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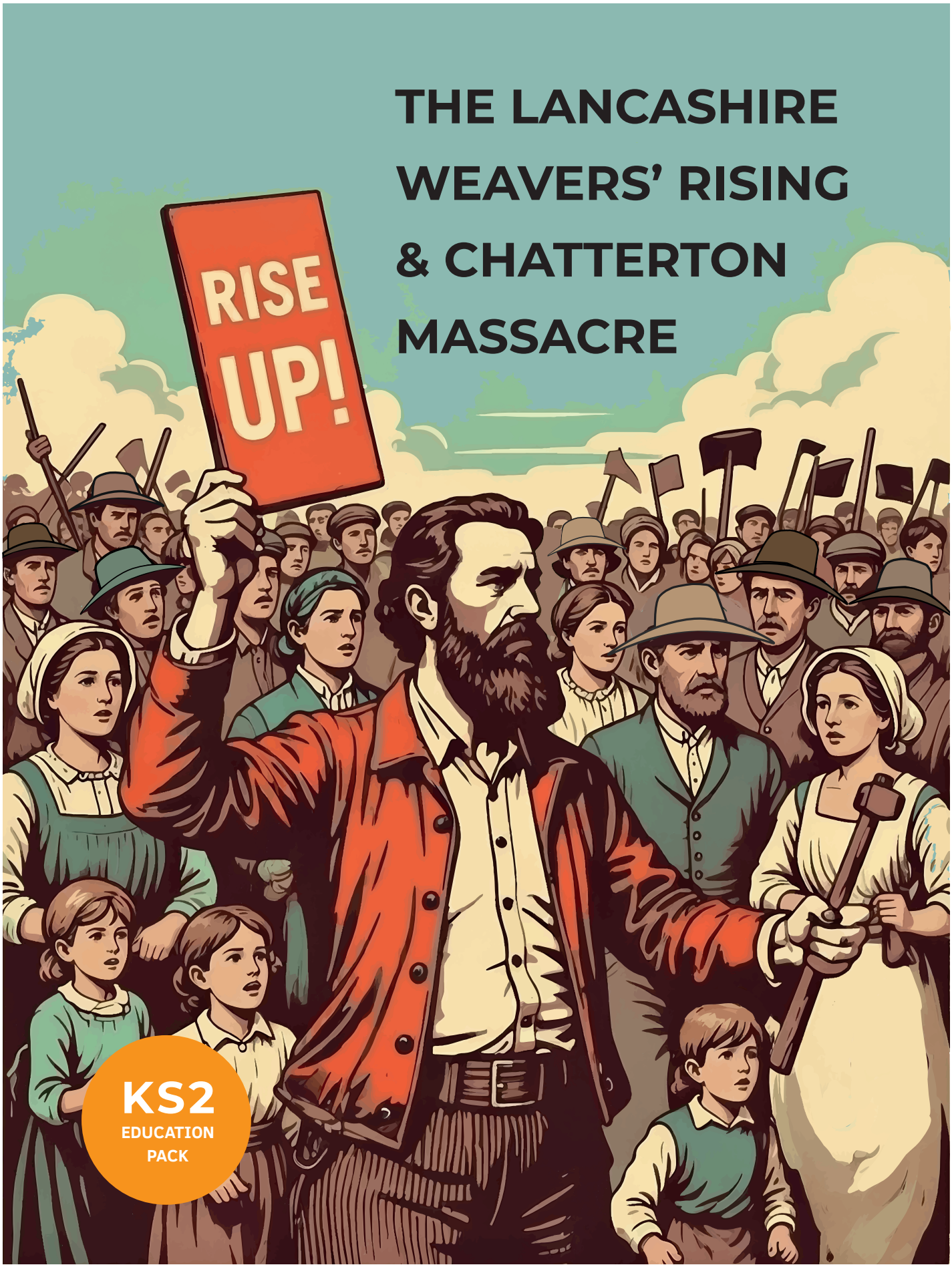
THE LANCASHIRE WEAVERS' RISING & CHATTERTON MASSACRE



KS2 EDUCATION PACK

The Open University

An Educational Resource For Young People

Created by Geraldine Onek, Dr David Gordon Scott & Lela Harris

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Acknowledgments

Geraldine Onek (co-author) is a primary school teacher, community activist and co-founder of the Lancaster Black History Group. A child refugee from South Sudan, she is a proud Black Lancastrian and mum to three young sons. Inspired by the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests, Geraldine was determined to turn a moment into a movement by challenging racism through education.

This latest resource, The Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre teaching toolkit, supports schools to explore local histories of protest, injustice and resistance. It builds on her earlier co-authored toolkits that encouraged Lancaster schools to teach the often-hidden histories of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Across all her work, Geraldine remains passionate about highlighting the stories of marginalised communities and using childhood education as a powerful vehicle for racial justice and equality.

Dr David Gordon Scott (historical researcher and co-author) works at The Open University. He is a former coordinator of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control (the largest and most established international critical criminology society) and co-founder of the international journal 'Justice, Power and Resistance'. He was a leading organiser of the national grass roots campaign against the introduction of Mega Prisons in England in the 2010s and is founder and chair of the registered charity The Weavers Uprising Bicentennial Committee. David was lead author of the successful 2025 National Lottery Heritage Fund bid "Remembering and Commemorating the Lancashire Weavers' Rising". He has published over 20 academic books and 100 articles or book chapters.

Lela Harris (illustrator and designer) is an award winning figurative artist, educator and activist. Her creative practice focuses on uncovering stories of those often overlooked by history and marginalised by society. Working across several mediums, Harris work is an exploration of memory, imagination and historical research.

Receiving nationwide recognition of her work, Harris was a finalist for the Museums Association Decolonisation Award 2023 for her 'Black Lancastrians' Exhibition at Judges' Lodgings Museum in Lancaster and awarded Runner Up in the V&A Illustration Awards 2022 Book Cover Category for her work on the first illustrated edition of 'The Color Purple' by Alice Walker, published by the Folio Society. Harris' work resides in private collections around the world and has been acquired by several public collections including Abbot Hall Gallery, Kendal; Judges' Lodgings Museum, Lancaster and Lancaster University.

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Introduction

Chatterton was once an important location at the heart of Britain's early industrial boom in Lancashire. During the early 1800s, industrialisation transformed places across Lancashire, like Chatterton, into key centres of textile production, with cotton imported from across the empire feeding local mills. While this brought wealth to factory owners, working-class families faced low wages, overcrowded housing, and rising food prices. Many families lived in poverty, unable to afford enough food to survive, while mill profits soared. These growing inequalities, coupled with the tangible experience of mass hunger, led to rising unrest across the country as people began to demand fairer treatment and representation.

Protests were often peaceful, with ordinary citizens - including women and children - gathering to speak out against unfair wages, high food costs, and the lack of political voice. Sometimes protests took the form of machine-breaking, a long tradition when negotiating with employers and grabbing the attention of political elites. The Chatterton Massacre occurred during one such protest. Crowds assembled to express their frustration and hope for change, but instead of being heard, they were met with brutal force. Soldiers intervened, and what began as a targeted protest against mill machinery to raise awareness of the injustices and terrible hardships ordinary people were facing, ended in violence and tragedy.

Understanding the Chatterton Massacre is essential to understanding the broader history of early industrial Britain and the struggles faced by working people in the Northwest of England. It reveals how protest has long been part of British history and how social change has often come at great cost. At present, events like the Chatterton Massacre are not part of the compulsory primary curriculum. The National Curriculum only requires such topics to be covered at Key Stage 3, meaning younger pupils may miss the opportunity to explore these important stories. Yet, learning about such events helps children make sense of their local history and deepens their understanding of democracy, justice, and equality. This educational resource has been developed to support teachers in introducing this complex but vital subject to primary-aged children in an age-appropriate and meaningful way.

The resources in this pack cover the objectives of the National Curriculum across a range of subjects, including History, English, PSHE and Art.

This resource is specifically aimed at pupils in Upper Key Stage Two (9-11), however it can be differentiated to include pupils with additional needs.

The pack also includes historical reference sheets, which can be used by both teachers and pupils, and has been checked for accuracy by subject experts.

Activities allow opportunities for pupils to enhance the use of ICT skills as well as to discuss and debate historical issues. The primary use is to support teachers in the classroom but it also facilitates learning on museums visits, including at Helmshore Mills Textile Museum.

Guidance for Teachers

Historical Enquiry - A Guide For Teachers

This teacher toolkit has been designed to provide a structured and adaptable sequence of six lessons to support the teaching of the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre - a significant series of events in both local and national history. It is specifically developed for Upper Key Stage 2 pupils, with clear guidance on lesson structure, vocabulary, and recommended resources. The lessons are intended to be flexible and can be adapted to suit the needs and abilities of your pupils, while encouraging enquiry, discussion, and critical thinking.

Each lesson supports the development of historical enquiry skills, offering opportunities for pupils to ask questions, analyse evidence, and reflect on key themes such as justice, protest, democracy, inequality, and the struggle for workers' rights. Guidance is included on using non-judgemental language and ensuring that all voices - especially those from marginalised and working-class backgrounds - are heard and explored with care and respect.

Purpose and Context

Following renewed interest in social justice movements such as Black Lives Matter, there has been an important shift in how we approach the teaching of British history. Teachers and pupils alike are increasingly questioning whose stories have been told - and whose have been left out. Events like the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre help us respond to calls to diversify the curriculum and address long-standing inequalities in the historical record.

To overlook the voices of working people and their fight for fairness is to ignore the roots of many rights and freedoms we enjoy today. Protest has always been a vital part of a democratic society, and education plays a crucial role in providing an honest, inclusive, and critical account of historical events such as the Chatterton Massacre.

Historical Background and Relevance

The Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre, like many working-class uprisings of the early 19th century, was rooted in genuine hardship: food poverty, falling wages, and lack of political voice in an industrialising society. While the economic gains of the cotton industry enriched factory owners and merchants, handloom weavers and other working families were left behind, often living in extreme poverty. Their largely peaceful protests - calling for dignity, fair pay, and survival - were frequently met with silence or violence. Though the Lancashire Weavers' Rising did involve property destruction, it was targeted exclusively against specific kinds of machines in the mills, with virtually no violence against persons.

Yet their contributions to social change are largely absent from the mainstream curriculum. This toolkit aims to redress those gaps, helping pupils explore the human stories behind the facts, and to understand that ordinary people - especially those in poverty - have shaped history through courage, resistance, and collective action.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

By the end of the six-lesson sequence, pupils will:

- Understand the historical context of the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre by sequencing the significant events over time to show how different times relate to one another and contribute to a coherent understanding of the past.
- Explore the causes and consequences of protest during the Industrial Revolution.
- Examine primary and secondary sources to form their own interpretations.
- Reflect and understand the role of working-class voices in local, regional and national history, and why they are often underrepresented.
- Draw connections between past and present movements for justice, rights and equity.
- Build empathy through creative responses such as diary entries, letters, or oral histories.

The 2026 Weavers' Uprising Bicentenary Project aimed to acknowledge the 200th anniversary of the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre - a series of events that hold deep historical and social significance. This milestone provided a timely opportunity to reflect on the conditions that led to the 1826 uprising, the responses of those in power, and the experiences of the working-class communities involved.

The aim of this pack is to help pupils develop their skills of historical enquiry by encouraging them to investigate sources, question narratives, and understand the broader context of the event. By engaging with this local history, pupils can bring greater meaning to the subject and build a more informed understanding of past struggles for justice and equality. To ensure this, the following points should be considered:

Language

Before teaching the topic of the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre, it is important to spend time as a class exploring the language used when discussing events of historical violence and injustice. The Chatterton Massacre can raise strong emotions and may be misunderstood or oversimplified by pupils. For example, some historical accounts or media sources may describe the response as "riots" or "fights" rather than say "protests", a choice of language that can carry biased or negative connotations. By unpacking such terms, teachers can help pupils understand how language influences perception and judgement.

It is also vital to consider whose voices are heard and whose are left out - particularly those living in poverty at the time, whose experiences and grievances were often ignored or dismissed. The framing and interpretation of historical events can have a significant impact on how people understand and respond to them. Encouraging the use of respectful, non-judgmental language creates space for inclusive dialogue and helps ensure that all perspectives are acknowledged and valued in the classroom.

