

YEAR 9 CORE: HUMANITIES

The Year 9 Humanities course integrates the disciplines of History, Geography, Civics & Citizenship, and Economics & Business within an examination of topic-based units. In year 9 these units position students to contend with real-world current issues by exploring the relationship these issues have with history. For example, students explore the concept of 'working conditions' through analysing and comparing aspects of working life during the industrial revolution with aspects of working life today. Each topic area incorporates elements of the four key subject areas within the broader Humanities umbrella: Civics, History, Economics and Geography. Through this study, students develop their abilities in acquiring, processing, and communicating information from a variety of data sources and via a range of presentation formats. They learn to evaluate patterns and connections within and between societies and places, and across time. Students synthesise information from a range of sources to produce original responses that use appropriate conventions.

Semester 1

Fast Fashion

This topic explores the development of Fast Fashion and how the textiles and garment industry changes over time. Students investigate the historical origins of factory production during the Industrial Revolution and examine how these early systems influence the modern Fast Fashion production model used by global clothing companies today. They explore why many businesses choose to offshore clothing manufacturing to developing countries, focusing on places such as Dhaka in Bangladesh, where labour costs are lower and regulations may be less strict.

Students compare working conditions in the textile industry across different time periods and locations, analysing similarities between factory conditions during the Industrial Revolution and those found in some modern garment factories. They examine how working conditions differ between developed and developing countries and discuss the ethical concerns surrounding Fast Fashion, including child labour, unsafe workplaces, low wages, and the limited protections available for workers. Students also consider how some businesses exploit these conditions in order to maximise profit.

Finally, students reflect on the environmental and social impacts of Fast Fashion and explore ways consumers can make more ethical and sustainable clothing choices in the future. This includes considering alternatives such as buying second-hand clothing, supporting ethical brands, reducing overconsumption, and making informed purchasing decisions to reduce waste and environmental harm.

Food for Thought

Students investigate how food is overproduced and overconsumed around the world and reflect on their own food consumption and waste habits. They analyse data about Year 9 food consumption, knowledge and waste habits, identifying trends and patterns from raw data and representing their findings using graphs and tables. Students examine sources that outline global food consumption and consider what the data reveals about food waste and consumer behaviour.

Students also explore where food comes from by investigating biomes around the world and the role they play in food production. They examine the characteristics and locations of different biomes, with a particular focus on grassland biomes and how they are modified to produce food. Students investigate the stages of the food production process and analyse how food travels from the grassland biome to their plate, while considering the environmental implications of altering natural ecosystems for agriculture.

The unit also focuses on food wastage and food security. Students examine what food waste looks like, what happens to food when it is discarded, and how personal habits contribute to the issue. They investigate the meaning of food security and food insecurity, compare how people consume food around the world, and explore why these differences exist. Through budgeting activities, class scenarios and research into food security levels in Australia, students analyse the advantages and disadvantages experienced by different groups in society. Finally, students analyse patterns and trends from Year 9 food consumption data at Viewbank College, reflect on continuities and changes in food habits over time, draw conclusions from their findings, and suggest ways to improve food consumption habits in the future.

Semester 2

Power

Students explore key historical topics in Semester Two while developing skills in source analysis, cause and consequence, historical significance, and interpretation of perspectives. They use the DAMMITTU model to analyse historical sources and apply it across a range of contexts to better understand how and why events occurred and how different groups experienced them.

Students begin by examining the experiences of Chinese migrants on the Australian goldfields, including the presence of anti-Chinese sentiment and the causes and consequences of migration to Australia during the gold rush. They investigate the historical significance of the gold rush and how it contributed to broader social and political change, including the development of the White Australia Policy. Students analyse its causes, impacts, and the perspectives of those affected using historical sources.

Students then study discrimination and segregation in the United States, focusing on the Jim Crow laws, the ruling of the Plessy v. Ferguson case, and the influence of the Ku Klux Klan. They examine how Civil Rights movements challenged segregation, including the desegregation of transport and education, and evaluate how individuals and groups resisted discrimination.

Students also investigate Apartheid in South Africa, including why it was introduced, how it affected society, and how it was challenged through resistance movements such as Umkhonto we Sizwe. They explore key events including the Soweto uprising and the eventual dismantling of apartheid in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Finally, students examine the causes and consequences of World War II, the rise of Nazism in Germany under Adolf Hitler, and key aspects of the Holocaust. This includes analysis of propaganda, life in ghettos, deportation, and the role of sites such as Auschwitz concentration camp, while considering different historical perspectives and the significance of these events.

The Holocaust (inquiry program with English)

Students complete an inquiry-based learning task focused on the question: what was life like for those who experienced the Holocaust? They begin by understanding what an “inquiry task” is and how it allows historians to investigate the significance of individual lives within major historical events. Working collaboratively in groups, students explore “The One” — a Holocaust survivor — through a series of structured tasks that highlight the importance of personal experience in understanding history.

Students examine the causes, consequences, and lived experiences of the Holocaust using a range of multimedia sources. They investigate how individuals experienced suffering, survival, and resilience, and consider how these personal stories can be represented through different elements such as written, visual, and creative forms.

Throughout the inquiry, students work together to complete a group study of one survivor, ensuring equal contribution to all tasks. They develop an understanding of how to represent an individual's experience of a historically significant event and reflect on how these stories help deepen understanding of the Holocaust as a whole.

History

Students will learn to:

- analyse continuity and change
- analyse short- and long-term causes and the intended and unintended consequences of significant events, individuals, ideas and developments and their contributions to continuity and change
- evaluate the significance of individuals, groups, movements, events, developments and ideas
- analyse the purpose, features, content and context of historical sources
- construct sustained historical interpretations and arguments using appropriate historical concepts, terms, knowledge, conventions and evaluated evidence from a range of historical sources

Geography

Students will learn to:

- interpret and evaluate information and data to make generalisations and predictions, analyse patterns and trends, infer relationships and make forecasts
- develop a range of questions for a geographical inquiry related to a phenomenon, issue or challenge
- consider ethical values and perspectives to justify conclusions related to a phenomenon, issue or challenge using geographical concepts
- justify responses and develop and evaluate strategies using environmental, economic or social criteria, recommend a strategy and explain the predicted impacts
- explain and evaluate proposed actions, using geographical knowledge and concepts and appropriate methods, and incorporating and acknowledging research findings

Ethical Capabilities

Students will learn to:

- develop the knowledge, skills and understandings to analyse and evaluate ethical problems and their resolution, and to identify and manage contestability in ethical matters
- reflect on whether there are ethical concepts and principles common across people, groups and cultures