

Key stage 3



Oxford history study units

Teacher's resource book 1

IAN DAWSON, IAN COULSON,
and PAUL WATSON

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History and science – two ways of working?

The first diagram below shows how you have been working in history. The second shows you how scientists work. Look at the two diagrams closely. Are history and science very different or are they really quite similar?

- 1 Describe how you have investigated a topic in history. Use an example, perhaps about the Roman Empire or Britain in the Middle Ages, to show what happened at each stage.
- 2 Now compare your work in history with the science diagram. What stages are the same in both?
- 3 In science you do experiments to check an answer or hypothesis. Historians do not do experiments. What do they do instead?
- 4 If two scientists in different countries do the same experiment they will almost certainly have the same result or answer. If two historians investigate the same question they may well have different answers.
 - a Why might historians have different answers?
 - b Why would scientists have the same answers?
- 5
 - i Scientists usually find definite answers to questions.
 - ii Historians cannot be completely certain about the answers to many questions about the past.

Do you agree with these two statements? Explain your reasons.

- 6 Do science and history have very different ways of working or similar ways of working. Explain your answer.