Relevance

The Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre are relatable and relevant historical events linked to contemporary struggles, where communities still face oppression when exercising their rights through protest. Events such as the treatment of peaceful demonstrators today echo historical patterns of silencing dissenting voices. Encourage pupils to 'work backwards' - don't simply present the answers, but instead create opportunities for them to investigate the causes, consequences, and language surrounding the workers' protests and subsequent massacre. This approach helps pupils develop inference skills, become critical thinkers, and draw connections between past injustices and ongoing societal challenges.

Historical Background

Aitkens and Lords Mill, Chatterton, before demolition in 1890s.

The 1826 Lancashire Weavers' Rising and the Chatterton Massacre

2026 marked 200 years since the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre, a series of interrelated events rooted in the economic hardship and political unrest of early 19th-century industrial Britain. The Weavers' Uprising Bicentenary Project aimed to mark this anniversary by shining a light on the lives, labour, and resistance of the handloom weavers of Pennine Lancashire - once the backbone of the local textile economy. These men and women were not only often highly skilled artisans but also vital contributors to Britain's global trade in cloth, long before the dominance of mechanised factory production.

As the Industrial Revolution gathered pace, the rural weaving communities of Lancashire found themselves increasingly under threat. One reason was long-term economic instability. Another was the introduction of mills and power looms. Driven by the promise of faster, cheaper cloth production, this transformed the region into one of the world's first industrialised societies. But progress came at a cost. The handloom weavers' livelihoods collapsed as wages fell consistently for several decades, and living and working conditions deteriorated. Entire families faced hunger and squalor, living in overcrowded homes with little or no access to basic necessities. One reason wages fell was because of a large influx of people taking up handloom weaving following the end of the Napoleonic wars. Whereas intricate and high-quality weaving by human hand took many years to master, basic and coarse weaving could be learnt in a matter of weeks. Handloom weaving was taught in workhouses for those without a trade. Others new to the trade included demobilised soldiers returning from the wars and those escaping severe economic hardship in Ireland. Together, they swelled the number of handloom weavers in Pennine

Lancashire, ensuring a cheap and compliant labour force. Handloom weavers could also see that the introduction of new machinery – known as the 'power loom' – would also, in the long term, present a serious threat to their way of life. These machines were of insufficient number and technical efficiency to present a challenge to handloom weaving in 1826, but it was obvious by then the machines would one day replace them.

Between 1825 and 1827, Britain entered a deep economic depression. For the weavers of Pennine Lancashire, this meant not just lower wages, but widespread food poverty and rising levels of unemployment. This economic depression was one of the worst in British history and hit the cotton trade very hard. Indeed, the 1825 banking collapse that precipitated the depression remained the worst of its kind until the financial crisis of 2008. Bread and oat prices soared while incomes stagnated. Many weavers and other workers in Lancashire were out of work for several months. Children had little or no food and hunger was widespread.

The living and working conditions of handloom weavers had been in decline for decades. In the face of these deteriorating conditions, the weavers did not suffer in silence. Over several years, they petitioned the government, formed associations, and organised strikes to demand fairer pay and humane working conditions. However, their appeals were repeatedly ignored, and their peaceful protests dismissed. A further tradition had also developed among weavers and other workers from the late 1700s that involved taking direct action to persuade their employers to increase wages and improve working conditions. This action included confiscating or even destroying machinery in mills and other factories. Machine-breaking in the early nineteenth century was considered a desperate and high-risk last option action when other strategies had failed, but it was one which had a long track record and popular support.

The Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre must be seen in the wider context of escalating desperation and previous waves of civil unrest. Before the events of 1826, there had already been widespread protests in response to food shortages (risings which were sometimes referred to as 'food riots'). Earlier uprisings such as the Luddite rebellions of 1811-1817 and the pro-democracy gathering that resulted in the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester (1819), had shown how working people, denied political representation, often turned to collective action. For the 'Luddites' (who were named after the mythical figure of 'General Ned Ludd' who is said to have started a wave of machine-breaking protests in Nottingham in 1811), this action involved property damage - such as the destruction of machinery or breaking into mills - as a last resort against starvation and exploitation. From the 1760s through to the 1830s, whenever the people of Britain had faced starvation, hunger or unemployment, they had virtually always turned to mass protests of one form or another.

The weavers and other workers were not just protesting for themselves, but for their families, their communities, and their right to survive. As starvation loomed, the uprising became not just a reaction to economic conditions but a powerful act of defiance against a system that devalued human labour and dignity. The massacre that followed was not an isolated event, but part of a larger pattern of state violence used to suppress working-class resistance.

This educational pack focuses on these histories - not simply to commemorate, but to foster a deeper understanding of the causes and consequences of protest.

National Cross Curriculum Links - Key Stage 2

PSHE

- To reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences
- To think about the lives of people living in other places and times, and people with different values and customs

English

Reading

- Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion
- Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction
- Asking questions to improve their understanding
- Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Writing

- Noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary
- In narratives, describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to convey character and advance the action

Speaking and Listening

- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates
- Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions

Music

- Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression
- Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the inter-related dimensions of music

Physical Education- Dance

- Perform dances using a range of movement patterns

Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural development (SMSC):

- Ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life
- Sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences
- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, recognise legal boundaries and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues and ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues
- Ability to recognise, and value, the things we share in common across cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities
- Knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- Interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept and respect diversity. This is shown by their respect and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities

Art

- To create sketch books to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas
- To improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials, such as pencil, charcoal, paint, clay

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The appendix of this educational pack includes a detailed fact sheet about The Lancashire Weavers' Rising and The Chatterton Massacre in the layout of a Knowledge Organiser.

Curriculum Guidance
- Key Stage 2

Pupils should continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

The latest Ofsted review of History taught in primary schools, focuses on explicitly teaching disciplinary and substantive skills. Think of them as two sides of the same coin.

Substantive Knowledge

The 'what' - e.g. places, people, dates, events, periods of time, facts and figures.

Substantive knowledge can be broadly divided into three areas:

Chronological knowledge/framework: Over time, pupils should develop an intricate schema of how historical periods connect with each other, with a deeper understanding of the individual events and narratives within a certain period. This can be supported in class through physical timelining activities, sequencing games, and other interactive approaches.

Coherent topic knowledge: solid factual knowledge of the past, including things such as place, specific events, society, people, dates, narratives, etc.

Substantive Concepts: specific vocabulary and definitions for things like rich/poor, king, dynasty, democracy, era, trade, tax, empire, civilisation, warfare, parliament, etc.

Repeated encounters enable pupils to develop their schema. Fundamentally, they should be embedded throughout the curriculum so that they can be encountered multiple times. This way, understanding is nurtured through repeated encounters in specific, meaningful environments, rather than being taught in an abstract way.

Disciplinary knowledge

The 'How' - This area explores how historians and others study the past, and how they construct historical claims, arguments and accounts. This is not a set of generic skills, but a complex body of knowledge. Pupils

need to build this knowledge over time by encountering a range of meaningful examples of how historians have studied specific aspects of the past and constructed claims and accounts about them.

Pupils learn about how historians investigate the past and how they construct historical claims, arguments and accounts through specific examples. Fundamentally, this requires robust substantive knowledge about relevant historical contexts. In essence and for ease of use, 'Historical Enquiry'.

Disciplinary knowledge is often divided into seven areas:

Chronology – The sequencing of events, stories, pictures and periods over time to show how different times relate to one another and contribute to a coherent understanding of the past.

Change and Continuity - This relates to the pace, nature and extent or characterisation of change.

Extent or degree
Pace or rate
Nature or type
Process

Cause and Consequence – The identification, investigation and communication of the reasons for and results of historical events, situations and changes studied in the past'. This requires teaching pupils to use detailed and developed substantive knowledge to examine how and why events or states of affairs occurred, emerged changed.

Similarity and difference - This refers to the extent and type of difference between people, groups, experiences or places in the same historical period. It often involves detecting and analysing generalisations. Pupils should be taught about their limitations. Did all Vikings go raiding? Did all the Romans think the same?

Sources and evidence - Pupils learn how historians use a range of sources as evidence to construct knowledge, understanding, challenge or test claims about the past.

What is the difference between a source and evidence?
A source is anything that contains information about the past.
Evidence is what we take from that source to use for a specific purpose.

Historical interpretation – Understanding how and why different views and accounts of the past are constructed.

Historical significance - This refers to how and why historians attribute, understand and suggest reasons why events, periods, societies and people may be considered historically significant'. Equally, it is also important to consider historical silence: why certain events, trends and individuals haven't been considered significant. E.g. women in scientific fields.

Lesson Objectives Overview

Lesson	Substantive Concepts: JUSTICE AND EQUALITY	Focused learning tasks
1	Disciplinary Knowledge: **SOURCES and EVIDENCE** Pupils learn how historians use a range of sources as evidence to construct knowledge, challenge or test claims about the past. What is the difference between a source and evidence? A source is anything that contains information about the past. Evidence is what we take from that source to utilise it for a specific purpose.	Pupils will: - Explore different sources and say which are more useful to use as evidence. - Recognise how to use different sources (primary/secondary) to answer questions and make conclusions.
2	Disciplinary knowledge : **CHRONOLOGY** The sequencing of events, stories, pictures and periods over time to show how different times relate to one another and contribute to a coherent understanding of the past.	Pupils will: - Demonstrate knowledge of aspects of history significant in their locality (North West of England, Lancashire). - Describe links and contrasts within and across different periods of time including short-term and long-term scale. - Use dates and historical terms when ordering events and objects.
3	Disciplinary Knowledge: **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE** This refers to how and why historians attribute importance to events, trends and individuals. Equally, it is also important to consider historical silence: why certain events, trends and individuals haven't been considered significant	Pupils will: - Identify historically significant people (Mary Hindle) and events in different situations.
4	Disciplinary Knowledge: **HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION** Understanding how and why different views and accounts of the past are constructed.	Pupils will: - Recognise how sources of evidence are used to make historical claims.
5	Disciplinary Knowledge: **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE** This refers to how and why historians attribute, understand and suggest reasons why events, periods, societies and people may be considered historically significant'. Equally, it is also important to consider historical silence: why certain events, trends and individuals haven't been considered significant.	Pupils will- - Choose the right sources to support lines of enquiry. - Discuss and debate historical issues using the correct vocabulary.
6	Disciplinary Knowledge: **CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE** The identification, investigation and communication of the reasons for and results of historical events, situations and changes studied in the past'. This requires teaching pupils to use detailed and developed substantive knowledge to examine how and why events or states of affairs occurred, emerged changed	Pupils will: - Describe the impact of historical events and changes locally, regionally and nationally

Helmshore Moor, Lancaashire, April 2023

Lesson Plans

LESSON 1	WHAT WAS THE CHATTERTON MASSACRE? **Learning Objective** To recognise how to use different sources (primary/secondary) to answer questions and make conclusions
Key Facts	• **The Chatterton Massacre** occurred on **26 April 1826** in Chatterton, Pennine Lancashire, where a**t least six people were shot dead by British soldiers** during the Lancashire Weavers' Rising. • The massacre happened on the **third day of the Lancashire Weavers' Rising**, a widespread protest that began on **24 April 1826** and spread across several Lancashire towns. • On that third day, a huge **crowd of 3,000–4,000** people marched from nearby towns toward mills in Edenfield and Chatterton, where **magistrates and soldiers were waiting.** • **'The Hungry Lookout'** describes the wider context of **economic hardship and social unrest in 1826**, including unemployment, machine-breaking protests and the use of **military patrols and sentinels** — such as Ned Kenyon — to protect property.
Suggested Activities	Ask pairs to discuss what they already know about local and national resistance to injustice in British history. Encourage them to think about times when people have protested or campaigned for change and why they did so. Take feedback and record key ideas. Explain that the **Chatterton Massacre** involved ordinary working-class people, many of whom were peacefully protesting for better working conditions and political representation. Emphasise that their demands were met with force rather than dialogue, and that those involved did not see their actions as morally or legally wrong — they believed they were citizens calling for change. Using the primary and secondary sources — *The Hungry Lookout*, *60th Duke Rifles* by **Charles Stadden**, *The Queen Bays* by **Michael Angelo Hayes**, the Chatterton Peace Memorial and the list of those arrested — ask pupils to study the images and evidence carefully. Draw attention to the vocabulary in *The Hungry Lookout*, exploring how participants were described and perceived by those protecting the mills, such as Ned. Discuss how language can shape opinions and attitudes

	towards events and people. Guide pupils to use the 5Ws to structure their discussion: • **What** happened? • **Who** was involved? • **When** did it take place? • **Where** did it occur? • **Why** do they think it happened? Encourage pupils to consider how perspectives differ depending on who is telling the story, and how this affects our understanding of historical events. Ask pairs to discuss the ways that we might recognise how to use different sources (primary/secondary) to answer questions and make conclusions. Ask pairs to work together using question prompt. Pupils to ask and answer questions about the different sources. What can I see? What does this tell me? What can I infer? Claim, support, question.
Possible written outcomes	Using The Hungry Lookout text, pupils can create a story map to sequence the key events and then draw what they think happened, using their inference skills to interpret clues from the text and the other sources. They could then use their story map to write a recount from the perspective of Ned, retelling the events in the first person. Encourage pupils to describe what Ned saw, heard and felt, using emotive language and expanded noun phrases to bring the experience to life. They should write in chronological order, using time conjunctions (e.g. first, later, after that, finally) and include details that show his thoughts and reactions to what happened.
Cross-curricular outcomes	**Geography:** Pupils could first research the event to identify key locations, landmarks and meeting points connected to the protest. Using this information, they could then trace the route on a map of the local area to imagine the journey of those who protested. Ask pupils to mark the starting point, stopping places and final destination, considering the distance travelled, the time it might have taken on foot, and why certain locations were significant. Encourage them to think about what protestors might have seen, heard or experienced along the way. Pupils could annotate their maps with historical notes, questions, and inferred thoughts or feelings to deepen their understanding of the journey.

