

Teacher's notes

Winston Churchill and the bombing of Dresden ▼

John Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis ▼

Benito Mussolini and the invasion of Abyssinia ▼

Joseph Stalin and the industrialisation of USSR ▼

Harry Truman and the atomic bomb ▼

Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement ▼

Heroes and Villains is an expanding collection of galleries looking at significant historical figures and controversies. The aim of these galleries is to introduce students to the interpretation of original sources and to help students use such sources to draw their own conclusions about historical arguments and about the people who made a difference in history.

Each gallery is listed here, along with information on how the material fits into the History National Curriculum. In addition to the details below, any gallery may be used for Key Stage 3, Unit 22: The role of the individual for good or ill. This unit gives pupils the opportunity to analyse the role of the individual in history and to assess how far they can change the course of history.

Winston Churchill and the bombing of Dresden

This gallery focuses on a single event during World War 2. It uses British reports and plans to trace how and why a decision was made to bomb this German city. It is suitable for anyone studying World War 2 and fits the national curriculum at key stage 4, for example Conflict in the modern world (AQA) and International relations 1919-1989 (OCR).

John Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis

This gallery uses mainly Western sources, but also the views of Khrushchev and Castro, to unfold one of the most dangerous moments of the Cold War. It looks at the alternatives that Kennedy faced and the decisions that he took. Correspondence between the world leaders during the crisis is included here.

Key Stage 3

Unit 18: Hot war, cold war: why did the major twentieth-century conflicts affect so many people?

Key Stage 4

Conflict in the modern world (AQA)

International relations 1919-89 (OCR)

Superpower Relations 1945-90 (Edexcel)

Benito Mussolini and the invasion of Abyssinia

This gallery looks at Mussolini's motives for invading Abyssinia (Ethiopia), what Italy gained and lost, and also the reactions of the United Nations. Sources include a range of propaganda photos and films (don't miss the sheep being parachuted into Abyssinia).

Key Stage 4

Conflict in the modern world (AQA)

International relations 1919-89 (OCR)

Key Stage 5

Quest for greatness: Fascist Italy 1924-39 (Edexcel A2 Unit 4)

Joseph Stalin and the industrialisation of USSR

Why did Stalin attempt such an ambitious programme for change and what were the results? This gallery touches on aspects of a very broad topic to give students an overview and an opportunity to evaluate the success or failure of industrialisation by using original documents. The main sources are the British Foreign Office reports, as they monitored what was happening in the Soviet Union by every possible means. Students can work with figures and percentages from the Five Year Plans to consider the success or otherwise of these Plans - and then factor in the human costs as well.

Key Stage 4

Russia/USSR 1914-41 (AQA)

Soviet Union 1928-41 (Edexcel)

Russia 1905-41 (OCR)

Key Stage 5

Germany, Russia and the Soviet Union in the 19th and 20th centuries: European dictatorships (AQA A2 Module 4)

Harry Truman and the atomic bomb

It fell on the new US president, Harry Truman, to approve the use of the atomic bomb against two Japanese cities. Why did they use this weapon and what were the results? Sources include Allied strategy on how to end the war, and reports and photos from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This gallery is suitable for students of World War 2 history and in particular:

Key Stage 3

Unit 18: Hot war, cold war: why did the major twentieth-century conflicts affect so many people?

Key Stage 4

Conflict in the modern world (AQA)

International relations 1919-89 (OCR)

Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement

What was the role of Martin Luther King in the early 1960s civil rights movement? This gallery examines four aspects of this broad topic in four case studies.

The first case study examines desegregation at Little Rock Central High School in 1957. There were many important moments in the struggle for civil rights, but this is particularly significant. In May 1954 segregated schools had been made illegal, yet many of the Southern states ignored the changes in the law. Pupils can gain an understanding of the key concept of segregation and find out what happened when the law was applied in one Arkansas school.

The next two case studies, on the Birmingham campaign and the March on Washington, look at events involving Martin Luther King in the struggle for civil rights in 1963. These events illustrate his concept of non-violent protest (following Mahatma Gandhi's ideas) and direct action in order to end segregation and discrimination in American society. Both case studies offer the chance to use original sources with questions and there is an additional activity to write a news report covering the March on Washington. The last case study contains several sources on the death of Martin Luther King. There is a task based on these sources and other information in the gallery.

Key stage 3

Unit 15: Black peoples of America: from slavery to equality?

Section 7: From segregation to civil rights: did the Civil Rights movement bring freedom for black people?

Key stage 4

Modern World History GCSE Syllabus B, Race Relations in USA post 1945, case study on Martin Luther King (AQA)

Modern World History GCSE Syllabus A, Outline study, paper 1: The USA 1941-80: The Civil Rights Movements and their impact on US society (Edexcel)