



Changes Within Living Memory: Our Local Area

Field	Lesson information
Year group	KS2, Years 4–6
Date	Scheduled class date
Duration	60 minutes
Topic	Changes within living memory
Focus	Investigating how the local area has changed by comparing old and new photographs, maps, buildings, streets, objects and family or community memories.

Enquiry question

How has our local area changed within living memory, and what has stayed the same?

Learning objectives

By the end of the lesson, pupils will be able to:

- ☐ Place local photographs, maps, objects and memories in chronological order.
- ☐ Use details from different sources as evidence about the local area.
- ☐ Identify changes and continuities in local buildings, streets, places and daily life.
- ☐ Ask historical questions and explain why one local change is significant to the community.

Success criteria

- ☐ I can order local sources on a timeline.
- ☐ I can describe what an old and a new source show.
- ☐ I can identify at least two changes and one continuity.
- ☐ I can use evidence to support a historical statement.
- ☐ I can ask a question about when, why or how the local area changed.
- ☐ I can explain why one change matters to the local community.

Key vocabulary

- **Sources and evidence:** source, evidence, photograph, map, object, memory, oral history, community
- **Historical thinking:** chronology, timeline, change, continuity, compare, contrast, significance
- **Place and time:** local area, building, street, past, present, living memory

Resources

- ☐ Prepared source packs containing paired old and current photographs of local buildings and streets.
- ☐ Old and current maps of the local area.
- ☐ Photographs or cards showing local objects, transport and everyday life in the past and present.
- ☐ Six short, consented family or community memory cards.
- ☐ Timeline cards and a large classroom timeline.
- ☐ Source-enquiry worksheets, A3 paper, pens, pencils and glue.
- ☐ Exit tickets and a visual word bank.

Prior learning

- Recall that historians use buildings, photographs, maps, objects, stories and memories as sources of evidence.
- Review the meaning of past, present, chronology, change and continuity.
- Recognise that local history connects the experiences of a community to wider changes in society.

Starter

10 minutes – Observe, question and connect to living memory

1. Display a paired old and current photograph of the same local street or building.
2. Give pupils one minute to observe silently, then ask: “What is the same? What is different? Which details can you prove from the photographs?”
3. Collect pupils’ observations in two columns labelled **Change** and **Continuity**.
4. Explain that living memory is history remembered by people alive today. Introduce the enquiry question and tell pupils that they will investigate local change as historians.

Teacher input

10 minutes — Model chronology, source use and historical questioning

- Place the old photograph, current photograph, old map and current map on the visualiser.
- Model a source statement: “The old photograph shows a row of small shops. The current photograph shows flats in the same position. The photographs are evidence of change in the local area.”
- Model a continuity statement: “The road remains in the same place, so the street has continuity even though the buildings have changed.”
- Place the sources on the classroom timeline and explain how dates establish chronology.
- Model the questions “When did this change happen?”, “Why did it happen?” and “Who was affected?”
- Explain that a change is significant when it has an important effect on people, places or community identity.

Questions to use throughout the lesson

“What can we see?”

“Which source is evidence for that idea?”

“What has changed and what has stayed the same?”

“Why might this change matter to people in the local community?”

Pupil activities

Time	Activity	Teacher instructions and pupil outcome	Materials
10 minutes	Source investigation	Give each group a source pack. Ask pupils to compare old and new photographs, maps, buildings, streets, objects and memory cards. Pupils record the source date, two observations and one inference on the worksheet.	Source pack, worksheet
7 minutes	Timeline work	Ask groups to order their sources from oldest to newest and place them on the classroom timeline. Check that pupils justify the order using dates, visual clues or details in the memory cards.	Timeline cards, source pack
5 minutes	Group discussion	Ask pupils to discuss which change had the greatest effect on the local community. Each group selects one change, one continuity and the strongest source supporting its decision.	Completed worksheets, word bank
8 minutes	Poster or	Direct groups to	A3 paper, images,

	information sheet	create a poster or information sheet titled “Our Local Area: Then and Now”. Require one old and one new image, three evidence-based facts, one continuity statement, one historical question and a sentence explaining the significance of the selected change.	pens, pencils, glue
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Challenge and support

Group	Teacher action
Struggling learners	Use a reduced source pack, labelled images, a partially completed timeline and sentence stems: “This source shows...”, “The evidence is...” and “This changed because...”. Read memory cards aloud and rehearse answers orally.
On-level learners	Require pupils to use at least three sources, identify two changes and one continuity, and explain one connection between a local change and wider changes in society.
Advanced learners	Require pupils to compare the reliability and usefulness of two sources, identify a limitation and justify which local change is most significant.
English Language Learners	Pre-teach the word bank with visuals, model complete sentences, pair pupils for rehearsal and accept labelled drawings alongside written explanations.

Assessment

Objective assessed	Evidence to collect	Assessment check
Chronology and source use	Pupils order sources and cite dates or visual details as evidence.	Question each group during timeline work and mark the source worksheet.
Change and continuity	Pupils identify two changes and one feature that stayed the same.	Check the Change and Continuity columns and the group poster or information sheet.
Historical questions and significance	Pupils ask a relevant question and explain why one change matters to the community.	Listen to group discussion and read each exit ticket.

Exit ticket: Write one change, one continuity, one piece of evidence and one reason why the change is significant.

Plenary

10 minutes — Share, connect and reflect

- Invite each group to present its selected change, continuity and strongest source.
- Place the group findings on the classroom timeline and ask: “How did the local area change within living memory?”
- Ask pupils to explain how photographs, maps, objects and family or community memories help historians understand the past.
- Return to the enquiry question and use the exit ticket to identify pupils who can support a conclusion with evidence.

Homework or follow-up

- ☐ Ask each pupil to interview an adult they know about one change they remember in the local area.
- ☐ Require pupils to record when the change happened, what changed, what stayed the same and why the change mattered.
- ☐ In the next lesson, add the memories to the class timeline and compare them with the photographs, maps and objects used today.

Teacher notes

Before the lesson

- ☐ Arrange the source packs in labelled group sets and place the classroom timeline where every pupil can reach it.
- ☐ Check dates, captions and map labels for accuracy.
- ☐ Use consented family or community memories and remove private names or details from shared cards.
- ☐ Display the vocabulary word bank and prepare the exit tickets.

After the lesson

- Record which sources helped pupils make the strongest historical connections.
- Record vocabulary that needs revisiting, especially evidence, chronology, continuity and significance.
- Identify pupils who need further support with ordering sources, comparing evidence or explaining significance.
- Use pupil memories and class findings to plan the next timeline activity.