Lesson Plans

LESSON **2**	**WHY RISE UP? A STRUGGLE ACROSS GENERATIONS.** **Learning Objective** To describe links and contrasts within and across different periods of time including short-term and long-term scale. To use dates and historical terms when ordering events and objects.
Key Facts	• **The Chatterton Massacre / Lancashire Weavers' Rising** was not a single violent event but the outcome of **decades of hardship, hunger, and working-class resistance,** involving ordinary families fighting to survive. • From the **1760s to the 1830s**, Lancashire weavers used **machine-breaking as a form of protest and communication**, targeting power looms and frames to make their voices heard when peaceful routes like petitions or representation were unavailable. • The **rise of ther power loom, end of legal apprenticeships and industrialisation** severely damaged handloom weaving, causing **falling wages, job losses and the loss of traditional skills**, especially during the **economic recession of 1825–1827** which led to widespread hunger and starvation. • **The April 1826 Lancashire Weavers' Uprising** was **planned and collective**, involving up to **10,000 people across multiple towns**, representing the desperate voice of whole communities pushed to the brink rather than isolated acts of anger.
Suggested Activities	**Conscience Alley:** Ask pupils to read Tommy's Story carefully and discuss the historical context of hunger, industrialisation, and protest in 1826 Lancashire. Pupils should then decide whether Tommy should accompany his father on the uprising or stay behind, justifying their decision with evidence from the text. Encourage them to consider risk, family responsibility, and desperation, and to write a short paragraph giving advice to Tommy that shows empathy and clear historical reasoning. **Interactive Timeline Task:** Pupils use key dates from the 1760s to 1826 to order events showing how industrialisation, economic change, and generational hardship led to the weavers' protest. For each date, they act out a scene from one of the key protests, showing the experiences of families, workers, and children at that time.

Possible written outcomes	**Diary entry:** Reread Tommy's Story and imagine they are Tommy on the evening before the uprising. Pupils should write a diary entry in the first person, describing Tommy's thoughts, fears, and hopes about his father joining the protest. Encourage them to include details about hunger, family life, danger, and the reasons for the uprising, using emotions and evidence from the text to show understanding of what life was like for working-class families in 1826. **Have you decided to go on the protest?** **Where were you when the trouble started, and what did you see or hear?** **How are you feeling?** **What do you want others (like the government or your family) to know about what happened?** **What are your hopes or fears for the future after the protest?**
Cross-curricular outcomes	**SMSC:** Pupils compare the 1826 weavers' protests with modern protests (e.g. climate marches, school strikes, food bank campaigns), identifying similarities and differences in causes, methods and demands for change. Begin by exploring the reasons behind each movement — what problems were people responding to, and how were these issues affecting their daily lives? Pupils can then examine how protestors made their voices heard, such as marches, petitions, strikes, public speeches or social media campaigns. Encourage pupils to consider questions such as: Who was involved? How did authorities respond? What risks did protestors face? What changes were they hoping to achieve? Pupils could record their findings in a Venn diagram, comparison table or short written reflection, drawing conclusions about how protest has evolved over time and what has remained the same. **Music:** Using The Hand-Loom Weavers' Lament as inspiration, pupils write a short protest song based on Tommy's story. Begin by exploring the language and tone of the original song, discussing how repetition, rhythm and emotive vocabulary are used to express hardship and injustice. Identify key themes such as hunger, poverty, unfair wages and the struggle to provide for family. Pupils can then plan their own lyrics, choosing powerful words and phrases that reflect Tommy's experiences and feelings. Encourage them to write in the first person to strengthen the sense of voice and authenticity. They might include a repeated chorus to emphasise the main message and mirror traditional protest songs.

Lesson Plans

LESSON **3**	**WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THOSE WHO WERE ARRESTED/ DIED? THE PRISONERS' TALE** **Learning Objective** To identify historically significant people (Mary Hindle) and events in different situations
Key Facts	• **Not all affected were protestors:** Mary Hindle, a young woman from a weaving community, was an innocent bystander caught up in the Chatterton Massacre. • **Harsh living conditions:** Life for women like Mary was shaped by economic hardship, low wages, scarce food, long hours, and limited rights in early 19th-century Lancashire. • **Severe punishments:** Mary was sentenced to life transportation to New South Wales; **41 others were convicted** for their part in the Lancashire Weavers' Rising. **Thirty-one were imprisoned**, and **ten were transported to New South Wales**. One prisoner, **Thomas Ashworth,** died in Lancaster Castle, while **Simeon Wright** and **James Chambers** died on The Dolphin Hulk ship while awaiting transportation in 1827. • **Human perspective on history:** Mary's story, along with others like Simeon Wright, highlights the personal suffering behind historical events and challenges the portrayal of the uprising as merely a "riot," supporting the view that the protests were brutally repressed.
Suggested Activities	**Role Play:** Read the testimonies from the six different people who were killed during the Chatterton Massacre and ask the pupil to role play the different characters. The purpose of this activity is for the class role play as the 'jury' and decide who seems to be guilty and who seems to be innocent? Using the different sources including the extract from' Giving Dignity for the Dead' pupils need to explain their choice and justification. **Hot seating:** Mary Hindle was an innocent bystander during the Lancashire Weavers' Rising. Sources like, Mary Hindle's letter to her family gives Historian's an insight into how she was feeling during that period. Using the different sources pupils could outline Mary's life and the events she witnessed. To develop empathy and understanding, pupils could take part in hot-seating, asking and answering questions whilst a pupil plays the role of Mary. Through Mary Hindle's story pupils

	gain a **personal and human perspective**, seeing that history is not only about major events or movements but also about the **real lives and struggles of individuals.**
Possible written outcomes	Using the Mary Hindle Letter and the extract from Dignity for the Dead, pupils could write an autobiography in the first person, imagining they are **Mary Hindle**. They should plan their writing in chronological order, starting with events leading up to the uprising and then describing the key moments she witnessed or experienced. Pupils should include Mary's thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the events, using emotive language to convey fear, anger, hope, or determination. Encourage them to add personal reflections and details that show her perspective, such as interactions with other weavers, observations of the protests, and her responses to the aftermath. This activity helps pupils build historical understanding, develop empathy, and strengthen narrative writing skills, while learning to bring a historical figure's story to life through a structured, first-person autobiography.
Cross-curricular outcomes	**Art:** There are only artistic illustrations of Mary, however there is a brief description of her appearance in the extract from 'Dignity for The Dead'. Use retrieval skills to highlight key vocabulary that describes what Mary looked like. Create your own image of how you imagine what Mary looked like. Use the questions in the booklet as prompts to help pupils. **PSHE/Art:** To reflect on the six individuals who lost their lives at the Chatterton Massacre, pupils can use their research to create a commemorative blue plaque. They should gather information about each person, including their names, ages, occupations, and any relevant details about their lives or involvement in the uprising. Using the template on the provided page, pupils can design a plaque that honours their memory, incorporating a brief description of the events, key dates, and the significance of the massacre. Encourage pupils to consider how to make the plaque informative and respectful, using clear, concise language and appropriate imagery or symbols. This activity helps pupils connect personally with historical events, recognise the human cost of protest, and understand how communities remember and honour those who fought for justice.

Lesson Plans

LESSON **4**	**CLASS IN SILENCE: WHOSE VOICES ARE HEARD IN HISTORY?** **Learning Objective** To Recognise how sources of evidence re used to make historical claims.
Key Facts	• **Class prejudice:** In early 19th-century Britain, poor and working-class people were often blamed for their poverty, shaping how handloom weavers and labourers at Chatterton were judged and remembered. • **Limited voices:** Most protesters were illiterate and lacked access to formal channels, so their perspectives were often ignored or silenced in courts and official records. • **Power and law:** Authorities and mill owners benefited from the law — like the reading of the Riot Act and compensation for damages — while families of the victims received nothing. • **Bias in historical accounts:** Language like "mob" and emphasis on financial loss framed protesters as dangerous, masking their suffering and the peaceful nature of the protest, highlighting the importance of questioning whose voices are recorded in history.
Suggested Activities	Pupils read the eyewitness accounts of **Thomas Aitken** and **Betty Upton**, who helped **James Waddicar**. Using the information provided, pupils analyse each source to decide whether statements are factual or based on opinion. They highlight facts in one colour and opinions in another. Through analysing official records and eyewitness accounts, pupils recognise that primary sources can contain bias. Explain that bias is not necessarily negative and should not simply be dismissed. Instead, pupils should consider whether the bias makes the source unreliable or whether it provides useful insight into the attitudes and values of the time. **Heart, Head, Bag, Bin:** Using a large piece of paper draw an outline of a person, a large heart shape on the chest and separate carrier bag and bin. One group, retrieve information from the Thomas Aitken's eyewitness account and the other

	from Mrs Betty Upton's testimony. Pupils will write comments on sticky notes and attach them to the appropriate place: o **Head** - "something I have learned (factual)" o **Heart** - "something that made me empathise with the character" o **Bag** - "something that is relevant and I will remember" o **Bin** - "Anything I didn't find useful " Then present and feedback to the whole class their own interpretations. How are the similar/ different? Would they define their text as a 'source' or 'evidence' of what happened?
Possible written outcomes	*Newspaper report*: Using all the information pupils have learnt about The Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre write a newspaper report to show the perspectives of both Thomas Aitken and Betty Upton. • Create a clear, eye-catching headline. • Write an opening paragraph that answers: Who? What? When? Where? • Include further details explaining Why it happened and How events unfolded. • Add quotes from eyewitnesses or officials (real or based on sources studied. • Finish with the consequences or impact of the event. Pupils should consider: Is their report neutral, or does it reflect a particular perspective? How might different newspapers have reported the event differently?
Cross-curricular outcomes	**Art:** *Scene Snapshot* – Pupils choose either Thomas or Betty's eyewitness account from the text. First, read the account carefully and highlight descriptive language, key actions, and details about the setting. Using this information, pupils create a detailed scene illustration of what their chosen character saw, paying attention to people, buildings, objects, and atmosphere to make the scene vivid and historically accurate. Around the illustration, pupils write thoughts for a minor character in the background of the scene — someone who is not the main focus but who would have been present. Encourage them to imagine this character's feelings, reactions, and perspective, using inference from the text to guide their ideas. Pupils should include sensory details (what the character might see, hear, smell, or feel) and use descriptive language to bring both the scene and the background character to life. This activity develops empathy, close reading, and creative interpretation skills.

