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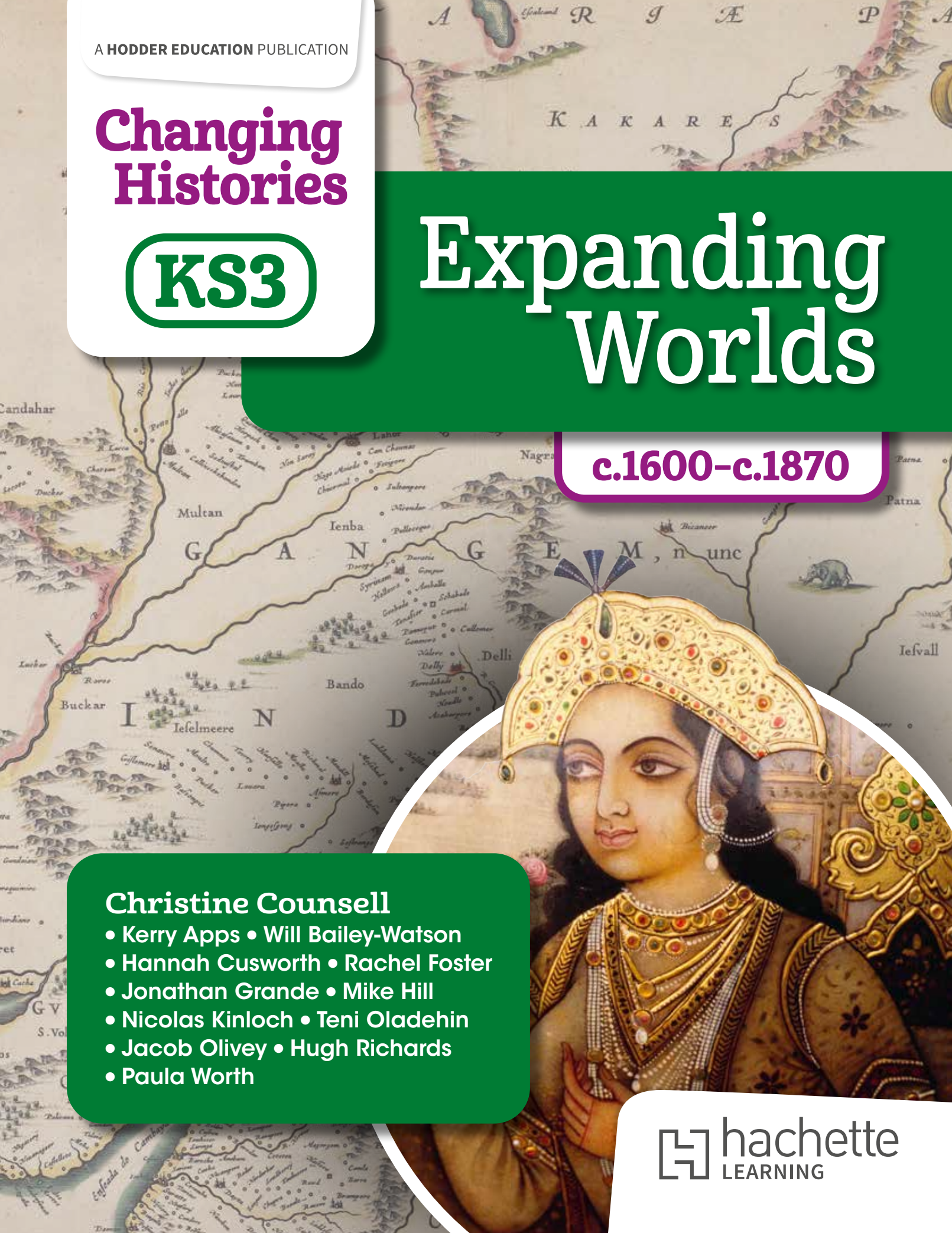
Changing Histories

KS3

Expanding Worlds

c.1600–c.1870



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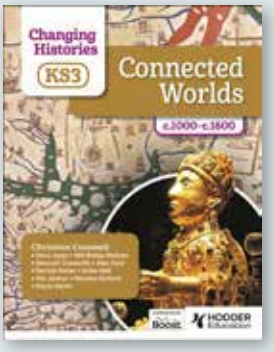

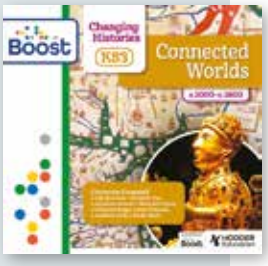

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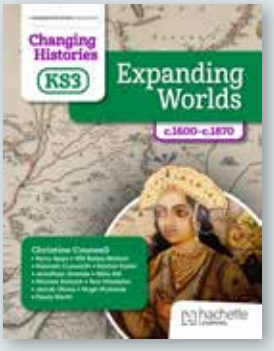



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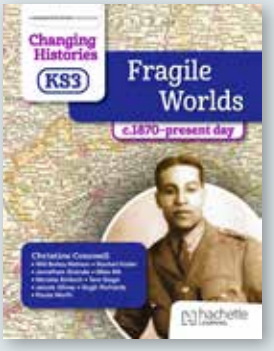

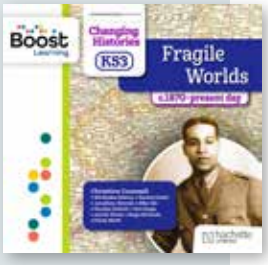

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> **Geraint Brown, Education Consultant**

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Preface

When I studied the period 1600 to 1870 at school, it was a bit like speeding along a one-lane motorway. The drama all headed in one direction. Stories of Britain's ever-expanding empire propelled us forwards, but the stories rarely began in other parts of the world. We hurtled along in our lane, with fleeting, high-speed glimpses from history's car window.

Events in Manchester or Paris, arguments in Somerset or Edinburgh, people in East Anglia or Bengal, flew in like birds caught in a crosswind. We never lingered long enough to hear them sing. We didn't follow the slow struggles and strange shocks that shaped so many expanding worlds.

In this book, you will learn both British and world stories, but ones which start in different places and which often change lanes. You will slow down and observe people's knowledge and action in the natural world too – in the fertile tangle of a Pocasset cornfield, the ancient reedy waterways of the Fens, the mahogany forests of West Africa, and underground, searching for minerals and clays to make paints and pots. How did trade and empires cause these things to travel and change, grow and fade?

History lives in the present, as well as the past. We have written this history book for you so that you can take the wheel in your history studies. You will gain enough knowledge, and learn enough about how historians build that knowledge, to let you drive your history car wherever you want.

Christine Counsell

Series Editor, *Changing Histories*



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2 Meanwhile, in a West African kingdom

A trader visits Benin City

It is January 1600. A trader from Ifè enters Benin City. He is so familiar with the massive city walls and gates that now he hardly notices them. He is making his way to one of the markets. He follows the wide street, lined with thatched houses of mud-brick. He sees a nobleman ride past, his horse elaborately decorated. The nobleman's servants walk beside him. One holds a parasol to shield his master from the fierce sun.

The trader himself feels a sudden blast of heat, but not from the sun. He is passing workshops where smiths cast bronze images of rulers. The process is a closely guarded secret; only a few people can do this. The plaques and images which they produce will go to the royal palace. But the images are not just decoration. They tell the story of the kingdom of Benin and its rulers. And just by being in the palace, these images acquire spiritual power possessed by Benin's ruler, the **Oba** himself.

The Oba shows himself to his people only once a year. Our trader has never seen him, but he does know that he is named Ehengbuda N'Obo, and that he must be old. Much has changed while Ehengbuda has been the ruler.



A bronze plaque from Benin, showing an oba with his attendants, made in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. The attendants are shading the Oba from the sun.

Benin is still a great city, but the kingdom is less powerful than it was a hundred years ago. There have been too many rebellions in the last twenty years.

The trader is eager to reach the market early, before too many goods are sold. He hopes that there will be leopard skins. There will certainly be fine cloth, as well as gold dust from northern deserts and elephant teeth from southern forests. He would be happy to buy any of these, but leopard skins are what he really wants. People are always eager to buy them.

Other markets deal in less exotic goods. Although not quite as large as it was twenty years ago, Benin still has a sizeable population, so some markets specialise in foodstuffs. The trader will visit one later, to obtain the pepper for which Benin is famous. He might also buy yams, for which there is always a demand. But first he must try to sell what he has brought with him. He has a large amount of red coral. He can sell this easily. Coral is needed for the ceremonial costumes that important people wear. The trader has never seen living coral growing in the sea. He is just one link in a chain of trade that stretches all the way to the coast and beyond.



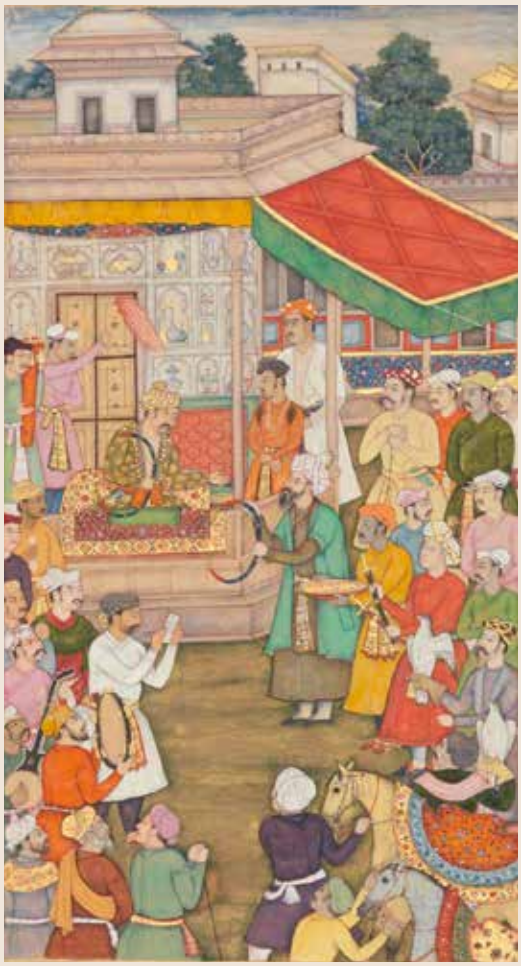
As he nears the market, he notices a white man. He has seen such men before, and no longer finds them strange. At first, he thought that they were all from the same tribe, but now he knows that there are different kinds. This one is an Ipkotopi – a Portuguese. Our trader knows that many years ago, one oba sent his son to study in Portugal, but he does not know what happened to him. He also knows that the Portuguese are eager for Benin's riches. What do the Bini, the people of Benin, get in exchange? The Portuguese would like to sell European cloth, but Benin produces fine cloth of its own. They do sell copper, which the Bini use to make the royal bronze images. The Portuguese also bring in cowrie shells, which are used as currency. But the Bini can get all these things elsewhere. The trader knows that the Portuguese would really like to convert Benin to their own religion, as they tried to do sixty years ago. But no oba would permit such a weakening of his own religious power.

