

Nursery to Reception progression of Sills



	Nursery (3–4 Years)	Reception (4–5 Years)	ELG: Past & Present
Chronological Understanding	- Talks about the <i>immediate past</i> (“yesterday”, “when I was a baby”). - Understands simple sequences: first/next/last. - Notices change over time (growth, seasons, routines).	- Understands the idea of the past beyond living memory (“long ago”). - Orders events using simple timelines. - Uses vocabulary: past, present, before, after, long ago.	Children talk about events in the past using accurate time language.
Personal History	- Shares simple past experiences. - Recognises they have grown and changed.	- Sequences key life events (baby → toddler → Nursery → Reception). - Explains how and why they have changed over time.	Children talk about their own life and the lives of people around them.
Knowledge of the Past	- Learns about familiar events from their own family. - Listens to stories set in the past.	- Learns about significant people/events (e.g., Mary Seacole, Guy Fawkes...). - Talks about why these people/events are remembered.	Children understand the past through settings, characters, and events encountered in stories.
Similarities & Differences (Past vs Present)	- Notices basic differences between old/new objects. - Begins comparing “then and now” with adult support.	- Compares life in the past and now (toys, homes, transport, routines). - Describes similarities and differences in detail.	Children know similarities and differences between things in the past and now.
Historical Enquiry (Using Evidence)	- Looks closely at photos/objects. - Describes what they notice with adult modelling.	- Uses photos, artefacts and images as evidence to talk about the past. - Answers “How do we know?” and “Why did this happen?” - Begins to ask simple historical questions.	Children draw on books, photos, images and storytelling to understand the past.
Vocabulary Development	- Uses early vocabulary: before, now, baby, grow, old/new, yesterday.	- Uses expanded vocabulary: past, present, modern, old-fashioned, long ago, timeline, evidence, then/now.	Children confidently use language of past and present.


Guidance, vocabulary and examples

<p>Substantive knowledge</p> <p>Personal History : Children’s own history: Understanding their own life story (e.g., “When I was a baby,” “Who is in my family?”).</p> <p>Life stages: Concepts of being a baby, growing up, and becoming a child, but avoiding complex notions such as adolescence and adulthood.</p> <p>Family history: Family members: Learning about parents, siblings, and extended family members (e.g., grandparents). Special events: Children can learn about key family events such as birthdays, holidays, and celebrations that happen every year. History of People and Communities Community and local history: Begin to understand the community around them (e.g., local parks, schools, and businesses). Children can talk about the people they know in their local community. Famous people: Introduce children to simple ideas of famous people who made a positive impact, such as Florence Nightingale or Queen Elizabeth II. Changes Over Time Seasons: Teach children how the seasons change and the different activities associated with each (e.g., what happens in spring, summer, autumn, and winter). Everyday objects: Introduce the idea of objects that have changed over time, like toys, clothes, or technology (e.g., comparing old and new toys).</p>	<p>Disciplinary Knowledge</p> <p>Understanding the passage of time: Begin to introduce simple concepts of time using a daily routine to compare activities (e.g., morning, lunchtime, bedtime). This can help children understand the idea of past, present, and future. Using simple timelines: Use visual aids (e.g., pictures of a child as a baby, child, and adult) to show how people grow over time. Historical Inquiry Asking questions: Encourage children to ask questions about the past. For example, “What did your grandma do when she was little?” or “What did people wear a long time ago?” Encourage children to explore their own history through family members and photos. Looking at objects: Show children objects from the past, such as old toys or pictures, and discuss how they are different from things today. This supports them in making comparisons. Storytelling: Introduce history through storytelling. Stories help children connect emotionally with the past and see it as a series of events that shaped who we are today. Books about famous figures or family stories are a great start. Change and Continuity Identifying changes: Help children notice how things change. This can include personal changes (e.g., a growing child), seasonal changes (e.g., leaves turning colors in autumn), or the evolution of objects and technology (e.g., how toys have changed over time).</p>
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<p>Time and the World Around Us Time concepts: Introduce basic concepts of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Discussing daily routines, such as “What did we do today?” and “What will we do tomorrow?” Simple traditions: Learn about simple traditions like Christmas, Easter, or birthdays—what they are, how people celebrate them, and why they are important.</p>	<p>Exploring continuity: Discuss things that have stayed the same, such as family traditions or routines. Empathy and Perspective Understanding different perspectives: Begin teaching children to empathize with people in the past. For instance, “How do you think people lived a long time ago?” or “What would it have been like to live in a different time?” Role-play: Children can act out historical events (e.g., pretending to be people from the past, like a Victorian child or a knight) to explore different roles and perspectives. Exploring Evidence Using photographs and objects: Show old family photos or historical items and discuss how these objects help us learn about the past. Simple visual resources: Use pictures of historical objects, buildings, or people to stimulate conversation about the past.</p>
<p>Vocabulary Past: What happened before. Present: What is happening now. Future: What will happen next. Now and then: Comparing the present with the past. Old: Something from a long time ago. New: Something that has just happened or been made. Long ago: A way to describe things that happened a long time in the past. Family: People we are related to (e.g., parents, siblings). Story: A narrative about events, real or imagined. Event: Something that happens, a special occurrence. Change: How things are different now than they used to be. Tradition: A special custom or practice passed down through generations. Memory: Things we remember from the past. Ancient: Very old (e.g., dinosaurs, ancient history). Famous: Well-known people or event same and different traditions artefact history</p>	<p>Example of Classroom Activities: Timeline of the day: Create a simple class timeline with pictures (e.g., morning, lunch, playtime) to help children understand the concept of time and routine. Family tree activity: Have children create a simple family tree with their family members to introduce the idea of family history. Exploring old toys: Bring in old and new toys, and have children discuss how they have changed over time. Celebration traditions: Have children talk about how their families celebrate birthdays, Christmas, or other holidays, highlighting how traditions stay the same over time. Historical role-play: Organise a role-playing activity where children dress up as historical figures or people from the past (e.g., a knight or a Victorian child). Enquiry <i>Be curious</i> about people and show interest in stories Answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions ... in response to stories or events from the past. Explain own knowledge and understanding and ask appropriate questions. Re-tell their own life-story and family’s history Know that information can be retrieved from books and computers Record, using marks they can interpret and explain</p>

