

History Knowledge Organiser: Year 4- Assyrian Empire

Prior Knowledge

Pupils should have a secure understanding of the changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age, including: the traditional chronological periods of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic; Neolithic hunting practices and early farmers; Bronze Age religion, technology, and travel; Iron Age tribal kingdoms, burials, farming, culture and hill forts. Pupils will understand what is meant by 'prehistory' and can distinguish between primary and secondary evidence. They should identify and comment on connections, contrasts and trends over time in early British history, and deploy historical terms to describe these crucial developments. Pupils should understand how to use historical sources provided to construct informed responses to questions, which involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources and identify the differences in sources between cultures and time periods. Pupils should understand that certain changes and human milestones occurred at different times across world history. For example, the English language first developed around the middle of the 5th century, whereas writing developed in Egypt from as early as 3500 BC. Pupils should understand that our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources. Pupils should understand the difference between primary and secondary sources and that both are required for being well informed on historical lives and events. Their understanding of Egyptian social structure and the difference between king and pharaoh, should now be secure.

Diagrams



Lion hunts from the palace at Nineveh, during Ashurbanipal's reign.



Assyrian Sacred Tree. A very important symbol, decorated throughout Assyrian palaces during the early phases of the empire. They were gradually replaced with scenes of lion hunts instead.

Vocabulary

Archaeology: The study of man-made objects from the past.
Ashur: The city-state god of Assyria, who was believed to have founded the city as the political capital in the 10th century BC.
Ashurbanipal: The last known king of the Assyrian Empire. Built a very famous Library in Nineveh. He was one of the few kings who could definitely read and write.
Assyria: A city-state, located in the north of Iraq. This was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. In ancient times, the capital was called Ashur, the state's founding god.
Babylonia: A rival city-state, found in the south of Iraq.
Dynasty: a line of hereditary rulers of a country, civilisation or empire.
Empire: A group of states or countries, ruled over by a single monarch or oligarchy. Assyria became an empire, because Mesopotamia was organised politically into individual states, which were then ruled by one king.
Mesopotamia: The ancient name for Iraq, named so because it means 'the land between two rivers'. In antiquity, the river Tigris and Euphrates ran through the Assyrian Empire.
Sack (a city): When an army sacks a town or city, they destroy it, taking away all valuable things.

Intended Unit Outcomes

By the end of this unit, children will have a secure understanding of:

- What is meant by 'archaeology' and recognise its importance in the field of history and research.
- The difference between 'primary' and 'secondary' sources and their equal importance in creating historically valid points and questions and solidifying historical knowledge and understanding.
- The meaning of 'administration' and how the Assyrian Empire was politically and socially organised.
- The different political roles in the Assyrian governing body (the king, the magnates, the scholars, scribes, provisional governors and the 'beardless men').
- The political and religious significance of lion-hunting and its exclusivity to be done only by the king.
- Palace-building in the Assyrian Empire.
- What is meant by 'chronology', the key events that occurred in the Assyrian Empire and what was taking place elsewhere in the world during this time.
- The importance of artefacts and how they are used to pose historically valid questions and receive historical information and knowledge from them.
- What an empire is and how that differed from ancient Egypt's political organisation.
- Where Assyria is geographically.
- The importance of high-quality research, particular the quality and resources of secondary evidence.

Timeline/Chronology

911 BC: Considered by any archaeologists to be the emergence of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.
911-859 BC: The campaigns of Adad-nirari II allowed Assyria to become a great power after overthrowing the Twenty-fifth Dynasty of Egypt and conquering Elam, Urartu, Media, Persia, Mannea, Gutium, Phoenicia/Canaan, Arabia, Israel, Judah, Philistia, Edom, Moab, Samarra, Cilicia, Cyprus, Chaldea, Nabatea, Commagene, Dilmun, Shutu, and the Neo-Hittites, as well as removing the Nubians, Kushites, and Ethiopians from Egypt and forcing a tribute from Phrygia and others.
883-859 BC: The reign of Ashurnasirpal II.
859-783 BC: Shalmaneser III- Adad-Ninari III.
744-727 BC: Reign of Tiglath-Pileser III.
738 BC: Israel is invaded.
721-705 BC: Sargon II comes to the throne and begins the Sargonid Dynasty.
705-681 BC: Reign of Sennacherib.
681-669 BC: Reign of Esarhaddon.
668-631 BC: Reign of Ashurbanipal.
631-609 BC: Fall of Assyria. City of Nineveh is sacked by the Babylonians.

Sources and Artefacts

Pupils will be introduced to Mesopotamian writing, known as cuneiform. Children will look at pictures of cuneiform tablets. Artefacts will also be used, including a wall hanging of the Assyrian Sacred Tree, a replica of a scene from the lion-hunts of Ashurbanipal, a miniature figurine of a lamassu and reconstructions of Assyrian palaces. Wall reliefs from the British Museum and the Louvre will also be shared with pupils.

Historical investigation and enquiry skills

Pupils in Year 4 should now regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions, such as, what are the differences between an Empire and a settlement and how did that impact the culture? They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources and understand that both primary and secondary sources should be used, wherever possible, in order to create an informed response or answer to questions provided. This process should now be completed in two or three stages. For example, stage 1: Show children one or two pieces of primary evidence (an artefact or picture of an artefact). Show the pupils where it was found. Stage 2: Prompt children to ask questions about this evidence- What is it? How old is it? Who owned it? Where was it found? Stage 3: Prompt children to suggest answers (which we can call hypotheses) to some of the questions and to think about which of their questions are the most important to answer