Lesson Plans

LESSON **5**	**PROTESTORS OR VANDALS?: WERE THE WEAVERS JUSTIFIED IN THEIR ACTIONS?** **Learning Objective** To discuss and debate historical issues using the correct vocabulary.
Key Facts	• **Chatterton Massacre:** In April 1826, during the Lancashire Weavers' Rising, soldiers opened fire on starving, unemployed weavers in Chatterton, killing several. Modern historians now classify it as a **massacre**, not a "riot" or "fight". • **Language matters:** Terms like "riot" or "fight" were used by authorities to justify violence and distort the truth. Calling it a **massacre** corrects this "knowledge injustice" and acknowledges the victims' suffering. • **Changing narratives:** Since 2022, historians, local groups, and the media have begun calling the event a massacre, reflecting efforts to **reclaim truth, correct the historical record, and honour the victims**. • **Importance for teaching:** Studying Chatterton helps pupils **understand power in historical narratives**, develop critical thinking, empathize with those affected, and connect past injustices to modern discussions of truth and fairness.
Suggested Activities	Ask pupils to recap prior learning about attitudes towards poor and working-class people in the 19th century. Explain that this context is essential when analysing primary sources. Discuss why we know less about the protesters themselves — many were illiterate, silenced, or not permitted to speak in court — meaning we often rely on eyewitness or official accounts. Read through the mill owner, Thomas Aitken's account together. Highlight key vocabulary (e.g. "mob") and discuss how word choice shapes perception. Question the reliability of the source: When was it written? Who wrote it? What was their purpose? As a class create an **Evidence Web** – Write a statement in the centre (e.g., *Thomas Aitken's testimony is an unreliable source*). Around it, record pieces of evidence from the text that prove it.

	Debate Statement: 'The events that happened at Chatterton should be remembered as a massacre and not a riot.' Using the accounts of Thomas Aitken and Betty Upton, alongside the statements of the six who died, pupils compare perspectives and consider how the naming of the Chatterton Massacre influences interpretation. Link this to learning about the wider Lancashire Weavers' Rising. Organise a class debate with one judge and two groups (for and against). Pupils use the different sources to support their arguments, aiming to persuade the opposing group. Afterward, reflect: Has anyone changed their view? Why? Throughout, emphasise that historians must assess sources for accuracy and bias to develop strong historical interpretation skills.
Possible written outcomes	**Narrative Storytelling Activity:** Pupils use the toolkit to create a story map showing the sequence of events from Day 1 of the **Lancashire Weavers' Rising** to the **Chatterton Massacre**. They then use their story maps to retell the events, either through drama or by writing a recount.
Cross-curricular outcomes	**SMSC:** Read the secondary source, an article called "Chatterton: Britain's Hidden Massacre" which was written in 2022 on page 43. Then introduce a current event involving protest or public action. Pupils compare the two events using the following prompts: • **What were people protesting about?** • **How the protesters viewed differently by different groups?** • **How was each event reported or described?** • **What values (e.g. justice, fairness, democracy, freedom) are shown in each case?** Finish with a class discussion on what has changed and what has remained the same regarding citizens speaking out for change.

Lesson Plans

LESSON 6	**HOW AND WHY DO WE COMMEMORATE THE LANCASHIRE WEAVERS' RISING?** **Learning Objective** To describe the impact of historical events and changes locally, regionally and nationally
Key Facts	• **Significance of the uprising:** The Lancashire Weavers' Rising was a major rural protest, comparable in importance to Peterloo (1819), giving workers a voice against starvation and hardship in Pennine Lancashire. • **Industrial context:** It illustrates early resistance to the harms of industrialisation in England's first industrialised region, marking the beginning of the decline of handloom weaving. • **Government response:** The state's reaction and the labelling of events as "power loom riots" reveal 19th-century approaches to social control and how history was interpreted. • **Cultural and moral importance:** Commemorating the uprising honours those who suffered or died, helps understand Lancashire's economy, landscape, and culture, and encourages reflection on social inequalities—past and present. • **Bicentennial commemorations in 2026:** Artistic, creative, and educational activities — including exhibitions and talks — marked the 200th anniversary, engaging communities and providing a shared understanding of the 1826 uprising.
Suggested Activities	**Exploring Commemoration and Local History** Protests and social movements remain relevant today. These activities encourage pupils to view their local area critically and ask questions about who is remembered and why. Pupils research their local area to identify commemorations, such as blue and red plaques, statues, street names, or buildings. They then consider patterns or disparities: Who is celebrated? Are certain groups, such as wealthy, white men, overrepresented? How might these choices shape our understanding of history? This encourages critical thinking about local heritage and the narratives presented in history.

	Design a Protest Banner To commemorate this, artist James Fox was commissioned by the *Weavers Uprising Bicentennial Committee* to create a banner that honours those who resisted and those who died due to social injustice. James' banner is made out of fabric and include images that he believes represents the Lancashire Weavers' Rising. Use James Fox's work as inspiration to create your own banner—one that connects to the broader struggle of ordinary people in Lancashire. Pupils could design and make a textile banner reflecting weavers' demands (fair wages, better conditions). • Consider colour, symbols and slogans. • Evaluate: Is the message clear? Is it bold and eye-catching? Could you include the significant people, places and dates on your banner? James uses the 'Rise Up' phrase to highlight what happened. What words would you choose? Design and create your own banner using a range of materials or just even draw one on paper.
Possible written outcomes	*Writing for a Purpose* – Pupils could write a letter to Chatterton's council persuading them to reconsider the wording on the memorial. Using all their knowledge of the event, they should explain how terms like "fight" and "riot" fail to acknowledge that lives were lost and the human cost of the uprising. Pupils should suggest a more appropriate name for the memorial that honours those who died and reflects the historical significance of the events. Encourage them to structure the letter clearly, starting with an introduction stating their purpose, followed by reasons supported with historical evidence and research, and ending with a persuasive conclusion. They should use formal, respectful language, emotive vocabulary to convey the seriousness of the issue, and consider the audience's perspective to make their argument compelling. This activity develops empathy, critical thinking, and persuasive writing skills.
Cross-curricular outcomes	**Dance:** In groups, pupils choreograph their own sequence to express the emotions and experiences of the weavers. Begin by discussing the weavers' daily life, including their long hours, hard working conditions, and the physical and emotional toll of their labour. Pupils can use interpretative dance to explore and empathise with these experiences, understanding how movement can convey feelings that words alone cannot. For example, they might use repetitive weaving actions, tired postures, and slow, heavy steps to show exhaustion and hardship. Contrast this with stronger, sharper, expansive movements to represent protest, solidarity, and the unity of the weavers. Pupils should consider the flow, rhythm, and spatial patterns of their sequence, and may incorporate changes in tempo, levels, or direction to reflect the tension and energy of the events.

Lesson 1

Hello

My name is Dr David Gordon Scott, and I live in Ramsbottom, Lancashire, with my dog, Flossy.

Flossy is something of a local hero. She's a rescue dog, and when I first brought her home, she needed a lot of retraining - even learning how to walk on a lead properly.

One afternoon, I took Flossy to the playing fields at Chatterton, which is near to where we live. I knew Flossy would be safe, and she could run freely to her hearts content. As we wandered around the field, we came across something unexpected — a sign about "The Chatterton Riot." It was referring to a story about mill workers who had died while protesting. I stopped and read it, surprised. I had lived in Ramsbottom for many years, yet I had never heard about this event.

That moment sparked questions in my mind. What had actually happened here? How can we best describe what happened? Was it really a "Riot"? Why did people not seem to know very much about this part of our history? Had it been forgotten — or even deliberately hidden? My curiosity took over. I decided then and there to become a history detective, determined to uncover the truth and share it with others.

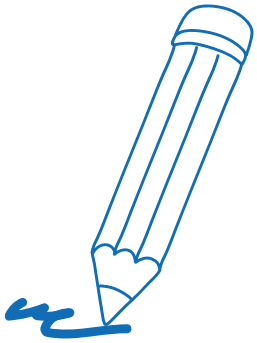
As I researched, I discovered stories about ordinary working people from Lancashire that deserved to be remembered. In this booklet, I will teach you how to be a History Detective too. Together, we will search for clues about the people who were there on that fatal day, including Betty Upton. You will also learn about the story of Mary Hindle, an innocent bystander, who paid a high price simply for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. We will also explore how the Lancashire Weavers Rising and Chatterton Massacre, as it is often called, affected several generations of the same family.

Using both primary and secondary sources, together we can start to imagine what their lives might have been like. We will also debate an important question — whose voices are remembered in history, and whose are left unheard?

Chatterton is a small village in Lancashire. It's close to where I live, so Flossy and I often drive over to explore the local area. History Detectives, how do you think people travelled around Lancashire during the 19th Century?

Lesson 1

History Activity



How would you find more information about a historical event?

To help me uncover Chatterton's hidden history I searched in the library and used different clues called sources. Some were ***primary sources***, like paintings and newspapers from the time, and others were ***secondary sources***, like books written later. These clues helped me investigate people and places from the past and discover why important events happened.

At last, I solved the mystery!

The memorial was about an event called at the time, **The Lancashire Weavers' Uprising and Chatterton Massacre** which took place in 1826.

Now it's your turn ....

Can you become a history detective and uncover the secrets of the past?

- *Are you a member of your local library? It's free to join and packed full of interesting books on local and world history. With friendly librarians on hand to help you with your research, it's the perfect place for History Detectives!*

TALKING ACTIVITY

The Hungry Lookout

During 1826, people in Lancashire were breaking and entering mills to destroy all the machinery they could lay their hands upon. To prevent any more damage a 'watch' or also known as a 'lookout' was ordered by the magistrates to protect buildings and alert them of any large groups of people causing trouble. However, because all was quiet one ***'lookout'*** called Ned got hungry and left to find food. He was biting into a juicy pie when he heard an angry crowd shouting the words above.

History Detectives look at these words which were taken from Ned's eyewitness statement:

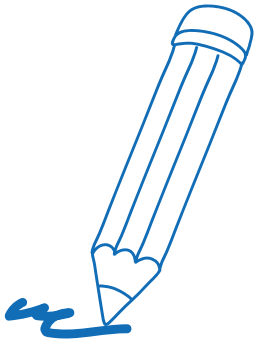
"rioters" "mob" "foe" "attack" "enemy" "violent" "destruction"

Discuss with a partner:

1. What might these words tell us about the event?
2. Do these words tell us about the feelings of the person who wrote them? Whose side do you think they were on?
3. What do you predict might have happened that day?
4. What do the words suggest about the behaviour of the people there?
5. If you could ask the eyewitness a question about what they saw, what would you want to know?
6. Do you think everyone at the time would have used the same words? What words might the 'rioters' have used to describe themselves?

Lesson 1

History Activity



A History Detective always uses a range of sources to make their own predictions of what they think happened.

Let's look at the painting of The Peterloo Massacre by Richard Carlile on page 33. It was created to remember the brutal repression of a large protest in Manchester which took place less than seven years before events unfolded in Chatterton. As it's from the same time period and of a similar event we can use it as a source to help us with our research.

As images are open to interpretation, use the questions below to help you make your own conclusions about what you think might have happened at Chatterton.

Share your thoughts with your partner.

THE CHATTERTON MASSACRE

1 What can you see?

2 What does this tell you?

3 What can you infer?

I think…, I know this because… I want to find out… ?

Coloured engraving of the 1819 Peterloo Massacre, by Richard Carlile

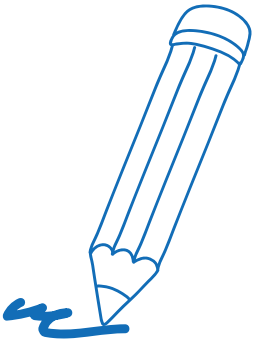
The Peterloo Massacre

The Peterloo Massacre (or Battle of Peterloo) happened at St Peter's Field, Manchester, England, on 16 August 1819. It was when cavalry charged into a crowd of 60,000 to 80,000 people gathered at a meeting to demand the reform of government.

Shortly after the meeting began, local magistrates called on the military authorities to arrest the leader Henry Hunt, as well as his supporters and to disperse the protesters. Cavalry charged into the crowd with sabres drawn. In the resulting confusion, at least 18 people were killed and 400-700 were injured. The massacre was given the name Peterloo in an ironic comparison to the Battle of Waterloo, which had taken place four years earlier.

Lesson 1

History Activity



We are now going to listen to an audio recording by Maxine Peake, a well known TV actor who grew up in Lancashire. Maxine was born in Bolton, not far from Chatterton and she has a very distinctive local Lancashire accent.

As you've discovered it's important to use a range of sources when investigating a historical event because some sources of evidence are opinion rather than factual. The recording you're about to listen to is based on information that I discovered during my research. It features details from baptism and burial records, newspaper articles, eye witness statements and historical accounts of the Lancashire Weavers' Rising.

