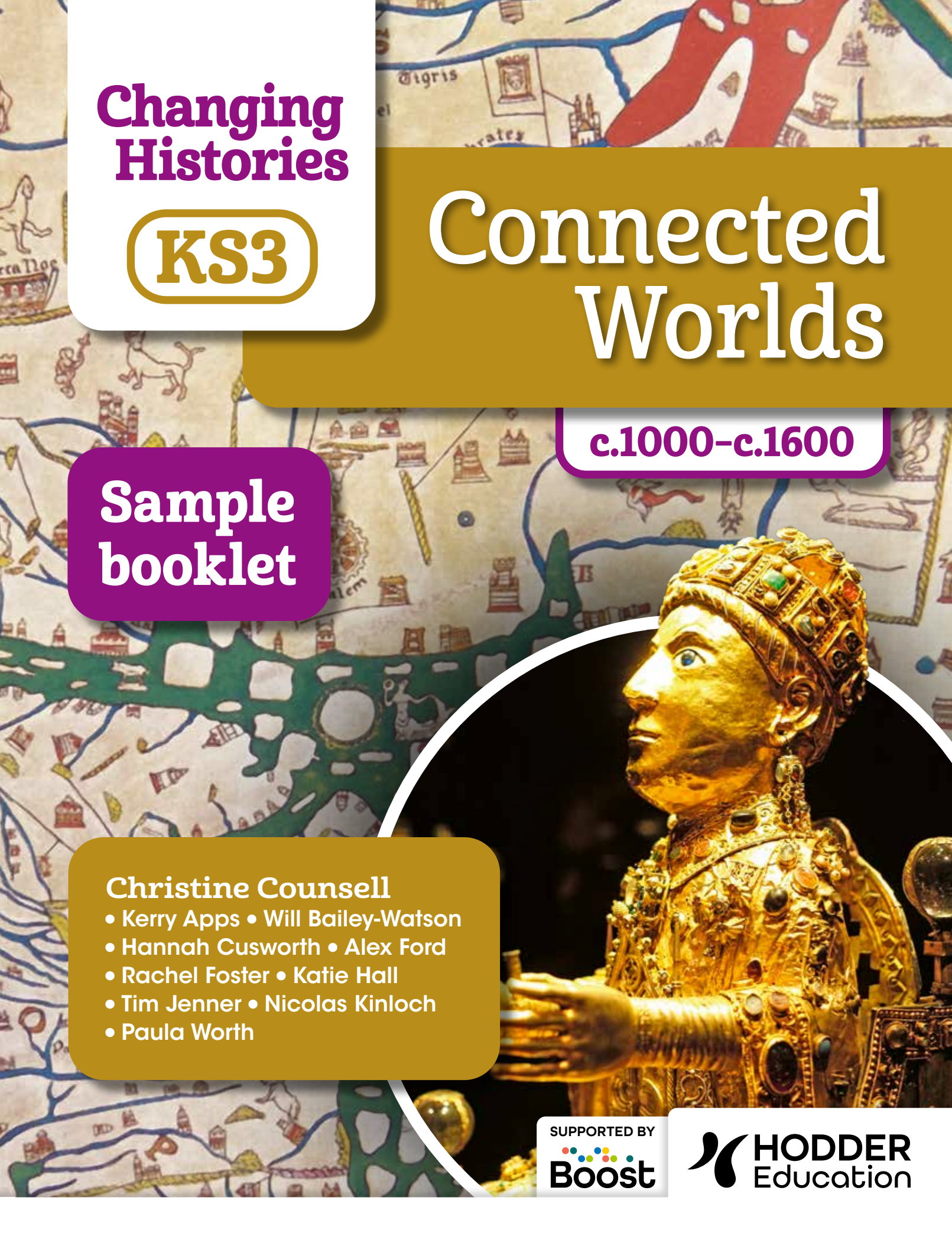
Changing Histories

KS3

Connected Worlds

c.1000–c.1600

Sample booklet



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Changing Histories

KS3

Created by Christine Counsell and a team of 20 authors

Connected Worlds, c.1000–c.1600

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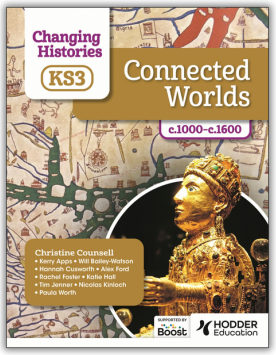

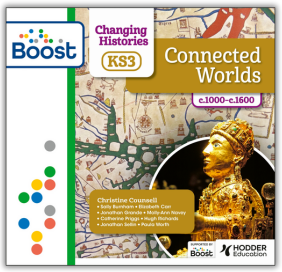

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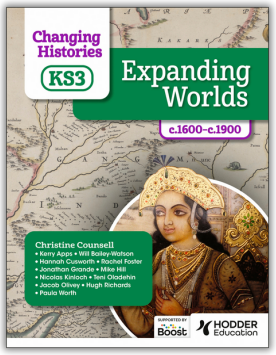

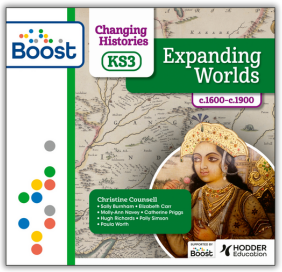

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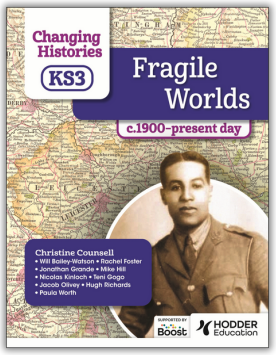

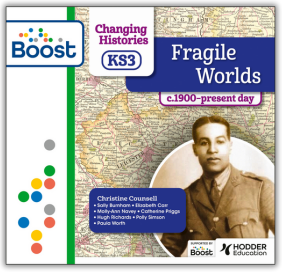

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"This series is a must have for all History departments. The story approach is a power tool in the History teacher toolkit. These accessible and inclusive stories build drama, suspense and transport pupils back to the time and place being studied. The images and carefully designed pages work fantastically well with the text, helping to build an immersive world for pupils to study and enjoy."

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Pete Jackson, Head of History, Ryedale School

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Preface

I fell in love with history at school. Each history lesson was a story, full of surprise and mystery. It was full of people who fascinated, annoyed or amazed us.

Each history lesson made me wonder. I wondered how long a journey took with only horses or oars for power. I wondered how different people lived and worshipped, loved and laughed; or why when empires rose and fell, some lives shattered and others flourished.

Yet so much was missing! We learned how Edward I stormed into Wales. We didn't know that, meanwhile, in Mongolia, North Africa and South America, different conquerors also expanded their lands. We learned how Elizabeth I fought the Spanish but we didn't know that it was Moroccan sugar which rotted her teeth. We didn't learn how science and mathematics, art and language were shaped in Greek, Arab, Persian, Indian and Italian worlds, nor the quests, determination and accidents that connected them.

Many history teachers have written this book for you. We want you to enjoy wondering about past worlds, both in and far beyond Britain. We want you to revel in the stories and to discover how they connect.

And as you read, look out for the different ways in which we tell these stories. Then see what happens when you start to retell them yourselves! Part of the wonder of history is that stories change, depending on the questions we ask, the sources we use and the voices we find.

Christine Counsell

Series Editor, *Changing Histories*

Contents

1 Constantinople in 1050

Empress Zoe surveys her Mediterranean world

The year is 1050. Zoe walks outside from an upper door in her imperial palace to stand on a grand platform. The platform juts out from a vast stadium. Now aged 72, Zoe remembers standing here before. Often, her presence had calmed the heaving crowd below. She remembers her people thronging the streets, chanting in support of her or her sister, or one of her husbands; or baying for her nephew's blood.

Zoe is a great empress. Standing here, she can see right across her magnificent city and beyond. Zoe has been empress of the **Byzantine empire** since 1028. This, her capital city, is Constantinople.

Standing here, Zoe can look into the past. Hundreds of statues glorify the memories of past emperors. Across the city, on tall columns, they rise to the sky.

Zoe remembers stories, learned in childhood, about her empire's glorious past. It is a past stretching back to ancient Rome. By the fourth century, Rome's empire covered much of Europe, north Africa and western Asia.

