

HISTORY: WHY AND HOW

I. What is History?

- A. Most people say “history is **the study of *the past.***”
- B. A better definition is: History is **the study of *the world we live in*** by looking at its past to see how it came to be the way it is, especially through the actions of important people.

II. Why Do We Study History?

- A. The proper reason to study history is to better know and understand the world we live in.
 - 1. When people think that history is about *the past*, they end up learning only about the past, not the present.
 - 2. The story of the most important people and events from the past helps us to understand how the world came to be the way it is *now*.

- B. Being Aware of the Interconnected World We Live In
 - 1. One important thing about the world we live in now is that people in every part of the world are connected to everyone else in the world somehow.
 - 2. We can see how connected we are to the rest of the world by thinking of the distant places our extended families live, the countries we have visited during our lives, and simply by looking at the “Made In” label on the products in our house. (Each of us has products from every continent in our homes: olive oil from Italy, cars and electronics from Japan, clothing and appliances from China, foods from central America, etc.)
 - 3. In addition to family links, travel, and trade, we are connected to one another through communication using the Internet and cell phones.
 - 4. We are so connected that we use the word “*interconnected*” to express it. To be connected means there is a link *between* people (or things); “inter” also means “between”; so the word “interconnected” means “involving a high degree of *betweenness*” or “being connected in multiple and complex ways.”