History Detectives let's put your listening skills to the test! Can you answer the questions below by paying close attention to the list of names read by Maxine Peake?

- Who were these people?
- Why are their names important?
- Can you remember one fact about each person?

JAMES LORD • JOHN ASHWORTH
JAMES ROTHWELL • RICHARD LUND
MARY SIMPSON • JAMES WADDICAR

AUDIO RECORDING

A link to the audio recording: 'The Six Named Dead' performed by Maxine Peake can be found on pg 71.

TALKING ACTIVITY

Working in a group discuss how we can find out more information about the past.

What are reliable sources of information?

How do we understand bias, for example the information written in a mill owner's diary?

GROUP ACTIVITY

Did you know that Flossy and I have also been interviewed about our research on TV?!

Get comfy and watch the recording carefully.
It contains key information that will help you answer the 5Ws below - **What, Where, When, Who, Why**

1. **What happened?**

2. **Where did it happen - can you find this on a map?**
   Clue go back to page 29.

3. **When did this happen- can you place this on a timeline?**

4. **Who was involved?**

The only question that we are unable to answer is the Why?

As History detectives how could we find out **why** this event happened and what happened as a result?

Let's follow Flossy's pawprints to discover more about the Lancashire Weavers' Rising.

VIDEO RECORDING

A link to the video recording of Dr David Gordon Scott's interview can be found on page 71.

Lesson 2

Tommy

Let me introduce you to Tommy...

Hi my name is Thomas Walmsley, but my friends call me Tommy. I am aged 12 and I have two sisters – Sarah who is 1 and half years and Margaret aged 8. It is 1826 and the month is April. I live in Accrington and life is not great at the moment for us.

Last year in December there was a ***recession*** which meant lots of people lost their jobs including my dad who was a handloom weaver. My dad was the only one able to work and it didn't help that the mill owners started using ***power looms*** to replace their workers. Think it is called ***industrialisation*** and it is a real threat to our existence. Imagine, dad has no work and as a family we were facing starvation. We looked to the government to help us, but no money was given. Dad tried everything from selling our belongings to even writing petitions, but nothing worked. At one point we were surviving on one meal a day of oats mixed with water.

Then one day, my dad had enough, and he wanted to do something. He and some friends met on the moors. There were talks about going on a mass ***rising*** with thousands of other people from all sorts of different kinds of work. They had heard that by breaking the power looms they would send the message that we were desperate. The protestors say they won't destroy anything else. I don't know how I felt about that as I know breaking someone else's property is illegal and my dad is not like that. But my dad told me that grandad had been involved in similar protests in the past. These protests are part of our tradition. Also I heard if you protested then they wouldn't give us any ***welfare***. But we were at breaking point. Lots of children on our street had died from starvation and no one was accepting ***promise notes***, which are a bit like IOUs. I am frightened for my dad as I heard what happened at The Peterloo Massacre a few years ago in Manchester. They will be protesting during the day so soldiers can see them. However, I don't think we have any choice as we have not been listened to. This is our last option. Tens of thousands of people's lives are at risk of starvation. What would you do?

So History Detectives, how do we know about Tommy?

We know about children like Tommy because of ***primary sources***, like parish records, which teach us more about life during 1826. By reading Tommy's story carefully, we can uncover important clues about his life and experiences. ***Sources*** such as baptism records often had the jobs of the parents as well as where they lived. Families would also often baptise their children all at the same time so this told us who was in their family. Sadly, death records showed the impact of ***industrialisation***, and how the family struggled during the recession as infant mortality was high. Archives show in the 12 months after the Lancashire Weavers' Rising that more than 1,600 children under 5 years old died. What does this tell you?

Lesson 2

TALKING ACTIVITY

We can find clues about what life was like for working-class families, how little support they received from the government, and why people felt driven to protest.

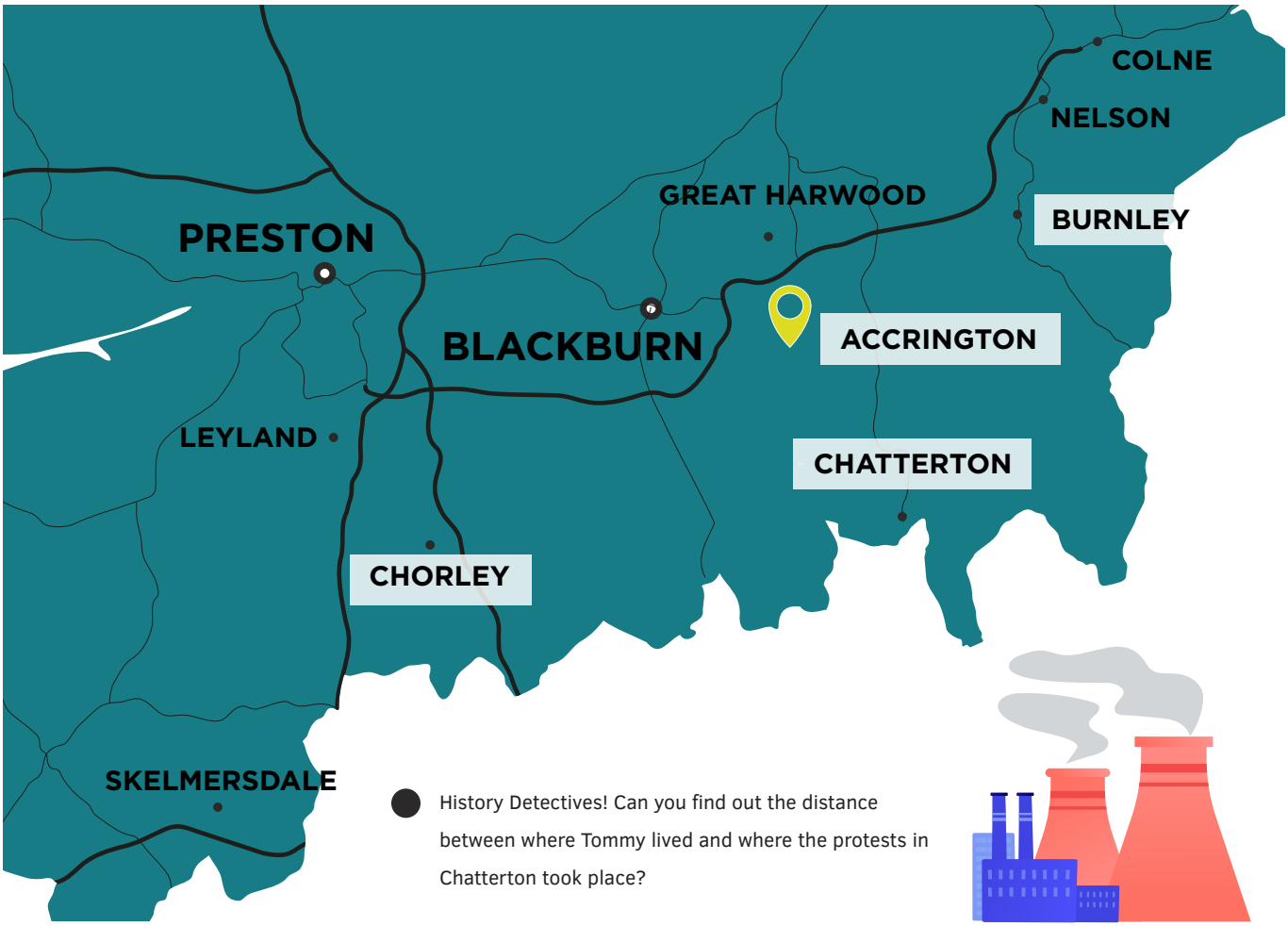
However, what we don't know for sure is how Tommy felt about 'The Lancashire Uprising'.

This is when we need to use our inference and empathy skills.

As History Detectives, can you identify what problems Tommy's family faced, how they tried to survive, and why Tommy felt frightened yet believed protest was their only option?

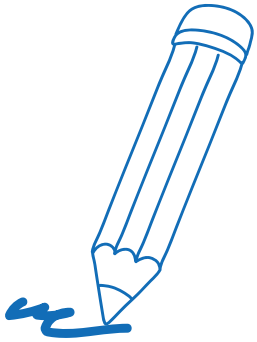
Answer the following questions with your partner:

1. How do you know Tommy's family is struggling? Give one example from the text on page 36.
2. Why do you think Tommy feels worried about his dad joining the protest?
3. Why does Tommy believe protesting is their "last option"?



Lesson 2

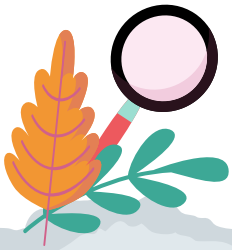
History Activity



Before the Lancashire Weavers' Rising, there were several other protests during this time. The weavers were not the only people unhappy with their lives. Look at the dates included in the document below. As a Historian, what do you think was happening in the country?

Think about ...

- What problems were people facing at the time?
- Why might people have felt they needed to protest?
- Do you notice a pattern in the dates and events?



1768-9	Blackburn spinners entered the house of James Hargreaves and destroyed his new spinning-machines.
1779	In a time of economic depression and widespread unemployment a crowd of protestors destroy the new carding and roving machines invented by Richard Arkwright in Birkacre, near Chorley.
1792	During an economic downturn Manchester handloom weavers burn down the factory of Messrs Grimshaw. The mill had housed Edmund Cartwright's early power loom. This destruction could have deterred the further introduction of power loom weaving for several years.
1808	The distress created through economic crisis led to small scale disturbances by weavers in Burnley, Clithero, Blackburn, Wigan, Preston, Manchester and Rochdale to express their grievances. Authorities distributed bread, ale, and butter milk. In Rochdale one person was killed and several wounded when soldiers opened fire after protestors had burned down the local House of Correction.
1812	As part of the 1811-1817 'Luddite Rebellion' there was extensive machine breaking and other forms of property destruction across Lancashire, including Bolton and Manchester. Power looms were attacked at several sites and there was an unsuccessful attempt to burn down the Stockport warehouse of William Radcliffe, who was a strong advocate of the power loom. At least five people were killed at the Middleton massacre.
1817	Around 5,000 weavers from South Lancashire planned to march to London. The so-called 'Blanketeers' (the marches had blankets with them for sleeping during the journey) were peaceful but most were dispersed by cavalry and special constables shortly after the outset from St Peter's Field and the remaining few hundred by armed yeomanry in Stockport.
1819	A peaceful crowd of many thousands at St Peters Field congregating to hear speeches against the corn laws, economic distress, and lack of political representation were charged by the local yeomanry and later soldiers. Many hundreds were wounded and at least 18 killed. It became known as the Peterloo Massacre.

Lesson 2

GROUP ACTIVITY

Show Time!

In groups, bring history to life by role playing a scene from the protest timeline on page 22.

Read the information in the timeline carefully and discuss the main points:

- Who was involved?
- What happened?
- Why did it happen?

Each group will act out a scene from one of the key protests that took place between 1768 - 1819.

Remember to include people, actions, and emotions to show what happened.

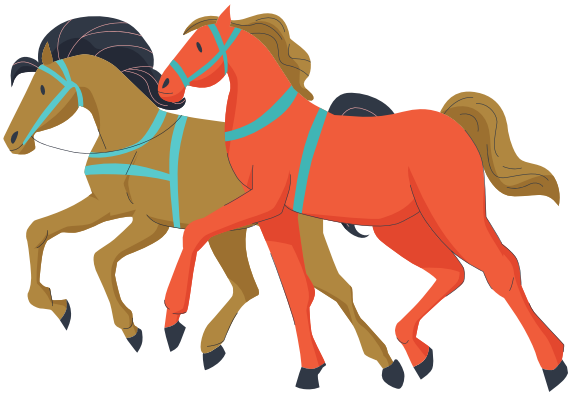
At the end, perform all the scenes together in chronological order to make a classroom interactive timeline.

Here are some ideas...

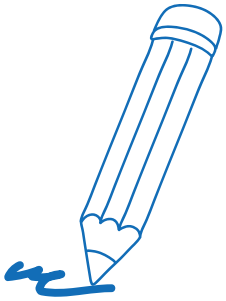
1819 – Peterloo Massacre

What happened: Thousands gather at St Peter's Field to protest Corn Laws, poverty, and lack of political representation. Soldiers charge the crowd. At least 18 killed, hundreds wounded.