But this huge empire was divided.

It was the emperor Constantine who had finally defeated his rivals to bring the whole empire under his control by 324. And with this huge empire to rule over, Constantine had selected this ancient Greek city, once known as Byzantium, to build a new, eastern capital, greater even than Rome itself. The city had become known as Constantinople ('city of Constantine', in Greek).

Looking out to sea, Zoe sees boats weave through the harbour. These boats carry goods across the Mediterranean. From the east, as far away as China, merchants trade in silks and spices, paper and perfumes. Constantine had chosen this site for a reason; it was a place that connected worlds.

From these worlds, goods arrive in the bustling markets that Zoe can hear below. Merchants will return home and say that they have seen the richest city in the world. This wealth is carefully managed to keep Zoe, and her empire, rich.

But Constantine had done more than build a dazzling city. He had made his capital the heart of the Christian world. Rising above the great columns of the city, Zoe can see the impossible dome of the church of Hagia Sofia. It seems to be suspended from heaven. Nothing like it has been seen since it was built 500 years ago.

Zoe pictures the sacred wonders in that mighty church. **Pilgrims** flock around the finest collection of holy **relics** in the world. And in that church, stands this image of Zoe, in golden mosaic, next to those of past great emperors – each one God's representative on Earth. Zoe is one link in a chain never broken.

And as her eyes reach the towering city walls, Zoe is proud. Constantinople has never been conquered. As a child, Zoe heard how the Virgin Mary appeared on the walls to defend the holy city against all attackers – the Persians and Avars in 626, and later the armies of **Muslim** Arabs, of Bulgars and Russians.

Yet Zoe knows that greater threats to Byzantine rulers have come from within the city walls. This is why the most highly trained soldiers, the Varangian Guard, serve as her personal bodyguards. She needs them. She grew up with the stories of mutilation and murder, of endless rivals fighting for control.

And these are not just stories. Zoe has lived them. She remembers lonely days imprisoned in a convent, her head shaved, after her nephew seized her throne in 1042. She remembers how the people of Constantinople rose up and returned her to the throne, and how they demanded that her reluctant sister, Theodora, reigned with her – Theodora, who ordered their nephew's eyes to be gouged out.

But Zoe knows that the greatest challenges to her empire lie in its future.

She looks north, towards enemies who have challenged her empire for centuries. The Russians now follow her Church, the **Orthodox Christianity** of the Greeks. But she remembers their attack of 1043: Russian ships broke a century of peace.

The city's defences cannot be broken, but the empire beyond its walls is at risk.

Zoe looks east, towards Muslim lands. Zoe's ancestors lost vast lands to the Arab warriors who burst out of Arabia in the seventh century. Their Muslim empire declined in the ninth century and the Byzantines recovered much land. But now new armies of Muslim Turks threaten her empire from the east.

Zoe looks west, towards Rome, where the **Pope** seems determined to dominate Christianity in Europe. And she looks further west to a warrior people loyal to the Pope, the Normans. Now spread out from Normandy, and flexing their muscles in Italy and Sicily, these Normans threaten her empire's western edge.

Constantinople connects worlds. Goods, people and ideas, ever-moving, always changing, connect **Christendom** and Islam, Europe and Asia.

13 A golden country: the empire of Mali

What does the story of Mansa Musa reveal about medieval west Africa?

It is 1323. Mansa Musa, the emperor of Mali, sits on an ebony throne. Behind him, thirty enslaved people from Turkey and Egypt stand to attention. One of them holds a silk sunshade, topped by a golden falcon, over the emperor's head

This is a land of gold and many will come to see Mansa Musa's rule as a golden age. South of the Sahara Desert, the African empire of Mali has grown rich from huge nuggets of gold mined from the goldfields of Wangara. One of the miners was at the palace today, bringing a camel laden with gold as a gift for the mansa. The word 'mansa' means 'emperor' or 'king'. Mansa Musa is the emperor of the biggest empire that Africa has ever known.

Two great elephant tusks stand beside the mansa's throne. On his raised platform in the palace courtyard, Mansa Musa can see the rounded roofs of clay houses stretching into the distance. Several horses stand calmly nearby. Mansa Musa will soon be inspecting them, ready for a long journey. This journey is a pilgrimage.

Mansa Musa cannot wait to get going, but he must. He must make sure that his empire is safe before he leaves. Today, he will discuss his plans with the emirs (chiefs), who each govern different parts of the empire.

Mansa Musa shifts a little on his throne. A bow and three arrows, each made of pure gold, rest heavily on his knees.

The mansa's musicians begin drumming. The buzz of balafons fills the air. The visitors must be here. Mansa Musa does not stand when the emirs arrive in the palace courtyard.

Your enquiry

Mansa Musa's pilgrimage made him famous. Stories of his wealth and his generosity became legends. People from as far away as England wanted to hear more about his kingdom. Historians, today, still find him remarkable. By studying Mansa Musa, historians have built fascinating new knowledge about the medieval world. In this enquiry, you are going to show what the story of Mansa Musa reveals about medieval West Africa.

Mansa Musa prepares for his pilgrimage

Decorated in silver and gold, the king's palace dazzles in the sun. From his throne, Mansa Musa strains to see his emirs. The emperor of Mali never speaks aloud in public. Instead, he whispers what he wants to say to a spokesman called a jeli, who makes the announcements.

On this day in 1323, the jeli is announcing the king's plans to go on a great pilgrimage or hajj to the holy cities of Makkah and Medina in Arabia. This journey will cross the Sahara Desert, the largest desert in the world. Crossing the desert will take over a year, so Mansa Musa will need provisions from all over the empire. He has already sent officials to the bountiful markets of his cities. Horses will be needed to carry the king and his great officials across the desert. There is so much work to do.

Mansa Musa rises to inspect his horses

Mansa Musa strokes the delicate strands of gold woven into his horse's mane. His mind turns to another important animal: the camel. Capable of carrying heavy loads in the heat of the Sahara, thousands of camels will carry food, water and equipment on the pilgrimage.

Mansa Musa's pilgrimage became so widely known outside Africa that the empire of Mali appeared for the first time on a European map. This map was made by Italian map-maker Angelino Dulcert in 1339.

Other camels will have a much heavier load to bear. Although Mansa Musa is on a religious pilgrimage to Makkah, where he will pray in front of the Kaaba, he can do other things along the way. Mansa Musa will present, in person, his gifts to the kings of other African states. This will help the mansa to strengthen alliances with these states.

Mansa Musa needs gold for these gifts. He gives the order for 80 camels to be laden with gold.

Step 1

In this enquiry, you will show how the story of Mansa Musa can reveal different things about medieval West Africa. Make a table like this one. Fill the columns with as many details as you can from what you have read so far. Your table will then show what the story of Mansa Musa **reveals**.

Kingship	Religion	Trade	Natural resources	The growth of cities
	Mansa Musa's great pilgrimage to Makkah reveals how Islam was established in West Africa.		Mansa Musa's order to load 80 camels with gold reveals how rich the Malian goldfields were.	

Mansa Musa sets out on his hajj

Mansa Musa and his entourage travel north, across the broad grasslands of central Mali. The mansa's **caravan** becomes a long line of glittering gold that stretches for miles across the landscape.

Herds of elephants, giraffes and gazelles stop and stare. Finding shade under a baobab tree, the mansa takes a drink of water from the tree's trunk. Water has collected here since the last rains came to the grasslands. The emperor knows that soon there will be no baobab trees, and very little water. Soon, he will reach the unforgiving dunes of the Sahara.

This is an extract from a book written much later, in the seventeenth century, by Timbuktu scholar Al-Sa'd. It shows how some of the stories which we are telling here lived on in the African source records. Al-Sa'd describes how Mansa Musa…

> set off in great pomp, with a large party, including sixty thousand soldiers and five hundred slaves, who ran in front of him as he rode. Each of the slaves bore in his hand a wand fashioned from 500 mithqāls [nearly 2 kilograms] of gold.'

The route taken by Mansa Musa on the hajj.

Travelling with a caravan across the Sahara Desert is a dangerous business. The mansa has heard stories of entire caravans losing their way and dying in sandstorms. The mansa will need to rely on the traders who travel with him: their knowledge of oases in the Sahara Desert is vital for the pilgrimage to succeed. These oases will allow the caravan to replenish their stock of food and water. Without them, Mansa Musa and his followers will die.