Just before he reaches the market, the trader passes the queen mother's palace. Of course, he has never been inside it, nor indeed any other palace. When he needs somewhere to stay, there are comfortable guest-houses for traders like him. But he knows enough about Benin to be aware that the mother of the oba, the iyoba, is powerful. Often in the past one hundred years, a mother's support for one son over another has been crucial in deciding who should rule. The iyoba's knowledge of spells and magic has helped to keep many obas on the throne. In wartime, the queen-mother commands her own **regiment**.

Once inside the market, the trader quickly finds them. Leopard skins! And, as he suspected, his coral is eagerly purchased. Perhaps it will end up adorning one of the Oba's wives; perhaps even the Oba himself.

3 The Mughal Empire

How can we tell the story of Nur Jahan?



Akbar receiving gifts at court, c.1605

Your enquiry

Nur Jahan was born in 1577 and died in 1645. She was a remarkable woman. Her life can tell us a great deal about the Mughal world. In this enquiry, you will follow Nur Jahan's life story. You will explore how and why historians write books and articles about her. You will then write your own story about Nur Jahan.

It is 1577. On a cold mountain road, a baby girl enters the world. Her mother wraps her tenderly in white cloth. Her father offers prayers of thanks for her safe arrival.

The baby girl, Mihr, joins the saddlebags, carts, tents and animals that form the family's caravan as it winds through icy mountains and blistering deserts. The caravan is travelling on an ancient web of trade routes. These are the silk roads. Mihr's family caravan is one of many going in the same direction. Chewing garlic and dried apricots, the families talk about their hopes for the future. They are leaving Persia behind to seek a place of wealth and peace. They are headed for 'Al-Hind' – India – and the court of its great Mughal emperor.

After crossing the Indus River, the family travels through flat, fertile lands. Mihr's brothers and sisters are amazed. What beautiful gardens! Smell the spices in that bazaar! Watch out for the elephant! Did you hear there's a tiger in that forest?

Mihr is a few months old when the family finally reaches the emperor's court, near the city of Agra. Mihr's father hopes to enter the service of Akbar, the Mughal emperor. Emperor Akbar is a descendant of the great Mongol Chinggis Khan.

Akbar's court is legendary. It is a place of elephant fights, gladiatorial battles and extraordinary acrobatic displays. Visitors marvel at Akbar's diamonds. The Emperor, adorned with golden rings and necklaces, sits crossed-legged on his throne. He waits for people to pay their respects. Mihr's father is one of those people.

Mihr's family wait anxiously. But all is well: Emperor Akbar agrees to take Mihr's father into his service. The family is now part of the Mughal Empire. In this empire, Mihr will be given a new name. She will become known as Nur Jahan.

This little girl, a migrant from Persia, will one day rule 100 million people living in the mighty Mughal Empire.

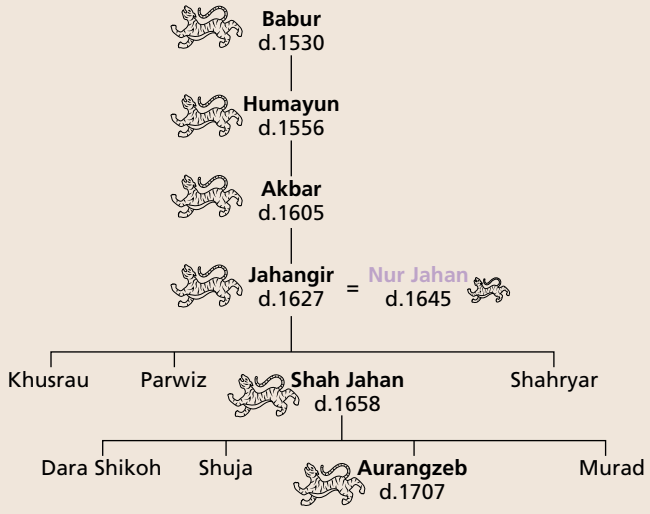
Nur Jahan's story

Mihr marries a Mughal officer

It is 1579. Mihr's family is beginning to settle into their new life in India. Mihr grows up in a mansion. She plays with her pet parrot and sings songs with her sisters. Mihr is not allowed in the men's area of the house, but she can sit on the rooftop and listen to the sounds of the streets below. She often hears the *azan*, the call to prayer, from the nearby mosque.

In 1594, servants decorate the trees in Mihr's garden with garlands of jasmine. Mihr is getting married. She travels with her new husband to Bengal, a leafy eastern province of the Mughal Empire, rich with rivers and prowled by tigers. Mihr's husband's job is to help rule Bengal. He collects taxes, issues the emperor's orders and suppresses rebellions.

But in 1605, Emperor Akbar dies. His son, Jahangir, becomes emperor. In Persian, the language of the Mughal court, the name Jahangir means 'Conqueror of the World'. Look at the family tree. Jahangir is the fourth Great Mughal emperor.



Family tree of the Great Mughals



A map of the Mughal Eempire under Emperor Akbar, c.1600.

Just two years later, in 1607, Emperor Jahangir's eldest son launches a rebellion to overthrow his father. Mihr hears upsetting rumours that her husband, too, is a rebel.

The rebellion fails. Emperor Jahangir punishes the rebels. He orders his soldiers to destroy his son's eyes. Everyone else linked to the rebellion is to be killed. This includes Mihr's husband.

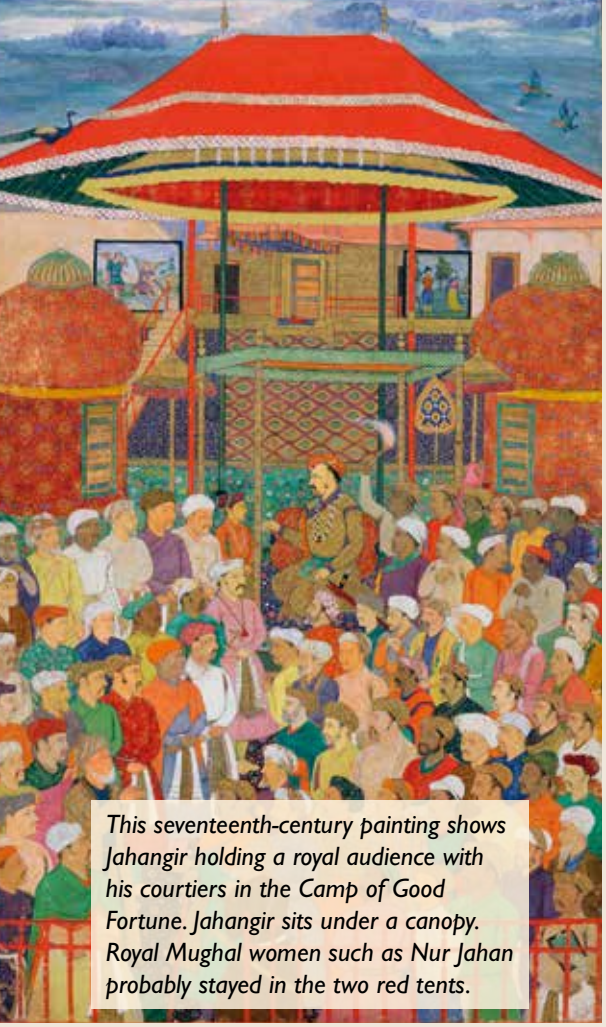
Mihr marries Emperor Jahangir

After her husband's death, in 1608, Mihr is ordered to travel to Jahangir's court. She is sent to Jahangir's harem: a special area of the court where royal Mughal women lived. Three years later, Jahangir happens to meet her. He is entranced. He asks Mihr to marry him.

In 1611, Mihr becomes Jahangir's twentieth wife. Her life is about to change yet again.

Mihr becomes Nur Jahan

Mihr uses her new royal status to help people. She cares for her new husband when he is ill. She gives gifts to the poor. She arranges the weddings of 500 orphan girls. Those around Mihr are impressed and she soon becomes Jahangir's favourite wife. In 1616, Jahangir gives Mihr a new name: Nur Jahan, meaning 'Light of the World'.



This seventeenth-century painting shows Jahangir holding a royal audience with his courtiers in the Camp of Good Fortune. Jahangir sits under a canopy. Royal Mughal women such as Nur Jahan probably stayed in the two red tents.



This painting was made in the 1640s. Find Emperor Jahangir in the centre. Below him is Jahangir's third-born son, Prince Khurram, who will become Shah Jahan I. Can you find Nur Jahan?

Nur travels with the Mughal court

Jahangir's royal court is always on the move. Hundreds of tents, woven with gold and arranged over gold-beaded carpets, are moved from place to place. The moving court, know as the Camp of Good Fortune, is served by some 300,000 people – goldsmiths, gunsmiths and carpet-weavers; elephant-keepers, perfumiers and architects. It includes an ambassador from England and merchants from India's diamond fields. With this court, Jahangir and Nur visit the waterfalls of Kashmir. In the Himalayan foothills, they watch the birds above the Ganga River.

In the Camp of Good Fortune, Nur helps her husband to fulfil his royal duties. Jahangir holds banquets to win back the support of grumbling officials. He keeps an eye on ambitious army leaders. He gives out brooches with miniature paintings of himself to visiting noblemen, to encourage their love and loyalty. Wearing a turban decorated with rubies and diamonds, and a gold belt, Jahangir displays his wealth and power.

Holding audience inside her own royal tent, Nur gives gifts to noblemen and to Jahangir's sons. With gifts of clothing, diamonds, elephants and gold, Nur makes alliances with powerful people. Nur's generosity wins the loyalty of government officials who rule the empire's regions. She works to prevent Jahangir's sons from plotting rebellions.

