Introduction to history

Lesson plan and teacher's notes · Form 1 History · 1 period of 40 minutes

School	(write school name)	**Teacher**	(write name)
Date	(date)	**Class**	Form 1
Subject	History	**Enrolment**	Boys ___ Girls ___ Total ___
Time	40 minutes	**Topic**	Introduction to history

Learners explain why we learn history, study the history of their own area, classify events into branches of history and judge how far a source can be trusted. The lesson uses local examples such as the Kuomboka and Independence Day on 24th October.

Specific outcomes

By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to:

1. Give two reasons for learning history
2. Explain what local history is and name evidence used to study it
3. Place an event under political, economic, social or religious history
4. Judge the credibility of a source using questions about who, when and why it was made

Prior knowledge

- That Zambia became independent on 24th October
- Stories told by elders about the village or school
- The meaning of a ceremony such as the Kuomboka

Teaching and learning materials

- chalk and board
- a school photograph or an old school record, if available
- exercise books

References

Ministry of Education (CDC) Form 1 History syllabus and module; 25Schools learners' note: Introduction to history.

Lesson development

Stage and time	Teacher activities	Learner activities
Introduction 5 min	Ask why Zambia celebrates Independence Day on 24th October and who told learners the story of their village. Take three answers and write history on the board.	Share a story they have heard and say who told it.
Development: why and local history 10 min	Give the reasons for learning history and define local history. List evidence: elders' stories, old buildings, photographs, school records, ceremonies.	Write two reasons and name two kinds of evidence from their own village.
Development: branches 10 min	Draw four branches: political, economic, social, religious. Work the copper mining example and show that one event can belong to more than one branch.	Place three events under the right branch and give a reason.
Development: sources 10 min	Explain primary and secondary sources and oral, written and archaeological types. Teach the credibility questions and compare the soldier's diary with the man who heard the story from others.	Decide which source is more credible in two examples and say why.
Conclusion 5 min	Ask two learners to say in their own words how to check a website. Set the homework.	Answer and copy the homework.

Teacher's content notes

Read these before the lesson. They are what you need to know, not what to copy onto the board.

Why we learn history

History explains why Zambia has its own government, flag and laws. It teaches lessons from how people solved problems, builds identity and pride, helps different groups understand one another, and trains us to weigh evidence and give reasons.

Local history

Local history is the history of a village, town, school, church or chiefdom. Use evidence such as elders' stories, old buildings, photographs, school records and ceremonies. The Kuomboka shows how the Lozi lived with the yearly flooding of the Zambezi plain.

Branches of history

Political history studies governments and struggles for power. Economic history studies how people earned a living and traded. Social history studies how people lived. Religious history studies beliefs and how they spread. One event can belong to more than one branch.

Sources and credibility

Primary sources come from the time of the event; secondary sources are written later. Sources can also be oral, written or archaeological. To judge credibility ask who made it, was the writer present, when, why, and does it agree with other sources. A person may be biased.

Digital resources

Websites, online libraries, videos, recorded interviews, photographs and maps show places and records far away. Check the author, the date and whether it matches trusted books. Prefer official sites of museums, universities and government bodies, and note where you found the information.

Questions to ask during the lesson

Question	Expected answer
A boy at school asks why he should learn history when the events happened long ago, and his teacher points to the Zambian flag and the country's laws. (a) Give one reason for learning history. (b) Say how the flag and laws connect to the past. (c) Say what skill history trains.	(a) It explains why things are as they are today, builds identity or teaches lessons. (b) They exist because of events in the past. (c) Asking questions, weighing evidence and giving reasons.
A learner wants to write the history of her school and asks the headteacher for old records, photographs and the memories of former teachers. (a) Name the kind of history she is studying. (b) Name two sources she will use. (c) Say which is oral.	(a) Local history. (b) Any two of records, photographs, old buildings, elders' stories. (c) The memories or stories told by former teachers.
A student reads that a company began mining copper in a town and that families moved there for work and built homes and schools. (a) Name one branch the mining belongs to. (b) Name another branch the same event belongs to. (c) Say why this event belongs to more than one branch.	(a) Economic history. (b) Social history. (c) It concerns both earning a living and how people lived.
A man tells you of a battle that happened fifty years before he was born, while a soldier's diary written at the time tells a slightly different story. (a) Name the kind of source the diary is. (b) Say which source is more credible. (c) Say what to do next.	(a) Primary source. (b) The diary. (c) Compare it with other sources.

Worked examples for the board

Example 1: choosing the branch

A learner is asked where to place the story of copper mining and trading. It concerns how people earn a living and produce wealth, so it is economic history. It also affects family life and education, so it can be social history too.

Example 2: judging a source

A learner finds a man's story and a soldier's diary about a battle. The soldier was present and wrote at the time, so the diary is a primary source made close to the event. The man heard it from others. The diary is more credible, but should still be compared with other sources.

Example 3: checking a website

A learner finds a page about the Kuomboka. She checks the author, the date and whether it matches trusted books. She prefers a museum or university page and notes where she found it.

Board plan

Write the title and history. Left: reasons for learning history and local history evidence. Centre: the four branches table. Right: primary and secondary sources and the credibility questions. Bottom: three rules for checking a digital source.