There are no roads in the desert. Day after day, the mansa's scenery is the same. On some nights, the emperor stays up late, listening to men talk about the stars – their only guides across this barren land.

The emperor sleeps.

Mansa Musa reaches Cairo

One morning, about a year later, the emperor wakes up early. The sand-dunes are finally behind him. Today, he enters Cairo, a place which very few of his people have seen. The soldiers who guard the caravan are restless and excited. They are proud to stand guard over their emperor as he enters a new city.

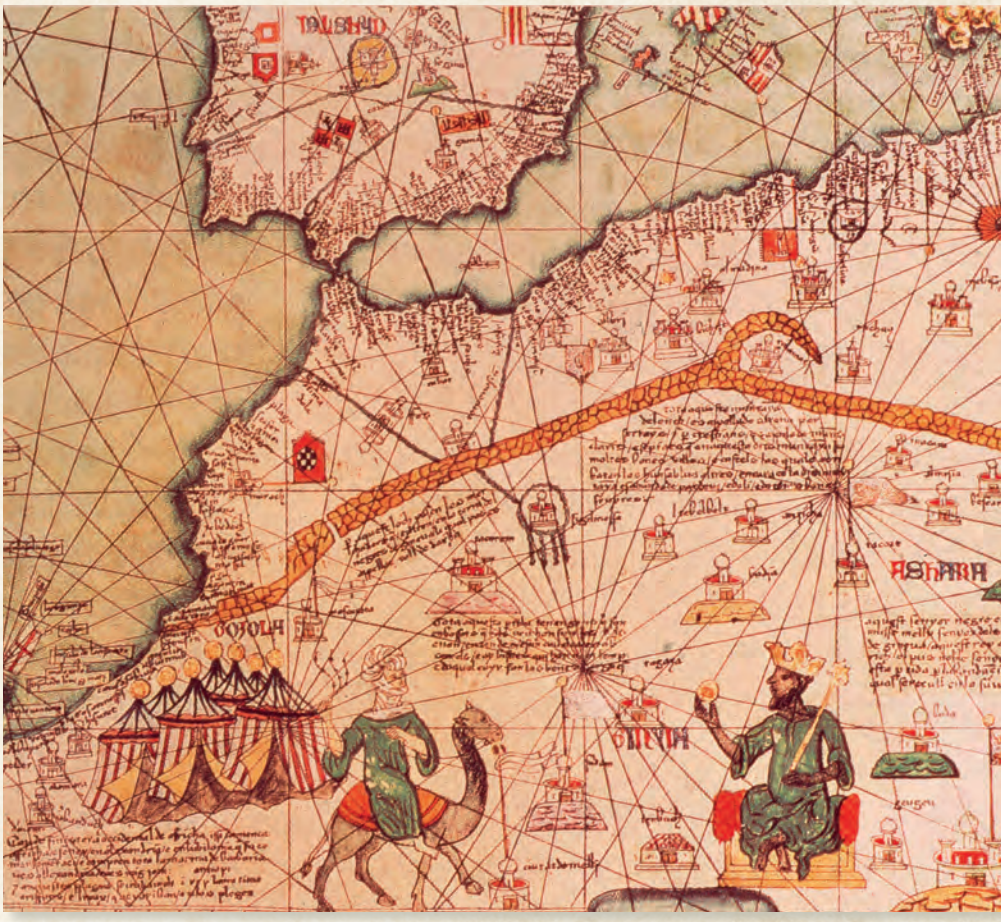
Mansa Musa's arrival creates an instant sensation. People gape in amazement at this king from an unknown land, boasting hundreds of slaves carrying batons of gold. Rumours are whispered about the vast quantities of gold that the mansa has brought with him to Cairo. No one can quite believe how much! Yet Mansa Musa does not spend all his gold at the market; he gives it out freely. First, he sends gifts to the sultan of Egypt. Then he gives out gold to the poor, to important officials, and to people that he meets in the marketplace. He floods Cairo with gold.

The mansa gives out so much gold that the markets are flooded with it. Throughout Egypt and all the Middle East this precious metal will start to drop in value, all because Mansa Musa brought so much gold with him.

This is just one story of many which have been told about Mansa Musa's hajj. Historians admit that there is much that we still do not know. Many historians are fairly confident, however, that Mansa Musa stayed in Cairo for three months before continuing to the holy cities of Makkah and Medina in Arabia. After four months in Makkah, he returned to Cairo and then travelled home, passing through the city of Timbuktu. Mansa Musa had given away so much gold in Cairo that some historians think that he had to borrow money to fund his return home.

This is part of a medieval world map called the Catalan Atlas. It was made in Majorca, fifty years after Mansa Musa made his pilgrimage. It was commissioned by the King of France. Find Mansa Musa. Look carefully at him. Why do you think that the artist drew him like this?

Part of the Catalan Atlas, *made in about 1375, possibly by a Jewish book illustrator. The* Catalan Atlas *was made on parchment and painted in rich colours, including gold and silver.*



Step 2

It's time to add more details about Mansa Musa and his empire to your table, using pages 85–86.

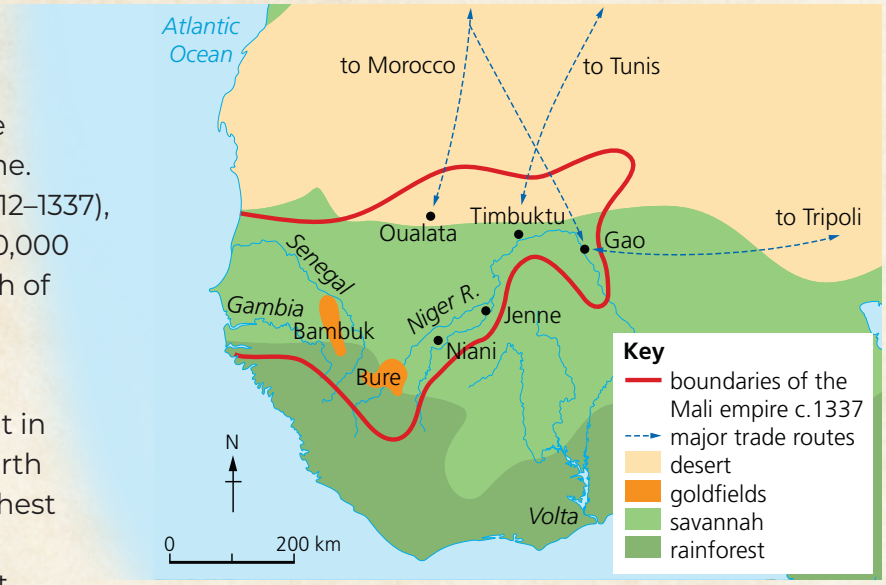
Buried deep in the Mali empire

At the heart of the Mali empire were vibrant cities such as Niani and Jenne. At the time of Mansa Musa's rule (1312–1337), some of these cities held around 100,000 people. Niani was built on the wealth of the Buré goldfield – one of several goldfields in the Mali empire.

Some historians have estimated that in today's money, Mansa Musa was worth $400 billion. He was possibly the richest man in history. Each nugget of gold produced by Mali's goldminers went straight into the king's treasury. Gold connected the Mali empire with the rest of the world. Buying gold motivated merchants to risk their lives crossing the dangerous Sahara Desert.

Gold was central to Mali's success, but you cannot eat gold. To grow an empire, you need to feed and pay an army of soldiers. The empire of Mali grew on the savannah, a vast area of grassland, south of the Sahara Desert. Find the savannah on the map. This grassland was very good for grazing animals like sheep, cows and goats. It was also fertile soil for crops. The Mande people who lived here also fished in the river Niger, an important river for transporting people and goods to different parts of the Mali empire.

Fishing and growing crops gave the Mande people a reliable food supply. It meant that the first Malian kings could feed a larger population and form a bigger army. Making agriculture more efficient also led to the growth of cities. By the time Mansa Musa ascended to the throne in 1312, there were three cities: Niani, Jenne and Timbuktu.



The Mali empire in around 1337.