Nur goes hunting

Like all Mughal emperors, Jahangir wants to extend his empire. Unlike his father Akbar, however, Jahangir allows his war commanders to battle on his behalf. Jahangir would rather hunt animals than soldiers.

One day in 1617, Nur joins her husband on the hunt. The royal camp is travelling through Malwa, a region of lush green valleys and lakes. Nur Jahan leaves her tent, grabs a musket and mounts an elephant.

Nur's scouts spot four tigers. Quietly, Nur follows them. She shoots: one, two, three, four, five, six. It's enough. With just six shots, she has killed four tigers. Emperor Jahangir is astounded. A poet sings her praises: she is Nur, tiger-slayer.

Step 1

Make a table like this one. Fill in the columns with as many details as you can from what you have read so far. Your table will show what the story of Nur Jahan reveals about Mughal India.

The role of women	Mughal kingship and government	Mughal wealth
The story reveals that women were usually hidden in ...	Mughal emperors travelled in order to ...	Nur gave out expensive gifts, such as ...

Now write a sentence to explain why Nur Jahan was so remarkable. You could structure your sentence like this:

Nur Jahan (Mihr) was remarkable when she ... and also when she ...

Nur becomes co-sovereign

Emperor Jahangir travels for both work and pleasure. But not all of Jahangir's pleasures are good for him: he drinks too much wine and becomes addicted to a drug called opium. He cannot perform his royal duties. Nur takes charge.

Nur begins issuing her own orders. She chooses which lands should be granted to which noblemen. She judges criminal cases. She decides how much tax should be collected in different regions of the empire. New coins, showing Nur and Jahangir's names, are struck.

In 1618, Nur designs her first public building – a travellers' inn. In 1621, in Agra, she plans a new palace garden in honour of her father. She designs watercourses, lines of shady trees, jasmine-scented walkways and a white marble tomb, decorated with semi-precious stones and paintings of flowers. In this tomb lie Nur's mother and father.

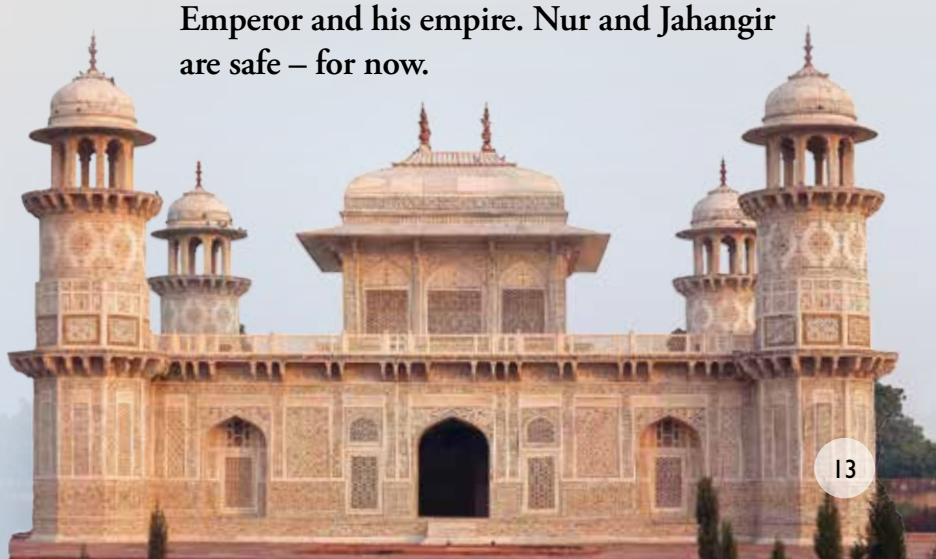
Nur makes a daring raid

It is January 1622. Jahangir's rebellious eldest son is dying. Just weeks later, Jahangir's third-born son begins his own rebellion against his father. The rebellion fails. Nur Jahan and Jahangir continue to rule together.

This peace does not last long. A powerful army general called Mahabat is causing trouble. Mahabat is refusing to send the Emperor elephants and taxes from Bengal. To punish Mahabat, Jahangir's officials deny him an audience with the Emperor. Mahabat is humiliated. In 1626, General Mahabat kidnaps Emperor Jahangir at sword-point.

It is Nur who leads the attempt to rescue Jahangir. On 18 March 1626, sitting on an elephant and armed with a musket, Nur leads loyal Mughal forces – a cavalry of war elephants and camels – into a fast-flowing river. She is forced to retreat when her elephant is wounded.

While attacking Mahabat, Nur loses many troops. Mahabat forces Nur to join Jahangir in captivity. But this is no surrender. In August 1626, right under Mahabat's nose, Nur secretly gathers an army. A successful attack rescues the Emperor and his empire. Nur and Jahangir are safe – for now.



This is the tomb of Nur Jahan's father, Ghiyas Beg, built between 1622 and 1628. It was the first Mughal building to be made of white marble. Jahangir's son, Emperor Shah Jahan, used white marble to build the Taj Mahal in 1632–53.

Nur did not have long to enjoy her victory. Just over a year later, on 28 October 1627, Jahangir died. There was then a war between Jahangir's sons over who should be emperor. Jahangir's third-born son, Prince Shah Jahan, emerged victorious. Look back at the family tree on page 11. Shah Jahan became the fifth Great Mughal emperor.

Nur chose to leave the harem and went to live in her mansion in Lahore. She continued to design buildings and manage her estates until she died in 1645.

Step 2

Use pages 13–14 to add more details to your table. Then write another sentence with a new point about why you think Nur was so remarkable.



The historian, Ruby Lal

How do historians know about the life of Nur Jahan?

The story you have just read is based on a history book written by the historian Ruby Lal.

When historian Ruby Lal first said that she was going to write a history of Nur Jahan, some people laughed. 'How will you write a story about a Mughal woman?' they said. 'There are no sources!'

But Lal was determined. 'I dived deeply into the court records,' she explains. 'Nur is there, it turns out; all we have to do is look for her. You have to peer around the towering figures of men.'

We are now going to find out how Ruby Lal used sources to build her story of Nur Jahan.

The *Jahangirnama*

Ruby Lal used a special diary called the *Jahangirnama*. Emperor Jahangir wrote this diary between 1605 and 1622, and then asked a trusted nobleman to continue the diary when he fell ill. Jahangir wrote about Nur over 30 times in this diary.

Here is an extract from the *Jahangirnama*. What event in Nur's life is being described? What evidence can you find of Nur's bravery and skill?

'An elephant is not at ease when it smells a tiger, and is continually in movement. Shooting a gun when riding an elephant is very difficult …

But such shooting had never been seen before. From the top of an elephant, and inside of a howdah [a carriage], Nur made six shots and not one missed. The four beasts found no opportunity to spring or move.'

Adapted from an extract from the ***Jahangirnama,*** c.1617

Imperial coins

Lal studied many different types of sources to construct her story about Nur Jahan, including artefacts.

Look at the coin. It was struck in 1617. It was the first time that a woman's name had appeared on a Mughal coin. At least eleven coins, each bearing Nur Jahan's name, have been discovered. Using these coins, Lal was able to suggest that Nur wielded royal power. In seventeenth-century India, coins and imperial orders were regarded as evidence of being a Mughal ruler.

'The new power of the empress would be obvious to those in the emperor's household who received these coins as gifts,' explains Lal. 'Ordinary folks would notice too, such as the salt makers or cumin traders who brought their produce to the Mughal court from far away and received these coins in payment.'

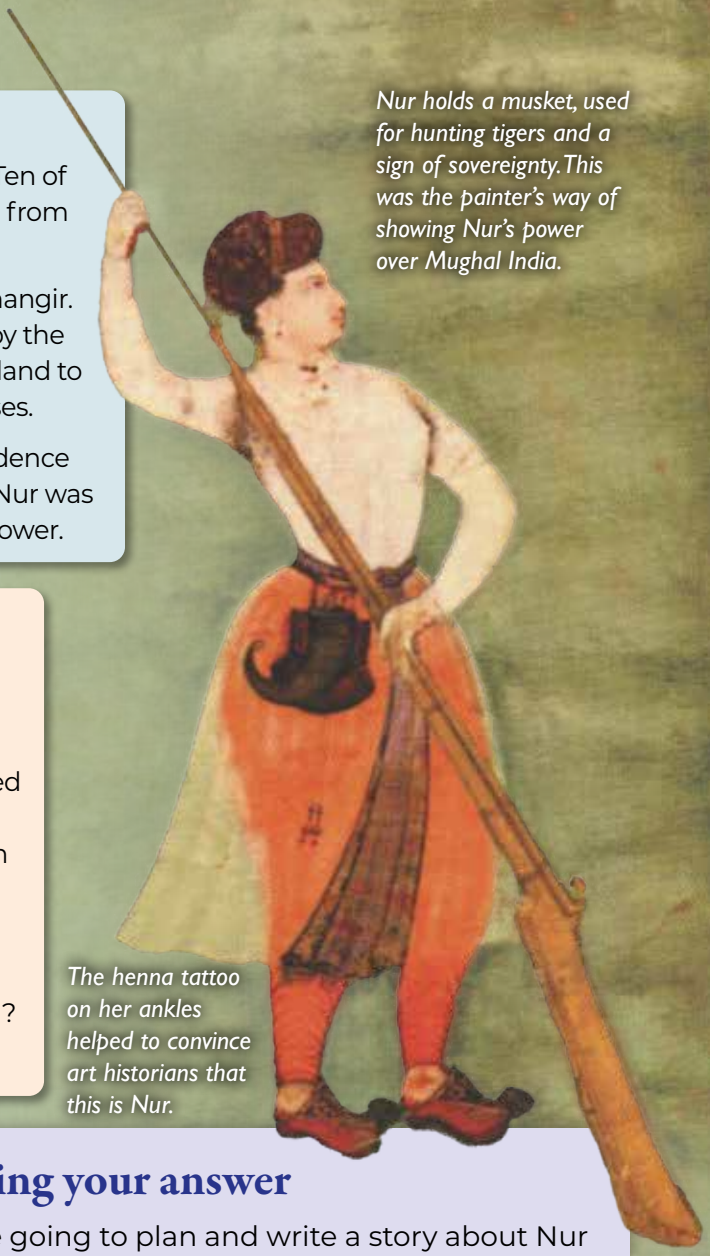


Imperial orders

Nur was the first Mughal woman to issue imperial orders. 'Ten of Nur's orders survive,' explains Ruby Lal, 'the majority dating from 1622 to 1627, when she was at the height of her power.'