Scene idea: Some people listening to speeches, some running or falling, soldiers on horseback, showing chaos and fear.



Music Activity



Protest has long been a way for groups, particularly working-class people, to make their voices heard. Methods have varied over time, including marches, boycotts, machine-breaking, and song. When words failed, actions and music became powerful tools of resistance. Protest songs, rooted in early folk traditions, reflect the struggles and hopes of marginalised communities. Their origins can be traced to the songs of enslaved African Americans, who used music as a form of resistance and communication.

Examine the lyrics of this song. What do they suggest about how the weavers were feeling?

'The Hand-Loom Weavers Lament' John Grimshaw 1820s

You gentlemen and tradesmen that ride about at will,
Look down on these poor people. It's enough to make you crill.
Look down on these poor people, as you ride up and down
I think there is a God above will bring your pride quite down.

Chorus *You tyrants of England! Your race may soon be run.*
You may be brought unto account for what you've sorely done.

You pull down our wages, shamefully to tell.
You go into the markets and say you cannot sell.
And when that we do ask you when these bad times will mend,
You quickly give an answer, "When the wars are at an end."

When we look on our poor children, it grieves our hearts full sore.
Their clothing it is worn to rags, while we can get no more.
With little in their bellies, they to work must go,
Whilst yours do dress as manky as monkeys in a show.

You go to church on Sundays. I'm sure it's naught but pride.
There can be no religion where humanity's thrown aside.
If there be a place in heaven, as there is in the Exchange,
Our poor souls must not come near there. Like lost sheep they must range.

With the choicest of strong dainties, your table's overspread
With good ale and strong brandy, to make your faces red.
You call'd a set of visitors--It is your whole delight--
And you lay your heads together to make our faces white.

You say that Bonyparty he's been the spoil of all,
And that we have got reason to pray for his downfall.
Well, Bonyparty's dead and gone, and it is plainly shown
That we have bigger tyrants in Boneys of our own.

And now, my lads, for to conclude, it's time to make an end,
Let's see if we can form a plan that these bad times may mend.
Then give us our old prices, as we have had before,
And we can live in happiness and rub off the old score.

WRITING ACTIVITY

The four days of protesting across Pennine Lancashire are often referred to as the Lancashire Weavers' Rising, what does this name tell you?

Have you ever wanted to protest about something that matters to you?

Maybe you think there is too much homework or you would like to have no school uniform?

Imagine, you are one of the weavers about to join Tommy's dad on the march.

Describe the Lancashire Weavers' Rising by writing your own Protest song! You can use another traditional nursery rhyme song for your melody!

What words would you include to relate to Tommy 's story on page 36 ?

Use the Word Bank opposite which contains examples of rhyming words.

Word Bank

- We / free
- Song / wrong
- Stand / hand
- Right / fight
- poor / more
- pay / way
- wrong / song
- fear / tear
- pain / gain
- together / forever
- free / we
- light / night
- day / way
- rise / eyes

Lesson 2

History Activity

Can you think of any other key events in the world where people have protested because of injustices/ inequalities?

Look at the images of modern protests (e.g. The Suffragette movement, Black Lives Matter protests and climate marches) and compare them to the descriptions of the 1826 protests.

Using your empathy skills, write a diary entry as Tommy, the night after the protest.

Things you might what to consider:

Have you decided to go on the protest?

Where were you when the trouble started, and what did you see or hear?

How are you feeling?

What do you want others (like the government or your family) to know about what happened?

What are your hopes or fears for the future after the protest?

What do you think happened to Tommy?

To help you with your diary entry use the telling of the story from this secondary source, an article called "Chatterton: Britain's Hidden Massacre" which describes the protest on page 43.

CHATTERTON: BRITAIN'S HIDDEN MASSACRE

Not long before 11.00am, it's widely claimed that the local magistate, William Grant, read a short extract from the 1714 Riot Act.

Those defending the mill, under the leadership of Colonel Kearney, comprised of both cavalry and riflemen from the British Army. Under Kearney's command were 15 Queen's Bays cavalrymen, in their famous red uniforms and black hats. As the large crowd descended upon Chatterton, the Queen's Bays made their way to the hill behind the cottages opposite the mill and awaited further instructions.

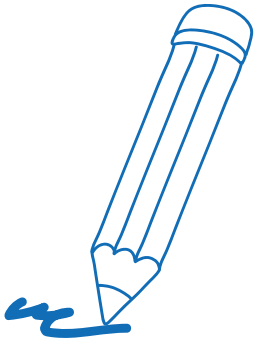
The 20 Riflemen from the 60th Duke of York Own Rifles were dressed in dark green uniforms. They were highly trained sharp shooters with long range Baker rifles. The 60th Rifles were also experienced in close combat skirmishers.

The 20 riflemen dispersed around the house of the mill owner and opened fire. The soldiers fired until they ran out of bullets. They fired several hundred into a crowd of 3,000 people over a period of 15 minutes. Clearly, many of the soldiers deliberately aimed to miss, perhaps shooting into the ground, into the brickwork of the mill, warehouse and cottages or over heads of the protestors. At least four people were seriously wounded although the exact number of those shot remains unknown, including the number (if any) who later died of their wounds. What is known is that during this sustained firing four people were shot and died immediately or very shortly afterwards. Two further people were also killed as the soldiers contined their attempts to disperse the crowd and arrest the protestors

...Undeterred by the shootings, the crowd continued to break into Aitkens and Lords factory and successfully destroyed all the power looms within. Some of the protestors were carrying wounded, some of them were wounded themselves. The mill owner by this point had fled with his family and soldiers from the 60th Duke of York Own Rifles were now in skirmisher mode as they attempted to disperse protestors and bystanders gathered in and around the mill. Around 200 protestors were dispersed in the direction of Stubbins and Ramsbottom, and these protestors continued in their attempts to destroy powerlooms along the banks of the Irwell, most notably at mills in Higher Summerseat and in Elton, Bury. The remaining 2,000 and more protestors were also successfully dispersed by the soldiers and cavalry, before making their way back towards Rawtenstall where they regrouped and continued their quest in the mills along the road towards Bacup.

Lesson 3

History Activity



History Detectives, it is always important to remember DATES in history.

The Lancashire Weavers' Rising took place over 4 days in 1826 ...

Day 1 – 24th April

Day 2 – 25th April

Day 3 – 26th April

Day 4 – 26th April

April 2026 marked 200 years since The Lancashire Weavers Uprising.

Think about your grandparents — and then their grandparents — and then their grandparents... that's about 200 years ago!

Another very important part of being a History Detective is remembering PLACES and PEOPLE

Do you remember where the The Lancashire Weavers' Rising took place?

Do you remember the following names from Lesson 1?

JAMES LORD • JOHN ASHWORTH
JAMES ROTHWELL • RICHARD LUND
MARY SIMPSON • JAMES WADDICAR

But who were they?

READING ACTIVITY

Read through the statements on page 45

Discuss with a partner whether you think these individuals were protesters, innocent bystanders or mill owners?

What happened to these people at The Lancashire Weavers' Rising?

I was on my way to Edenfield that morning to catch the coach to Manchester. However, I was delayed and the coach to Manchester had left without me. Whilst waiting for the next coach I decided to go down and see what was happening in Chatterton. As the soldiers made their way onto the hill to disperse the crowd I was shot in the thigh, possibly by a stray shot or a ricochet, and bled to death. **- Mary Simpson**

Before the protesters had arrived in Edenfield, I had been at Dearden Clough Mill where, and I had helped take off some of the warps of the power loom to save them from being destroyed in the uprising. My friend Richard Leech and I then walked down to Chatterton and were hiding near to the cottages opposite the Aitkens and Lords Mill when, for some reason, I thought I would be safer to try and get into one of the Chatterton Cottages, the dwelling of Mrs Betty Upton. As I was banging on the door of Mrs Upton's house, I was shot dead at close range by one of the British soldiers. **- James Waddicar**

We had no chance of surviving because there were over 200 riffle men who were known for being 'snipers. **- James Rothwell**

There were about 3,000 of us in the crowd and hundreds of bullets were fired at us of and I was a casualty.
- James Ashworth

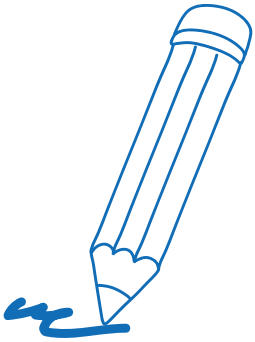
I threw a stone at Colonel Col. Kearney and you can guess what happened to me? I was shot in the back of the head **- James Lord**

I was attempting to make my escape out of the back of the factory through a window but was shot. I managed to crawl in agony across the river Irwell but died moments later on the other side of the riverbank.
- Richard Lund

Lesson 3

Lesson 3

Art Activity



History Detectives as you've discovered remembering dates is a big part of being a historian.

The 26th April 1826 is a very important date. It was the third day of the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and the day of the Chatterton Massacre.

The events of the 26th of April became an important moment in history, showing how people stood up for their rights, even when it was dangerous to do so. On this day, around 3,000 people gathered to protest against unfair treatment and poor living conditions. The demonstration quickly turned tragic when soldiers fired approximately 400-600 bullets into the crowd. At least six people lost their lives as a result of the violence.

Sometimes historical events are so important that Blue or Red Plaques are placed on nearby buildings so that future generations can easily find out about local history. They are used across Britain to commemorate historically significant people, events, or, in some cases, specific buildings.

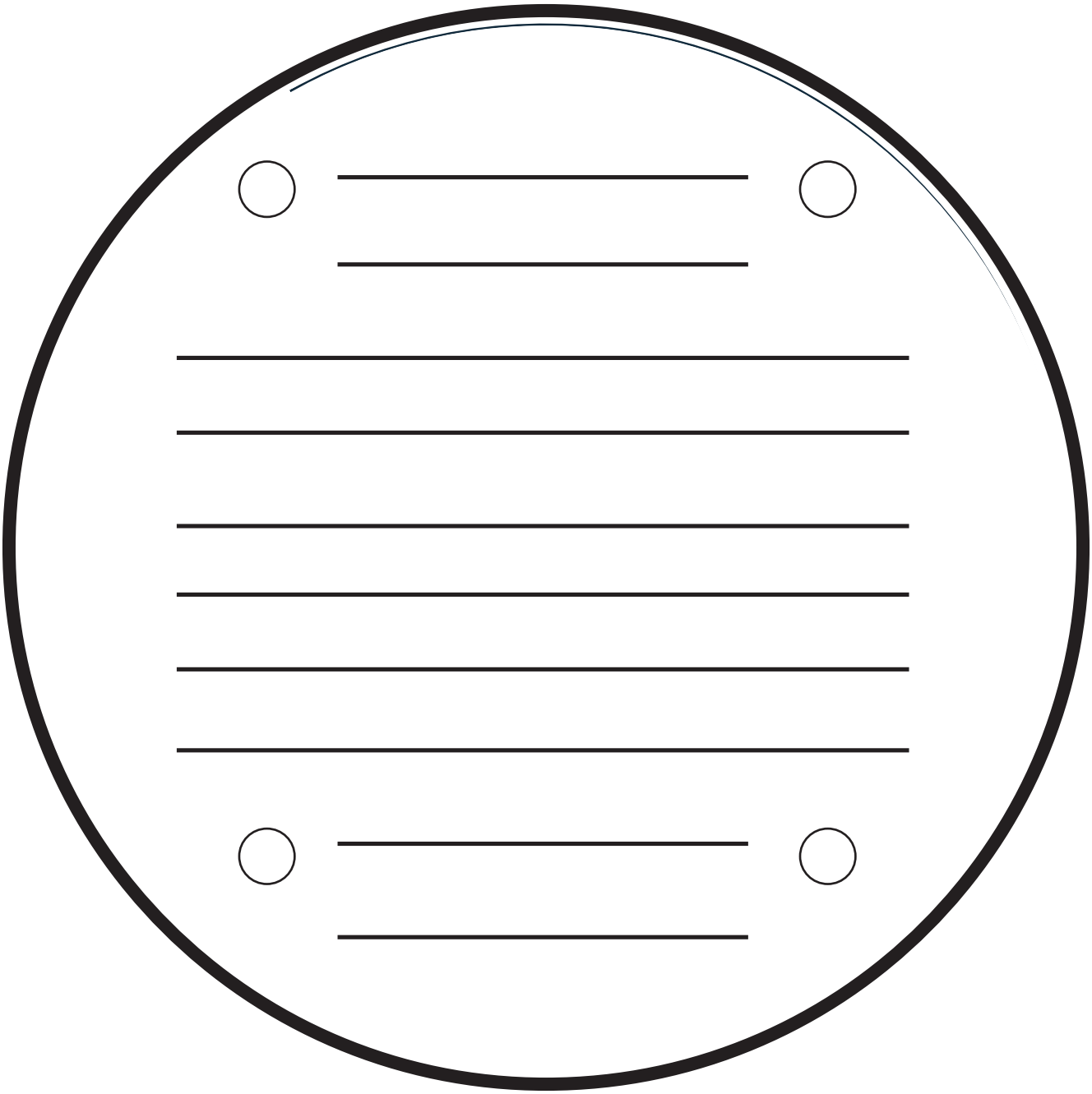
The blue plaque above is located on a building in Chatterton and was written by the Edenfield Local History Society in 2003. As space is limited on these small signs, historians try to keep the amount of words used to describe the event to a minimum whilst including important facts.