On the back of the mansa's horses

Horses were unusual in sub-Saharan Africa, and each mansa cherished them. Emperors of Mali traditionally imported horses from Arabia. The horses formed a cavalry regiment, which served under the direct command of the mansa himself. Charging across the grasslands in tight formation, the cavalry was unstoppable. The horses became a symbol of royal power. This little terracotta figure of a horse and rider (now in a private collection) has been dated to the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

Long before Mansa Musa came to the throne, his great uncle had united all the Mande people into one kingdom. This was in around 1250. Mansa Musa's great uncle was called Sundiata Keita, but he also had a nickname – the Lion King. One Mande legend says that leaders were granted their power from a **spirit animal**. Another animal from the Mande legend, the bush buffalo, was a kind of guardian spirit with whom leaders had to make a contract.

Governing Mali

Sundiata died in 1255. After he died, seven kings struggled to keep control of Mali. None succeeded. Then one king, known as the Voyager King, decided to explore the Atlantic Ocean. He never came back. Before he left, he chose Mansa Musa to rule while he was away.

So Mansa Musa ascended the throne in 1312. He then stayed in power until his death 25 years later.

When he began ruling Mali, Mansa Musa quickly got to work strengthening the empire. Some of the land conquered by Sundiata Keita, such as Gao, had been lost. Find Gao on the map on the previous page. Notice that it was in a useful position, on a great river. Mansa Musa set about increasing the size of his army to around 100,000 soldiers, including 10,000 horsemen. He was then able to reconquer Gao. Mansa Musa also used the army to rid Mali of the bandits who interrupted trade across the empire. This allowed traders to travel and trade safely.

Sources suggest that Mansa Musa had twenty-four emirs (chiefs), each governing different parts of the empire. Mansa Musa invited his emirs to tell him of any complaints, earning their trust. One source suggests that he rewarded their loyalty with gold and a new honours system. The highest honour was the National Honour of the Trousers. It was said that 'the greater the number of a soldier's exploits, the bigger the size of his trousers.'

Mansa Musa was committed to Islam. He wanted everyone in his kingdom to become Muslim. He once tried to force his goldminers to become Muslim, but they resisted. Mansa Musa accepted this and allowed the miners to continue to believe what they liked.

Travellers, trade and trust

In Chapter 2, we saw how quickly Islam had spread in the seventh and eighth centuries. Bursting out of Arabia, the Muslim armies had poured north and west into the Byzantine empire. They had swept north-east into the Persian empire. By 750, they had reached so far east they were even touching India. In the west, the Muslims made their way right across north Africa to Spain.

But Islam then made its way further into Africa much more slowly. Now Islam moved more through trade and missionaries than through conquest. Eventually, Islam reached Mali. Islam was the faith of the long-distance traders. Shared Muslim beliefs created trust among travellers, making the dangerous journey possible.

Step 3

It's time to add more details to your table. We have helped you along with a couple of ideas.

Kingship	Religion	Trade	Natural resources	The growth of cities
Mansa Musa set out to re-conquer Gao as soon as he came to the throne. This shows that military success and control were a priority for African kings.	Mansa Musa's decision not to force his miners to convert to Islam reveals that ...			

The caravan routes were vital for keeping the doors of Mali open. Look again at the map on page 85. Notice how Mali was separated from the north by the vast Sahara Desert. To the west was another barrier: the Atlantic Ocean. Sailors had not yet learned to navigate the Atlantic coast. Malian trade was therefore only possible across the vast dry desert, and that meant that oases were vital. An oasis is formed in the desert where water bubbles to the surface and creates an island of green. With careful farming, the water could be used to grow crops. It was the oases which enabled the merchants travelling to and from the markets of Mali to find food and water.

By the time of Mansa Musa's reign, the caravans had grown very large – as many as 12,000 camels in one caravan. At this time, nearly all the gold in Europe's jewellery and crowns came from Mali. The caravans moving north across the desert carried not just Malian gold, however, but copper, cereals, fish, ivory and salt from the Sahara. Salt, which stopped food from rotting, was carried in huge tablets on the backs of camels.

Trade was regular both in and out of Mali. The Mande people living in the Mali empire expected to buy luxury items, such as silk, in their city markets. In a Malian market, goods could be found from as far away as China, India and Spain. The publicity that Mansa Musa created on his pilgrimage caused trade to increase even more. More and more merchants wanted to travel to Mali's golden lands, and Mansa Musa encouraged them to come.

Great minds shape great cities

Mansa Musa kept the doors of Mali wide open, not just to goods, but to ideas.

New ideas about art and architecture moved in and out of Mali. Mansa Musa asked architects to design hundreds of new mosques. Mansa Musa hoped that all these new mosques would help him to convert more of his people to Islam.

This is the Djinguereber Mosque, still standing today in Timbuktu. New mosques such as this made the city of Timbuktu exciting and attractive.

Caillie's Mali – a drawing of Timbuktu made by a nineteenth-century French explorer in about 1830.

Timbuktu became home to scholars, musicians and priests. Rather like the Muslim city of Baghdad in the eighth and ninth centuries, Timbuktu now became a great centre of learning. In its university, about 25,000 scholars studied in different 'schools'. With access to nearly a million books, they could become architects, astronomers, doctors and engineers.

Placed at the crossing of the Niger River and a major caravan route, Timbuktu saw goods and new ideas flowing in and out, every day. Many traders and travellers converted to Islam during conversations with the city's scholars and students. Busy and bustling, Timbuktu must have been an exciting place to learn.

Mansa Musa ruled Mali for about 25 years. After his death, in about 1337, Mali weakened. In the late fourteenth century, rival leaders fought civil wars. Then outsiders began to attack. In 1433, Mali lost control of Timbuktu. By the end of the fifteenth century, Mali had been taken over by the Songhay empire.

Step 4

Using pages 89–90, add some final details to your table.

Shaping your argument

This photograph shows Toby Green, a modern historian. He has shown that the story of Mansa Musa reveals a great deal about medieval west Africa – its trade, its government and its ways of life. Imagine that you are organising a history event with guest speakers. You have invited Toby Green to speak about medieval Mali. The event manager wants fewer speakers. He wants to cut Toby Green's talk. You are furious!

Write to your event manager explaining why you think that the story of Mansa Musa is historically significant. To do this, you must convince the manager that the story of Mansa Musa reveals much more than the story of just one ruler. Use the headings in your steps to organise your letter.

15 Order and disorder in Walsham

How did one village respond to the Black Death?

It is the week before Christmas 1347. In the small Suffolk village of Walsham, the parish church is bustling with people. The villagers are preparing for the Christmas feast and the Midnight Mass. They have decorated the church with holly and ivy. The church seems alive. A little choir practises a carol. In front of the altar, a huddle of villagers is absorbed in moving brightly painted pieces of wood. They are assembling a tiny wooden stable.

But Master John, the priest, notices none of this. He hurries past his busy parishioners. In his hands he holds a letter. It is from his friend Richard, a monk at the nearby abbey in Bury St Edmunds. Richard's letter is brief, and terrifying.

A terrible disease, believed to have begun in the far east, in the lands of the Great Khan, is moving swiftly westwards across Europe. The letter says that it has crossed the Mediterranean Sea. The **pestilence** rages in the Italian and French seaports. Nothing, it seems, can halt its progress towards England … and Walsham.

Your enquiry

During the 1340s much of Europe, west Asia and north Africa was devastated by a terrible disease. It became known as the Black Death. One historian who has studied the Black Death is John Hatcher. He has written a book about the Black Death in one English village in Suffolk – Walsham. Hatcher based his book on sources but used his imagination to turn those sources into the story of what is likely to have happened. In this enquiry, you will use Hatcher's story to explore how ordinary people responded to disaster.

The world of Walsham

Today Walsham is a small village in the county of Suffolk. In the fourteenth century, this part of East Anglia was one of the richest in England. This is what the village looked like in the mid-fourteenth century. What similarities with the village of Bourn (on pages 34–37) do you notice?

Let's take a walk around, to see what Walsham was like...

Our journey starts on the village's eastern edge, on Finningham Road. All around us are fields of wheat, barley, oats and peas, neatly separated into strips. Tidy hedgerows, wooden fences and earthen banks line the road. The villagers' lives are marked by the passing of the seasons. Older, experienced hands decide what to plant, when to sow seed, how to plan the harvest, and on which pasture-lands each family can graze their animals. Everyone needs a good harvest, so the villagers work together.