Lal compared these ten sources to the orders issued by Jahangir. Lal discovered that Nur gave similar orders to those given by the Emperor: she made decisions about taxes, about granting land to noblemen, about the Mughal army, and about criminal cases.

By studying Nur's imperial orders, Ruby Lal established evidence for how Nur ruled the Mughal Empire alongside Jahangir. Nur was the only wife of a Mughal emperor to share an emperor's power.



Nur holds a musket, used for hunting tigers and a sign of sovereignty. This was the painter's way of showing Nur's power over Mughal India.

The henna tattoo on her ankles helped to convince art historians that this is Nur.

Imperial paintings

Lal used several paintings to construct Nur's story. Numerous paintings of the Mughal court of Jahangir have survived. Emperor Jahangir had a passion for paintings. He invited many artists to paint for him. Jahangir was fascinated by the new painting techniques from Renaissance Europe. When Portuguese artists visited his court, Jahangir sat with them for hours, staring at every brushstroke.

Many portraits of Nur exist, but we will look at just one. Ruby Lal thinks that this could be the first time that a royal Mughal woman was painted in action. What is Nur holding? What is the artist trying to say about Nur?

Step 3

Copy and complete the following table about the sources used by Ruby Lal.

Sources used by Ruby Lal	**How Ruby Lal used this source to establish evidence about Nur Jahan's life**
The *Jahangirnama*	
Imperial coins	
Imperial orders	Lal compared Nur's imperial orders to Jahangir's orders and discovered that ...
Imperial paintings	

Shaping your answer

You are going to plan and write a story about Nur Jahan for a class of Year 5 pupils. Plan your story first. Think about the following:

- How many pages will you need? Decide which parts of Nur's story to put on each page.
- What headings will help the Year 5 pupils to follow Nur's story? You can use the headings in this chapter or make up your own.
- Where will you include information about Mughal kingship, wealth and the role of women?
- How can you help the children to 'see' the Mughal world? Which illustrations will you draw or choose for the different parts of Nur's story?
- Which sources will you include? How will you introduce them to the pupils? You want them to understand how historians use sources to establish evidence about the past. Remember to mention Ruby Lal!

8 Meanwhile, sitting at a mahogany tea table

Hidden lives behind a transatlantic trade



Mahogany in Britain

It is 1761. Henrietta Howard surveys her tea table. The sugar bowl is piled with white lumps ready to be dropped into steaming tea. Delicate birds and flowers swirl across fine, porcelain cups. She so loves the chinoiserie style! It is as though she has little pieces of China in her possession. Henrietta glances at the wallpaper with its pastel pink and blue peacocks. People mock the style, but it is her house, she notes. She can do as she likes.

Henrietta casts her mind back 30 years, to 1729, when her beautiful house, Marble Hill, was finished. Back then, in the 1720s, they had used mahogany to make the staircase and the floorboards of the main room upstairs. Gigantic planks of glossy, red-brown timber. You would never see it used for a staircase these days! Far too precious. It is very hard to find good quality Jamaican mahogany now. Furniture makers are using wood from Honduras instead. All the biggest trees in Jamaica have been felled, each turned into furniture for fine homes. Mahogany is so fashionable nowadays. Perhaps, wonders Henrietta, in some small way she had contributed to the trend!

That reminds her, she must check whether her new cabinet is ready. She thinks of the craftsmen busy in their workshops in central London. Well, mostly men, but women too. She can't forget Katherine Naish, who is rumoured to be making two thrones with footstools for King George and Queen Charlotte's coronation in Westminster Abbey in September. All those hands working away, slicing wood, gluing pieces together and painting on the varnish. It seems everyone has to have a mahogany table these days. The surge in demand is good for the furniture makers. New workshops are appearing all the time.

Henrietta thinks of the bustling docks in Southwark where wide planks of mahogany are taken off ships coming from Jamaica, and sold; ships laden with hogsheads of sugar – barrels and barrels of the stuff. The River Thames is awash with ships from the Caribbean, from India, from all parts of the world. So much activity.



It is all quite unlike the genteel stretch of the Thames that Henrietta can see from her garden …

... and quite unlike the view from the middle of the Atlantic in 1761.

Up on deck, sailors would go for miles seeing nothing but a bright blue sky and its reflection in the sea. Meanwhile, below deck sat the valuable cargo – sugar, rum and mahogany – that had been loaded in Kingston, Jamaica, and would soon be sold in London or Bristol.

Where had this mahogany come from? Whose labour took it from land, to ships, to workshops? Whose knowledge was used to find it?

And *who knew* about mahogany, long before Henrietta sat at her tea table? Let's trace mahogany's stories.

Mahogany in Jamaica

Kingston, 1761

Kingston. The third largest city in British North America. The most valuable. The jewel in the crown. A city dominated by merchants, where goods produced by enslaved workers waited to be shipped across the sea. A city where almost 6,500 enslaved people had been forcibly brought from West Africa in 1761 alone, transported there to work on the plantations in Jamaica or packed on to smaller boats to labour on other islands.

A visitor to Kingston in 1761 would have seen many faces. From records stored in the Jamaica National Archives, we know that they might have seen James, the carpenter, renowned for his skill, who had bought his freedom from **enslavement**; or Susannah Davidson, driven around town by Humphrey, the enslaved coachman, heading back to her house full of mahogany furniture. The visitor would have seen the terrified new arrivals, captured and enslaved in West Africa, now awaiting sale after weeks at sea, heads full of things they could not forget. Shrieks of desperate women. The sight of men, who had been princes back home, being whipped for refusing to follow the crews' orders. The smell of death.

Cutting mahogany: a glimpse from the sources

Mahogany in Jamaica was mostly felled when a plantation owner wanted to clear new land to plant more sugar cane. Unlike sugar, mahogany trees had been planted neither by enslaved people, nor by colonists. Mahogany trees had grown in Jamaica's forests for hundreds of years, long before the British came.

For the year 1757, we have a detailed account of how mahogany was felled. Maynard Clarke, owner of Chancery Hall plantation and over 200 enslaved people, described in his journal how day in, day out, dawn to sundown, a group of enslaved people – men, women and children – felled trees and hauled giant logs down steep slopes. Christmas was their only break – when they received extra cloth and fish rations. Mostly, they worked in groups, divided by age and gender.

During this time, Clarke noted in his journal that some enslaved people on the plantation had sought freedom by running away, some had fallen sick and some had died. One recorded death was a child of a mother called Grace. It is rare for such sources to yield names, but this child, we think, was called Beneba.

Europeans seek knowledge of mahogany

By the time Henrietta Howard sat down for tea in 1761, the English had been felling mahogany for over 100 years. In that time, the English had been trying to understand their new surroundings. Almost as soon as Cromwell's men had taken Jamaica from the Spanish in 1655, books about Jamaica began to be written. Colonists, keen for more English people to come to Jamaica to make the colony profitable, sent information – on weather, landscape and plants – back to Britain. Two books written by English authors in the 1670s mention the value of mahogany.

These books describe how parcels of land were given out by the governor to people who were committed to exploiting it. Most of these landowners were Englishmen. A small number were Portuguese Jews seeking a home more tolerant of their religion. A tiny few were African. Legal documents from 1665 show one Anthonia Angola – her name perhaps a reference to where she grew up – owning a 27-acre plot of land.

Knowledge crosses the Atlantic

In the early years of English control of Jamaica, most enslaved African people came from what is now Nigeria. Many were Yoruba and Igbo speakers. Historians think that the word 'mahogany' comes from their languages. What other knowledge travelled in the speech of the Yoruba and Igbo? We may never fully know, but we do know that the journey across the Atlantic was one of unimaginable horror. It became known as the **Middle Passage**.

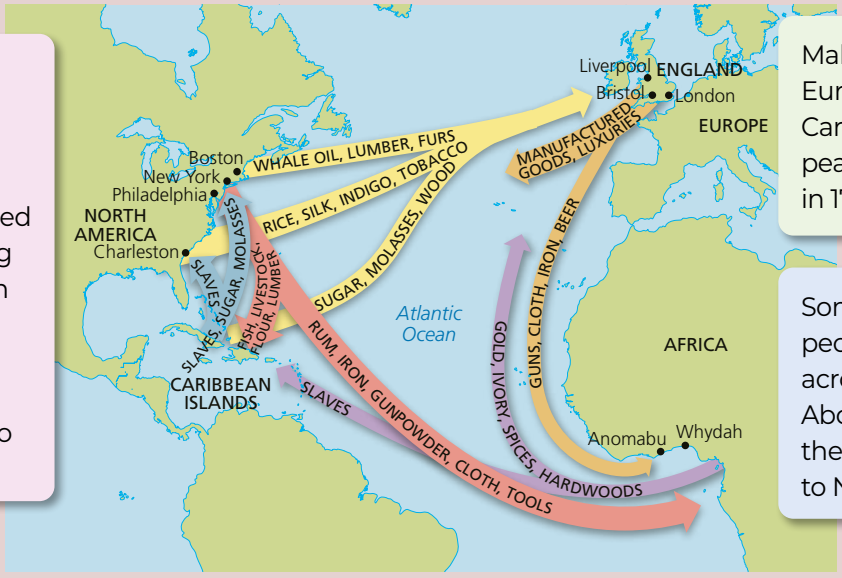
The Middle Passage

One ship that travelled the Middle Passage was the *Hannibal*. Financed by the Royal African Company, it sailed in July 1694 from the West African kingdom Whydah to the Caribbean. It set sail with 700 enslaved people – 480 men and 220 women – on board. Reaching Barbados on 4 November 1694, nearly one-third of the crew and half of the enslaved had died. Suicides and revolts were common during the Middle Passage, but disease was the biggest killer, its spread worsened by overcrowding, lack of food, water and sanitation, and the practice of shackling the enslaved together.

The triangular trade

The Middle Passage was the middle leg of a triangular trade system that began and ended in Europe. In ports such as London, Bristol, Liverpool and Amsterdam, ships were loaded with cloth and metal goods to be sold in West Africa. At first it was woollen and linen cloth from Europe, but by the mid-eighteenth century, Indian fabrics were popular. Metal goods, from Britain or Scandinavia, included copper rods, iron bars, pans, razors, padlocks, scissors and mirrors. Cowrie shells and glass beads were loaded too, for use as currency in West Africa.