History Detectives it's now your turn to use your research to create your own blue plaque to commemorate the Chatterton Massacre using the template on page 47.

What information would you include?

Which words would you use to describe what happened in Chatterton?

Lesson 3



This Blue Plaque was created by: .....

Lesson 3

Mary

Let me introduce you to Mary Hindle, another person who was present at the Lancashire Weavers' Rising.

Mary was one of those who did not plan to participate in the protests in advance.

Read the text below and find the clues which explain why she was there...

25th April 1826 DAY 2 OF THE LANCASHIRE WEAVERS' RISING

At 10.00 am on the 25th April 1826, around 2,000 protestors gathered in Earcroft and marched to Lower Darwen, then onto Hoddlesden, before making their way across the rugged West Pennine Moors and down the steep slopes of Musbury Valley into the small village of Helmshore. In total, 158 power looms were destroyed that day. When the soldiers did arrive, 23 people were arrested and taken to the New Inn, Haslingden.

Amongst those detained was Mary Hindle. The fourth of ten children born to Giles Holden (a weaver) and his wife Mary Entwistle, she was born in October 1798 at Carrs, on the east side of Haslingden. By the time Mary married George Hindle (also a weaver) at St. James' Church, Haslingden in July 1818, her father and two of her siblings were dead. Parish records indicate that both Mary and George were poorly educated, suggesting that neither had the opportunity to go to school. Eight months later, the baptism record for their daughter Elizabeth gave their address as Club Houses. On 25th April 1826, Mary's concern to find Elizabeth (who would have been only around six years old) took her over to Helmshore, where she became caught up in the crowds, was mistaken for a protestor, and later charged with "rioting at Musbury, and destroying power-looms, the property of William and Ralph Turner". In spite of numerous appeals for clemency, Mary Hindle was sentenced to transportation, enduring a 138-day journey to New South Wales aboard the Harmony, with seventy-nine other passengers (including Ann Entwistle or Enwisle, another woman charged with destroying Turner's machinery). Over a decade later, Mary absconded twice from her assigned position as a laundress, and was sent to the Female Factory in Parramatta, where she took her own life in August 1841. Mary was 5ft 2 and a quarter inch in height, had brown hair and brown eyes and, at that time (if not before), had a brown mark on the right side of her chin. She would have been around 42 when she died, some 15 years after the 'Lancashire Weavers' Rising'.

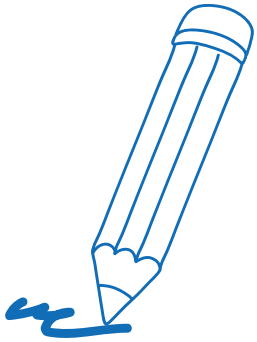
- *This information above is taken rom an extract from 'Giving Dignity for the Dead'. See page 72*

Lancashire to New South Wales

We know from court records and newspaper articles that after the protest, over 60 individuals were arrested. Of these, 31 were sentenced to time in prison, while 10 were transported to North South Wales in Australia — a punishment often used in the past to remove people who were seen as troublemakers. Being sent away like this meant leaving behind family, friends, and everything familiar.

Lesson 3

Art Activity



History Detectives, let's look at the extract from the 'Dignity for The Dead' on page 48 again .

This time we're going to look for clues to help us imagine what Mary Hindle might have looked like.

The description in the extract was originally taken from her convict record in 1827.

Read the text carefully.

Can you find out how old Mary was when she was sent to Australia?

How tall she was?

How did they describe her appearance?

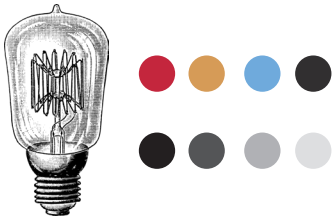
Use your imagination or the template on page __ to create a portrait of Mary Hindle.

Do you think she would look sad or happy?

What could she be thinking about?

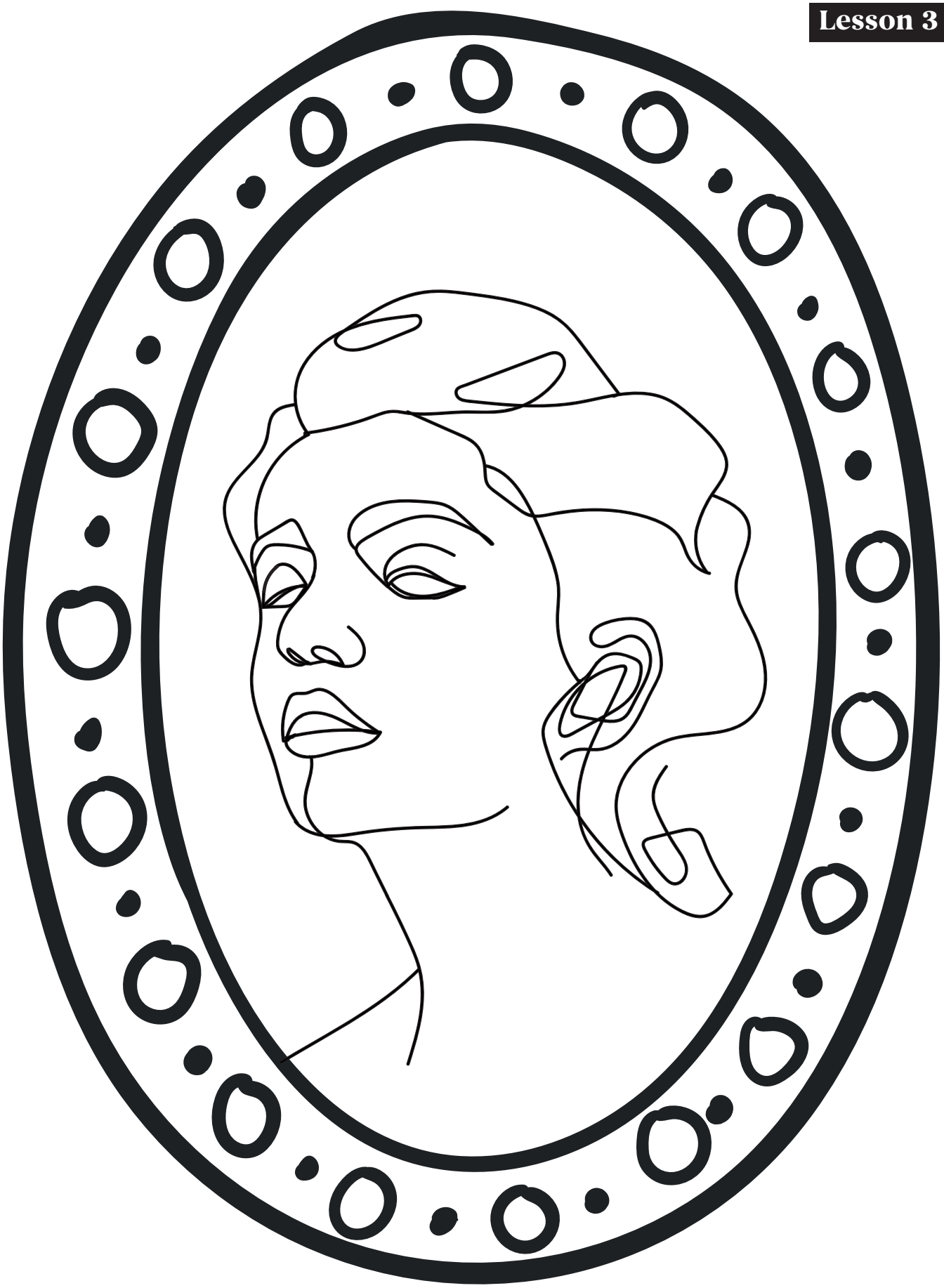
Are you going to draw her before the Lancashire Weavers' Rising or after?

What colours are you going to use for her clothes?



Drawing Tip Try changing the mood of your portrait by changing the colours. You could either use graphite pencils or charcoal to create a black and white 'monochrome' drawing or you could use coloured pencils for a more vibrant drawing.

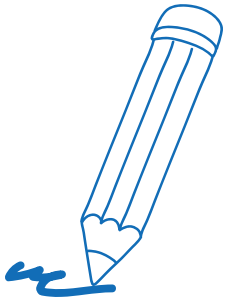
Lesson 3



Portrait of Mary Hindle by .....

Lesson 3

Drama Activity



Let's learn more about the story of Mary Hindle and what happened to her after the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre.

Whilst away from her family in Australia, Mary wrote a letter to her husband.

History Detectives, read the extract from the letter below then discuss with a partner:

- What words or phrases show her feelings?
- What might have happened just before this letter was written?
- What do you think happened next?
- What can we tell about life at that time from this letter?

Dear Husband

Sydney, New South Wales, 12th November 1827

I have taken this opportunity of writing these few lines to you, which I hope that they will find you in good health, as I am tolerably well and healthy at this time, Thank God for that! We arrived in New South Wales about the 7th October after a long and tedious passage of about five months, but we had a tolerably good passage and we was as well treated as I could expect, we had a very kind gentleman for a Doctor which treated us very well, and I was very ill on the passage I was in the hospital nineteen days, I was very bad with my legs swelling through not having any exercise on board of the ship. But I have got a situation in Sydney, but I have a very hard situation, I have got a great deal of work and the time appears to me to go very slowly and one day appears to me as long as a month and I am very much confined, we are not allowed any liberty to go away from the place where we live, and if we do go away and stop out till eight or nine o 'clock we are sure to get put in the watchhouse and very likely to get sent to the factory, a place where they punish the women very severly, but I hope that the God Almighty will give me health and strength to get through all my difficulties, and now I am in a far distant country I hope my dear little Elizabeth will be took good care of and I hope she is well, for I very often am thinking about her and I should like very much to see her, but God knows whether that ever will be my lot again or not.

Please to give my kind love to my mother and likewise to your father and mother and likewise to my brothers and sisters and all enquiring friends, and I am waiting very anxiously to hear from you my dear husband and I hope and trust that you will try all that lays in your power to get my sentence mitigated for if I thought that you could not get something done for me I think I should die of despair.

Please to give my respects to Mr Hurst and Mr Turner and I hope you will speak to them concerning me, and I shall feel myself forever indebted to them if please God, they should get my sentence mitigated. Sidney is a very fine town, that is, it is a very extensive place and there is a great deal of building going on, in the course of a few years it will be a very large town. Mechanics wages are very good particularly carpenters and masons and stone cutters, in fact all fit men may get good wages if they choose to work, but in general poor prisoners are very bad off, particularly when they just arrive in the country...

This is an edited version of Mary's Hindle's letter to her husband. The original can be found in the appendix.

GROUP ACTIVITY

Lesson 3

Mary did not accept her fate whilst serving her time in Australia because over a decade after being shipped there, she **absconded** twice from her assigned position as a **laundress**, and was sent to the Female Factory in Parramatta. Sadly, knowing there was no escape Mary tragically took her own life in August 1841.

History Detectives, we're now going to play the Hot Seat Game! If Mary was here today what questions would you ask her?

One of you is going to role play as Mary, and the rest of the group are journalists and will think of questions to ask her.

Journalists: Here are some ideas for your questions.

How did you feel when you went sent away?