History in Early Years Foundation Stage - history is taught through the "Understanding the World" area of learning by focusing on change over time, past and present comparisons, and developing a sense of chronology. **What does History look like in Early Years?** ‘Early years history should provide opportunities to expand the children’s knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past and develop children’s investigative and interpretive skills.
Children should focus on: Questioning; observation; Generating thoughts and ideas; Planning; Carrying out investigations; Recording findings; Checking and questioning findings; Presenting explanations’ (**Historical Association**).

Indoor and Outdoor Provision

Children	Adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about their daily and weekly routine. • Sequencing events from stories. • Using language connected with sequencing and the passing of time. • Talking about the lives of other members of their family. • Recounting memories of special celebrations. • Showing an interest in the passing of time and how things change. • Noticing changes in the seasons. • Exploring objects or photographs from the past. • Finding information about the past in books and use technology. • Showing interest and talking about how they have changed and grown since they were a baby. • Looking at objects or books to find out about the past. • Role-playing special events they have enjoyed and participated in. • Drawing and writing about recent or past events. • Exploring their own interests which have a historical links, for example finding out about dinosaurs. • Acting out historical events with small world play figures. • Asking questions about past events. • Exploring their local area through the eyes of a 'historian'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and modelling language associated with the passing of time, future, past and present. • Talking to children about past events in their lives and that of the children. • Providing opportunities to explore the local area and talk about past events and historical features. • Instigating opportunities for role play linked to past events in the children's lives and the lives of others. • Providing opportunities for sequencing activities in relation to stories. • Scaffolding conversations to recall prior learning. • Teaching children the days of the week and months of the year in sequence. • Stimulating curiosity through providing interesting resources and artefacts. • Considering prior learning when planning opportunities. • Considering children's interests. • Showing interest in the children as individuals. • Providing books and artefacts which promote discussion about how things change or what it was like in the past.
<p>Stories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. • They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions. DfE (2017)  <p><i>'Through stories children extend their knowledge. They create new worlds through the powers of imagination. Stories allow children to move from the present into other worlds, to explore emotion, intention, behaviour, conflicts, loves, hatreds, loyalties and complex motives beyond their experience. Stories recount events in sequence, transmit information, and introduce new vocabulary. Stories help children to think critically, to question and discuss ideas which help them begin to understand the past.'</i></p> <p>Hilary Cooper (Historical Association)</p> <p><i>In small groups the children can then talk about similarities and differences between their family and Lilly's in the story and then between their family and the families of other children in the group - talk about their favourite toy.</i></p> <p><i>Identify similarities and differences between the photograph, considering for example their clothes, and themselves.</i></p> <p><i>The imaginative play area is filled with clothes and artefacts from when the visitor was a child e.g. 1960s or 1970s and children encouraged to play in here to begin to develop their understanding of life at this time.</i></p> <p><i>How do you know if a story from a long time ago is true? Do you think this really happened? Why do you think that?</i></p> <p>Time questions: <i>Sequence: What do you think will happen next? What happened next? Who can tell me the story? Cause, effect: Why do you think that happened? Similarity, difference, then, now: Do we have these (do this, wear this) today? Why not? What do we have today instead? Vocabulary</i></p> <p>Time language: <i>Before, after, now, then, old, new Perhaps..... Probably...</i></p> <p>Interpretations: <i>Are these stories/ accounts, pictures the same? Why? Why not?</i></p>	