In the Caribbean, and in North and South America, men, women and children were forced to work, producing commodities such as sugar, cotton, tobacco and mahogany, which were then taken to be sold in Europe.



Mahogany imported to Europe from the Caribbean reached a peak of 30,000 tons in 1788.

Some 12.5 million African people were trafficked across the Atlantic. About 4 per cent of these people were taken to North America.

West Africa

The port of Whydah

Whydah was one of the largest slave trading ports in West Africa. In the eighteenth century, historians estimate that over a million enslaved people passed through it before being forcibly transported to the Americas. Traffickers generally did not go inland to enslave people; the enslaved were brought to Whydah from neighbouring kingdoms.

Some enslaved people died even before boarding, perishing in the cramped conditions that they were held in. Others chose suicide over enslavement. Many who lived in the city were enslaved men and women working for the French, English and Portuguese slave trading forts.

Mahogany in West Africa

These enslaved people came from diverse communities, including the Yoruba and Igbo, across West Africa. All these people had lives and families before they became enslaved. They held knowledge, especially about the natural world, which was passed down and adapted across generations. Some of this knowledge was about a species of tree known as African Mahogany. What we know of this has been used to write our final description, below.

How can we know about the transatlantic slave trade?

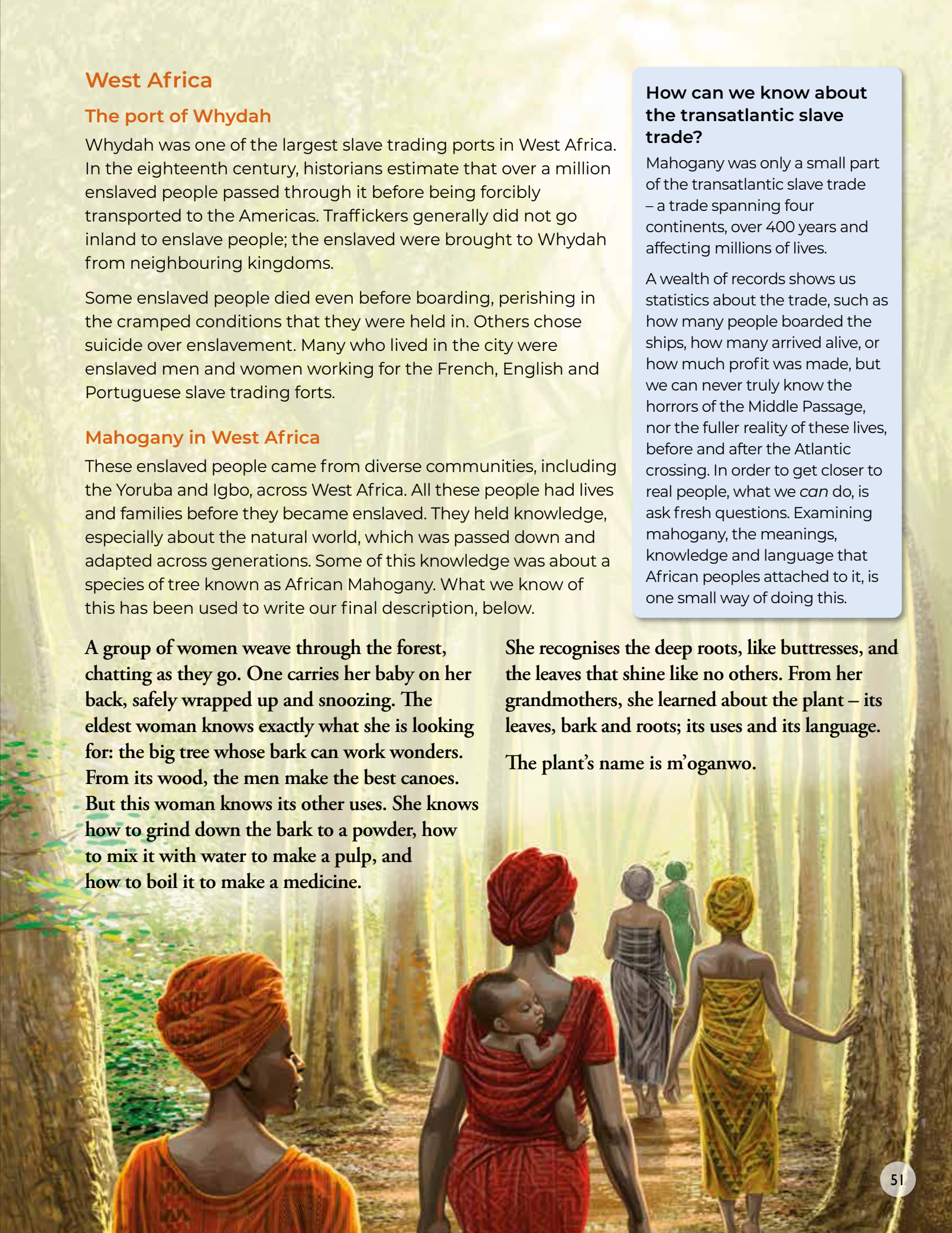
Mahogany was only a small part of the transatlantic slave trade – a trade spanning four continents, over 400 years and affecting millions of lives.

A wealth of records shows us statistics about the trade, such as how many people boarded the ships, how many arrived alive, or how much profit was made, but we can never truly know the horrors of the Middle Passage, nor the fuller reality of these lives, before and after the Atlantic crossing. In order to get closer to real people, what we *can* do, is ask fresh questions. Examining mahogany, the meanings, knowledge and language that African peoples attached to it, is one small way of doing this.

A group of women weave through the forest, chatting as they go. One carries her baby on her back, safely wrapped up and snoozing. The eldest woman knows exactly what she is looking for: the big tree whose bark can work wonders. From its wood, the men make the best canoes. But this woman knows its other uses. She knows how to grind down the bark to a powder, how to mix it with water to make a pulp, and how to boil it to make a medicine.

She recognises the deep roots, like buttresses, and the leaves that shine like no others. From her grandmothers, she learned about the plant – its leaves, bark and roots; its uses and its language.

The plant's name is m'oganwo.



18 Days of revolution: France 1789–99

Why did some days in the French Revolution matter so much?

Paris, 1789, a hot day in July

A crowd marches towards a huge castle. Built 400 years ago to defend the city, nowadays it is a prison. In this fortress, the king of France can keep anyone who opposes him, for as long as he likes. But the marching crowd has no interest in prisoners today.

The marchers, mostly men, number over 900. One woman, Marie, takes in laundry to make ends meet. A few people are well-off, but most are poor craftspeople and wage-earners like Marie. Some are very young. Jean-Marie, a brewer, is only seventeen. He will not live to go home.

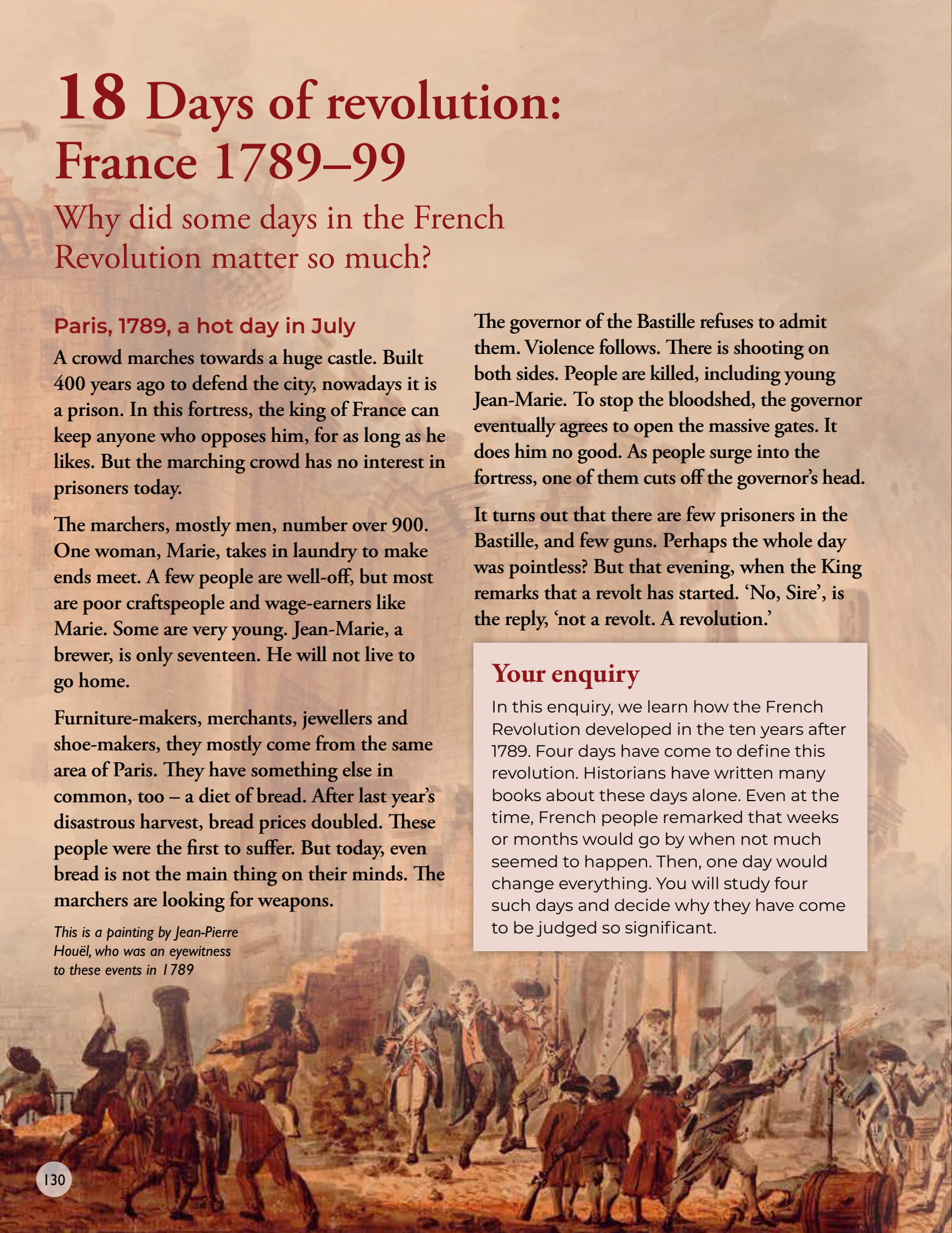
Furniture-makers, merchants, jewellers and shoe-makers, they mostly come from the same area of Paris. They have something else in common, too – a diet of bread. After last year's disastrous harvest, bread prices doubled. These people were the first to suffer. But today, even bread is not the main thing on their minds. The marchers are looking for weapons.

