History: since the dawn of civilisation

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
UPPER-INTERMEDIATE | B2

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each precise term with its definition.

1 antiquity ____	**a** the ancient period of history, especially Greek and Roman civilisation
2 chronicle ____	**b** a written record of historical events in chronological order
3 dynastic succession ____	**c** the process by which rulers pass power within the same family line
4 archaeological stratum ____	**d** a distinct layer of soil or deposits representing a particular period at an excavation site
5 primary source ____	**e** an original document or artefact contemporary with the period being studied
6 historiography ____	**f** the study of how history itself has been written and interpreted over time
7 anachronism ____	**g** something placed in the wrong time period, inconsistent with the setting
8 zenith ____	**h** the highest point of power or achievement
9 upheaval ____	**i** a sudden, major disruption or period of great change
10 legacy ____	**j** what someone or something leaves behind for future generations

2 Choose the word with the most suitable connotation.

1 For the ancient period of Greek and Roman civilisation: antiquity / the modern era.

2 For a written chronological record: chronicle / a random note.

3 For power passed within a ruling family: dynastic succession / open election.

4 For a source contemporary with the period studied: primary source / later commentary.

5 For the study of how history has been written: historiography / raw data.

6 For the highest point of power or achievement: zenith / decline.

7 For a sudden, major disruption: upheaval / stability.

8 For what is left behind for future generations: legacy / a temporary trend.

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3 **Complete the history collocations with one word.**

1 classical _____ (= ancient Greek and Roman period)

2 a historical _____ (= a written record of events)

3 _____ succession (= power passed within a family)

4 a _____ source (= a document contemporary with the period)

5 reach its _____ (= the highest point of power)

6 political _____ (= a period of major disruption)

7 leave a lasting _____ (= what is left for future generations)

8 an _____ stratum (= a layer at an excavation site)

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4 Complete the case notes with words and phrases from the box.

anachronism | antiquity | archaeological stratum | chronicle | dynastic succession | historiography | legacy | primary source | upheaval | zenith

Case A: The empire reached its 1 _____ during a period historians describe as classical 2 _____, before entering a slow decline.
Case B: A detailed 3 _____ written by a court scribe served as an invaluable 4 _____ for reconstructing daily palace life.
Case C: Succession disputes disrupted the usual pattern of 5 _____, plunging the kingdom into political 6 _____.
Case D: Archaeologists carefully documented each 7 _____, allowing them to date findings precisely.
Case E: The film was criticised for a glaring 8 _____, depicting technology that did not yet exist in the period portrayed.
Case F: Debates in 9 _____ continue over how earlier scholars' biases shaped accepted narratives, and how the empire's 10 _____ should be judged today.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Rewriting the past

Historiography, the study of how history itself has been written and interpreted, reveals that historical narratives are rarely fixed or purely objective; they reflect the assumptions and priorities of the historians who compiled them, often shaped by the political concerns of their own era rather than the period under study. A chronicle written to legitimise a ruling dynasty's succession, for instance, may present events quite differently from an account written generations later by a rival power. Modern historians increasingly cross-reference multiple primary sources and archaeological evidence to reconstruct a more balanced picture, recognising that even contemporary accounts carry their own biases rather than representing neutral, unmediated truth.

1 What does historiography study? _____

2 What does this reveal about historical narratives? _____

3 What often shapes how history is written, besides the period under study? _____

4 Give the example given of a chronicle written for a particular purpose. _____

5 What do modern historians increasingly do to reconstruct a more balanced picture? _____

6 What do even contemporary accounts carry, according to the text? _____

6 Rewrite each sentence using the word in capitals. Do not change the meaning.

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1 The empire reached its highest point of power. ZENITH _____

2 The document was written at the same time as the events. PRIMARY SOURCE _____

3 The film included a detail from the wrong time period. ANACHRONISM _____

4 The kingdom fell into major political disruption. UPHEAVAL _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 120-150 word account analysing how historical narratives can be shaped by the perspective of those who write them, distinguishing observation from interpretation.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Control connotation carefully. [ ] Avoid unsupported assumptions.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Precise terms

1 a 2 b 3 c 4 d 5 e 6 f 7 g 8 h 9 i 10 j

2 Connotation

1 antiquity 2 chronicle 3 dynastic succession 4 primary source 5 historiography 6 zenith 7 upheaval 8 legacy

3 Collocations

1 antiquity 2 chronicle 3 dynastic 4 primary 5 zenith 6 upheaval 7 legacy 8 archaeological

4 Case notes

1 zenith 2 antiquity 3 chronicle 4 primary source 5 dynastic succession 6 upheaval
7 archaeological stratum 8 anachronism 9 historiography 10 legacy

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 How history itself has been written and interpreted.
2 That historical narratives are rarely fixed or purely objective.
3 The political concerns of the historian's own era.
4 A chronicle written to legitimise a ruling dynasty's succession.
5 Cross-reference multiple primary sources and archaeological evidence.
6 Their own biases rather than representing neutral, unmediated truth.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 The empire reached its zenith. 2 The document was a primary source.
3 The film included an anachronism. 4 The kingdom fell into upheaval.

Over to you

Answers will vary. Check lexical precision, appropriate connotation and separation of fact from inference.