But the harvest also depends on the weather. In recent years terrible rains caused the harvests of 1346 and 1347 to fail. The price of bread rose so high that the poorest nearly starved. Some took to eating roots and berries. Older folk remember the three years of Great Famines of 1315 to 1317, when in some villages one in ten died. Villagers ate their cats and dogs.

This picture from a German prayer book shows medieval peasants hard at work during the harvest. On the left you can see crops being threshed to separate the grain from the stalk. On the right, you can see crops being cut with a sickle and bound into sheaves.

Life at home

As we approach the edge of the village and High Hall Wood we see some scattered cottages. They are the home to the village's poorest families.

Here is an artist's impression of what the inside of the cottage might have looked like:

For 200 years, England's population has been growing fast. Parents have many children to help work the land and to take care of them when they get old or sick. But now there is not enough land for everyone. When William I ordered the Domesday survey in 1086, only about 300 people lived in Walsham, making it roughly the same size as the village of Bourn in the same year. But now, in the 1340s, over a thousand people live in Walsham. Only a few families have enough land to feed themselves. 300 families have little or no land at all. They rent small garden plots from their lord or from richer neighbours, or they try to find work on the land of richer farmers. With so many people looking for work, wages are very low. For these families, life is hard and uncertain.

Let us meet the Chapman family: John, Agnes and little three-year-old Agnes. The Chapmans own little: a few cooking pots, bed covers, some rough furniture. In the small garden behind their cottage, they grow vegetables and graze their cow. In order to earn a little money, Agnes works as a house servant for John Wodebite, a richer villager. Some villagers work as shepherds and cowherds. Some are blacksmiths, carpenters, thatchers, tilers, weavers, tailors, cobblers or leatherworkers. Many women brew ale, bake bread or make pies to sell.

Step 1

At the end of this enquiry, you will answer this question:

How did one village respond to the Black Death?

First, you need to find out about life in the village *before* the Black Death arrived. John Hatcher says that village life was **hard and uncertain**, but **familiar and well-ordered**. Use pages 100–102 to find examples of each. We have included some examples to start you off.

	Hard and uncertain	**Well ordered by familiar routines**
Food and work		Work was organised by the farming year.
Home and village life		At the manor court disagreements were sorted out.
Religious beliefs and practices	Life expectancy was short.	Church rituals marked important stages in life.

The manor

A little further along the road, a fine manor house comes into view. High Hall has many rooms and a great hall, a dovecote, a sheepcote and barn. The house, wood and most of the surrounding farmland belong to the local lord, Edmund de Welles. High Hall has not survived, but it might have looked like this manor house in North Yorkshire.

Each village in England has a lord of the manor, just as it did 300 years earlier when the Normans arrived. But Walsham is unusual. Walsham has two manors. Lady Rose de Valognes is the lady of the other, larger, manor. She does not live in the village because she owns many other manors, but Walsham is her richest.

Other things have changed. At the time of Domesday, nearly half of Suffolk's peasants were free. This was unusual but Walsham was even more unusual, because most of its villagers were free. But now, in the 1340s, most Walsham villagers are unfree. They are **villeins**. As you know from studying the village of Bourn, all villeins rent their homes and land from their lord. They work for free on the manor farm. They ask permission and pay fines if they want to leave the village, to marry or to inherit land. When they die, the lord takes their best animal.

While lords have rights, they also have responsibilities. Taxes must be collected for the king. Law-breakers must be punished. Careful records are kept of duties and fines owed, of who has moved into or left the village, of who has married or died, and of when land changes hands. These records are made at the manor court, held every few months. The court also sorts out disagreements between neighbours. With land scarce, squabbles are frequent. At one manor court in Walsham in 1345 Edmund de Welles had to deal with over a hundred cases!

Lords of the manor have great power over villeins' lives. But villages have customs and traditions as well as laws. Like all villages, Walsham has its own traditions. These traditions give the villagers rights. The manor court helps to protect these rights.

This is Ightham Mote, in Kent. High Hall has not survived. It might have looked something like this.

The common lands and market

Find Cranmer Green on the map on page 101. On this wide stretch of rough grass, the villagers' animals graze. It is called 'common land' because it belongs to everyone. Richer villagers might own a cow, horse or a few sheep. Poorer villagers raise pigs and chickens, which wander in nearby woods or in the neat garden plots.

Around Cranmer Green is a cluster of larger, well-built houses. One belongs to the Cranmer family. The Cranmers have lived in the village longer than anyone can remember. One of the few richer families in the village, the Cranmers own over twenty acres of land.

Just to the west of Cranmer Green is the site of the weekly market.

Villagers come here to buy and sell bread and ale, fruit and vegetables, cheap woollen or linen cloth and leather. For anything more unusual or expensive, such as wine, spices or fine cloth, they must travel to one of the nearby market towns, around half a day's journey away. For something really special they might even travel to a port city such as Ipswich or London.

The market attracts many visitors to the village. They bring with them news of the wider world. In a world of hunger and hardship, tales of far-off lands at the edge of the world, with their terrifying sea-monsters and dragons, strange peoples and cities made of gold, are always popular in the tavern. But in 1347 it is news of King Edward III's recent successes in his wars against the French and Scots that is enthralling the village. Rich and poor alike tell and re-tell the story of Edward's famous victory in the Battle of Crécy, and of the famed English longbow-men. It is said that peasants just like them have shot their arrows with such force and speed that it seemed as if it were snowing.

We are not sure what the market at Walsham looked like, but this painting of a market made in France in the fourteenth century gives us some idea. What goods can you see being sold?

The church

We have come to the middle of the village. Just before we get to the cross-roads, we pass Alice Pye's alehouse, a popular village tavern. A little further on lies High Hall, Lady Rose's manor house. On the other side of the road is St Mary's church.

St Mary's church in Walsham is still standing today.

The church lies at the heart of village life. Each village must keep its church in good repair, and provide the objects needed for worship. To help pay for it all, everyone pays a special church tax called the tithe. They also give their second-best animal to the church when they die.

The village priest keeps a careful watch over his parishioners. It is his job to make sure that they live moral lives. Anyone accused of serious sins (such as having a child outside of marriage) can be punished by a church court. But for most people, most of the time, the church is not really about taxes, laws or punishments. It is about devotion, community and hope. And the church is part of everyone's lives. The church shapes the year. Alongside the changing jobs of the farming seasons, it is feast days and holy days such as All Saints Day, Christmas, Easter and Midsummer that give structure to the year.

Everyone looks forward to feast days: they are a welcome break from work. Everyone dresses up in their best clothes, and there is singing, dancing and games.

Church rituals mark the stages of life: birth, marriage and death. Dying a 'good death' is especially important. Dying well will allow the soul to escape purgatory and get to heaven quickly. The Church's role is vital. It is the priest who hears the dying confess their sins, sprinkles holy water over their body and anoints them with oil. It is the priest who gives the last sacraments: bread and wine. And the holy ground of the churchyard is the resting place of the dead.

Step 2

Add more examples to your table.

This painting of a village feast day is from two centuries later, but it gives us a feel for the atmosphere of fun and merriment. It is by Pieter Brueghel the Younger. It is called 'A Village Festival in Honour of St Hubert and St Anthony'. Notice the procession taking place on the right of the painting. Some people are carrying an image of the saints. The artist is suggesting that most merry-makers are not very interested in the religious part of the feast day!

The plague approaches

While the villagers of Walsham worried about their harvests and amused themselves with tavern tales, thousands of miles away a terrible disease raged. Historians disagree about where exactly the Black Death began. Some say it spread among rats on the steppes of central Asia, in the lands of the Mongols. Some say the spread gained momentum from natural disasters including earthquakes, floods and famines. Rumours certainly reached Walsham of disaster and disease at the far ends of the earth, but few worried about such fantastical tales.

This map shows how the Black Death spread between 1346 and early 1348.

Winter 1347

By Christmas 1347, when Master John received his letter, the stories reaching Walsham were more troubling. Merchants and sailors, travellers and traders all told the same terrifying tale: the many thousands dead, the ill left to die alone, the rotting bodies with no churchyard space nor people to bury them, and the cities lying ruined.

We now know from sources such as this one, written by an Italian lawyer, which stories were likely to have reached Walsham.