The governor of the Bastille refuses to admit them. Violence follows. There is shooting on both sides. People are killed, including young Jean-Marie. To stop the bloodshed, the governor eventually agrees to open the massive gates. It does him no good. As people surge into the fortress, one of them cuts off the governor's head.

It turns out that there are few prisoners in the Bastille, and few guns. Perhaps the whole day was pointless? But that evening, when the King remarks that a revolt has started. 'No, Sire', is the reply, 'not a revolt. A revolution.'

Your enquiry

In this enquiry, we learn how the French Revolution developed in the ten years after 1789. Four days have come to define this revolution. Historians have written many books about these days alone. Even at the time, French people remarked that weeks or months would go by when not much seemed to happen. Then, one day would change everything. You will study four such days and decide why they have come to be judged so significant.



This is a painting by Jean-Pierre Houël, who was an eyewitness to these events in 1789

France's three Estates

Who paid for all this?

Why were people in Paris looking for weapons in July 1789?

France had been in crisis for years. The main problem was a lack of money. In the Seven Years' War, France had fought the British in Europe, North America and India. In the 1780s, France was again at war with the British, this time helping the colonists win the American War of Independence. It was another expensive conflict that the country could not afford.



Louis XVI became king of France in 1774.

Meanwhile, expensive building projects drained the Crown's coffers. A few miles outside Paris, at Versailles, King Louis XVI had the biggest and grandest palace in Europe.



Who paid for all this?

Not the Church, known as the First Estate, rich and powerful though it was.

Not the nobles, the Second Estate, rich and powerful as they were.

Only the Third Estate paid taxes, and the Third Estate was everyone else in France, whether peasant or shopkeeper, lawyer or carpenter. Those who could least afford to pay were the only people forced to do so.

In this cartoon of the three Estates, how does the cartoonist show the unfair burden carried by the Third Estate?

The three Estates are summoned

Following the grim winter of 1788, when some Parisians starved to death, everyone knew that change was needed. Accordingly, the King did something that had not happened for centuries. He summoned the three Estates to meet in May 1789.

Before the meeting, many towns and villages sent lists of complaints to the King. Members of the Third Estate complained about taxes, but about other things too. Why should they be forced to build and repair roads, without payment? Why were nobles allowed to trample crops when they went hunting, and not pay for the damage? Why did ordinary people struggle to get justice if things went wrong? Some even dared to criticise the King. More complained about his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette. Why did she spend so much on jewels, and on the royal palace at Versailles?

> I was joined by a poor woman … who said that her husband had but a morsel of land, one cow and a poor little horse, but she had to pay 42 pounds of wheat and three chickens to one lord, and four times that amount of oats, and a chicken, to another, besides heavy taxes. It was said that something was to be done by some great folk for such poor ones, but she did not know how or who.

This account by a British traveller, Arthur Young, who visited France in 1787–89, gives us a glimpse of some ordinary people's hopes.

High hopes for change

By the time representatives of the Estates met, expectations were high that the meeting would solve all of the country's problems.

The three Estates meet

The three Estates began their meeting by arguing about how to vote. Traditionally, each Estate had one vote, causing the Third Estate always to be outvoted by the other two. But on 17 June, deputies from the Third Estate, calling themselves the National Assembly, declared that they alone now represented the whole nation.

The King promptly locked the Third Estate out of their meeting place.

Three days later, the National Assembly found somewhere else to meet. They poured into a disused tennis court. Some nobles and priests joined them. They declared that they would not allow themselves to be disbanded 'until the **constitution** of the kingdom is settled on solid foundations'.

This was not at all what the King had intended. He ordered soldiers to gather near Paris. By July, feeling increasingly threatened, many Parisians decided that they needed weapons. And so they marched on the Bastille.

The end of privilege

After the fall of the Bastille, France was swept by terror that the Government would seek revenge. The violence that erupted became known as the 'Great Fear'. Nobles' grand houses were destroyed. The Great Fear was only calmed when many nobles in the Second Estate agreed to give up their privileges.

In August 1789, the Assembly produced the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*. It stated that all 'men are born and remain free and equal in rights'. These rights included liberty, owning private property and freedom of religion.

At the same time, astonishing change took place in the Catholic Church. A hated tax called the tithe, paid to the clergy, was abolished. The Second Estate lost all their privileges, too. In October, the Assembly seized all Church land and property.

Paris, 1792, a hot day in August



The Storming of the Tuileries was painted by Jacques Bertaux in 1793, just one year after the event.

A different crowd is on the march. Their target: the Tuileries Palace. King Louis XVI has lived there since the day in October 1789 when the market-women of Paris marched to Versailles, and forced the royal family to return with them to Paris. Last year, the King and his family attempted to escape from France, but this daring gamble failed. Now, the Tuileries Palace feels more like a prison.

Today's crowd is not like the one that marched on the Bastille three years ago. Then, the marchers were looking for weapons. Today, they have brought weapons with them – swords, muskets and cannon. These people are here to get rid of the King.

The crowd surges into the palace courtyard. The King's guards open fire. But nothing can prevent the people from breaking in. As they storm up the Grand Staircase, 500 guards are killed.

The royal family flees to safety, but everyone realises that the monarchy is finished.

There were many reasons why the crowd attacked the Tuileries on that hot day in August 1792.

Reason 1: Louis had blocked several laws passed by the Assembly.

Reason 2: The bungled attempt to leave France the previous year convinced people that Louis had not accepted change.

Reason 3: Some European countries, fearing revolution might spread, had threatened France. Some suspected that the King had encouraged them. War with Austria and Prussia had begun in April and the crowd suspected the king of disloyalty.

Following the attack on the Tuileries, change happened at a breath-taking pace. It seems hard to believe, but every event in the first box, below, happened before the end of September. As you read it, think about why the attack on the Tuileries was a catalyst for so much change.

Within a month of the attack on the Tuileries:

- The Assembly granted the vote to almost all adult males.
- The monarchy was abolished. France became a republic.
- The former king and his family were imprisoned.
- A new calendar was introduced with 1792 as 'Year 1'. Each month had a new name. For example, mid-October to mid-November was Brumaire (the foggy month).
- Other crowds attacked the prisons of Paris, where 'enemies of the Revolution' were held, and killed hundreds of prisoners.
- A new government, called the National Convention, produced France's first republican constitution.

Within five months of the attack on the Tuileries:

- King Louis XVI was condemned to death.
- In January 1793, in a square surrounded by guns and drums, Louis was fastened to the guillotine's bench. His head positioned beneath its yoke and he was swiftly decapitated.

Step 1

It is time to think more deeply about the two days you have studied so far: **14 July 1789** and **20 August 1792**. For each day, make a storyboard with three images to capture the day's events. Then, jot down some reasons why you think historians have shown so much interest in each day. Finally, compare the two days. What do they have in common?

Paris, 1794, a hot afternoon in July



It is 27 July, 1794, but people must not say 'July'. It is the month of Thermidor. They must not say 1794. It is Year 2.

In the hall where the National Convention meets, deputies jostle and mutter. All eyes are on a short, slim man, who will shortly rise to speak. The short man's eyes and mouth are twitching. His pock-marked face always twitches, but never with nerves. This man, a lawyer, has made over 900 speeches.

The man is short-sighted. He sometimes wears two pairs of glasses at once. Perhaps he cannot see the glances and whispers. Perhaps he has not noticed that something is different today.

The man's name is Maximilien Robespierre.

Robespierre is the most powerful man in France. The constitution of September 1792 never came into force. Pressure of war made that impossible. The Convention is now dominated by a Committee of Public Safety. The Committee believes in extreme measures to keep France safe. The Committee is dominated by Robespierre.

Robespierre believes that the Revolution's problems come from traitors within. For nearly a year now, the law has ordered the arrest of anyone who *might* oppose the Revolution. No one is safe – an army commander who loses a battle, a priest who continues to practise his faith, an ordinary person reported by a spiteful neighbour. Those found guilty are sentenced to death. In the past year, 16,000 people have been executed in Paris alone. Even the great revolutionary, Georges Danton, has been executed. French people have given the times a name. They call it 'the Terror'.

A month ago, when French forces defeated the Austrians, many thought that the Terror would end. But the Terror did not end. It got worse. Only yesterday, twenty former nobles were guillotined, along with a grocer, an innkeeper, an actress and a chambermaid. Perhaps there is no limit to the traitors, and therefore no end to the Terror?

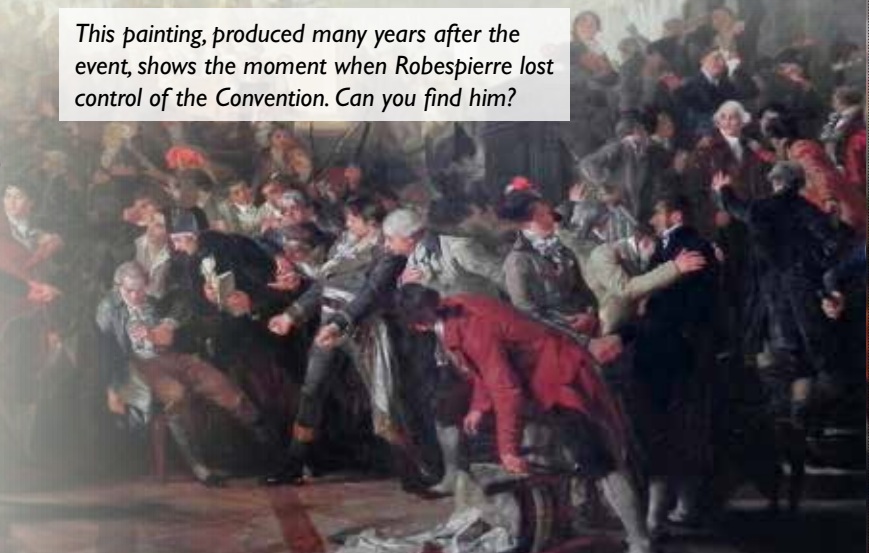
Today, tension and fear grip the room. Robespierre claims to have uncovered, within the Convention itself, the biggest plot yet.