Branch	What it studies	Example
Political	Governments, leaders, struggles for power	The fight for independence
Economic	Work and trade	Copper mining
Social	How people lived	Family, customs, health, education
Religious	Beliefs and how they spread	The spread of a church

Four branches of history

Mistakes to expect

Learners often think	Put it right
History is only about dates and kings.	History studies how people lived, worked, traded and believed, and also local places such as a village or school.
Anything written down is true.	Ask who made it, when, why and whether others agree. A writer may be biased.
An event belongs to only one branch of history.	One event can belong to more than one branch, for example copper mining is economic and social.

Differentiation

Learners who struggle

Give learners the four branch names on a strip and let them match each to one example before they write reasons. Use the credibility questions as a printed list on the board.

Learners who finish early

Ask learners who finish early to plan how they would find out the history of their school, listing three sources and saying which are primary.

Hearing or visual impairment

For learners with hearing impairment, write each key word and question on the board and face the class. For learners with visual impairment, read the sources aloud and let them tell a story from their own village to practise oral tradition.

No projector, no printing

Use elders' stories and the school itself as sources. Everything else is written on the board, and the digital part is taught by describing what a phone or computer would show.

If time is short

Teach the branches and the credibility questions, which carry the main idea. Set why we learn history and local history as reading and a short homework.

Evaluation

Question or task	A correct answer shows
A learner asks her grandfather how their village began, and he tells her the story that his father told him. (a) Name this kind of history passed by word of mouth. (b) Say whether it is a primary or secondary source. (c) Name one other kind of evidence she could use to check the story.	(a) Oral tradition. (b) Secondary, unless the grandfather was there himself, in which case primary; the learner must justify. (c) Old buildings, photographs, school or church records or ceremonies.
A teacher asks pupils to place three events under the right branch: the fight for independence, the mining of copper, and the spread of a church. (a) Place the first event. (b) Place the second. (c) Place the third.	(a) Political history. (b) Economic history. (c) Religious history.
A boy finds two accounts of a battle: a diary written by a soldier who was there at the time, and a story told by a man who heard it from others fifty years later. (a) Say which is more credible. (b) Give one reason. (c) Say what a good historian should still do.	(a) The diary. (b) The soldier was present and wrote at the time. (c) Compare it with other sources.

Homework

A learner finds a website that says a village was founded long ago but gives no author or date. (a) Name two things she should check before believing it. (b) Name a kind of site she should prefer. (c) Say what she should note down about where she found it.

Extra practice with answers

Question	Answer
1. A learner wants to study the history of her chiefdom and asks an elder, visits an old building and looks at a photograph. (a) Name the kind of history. (b) Name two kinds of evidence she uses. (c) Say which one is a spoken source.	(a) Local history. (b) Any two of the elder's story, an old building, a photograph. (c) The elder's story.

2. A teacher says that a textbook on independence was written after the event by an author who used other evidence. (a) Say whether it is primary or secondary. (b) Give a reason. (c) Name one primary source on the same topic.	(a) Secondary. (b) It was written later by someone who was not there. (c) A letter, photograph or the words of someone who was there.
3. A pupil is asked which branch studies the beliefs of people and how they spread, and which studies how people lived. (a) Name the first branch. (b) Name the second branch. (c) Give one example of the second.	(a) Religious history. (b) Social history. (c) Family, customs, health or education.
4. A girl reads a blog post that praises one chief and criticises his rival, and the writer says he supports the first chief. (a) Name the problem with the source. (b) Say what she should compare it with. (c) Name one credibility question to ask.	(a) Bias. (b) Other sources. (c) Who made it, when, why or does it agree with other sources.
5. A learner finds an old coin and a tool in a field and wants to learn from them. (a) Name the kind of source. (b) Say whether it is primary or secondary. (c) Give another example of this kind of source.	(a) Archaeological. (b) Primary. (c) Remains or objects such as pottery or old buildings.
6. A school club wants to make a video about the history of its village using a recorded interview with an elder. (a) Name one digital resource. (b) Say how to check a digital source. (c) Say what the club should note.	(a) A recorded interview, video, photograph or website. (b) Check the author, the date and whether it matches trusted books and sites. (c) Where they found the information.

Answers to the learners' check-yourself questions

1. Give two reasons for learning history.
   Any two: it explains how the present came about; it teaches lessons from the past; it builds identity and national pride; it helps people understand each other; it trains us to weigh evidence.
2. What is local history?
   The history of a small area such as a village, town, school or chiefdom.
3. Name two kinds of evidence you can use to study the history of your village.
   Any two: stories from elders, old buildings, photographs, school or church records, traditional ceremonies.
4. Which branch of history studies governments and the struggle for independence?
   Political history.
5. State the difference between a primary source and a secondary source.
   A primary source comes from the time of the event or from someone who was there. A secondary source is written later by someone who was not there.
6. Is a textbook a primary or a secondary source?
   A secondary source.

7. List three questions you can ask to judge whether a source is credible.
   Any three: Who made it? When was it made? Was the writer present? Why was it made? Does it agree with other sources?
8. Why must we check information found on the internet?
   Anyone can post information online, so it may be wrong or biased. We must check the author, the date and whether trusted sources agree.

Teacher's reflection

What went well:

What I will change next time:

Learners who need follow-up: