction of a medieval cathedral and the people who built it.

Edward Rutherford writes historical novels which look at the history of a particular place over centuries. Try “*New York*” “*Sarum*” or “*Ruska*”.

A real classic historical novel is “*The Name of the Rose*” by Umberto Eco. Set in 14<sup>th</sup> century Italy, it’s a thrilling murder mystery with secret codes and a labyrinth. Highly recommended!

**Something to watch**

This one-off programme looks at the way that 3 books published in England in the Early Modern period contributed to the Reformation.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b0992jdt/englands-reformation-three-books-that-changed-a-nation>

This programme is the first in the remake of a series that was first shown in 1960s. Both series are currently on iPlayer. Here’s a link to the first episode of the modern version to get you started.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p05xxsmp/civilisations-series-1-1-second-moment-of-creation>

This is an interesting look at life in Nazi Germany using unusual source material.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000crdf/lost-home-movies-of-nazi-germany-series-1-episode-1>

If you have a Netflix subscription, there is an excellent series on the Vietnam War, as well as programmes on the “Last Czars”, “The Russian Revolution” and “Hitler’s Henchmen”.

If you haven’t watched “The Crown” yet, this might be a good opportunity. Although the main focus is the royal family during the Queen’s reign, each episode is set against the backdrop of historical events in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Something to listen to**

I can’t recommend highly enough the series “A History of the World in 100 Objects” by Neil Macgregor, former Director of the British Museum. Taking just 100 objects from the British Museum, the story of human history unfolds in 100 15 minute episodes. Perfect for a lockdown. There is also a book of the series.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00nrtd2>

Another excellent series by Neil Macgregor looks at 600 years of German history. .

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04dwbwz/episodes/downloads>

The “In Our Time” podcasts often focus on historical themes. Why not dip in and listen to something not related to what you have already studied to push yourself outside your comfort zone

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01dh5yg/episodes/downloads>

For a more light-hearted look at history, take a look at the “You’re Dead to Me” podcasts. For a start, why not learn about the history of chocolate. You will find it here.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07mdbhg/episodes/downloads>

You could also look at Malcolm Gladwell’s “Revisionist History” podcast which asks whether historical events have been misinterpreted. <http://revisionisthistory.com/seasons>

### **An online course**

There are lots of free resources online to help you study something of interest.

The Open University has a huge number of courses – look in the History and Arts section for things relating to History.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>

There are more online courses available here. I’m doing the one on the history of the book in the Early Modern period at the moment and I’ve got my eye on the one on women’s suffrage from 1866 onwards too.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/subjects/history-courses>

If you would like to learn a skill rather than content, then why not try your hand at palaeography? (which means the study of old handwriting). This is an essential skill for historians working in archives on historical documents. It is not as easy as you think!

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/>

<https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/eres/ehoc/index.html>