> First, out of the blue, a kind of chilly stiffness troubled their bodies. They felt a tingling sensation, as if they were being pricked by the points of arrows. The next stage was a fearsome attack which took the form of an extremely hard, solid boil… as it grew more solid, its burning heat caused the patients to fall into an acute and putrid fever, with severe headaches. As it intensified, its extreme bitterness could have various effects. In some cases, it gave rise to an intolerable stench. In others, it brought spitting of blood, for others, swellings… Some people lay as if in a drunken stupor and could not be roused. Some died on the very day the illness took possession of them, others on the next day, others – the majority – between the third and fifth day.

An extract from History of the Disease OR the Great Dying of the Year of our Lord 1348, *a book by Gabriele de' Mussis, an Italian lawyer, about the Black Death reaching Italy.*

This image, from the south-eastern corner of France, shows a doctor trying to cut a boil from the neck of a terrified woman. She is being held upright by a man who looks on with pity and wonder. Two more frightened patients wait for help. They have raised their arms to ease the pain of the boils in their armpits.

There was no known cure. Death was coming to England. It could not be slowed or stopped.

A wall painting in the Chapel of St Sebastian in Savoy.

Spring 1348

For medieval Christians, the way to avoid disaster was to turn away God's anger. Priests urged people to confess their sins. St Mary's church was packed. Many rushed to perform penance and good works, giving money or food to the poor.

Others went further afield. Thirty miles away, in the little Norfolk village of Walsingham, lay one of England's holiest shrines. Its statue of the Virgin Mary was known as Our Lady of Walsingham. So remarkable were her miracles, that kings gave land, rents and even entire churches to Walsingham's priests. In May, pilgrims from Walsham made the week-long journey to the shrine, walking the last mile barefoot. They passed along a track through these fields, where pilgrims still walk today. Once inside, the Walsham pilgrims prayed, lit candles and left wax figures of their loved ones.

Returning home, they clutched tiny lead flasks containing droplets of the Virgin Mary's milk.

Summer and autumn 1348

By summer, the plague had reached England's southern seaports. Life in Walsham continued as normal. Peasants travelled to market. Manor court fines were paid. Young couples gained permission to marry. That year, the harvest was good. But there was growing unease. Wandering preachers warned of doom and sold holy relics. Peasants made wax charms and sprinkled holy water on food and doorways.

Eleven villeins shocked everyone by refusing to harvest Lady Rose's crops. Why bother to work when the end of the world was coming?

Winter 1348

By November 1348 plague had reached London, just 80 miles away. Strangers were watched with suspicion. A man found sleeping in the church was chased away. A guard looked for outsiders on local roads.

Spring 1349

The charms and relics, the prayers and precautions all failed. As winter turned to spring, a strange calm fell. At Easter, the first villagers fell ill.

Step 3

You will now consider how life in Walsham changed as the Black Death approached, and how it stayed the same. Copy this table.

Using this page, collect points for the first row only. Use two colours: one for what changed, one for what stayed the same.

	farming and work	community life	religious beliefs
Spring 1348 to Spring 1349: the Black Death approaches Walsham			
April to June 1349: the Black Death arrives in Walsham			
Summer 1349 to 1355: the aftermath			

The plague arrives

By early June, more than half of Walsham was dead.

In his book, the historian John Hatcher uses his knowledge from fourteenth-century sources to imagine how one family, the Chapmans, responded to the Black Death. Here is a simplified version of John Hatcher's account.

When their neighbours fell ill, the Chapman family retreated to their cottage. They left the cottage only to tend to their animals and crops. Soon John complained of tiredness and a strange tingling. When he developed a fever, Agnes went for help. She found the local midwife, Julia. Julia was also a healer. For a penny or two, Julia would give advice, make up herbal potions and give out charms to ward off evil. But Julia refused to visit John. Instead, she passed Agnes a potion through her cottage window. At home, Agnes rubbed it into John's skin. She tucked a little wooden carving of St Katherine under John's bedcovers.

That night, John's skin blackened. Now afraid, Agnes took her sleeping daughter and walked to her brother's cottage. Finding her brother also sick, Agnes ran to John Wodebite's home. Agnes had often worked for him, cleaning and cooking. John Wodebite opened the door but would not let her in. Agnes pleaded with him to take care of her child whilst she nursed her husband. Reluctantly, John Wodebite let little Agnes into a small barn, telling Agnes a servant would care for her daughter.

By the fourth day, John's fever had worsened. Agnes begged passers-by to send for the midwife and priest. When neither came, Agnes set out for the church herself. She found it empty.

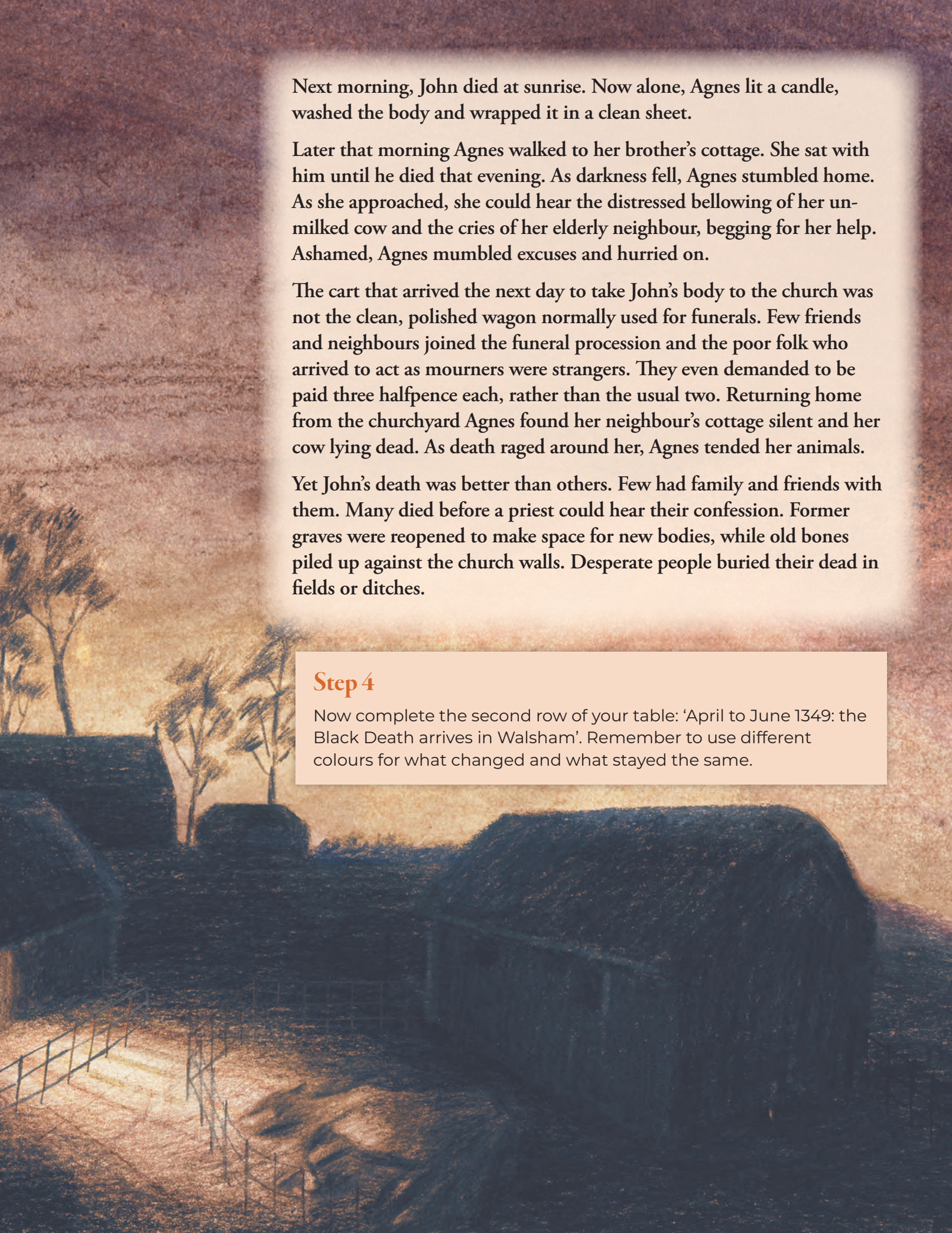
The next day, Agnes tried again. On the way, she bumped into the priest. He was returning home, exhausted from visiting the dying. The priest agreed to return with Agnes to see John. Inside the cottage, the priest unpacked his candles, a crucifix and a cup. He tried to get John to confess his sins, but John did not reply. He asked John to kiss the cross, but John pushed it away. He tried to anoint John's body with oil, but John screamed in agony. Agnes was desperate. If her husband did not confess his sins before he died, his soul would be damned. But the priest could do no more, and he had other dying villagers to see.