But in the last few hours, Robespierre's enemies have formed a plan. It is simple: Robespierre, the great speaker, must not be allowed to speak.

It works. When Robespierre starts his speech, he is shouted down. He tries again. His voice cracks. Someone shouts, 'Danton's blood is choking you!' Within minutes, Robespierre and his supporters are arrested.

Even so, he nearly survives. His supporters get him out of prison, but it is too late. His enemies know where he is. They bring soldiers with them. In the struggle that follows, Robespierre is shot in the face.

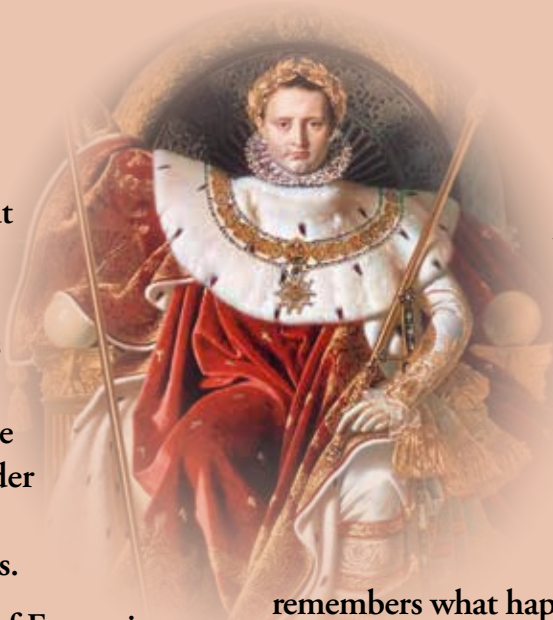
The following evening, still in agony, he and twenty supporters will go to the guillotine.



This painting, produced many years after the event, shows the moment when Robespierre lost control of the Convention. Can you find him?

Paris, a chilly day in November, 1799

It is the month of Brumaire. But few now use the revolutionary calendar. At the palace of St Cloud, near Paris, the Directors are meeting. Since the fall of Robespierre, five years ago, these men have governed France. Under their rule, people are no longer killed for their political opinions.



A royalist rebellion in the west of France is now over. The war in Europe continues, but French armies have defeated the Austrians in Italy. There is even a French army in Egypt, sent there to threaten Britain's route to India.

But nothing is ever perfect. In Egypt, plague ravages the soldiers and the British navy has destroyed French ships. What is to be done?

One man seems determined to solve the problems, and not everyone is happy about it. That man is General Napoleon Bonaparte.

It was Napoleon Bonaparte who won those victories in Italy. It was Napoleon Bonaparte who led that army to Egypt. And this general is on the loose, returning to France without orders.

Will he seize power?
The Directors fear so.



They are right to be afraid. Suddenly, Bonaparte strides into the hall.

What he says is not always clear – he has a strong Italian accent – but the Directors quickly realise that he is telling them that their rule is over. Some Directors jostle the general. Bonaparte begins to panic. (He remembers what happened to Robespierre.) Luckily for him, his brother Lucien keeps a cool head. Lucien orders soldiers into the hall.

The Directors flee. Some jump out of the windows. That evening, France learns that it has a new master.

After seizing power, Bonaparte ruled as First Consul. Within five years, he had a grander title: Emperor of the French. The painting at the bottom of this page shows his coronation in December 1804. He placed the crown on his own head.

Napoleon Bonaparte ruled until his defeat by British and Prussian forces in 1814.

Step 2

Make storyboards for the two days on pages 134–135.

Shaping your answer

Why have historians judged these four days historically significant? Is it because the events were so dramatic or shocking at the time? Is it because they spurred on change? Or is it because they reveal the forces and people that shaped the revolution? It is probably all of these things!

Next to each storyboard, make a historical significance box. In that box, write about:

a why the day was **remarked** on at the time
b what kinds of change **resulted**
c why historians might find the day **revealing** about how the French Revolution worked.

23 The 1832 Reform Act

Why did so many people feel so strongly about parliamentary reform?



On the evening of 7 November 1830, Harriet Arbuthnot puts down her pen. When the ink dries, she closes her journal. No one can read it. Her journal contains secrets.

Harriet Arbuthnot cannot vote in a parliamentary election. Like other wealthy women, however, she can have influence. Harriet is a famous political hostess. She can help her husband to forge friendships and do political deals.

Harriet is also close to another very powerful man, Britain's Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington. Harriet and the Prime Minister speak regularly. Sometimes they walk in the park, hand-in-hand.

Today, Harriet found the Prime Minister most agitated. What troubles him? Harriet has captured it all in her journal.

We can picture Harriet Arbuthnot and the Duke of Wellington in the park because a local artist made this sketch of them. We know what they talked about because between 1820 and 1832, Harriet kept a journal. Because Harriet knew many MPs, her journal is a fascinating source. On 7 November 1830, Harriet Arbuthnot was writing about a state of affairs gripping the attention of everyone, both those who held power and those who did not.

In Chapter 22, you read about the Peterloo Massacre of 1819. Henry Hunt and the handloom weavers had wanted a Member of Parliament to represent Manchester. They had wanted the vote for all men. Since then, nothing had changed. In 1830, the radicals were *still* demanding reform.

On 15 September 1830, the Prime Minister travelled to Manchester for the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. Crowds of handloom weavers were waiting. They carried banners saying 'Hunt and Liberty'. They hung the tricolour – the French Revolution flag – from bridges. They pelted the Prime Minister's carriage with vegetables.

Read the extract from Harriet's journal. What was worrying the Prime Minister, troubling Harriet and frightening the King?

We hear the radicals are determined to make a riot. The King gets quantities of letters everyday telling him he will be murdered. The King is very much frightened, the Queen cries half the day with fright.

It is quite preposterous to imagine that the idle vagabonds who compose the mob of London care a pin about parliamentary reform. What they want is plunder; those who have nothing want the property of those who have something.

The Prime Minister is greatly affected by all this state of affairs. He feels that beginning reform is beginning revolution, and therefore he must endeavour to stem the tide as long as possible.

An extract from Harriet Arbuthnot's journal, 7 November 1830

Soldier to statesman

Wellington had spent his younger days as a general, leading armies into battle. In 1799, fighting the East India Company's wars, Wellington had defeated the Tipu Sultan. In 1815, he had defeated Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo.

For many Britons, his victory over Napoleon made Wellington a national hero. Even Wellington's practical boots became a must-have accessory.



'A Wellington Boot' (1827)

In January 1828, Wellington became Britain's Prime Minister. His battles in India and Belgium were now distant memories. His battles against parliamentary reform were about to begin.

In Chapters 6 and 7, you read about Parliament in the days of Oliver Cromwell and Samuel Pepys. Things had changed by the nineteenth century. Members of Parliament (MPs) now fell into two main factions: the **Whigs** and the **Tories**.

The painting below shows 375 MPs sitting in the House of Commons. Find Wellington, at the front, on the right, holding onto the back of a bench. He has white hair. It is much easier to find the speaker of the House of Commons. He is seated on an elaborate chair and is wearing a wig. It was the speaker's job to maintain order during debates: this proved particularly difficult whenever MPs debated parliamentary reform.

Your enquiry

Despite the horror of Peterloo, Manchester's handloom weavers had not given up the fight for parliamentary reform. Meanwhile, their demands appalled others, such as Harriet Arbuthnot and the Prime Minister. Why was this? In this enquiry, you will build an argument to explain why so many people felt so strongly about parliamentary reform.

Step 1

Why were Harriet Arbuthnot, the Duke of Wellington and other Tories so opposed to parliamentary reform? Make a mind map of the reasons you can find so far.

Property not people

Wellington was a Tory. Since the Restoration of Charles II, Tories had been the group who supported the King and the Church of England. Most Tories were wealthy landowners who opposed parliamentary reform and wanted to preserve Britain's social hierarchy.

Most MPs in 1828 did not see themselves as representatives of ordinary people. MPs saw themselves as representatives of wealthy men who owned land and property. Only one in ten men – and no women – could vote. 'Democracy' was a dirty word in Parliament.

Recently, MPs had grown even more afraid of 'the mob'. The French Revolution was alive in their memories. Crowds storming the Bastille. King Louis XVI beneath a guillotine. Robespierre's Terror. Wellington feared parliamentary reform would lead to revolution.



Sir George Hayter's The House of Commons *(1833)*

Changing Britain, changing politics

During his lifetime, the Duke of Wellington witnessed dramatic change. People were moving, towns were growing, industries were expanding. Some Tory MPs were changing too. They wanted to improve working conditions in the cotton mills. They supported the abolition of slavery in the British Empire. They held more liberal views on religion. These MPs became known as Liberal Tories.

In 1828, Liberal Tory MPs did something that would have been unthinkable a hundred years before. They voted to repeal the Test Acts. This meant that Quakers and other Dissenters could now hold important roles in the government. But some other Tories were horrified by the repeal of the Test Acts. They still wanted to protect the old privileges of the Church of England. They became known as Ultra Tories.

Wellington was stuck. The Liberal Tories and the Ultra Tories were moving in opposite directions. Pleasing both sides had become impossible.

Ultra Tories were confident that Wellington would not allow any more religious changes. They were wrong. More religious change in England was certainly on its way, but this time the cause lay not in England, but in Ireland.

Ever since the Acts of Union of 1800, British politicians had feared another Irish uprising. In 1829, increasing unrest in Ireland forced Wellington to take drastic action. With the support of the Liberal Tories and the Whigs, Wellington passed the Catholic Relief Act. This meant that Catholics could now become MPs.

The Ultra Tories were furious. Had Wellington forgotten about Guy Fawkes and James II? Had he fallen foul of another popish plot?

