

<u>Overview Document</u> <u>2026/2027</u>	Curriculum Area: ACE History	Year Group: 8
	Personnel Responsible: PPR	Quality Assured by: RDE

Cycle	Topic/Unit Title – Big Question	Content Coverage	Skill development and links to other areas of this subject's curriculum
2	Was Great Britain actually 'Great'?	Within this cycle students will delve into the industrial revolution and the changes that Britain faced throughout that time period. At the start of the cycle they will study urbanisation, life in factories and living conditions in cities. At the later end of the cycle they will focus more on societal changes, such as slavery, empires and how slavery came to an end. At the end of the cycle they will make a judgement as to whether Britain was actually great during this time period.	This unit provides students with an understanding of how Britain changed during the Industrial Revolution and the wider impact this had both at home and across the world. Students explore how the shift from rural to urban living created new job opportunities while also bringing significant challenges. They are often particularly interested in the dramatic contrasts between life in the countryside and rapidly growing industrial towns, as well as the development of transport, such as the introduction of railways. Learning about working conditions, including long hours and the use of child labour, helps students to understand how society changed during this time. The unit also encourages students to make important connections between Britain's industrial growth and its global impact, particularly through the study of the transatlantic slave trade and the British Empire. Students learn about the experiences of enslaved people, the conditions of the Middle Passage and the role of reformers such as Olaudah Equiano, which often prompts strong emotional responses and thoughtful discussion. They are supported to make links between past and present when exploring themes of rights and equality, particularly through the study of suffrage and the campaign for women's right to vote. By considering key concepts such as empire, colonies and power, alongside case studies such as India, pupils develop a broader understanding of how Britain's actions shaped the wider world. By the end of the unit, students are able to reflect on how historical events connect to modern ideas about fairness, rights

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			and social change, and can articulate their understanding using key vocabulary and historical knowledge.
4	What was different about the First World War?	Students will be exploring World War I throughout this cycle. Within this study they will learn about: trenches, poison gas, tanks and life at home during the war. Throughout the cycle they will be aiming to build an image of the First World War in order to analyse how the war was fought and won. Source material will support students to gain knowledge and understanding.	This unit introduces students to the causes, experiences and consequences of the First World War, helping them to develop an understanding of conflict and its impact on people and society. Students are often highly engaged by learning about the trigger of the war, including the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and the scale of the conflict involving over 30 countries. They show particular interest in the lived experiences of soldiers, especially life in the trenches. Exploring the harsh conditions—mud, cold, disease and overcrowding—helps pupils to understand the realities of warfare, although some may find these conditions difficult to comprehend or may be puzzled by how soldiers coped for long periods. The study of new technologies, such as tanks and poisonous gases, also captures students' curiosity, highlighting how warfare changed during this period. Throughout the unit, students are encouraged to make connections between the battlefield and life on the home front. They explore how rationing and censorship were used by governments to support the war effort, and how shortages affected everyday life. Students also consider the changing roles of women, recognising how they took on new jobs and responsibilities while men were at war, linking this to wider ideas about gender and societal change. These discussions often prompt students to reflect on fairness, responsibility and how societies adapt during times of crisis. By using key vocabulary and analysing sources, students develop their ability to explain historical events and understand



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			their significance. By the end of the unit, students are able to make connections between cause, experience and consequence, and demonstrate a clearer understanding of how war can shape both individuals and society as a whole.
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