Next morning, John died at sunrise. Now alone, Agnes lit a candle, washed the body and wrapped it in a clean sheet.

Later that morning Agnes walked to her brother's cottage. She sat with him until he died that evening. As darkness fell, Agnes stumbled home. As she approached, she could hear the distressed bellowing of her un-milked cow and the cries of her elderly neighbour, begging for her help. Ashamed, Agnes mumbled excuses and hurried on.

The cart that arrived the next day to take John's body to the church was not the clean, polished wagon normally used for funerals. Few friends and neighbours joined the funeral procession and the poor folk who arrived to act as mourners were strangers. They even demanded to be paid three halfpence each, rather than the usual two. Returning home from the churchyard Agnes found her neighbour's cottage silent and her cow lying dead. As death raged around her, Agnes tended her animals.

Yet John's death was better than others. Few had family and friends with them. Many died before a priest could hear their confession. Former graves were reopened to make space for new bodies, while old bones piled up against the church walls. Desperate people buried their dead in fields or ditches.



Step 4

Now complete the second row of your table: 'April to June 1349: the Black Death arrives in Walsham'. Remember to use different colours for what changed and what stayed the same.

Walsham recovers

By the summer, a terrible stench hung over the hastily dug graves in Walsham's churchyard. Weeds grew high in the fields. Animals strayed across neglected gardens. By the time the plague left Walsham, more than half of the villagers had died. It was the same in other villages.

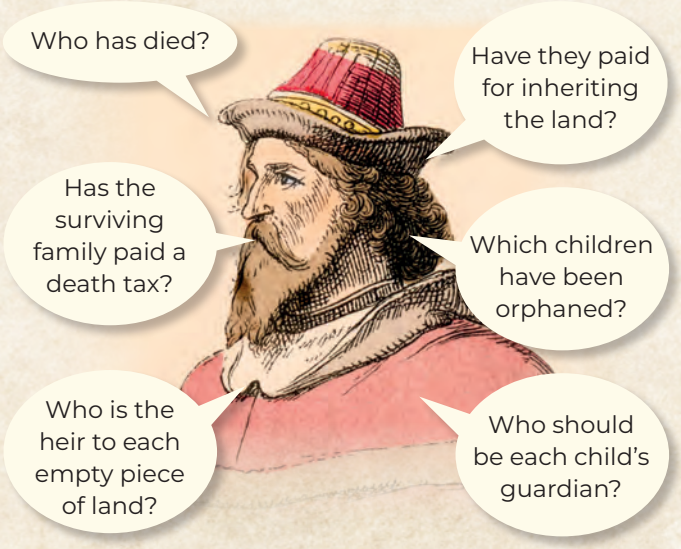
The only people on the roads were the poor. They had no choice but to continue working if they were to feed themselves.

Struggles to impose order

Yet as the pestilence faded away, Edmund de Welles, the lord of the manor at High Hall, had other worries. In June, houses and land lay empty. Rent was uncollected, the manor farm neglected. Hardly any of Edmund's surviving villeins did their labour services, and few workers could be hired cheaply anymore. Instead, they demanded good meals, including meat! Some were demanding nearly twice as much money. If Edmund refused, workers simply looked for work elsewhere.

Edmund feared that if order were not quickly restored, he would lose his authority altogether.

So, on 15 June 1349 Edmund held a manor court. The first job was to record all those who had died: 109 villeins. But for Edmund, there were more important questions to answer:



Edmund was worried about how he would restore order to the village. Whole families had died and it was not always clear who the heir should be. If no adult male heir survived, distant relatives or even women or children would inherit instead. Little Agnes Chapman inherited her father John's two acres of land.

Do you remember the Cranmers who we met on page 104? Hilary and Olivia Cranmer now found themselves well off after the deaths of their husbands, grandfather, father, two brothers and two sisters. The two sisters were pleased to inherit so much land.

But others who inherited land were reluctant to take up the duties that came with that land, especially if they had better inheritances elsewhere. Some land around Walsham fell into neglect.

Lords like Edmund de Welles were not the only ones worried about order breaking down. Three days after Edmund held his manor court, King Edward III issued a law called the Statute of Labourers. He ordered it be read out in every church. This new law said that free as well as unfree peasants had to work for whoever wanted to hire them, not just for their lords. They had to accept pay and conditions no better than those which they had received before the pestilence arrived. In the taverns, peasants grumbled.

1349–1355: finding a new normal

But despite the efforts of the lords and king to restore the old order, life in Walsham did not quickly return to normal.

Familiar faces were replaced by newcomers. These newcomers did not know the customs that governed village life. Villagers began to quarrel about how to organise shared tasks such as setting up sheep folds on the commons, selecting crops to sow and planning the harvest. Many disputes between new neighbours now came before Edmund de Welles's manor court.

Yet some villagers did not want things to go back to how they had been before. Some peasants now realised that their labour was worth more money. Many questioned the old ways of doing things. The manor rolls from Walsham show many disputes between villagers and their lords during the 1350s. Some refused to perform labour services. Others moved away from the village without permission. They refused to return.

Yet life did move on. Seeking companionship or practical help, some remarried quickly. Agnes Chapman's sister-in-law, Alice, found a new husband quickly (although Agnes feared that Alice's new husband was more interested in Alice's newly-inherited land!). Agnes herself did not remarry. Instead, she joined a band of travelling harvest workers, where she was able to earn more money than ever before. Her friend Hillary, who used to work as a servant, got work as a thatcher's assistant. To Agnes's amazement, Hillary told her that she was being paid twice as much as a man had been paid before the plague, and with a meal and ale on top!

The Cranmer sisters also thrived. With the cost of hiring farm labour so high, they decided to invest their money in expanding their herds of cows and flocks of sheep instead. So did

In the years after the Black Death many women took up jobs normally done by men. Historians have found evidence that blacksmith guilds began inviting widowed wives of craftsmen to continue running the family business in their husbands' place. This picture from a fourteenth-century Bible shows a woman working as a blacksmith. By the mid-sixteenth century, when populations began to rise, these jobs reverted to men only.

Alice Pye, the tavern owner. It was a clever choice. Many villagers spent their higher wages on milk, cheese and meat. The Cranmer sisters and Alice Pye were soon much better off.

Step 5

Complete the final row of your table: 'Summer 1349 to 1355: the aftermath'.

Shaping your argument

In many ways, the disaster of the Black Death *disordered* village life. But in other, important ways, life remained *ordered*. Go back through your table. Colour-code your notes to show:

- The ways in which the Black Death brought **disorder** to Walsham. Make sure you look for ways in which disorder brought both suffering and new opportunities.
- The ways in which **order** was kept or restored. Make sure you look for all kinds of order. This includes familiar customs, beliefs and routines, as well as ways of controlling the peasants.

You are now ready to write a story which answers the enquiry question, 'How did one village respond to the Black Death? Your story will have four sections:

1. life before the Black Death
2. life as the Black Death approached
3. life when the Black Death arrived
4. life after the Black Death

In each section of your story, make sure you show how life **both** became more disordered **and** stayed very ordered.

26 Meanwhile, in the Tudor court

The story of Mary Tudor, Queen of England

A troubled early life

Life had never been easy for Mary Tudor. Henry VIII had divorced her beloved mother, Catherine of Aragon, when Mary was just 18. Henry then took away his daughter's title of 'princess'. She was now plain Lady Mary.

Another problem with being Henry VIII's daughter was all the stepmothers. Mary was to have five of them! After her parents' divorce, Mary was not allowed to see her mother. Worse, Mary and her father's new queen, Anne Boleyn, hated each other. Anne soon demanded that Mary be sent away from court.