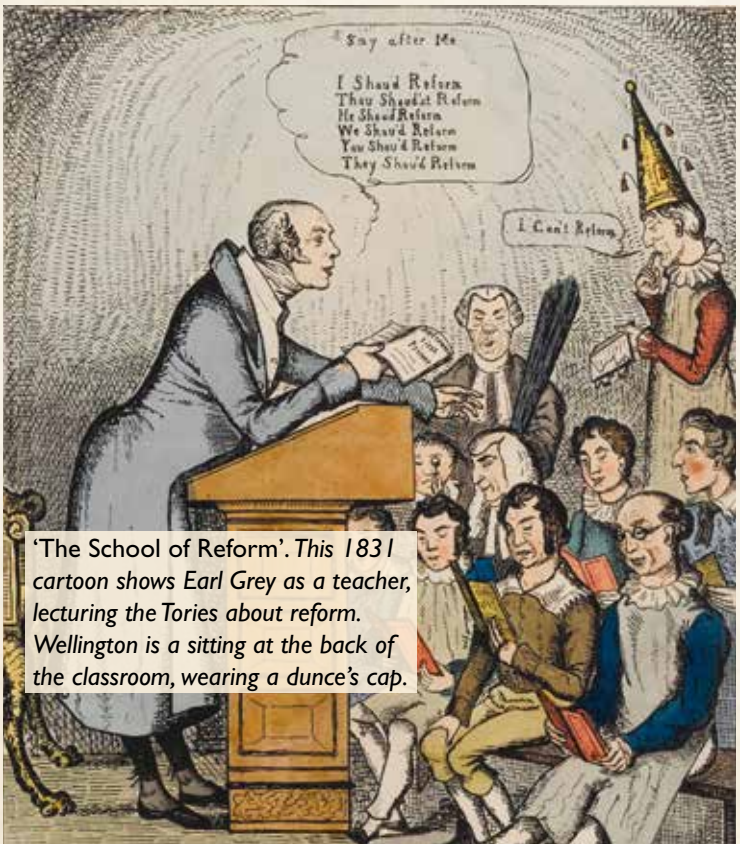
We know from Harriet Arbuthnot's journal that, on 7 November 1830, Wellington promised that he would fight against parliamentary reform for 'as long as possible'. Deep down, they both knew that his days as Prime Minister were numbered. He did not have support from enough MPs to pass any laws. Liberal Tories were forming new alliances with the Whigs. Ultra Tories would not forgive the Catholic Relief Act. On 16 November, Wellington resigned as Prime Minister.

Enter the Whigs

A few days after Wellington's resignation, a carriage arrived outside St James's Palace. An elderly man stepped out onto the street. He gazed up at the imposing redbrick gatehouse. The elderly man's heart was pounding. King William IV was waiting inside.

King William IV wanted an experienced politician to become his next Prime Minister. Which is why he turned to Earl Grey, the 66-year-old leader of the Whigs.

Grey's new Whig government included some Liberal Tories. In many ways, the Whigs and Tories were similar. Like the Tories, most Whigs were also wealthy landowners who feared 'the mob'. But there was one big difference. The Whigs supported parliamentary reform.



'The School of Reform'. *This 1831 cartoon shows Earl Grey as a teacher, lecturing the Tories about reform. Wellington is a sitting at the back of the classroom, wearing a dunce's cap.*

The rotten system

You might be wondering *why* the Whigs supported parliamentary reform. Why would these wealthy landowners give away some of their power? This cartoon from 1831 provides us with some clues.

The cartoon depicts Britain's political system as a tree. Look right. Wellington and the Tories are shown propping up the tree. Now look left. It's Grey and the Whigs, armed with axes.

Now look again at the tree. It is rotten. The cartoonist drew it this way to show three huge problems with Britain's unreformed political system.



The Reformers' Attack on the Old Rotten Tree, *1831*

How a bill becomes an Act of Parliament

First reading: The bill is announced in the House of Commons.

Second reading: MPs debate and vote on the main principles of the bill.

Committee stage: A small committee of MPs study the bill in close detail. They look for any problems and make amendments.

Reporting stage: The bill is reported back to the House of Commons. MPs debate the bill and make more amendments.

Third reading: The amended bill is 'read' and passed by MPs.

The House of Lords: The bill goes to the House of Lords. It goes through the same stages as in the House of Commons.

Royal assent: When the bill has been passed in both Houses, it is signed by the monarch. It becomes an Act of Parliament and is now law.

Problem No. 1

The constituencies were uneven. One **constituency**, Old Sarum, was an abandoned medieval hillfort with just seven voters. It sent two MPs to Parliament. Meanwhile, industrial towns like Manchester (population 180,000) and Birmingham (population 144,000) had no MPs.

Problem No. 2

The franchise varied hugely from place to place. In a few places, such as Preston, all adult men could vote. In most constituencies, only the wealthiest men could.

Problem No. 3

The elections were easy to corrupt. Votes were cast in public with a show of hands. This made it possible to bribe and intimidate voters. Old Sarum and many other **Rotten Boroughs** were controlled by wealthy families.

The Whigs wanted to reduce the corruption. They also wanted to give 'respectable' middle-class men, such as doctors and lawyers, the vote. But parliamentary reform would prove more difficult than chopping down a tree. Passing a new law was (and still is) a complicated process.

Step 2

Make another mind map. This time use it to show all the reasons why Earl Grey and the Whigs wanted parliamentary reform.

The reform crisis

Midnight in Parliament

In March 1831, the Whigs introduced a Reform Bill in the House of Commons. The bill would remove the Rotten Boroughs and give MPs to large industrial towns. Could it possibly pass? For the bill's second reading, over 600 Whig and Tory MPs crammed into the candlelit House of Commons. One MP described the unfolding drama:

In the early hours of the morning, Lord Duncannon stood to announce the result. There were 302 ayes ...

... and 301 noes. The Reform Bill had passed its second reading. By a single vote.

> The ayes and noes were like two volleys of cannon from opposite sides of a field of battle.
>
> The house was thronged up to the table, and all the floor was fluctuating with heads like the pit of a theatre. But you might have heard a pin drop as Duncannon read the numbers.

Part of a letter, written by the Whig MP Thomas Babington Macaulay, on 30 March 1831

Killing the bills

The bill's journey was not complete, however. Now the drama moved to the committee rooms. At committee stage, MPs picked holes and pulled it apart. The first Reform Bill was soon dead. The Whigs needed more MPs for a Reform Bill to pass.

There was only one solution – a general election. Earl Grey called for his carriage. He set out for St James's Palace to talk to the King.

The King was terrified of reform, but even more terrified of the radicals. Grey told the King that radicals from Birmingham to Bristol were growing restless. Without parliamentary reform, Grey warned, Manchester, Nottingham and Derby would rage and burn. There would be a revolution.

The terrified King called a general election. The Whigs won a huge majority of 130 seats.

By October 1831, a second Reform Bill had passed its first, second and third readings. There was just one more obstacle: the House of Lords.

The peers who sat in the House of Lords – dukes, earls, viscounts, bishops and other wealthy noblemen – were not elected. The majority were Tories. Horrified at the prospect of parliamentary reform, Tory peers voted against the bill.

The second Reform Bill was dead.

The radicals riot

That night, crowds threw stones through the windows of Wellington's luxurious London residence. The radicals had printed a blacklist of Tory peers who had voted against the bill.

On 31 October 1831, 86-year-old Hannah More wept as she watched her city burn. For three days, Bristol's radicals rioted. Down by the docks, they looted warehouses. They stormed the city's jails, releasing prisoners onto the streets. They burned down the Bishop's Palace. Some 20,000 working-class Bristolians took part. In the chaos, at least twelve were killed.



Another Reform Bill

A poem published in a Tory magazine imagined the Devil watching over the Bristol riots (see below).

The Whigs, too, were appalled by the Bristol riots. The Whigs, too, feared revolution. But Whigs believed that parliamentary reform was the way to prevent it. Once the flames died down, the Whigs introduced a third Reform Bill.

Once again, the Reform Bill passed its first, second and third readings. Once again, the House of Lords stood in its way.

Once again, Grey visited St James's Palace. Once again, Grey warned that, without parliamentary reform, there would be a revolution.

Grey now asked the King to create 50 Whig peers – enough for the third Reform Bill to pass through the House of Lords.

But this time, the King refused Grey's request. Instead, he did something dangerous. He asked Wellington to form a new government.

The Days of May

All morning on 7 May 1832, people gathered on New Hall Hill in Birmingham. By midday, 200,000 men, women and children had arrived. Some were working-class radicals: weavers and factory workers. Others were middle-class reformers: bakers and shopkeepers. They had come to demand parliamentary reform.

'Satan – Reformer' appeared in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in April 1832. The author was presenting parliamentary reform as an instrument of the devil that would destroy Christian Britain.

Satan stood high upon Brandon Hill,

With his fiery eyeballs glowing;

He banged the ground with his swinging tail,

And the Demons came round him, and cried, All hail!

See, see, how Reform is going!

Thomas Attwood, the leader of the Birmingham Political Union, addressed the crowds. Shouting to be heard above chants of 'REFORM! REFORM!', Attwood raged. He raged against the Tories. He would rather die than see another Reform Bill rejected.

Britain was on the brink of a revolution. Wellington realised that he could not form a government. Grey remained as Prime Minister.

The Great Reform Act

Wellington now did what he had promised Harriet Arbuthnot that he would never do. He gave in. He told the Tory peers to let the Reform Bill pass. Begrudgingly, they did.

On 7 June 1832, King William IV gave the third Reform Bill **royal assent**. The Whigs had done it. Their Great Reform Act made major changes:

- 56 Rotten Boroughs, including Old Sarum, were disenfranchised.
- 67 new constituencies were created. Manchester and Birmingham gained MPs.
- The **electorate** in England and Wales increased from around 370,000 to 650,000 voters.

Middle-class men now had a say in politics. But this was not a 'great' reform Act for everyone. Women still could not vote. Nor could working-class men. Radicals felt betrayed by the Whigs.

Step 3

Make a third mind map, this time on the working-class radicals. On one side, include reasons why working-class radicals kept fighting for reform. On the other side, include reasons why the Great Reform Act disappointed them.

Shaping your answer

Turn your three mind maps into a three-paragraph essay answering the question: Why did the Tories, the Whigs and the radicals feel so strongly about parliamentary reform?

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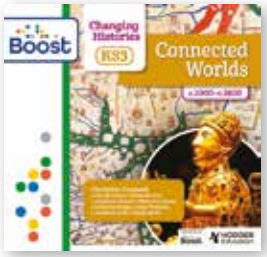

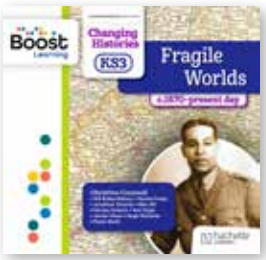

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