At least Mary's next stepmother, Henry's third wife, Jane Seymour, was kinder. Mary was devastated when Jane Seymour died. Jane Seymour died after giving birth to Edward, in October 1537. Edward was now heir to the throne, not Mary, but Mary still adored her little half-brother.

Brother trouble

In 1547, Henry VIII died and young Edward came to the throne. He was nine. Mary now watched in horror as her little brother, now King Edward VI, ripped up the Catholic traditions that she held dear. Edward VI and his advisers were committed Protestants.

It became harder and harder for Mary to resist her brother's new prayer books. In one last effort to change Edward's course of action, Mary confronted Edward at court. Both wept. They loved each other. But the gulf between their beliefs was too vast.

Mary even considered fleeing abroad. She planned to take refuge in a Catholic country. At dead of night, a ship waited on the English coast. Mary's ladies-in-waiting desperately shoved clothes into sacks and trunks. Then, at the last minute, Mary decided to stay. To stay and wait. It was to prove a good decision.

Trouble from cunning Protestant nobles

In 1553, 15-year-old Edward lay dying. Edward's advisers knew that the Catholic Mary would undo all the Protestant reforms. The Duke of Northumberland convinced Edward that Mary should not become queen. So who could? Who could keep the country Protestant?

The Duke of Northumberland hatched a cunning plan. 15-year-old Lady Jane Grey was the perfect solution. Lady Jane Grey, the granddaughter of Henry VII, was a Protestant. She was also married to Northumberland's son. If Jane became queen, Northumberland's family would be the most powerful family in England.

Jane never wanted to be queen, but Mary did. Mary had no difficulty raising an army: 30,000 troops came to support her. Jane had no chance. Jane reigned for just nine days. At the age of 37, in 1553, Mary became queen.

A troubled monarch

From the start, Mary asserted herself as a confident monarch. Yet beneath her outward strength, the pressures of being a woman in Tudor England were tiring. Mary needed an heir. But who could the Queen of England marry? An English noble? A foreign prince? Mary made the decision. She would marry King Philip II of Spain.

On paper, Philip was perfect: young, Catholic, powerful. Mary adored him. But Philip didn't love Mary. He wasn't even attracted to Mary. The marriage was just a way of connecting England and Spain.

When the marriage was announced, thousands rebelled. On arrival in London, Philip's advisers were pelted with snowballs. Later, Philip charmed Mary into joining a war against France. This cost England huge sums of money. It also cost England its very last piece of France: Calais.

An assertive monarch

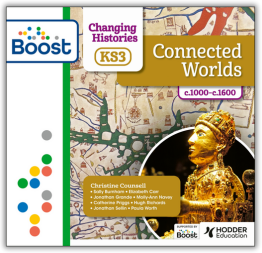
In spite of this, Queen Mary was a trailblazer. She dressed the part, with clothes of gold and silver. She talked the part, giving an inspirational speech from London's Guildhall when people protested against her marriage. She was decisive. She stood firm against powerful Spain when negotiating Philip's rights as her husband. Mary made sure that Philip could not claim to be King of England when she died.

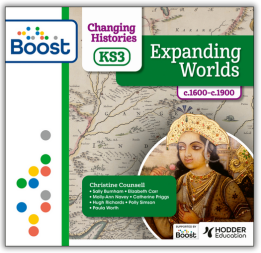
Mary Tudor overcame challenges posed by her family, her public and her enemies. Yet, for centuries, two words came to summarise Mary's life: Bloody Mary. She gained this nickname because of her persecution of Protestants. About 300 were burned to death.

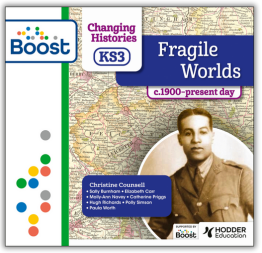
A troubled end

In 1558, Mary was 42, childless, and dying from cancer. Mary had shown that a woman could be monarch. But she would be remembered as 'Bloody Mary'. Days after her death, Londoners danced in the streets to the news that her sister Elizabeth was queen.

Boost digital resources







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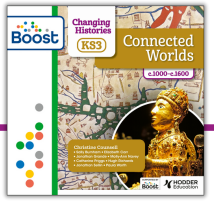

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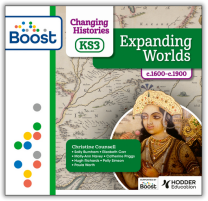

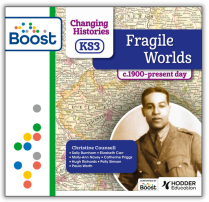

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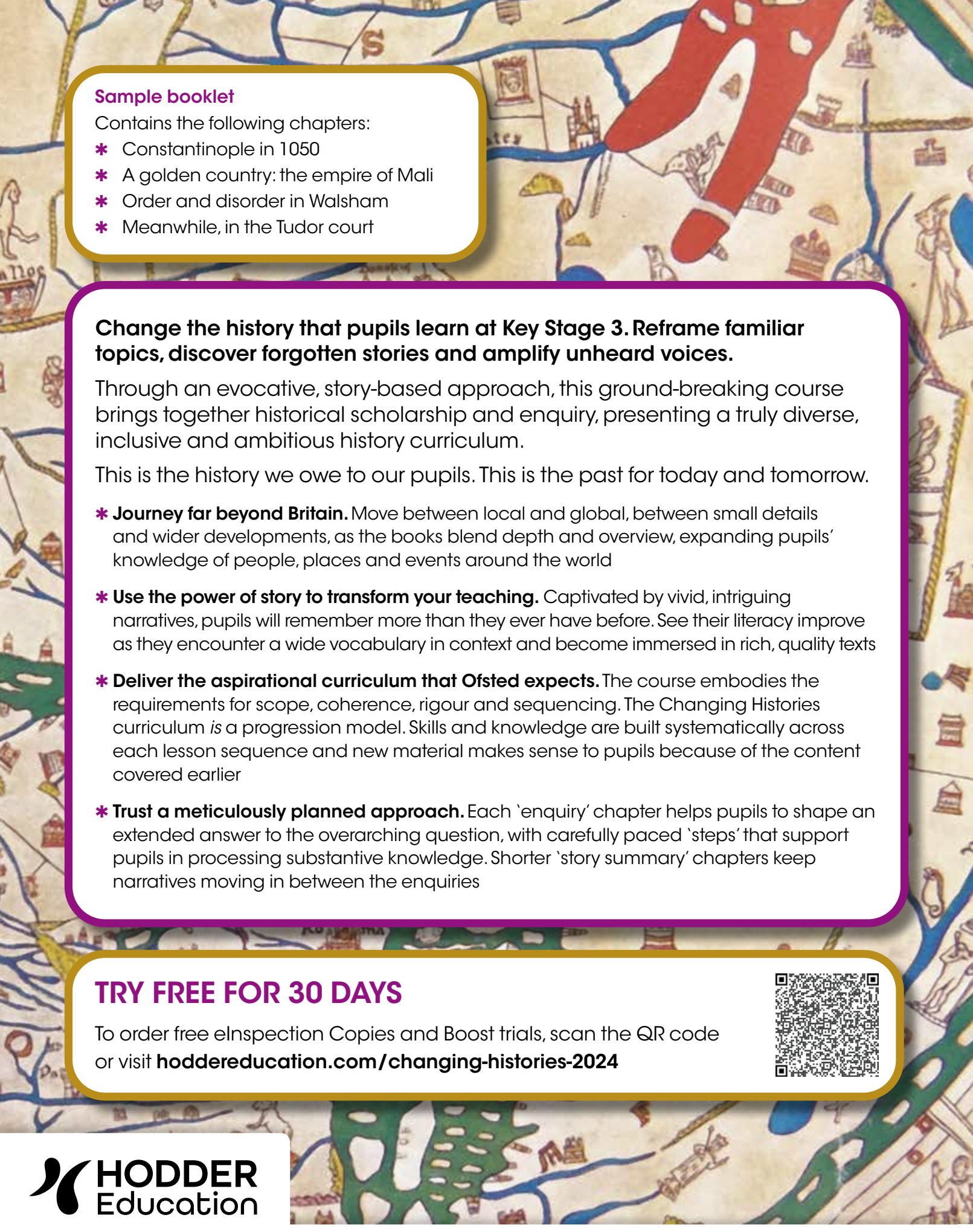

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