Who helped you, and how did they help you?

How did you feel when things were difficult?

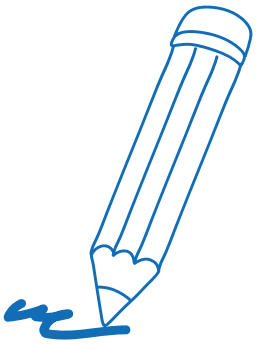
What made you keep going or want to stop?

Remember the things you have learned about Mary to help you think of questions.

Mary: Think about the things you have you learnt from the secondary source on page 48 and the letter she wrote to her family to help answer the journalist's questions.

Lesson 4

History Activity



History Detectives, there are usually two sides to every story but in history we sometimes only hear one perspective.

How can we distinguish between facts and opinions?

Remember...

Fact: A fact is something that is **true** and **can be checked or proven.**

Opinion: An opinion is what **someone thinks or feels.** It **cannot be proven** because different people might think differently.

On page 55 you'll find an eyewitness statement from Thomas Aitken who was present at the Chatterton Massacre.

Read through the information carefully.

Using two different colours highlight the ***facts*** in red and ***opinions*** in blue.

Can you explain why each eyewitness may have that opinion?

For example: Thomas Aitken was a **mill owner** – would he be in support or against the protest?

Why?

What words from his eyewitness account support your claim?

TALKING ACTIVITY

- What do you think of language used like mob?
- Who else referred to the group of people as mob?
- Do you think that the Mill Owner told all of the story?
- Why do you think the story tellers focussed on these parts of the story?
- Should we ever question eye witness accounts?

Lesson 4

Statement from:

Thomas Aitken - Cotton Manufacturer, Chatterton

"In partnership with Richard Lord, we are the proprietors of a Cotton Mill at Chatterton. In April last, we had 46 cotton power looms employed. That about 12 o'clock at noon of the 26th day of April last, a large mob attacked the Mill in which the power looms were used. The mob were proceeding from the Mill of Messrs Rostron's at Edenfield where power looms are also employed.

When I first saw the mob, there appeared to be some hundreds and they were proceeding towards our mill. I immediately proceeded towards the Mill, and on my way I met a party of Military from Mr Ashton's Mill with Mr William Grant the Magistrate and returned with them until we met the mob about a quarter of a mile from the Mill.

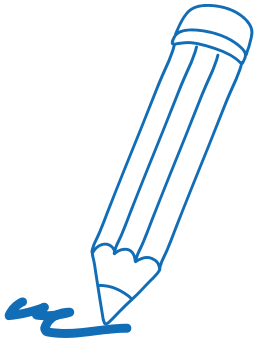
On meeting, the military drew across the land and the mob getting over the fences on each side of the road directed their course towards the mill. I immediately returned towards the Mill and on my arrival there, part of the mob had also arrived…

…I was about forty yards from the Mill at this time. I was alarmed. I waited for the military and they arrived in about ten minutes afterwards and took up their station in front of my house about forty yards off from the Mill. The Bulk of the mob were upon a hill a few hundred yards from the mill, but great numbers had come by different avenues unto the premises...

…The whole of the power looms, 46 in number, with the drawing frames and dressing machine, were broken, and a great quantity of the windows of the back part of the Mill."

Lesson 4

Art Activity



Let's look at the story of Betty Upton, who was also an eyewitness to the massacre.

Where have you heard of Mrs Betty Upton mentioned before?

The story is re-told on page 57 through a journalist and also includes direct quotations from her evidence at the inquest on 28th April 1826.

Can you predict what her version of events will say?

As photography wasn't invented until the 1830's in Britain, you're now going to use your research and imagination skills to create a drawing which illustrates a scene from Betty Upton's testimony .

Look closely for clues in the article that describe:

where Betty was...

who she saw ...

what happened ...

how she felt...

TALKING ACTIVITY

Discuss with a partner:

- How does Thomas Aitken's account on page 55 differ from Betty's experience?
- Do you feel differently about the protests and protestors now that you've read it from both points of view?

No. 624 The Morning Herald Page 2

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH BETTY UPTON!

…Betty's gave testimony at the inquest into the death of James Waddicar, a forty-year old dresser employed by the Rostrons at Dearden Clough on the 28th April 1826.

In her testimony at the inquest into James Waddicar's death Betty said:

"I heard a fire close to my house and smelt the powder. I heard a person make a moan and something fall close to my door. I looked out of the chamber window and saw James Waddicar lying at my door. I went downstairs directly and by the time I got there several of the soldiers in green were trying to force the door. I heard one of them say here 'he lies, damn him, he is foxing, run him through'..."

Alarmed, she told her father, "Waddicar is shot!". Still capable of speech, the injured James Waddicar is reported to have told his assailants, "I am shot through the back". Betty and her father sheltered behind the wall between the door and a window. In the chaos, the troops pointed their rifles through the ground floor windows.

From her testimony Betty noted:

"At the same moment my window was broken by the ends of their guns, and I heard one of them say he had seen a woman, and they fired their guns into my house... In a little time, they said again they had seen a woman and they fired again. I begged for my life and called out that I was only a widow and lived there. They told me I was one of the 'rioters' and demanded the door to be opened…"

The Morning Herald implied that the soldiers' intention may have been to detain an unnamed man who was found upstairs, hiding under a bed. Believing Betty to be harbouring a rioter, one soldier commented: "I see her again, shoot her!"

To appease the troops, Betty and father granted them entry to the house, only to be met with violence. Ignoring the orders of a passing officer to spare women and children, one soldier seized the sister of the young widow; whether the attack was physical or sexual went unrecorded.

In her own words:

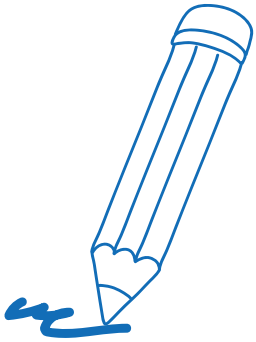
"When the soldiers got in, they were very rough... They were so violent and I was so frightened that I took one of the soldiers round the neck and begged of him to spare our lives. Then the soldiers heard somebody upstairs, my two sisters … Two of the soldiers had hold of my sister and they pointed their guns at her belly and swearing they would blow her brains out …"

Only when John Platt remonstrated, "Gentlemen, these are my daughters", did the intruders withdraw, ignoring Betty's pleas for assistance in moving the fatally injured James Waddicar into her house.

How James Waddicar and Betty knew each other is unclear. Her late husband William may have been employed alongside him by the Rostrons, or they may have bonded over their respective nonconformist backgrounds. It is impossible to say whether the last words reported in the press were accurate or exaggerated, but his plea, "Betty, pray for me, I know thou canst pray, and I am dying," and her response, "James, look to God, and pray yourself, and I will pray with you," suggest that faith comforted both of them in those final moments.

Lesson 5

History Activity



OK History Detectives it's time to review our research so far. What have we learnt about The Lancashire Weavers' Rising and Chatterton Massacre over the previous lessons?

- Can you explain what this event is?
- When it happened?
- Locate it on a map?
- Name some of the significant people involved?
- Explain why it happened?

Some newspapers reported the event as a:

riot, affray, and mob

but do you think it could have been described as a ***massacre?***

For an event to be defined as a massacre in the 1820s it had to meet three criteria:

- At least three people are killed from the same group at the same time in the same place.
- There are **civilians** who are killed by soldiers
- The victims were relatively defenceless and the soldiers' lives were not in danger.

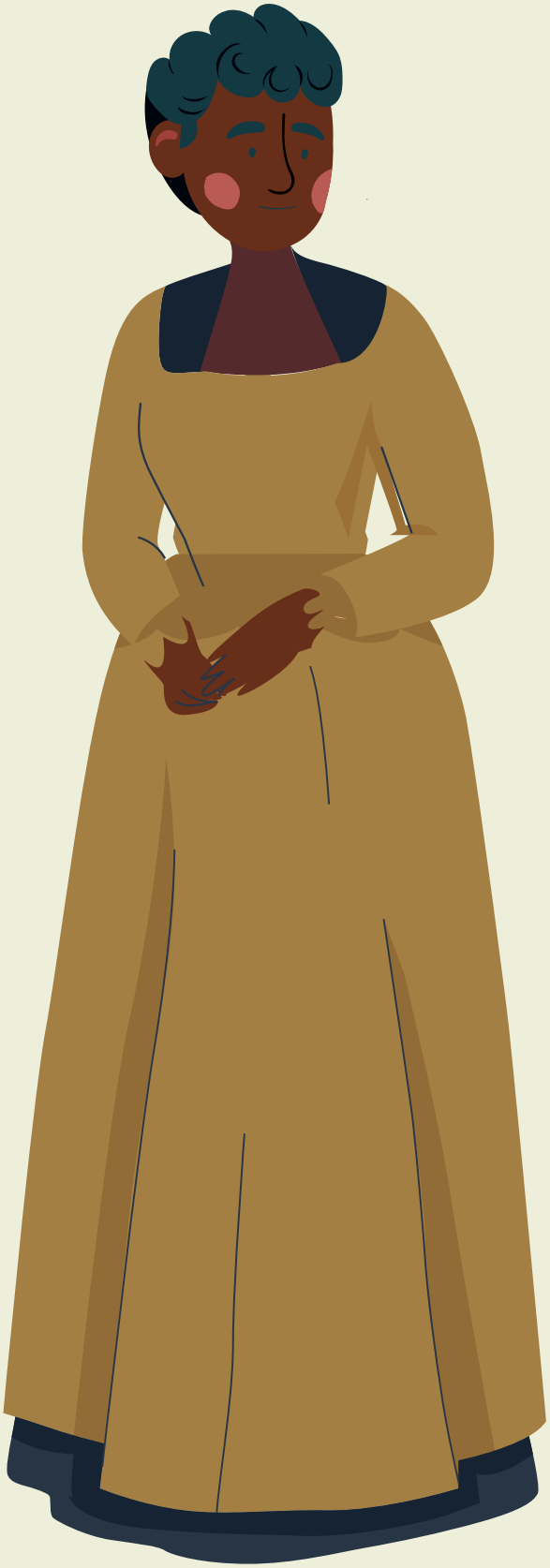
TALKING ACTIVITY

Discuss with a partner:

- Should the events that happened in Chatterton be called a massacre?

Give at least 3 reasons for your answer.

In April 2026 Stubbins Residents Association created a small garden in Chatterton Peace Park with a stone at its centre commemorating the bicentennial of the massacre.



Sophia Pierce

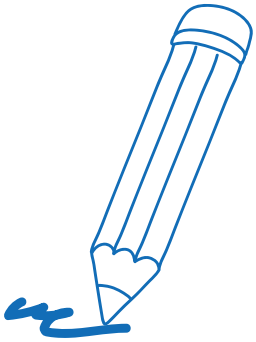
Did you know there were Black mill workers in Britian during the 1800's?

Sophia Pierce was a free Black woman living in England during the time of the Lancashire Weavers' Uprising. Born in London, she later moved to Burley in Wharfedale, where she worked in the local textile mills. In the 18th century, industrial towns such as Leeds and Bradford were closely tied to the Transatlantic Slave Trade, often producing goods that were exchanged for enslaved people.

In 1797, Sophia found employment at Greenholme, a Yorkshire woollen firm involved in manufacturing goods for trade. Although she was legally free, it is unlikely that she was treated equally to her white coworkers.

Lesson 5

History Activity



History Detectives, let's look again at the accounts of Thomas Aitken, Betty Upton and the six statements of those people who died.

Compare their perspectives and consider how the way we refer to a significant event can influence how we perceive those who were involved.

We're now going to use everything you have learnt about The Lancashire Weavers' Rising to have a class debate!

You'll be discussing this statement:

'The events that happened at Chatterton should be remembered as a massacre and not a riot.'

There will be 1 judge and 2 groups: one side will argue for the statement, and the other against it.

Group 1: You **agree** with the statement. Use Betty's account on **page 57** and the Six who died on **page 45** to support your argument.

Group 2: You **disagree** with the statement. Resources which will help you are: Thomas Aitken's eyewitness account on **page 55** and The Hungry Lookout on **page31.**

Your challenge is to persuade the opposite group using the arguments your group has created.

Has anyone's view changed?

As the Judge you could use the following questions to pose to both groups.

- Why do you think the authorities called it a "riot" instead of a "massacre"?
- How can changing one word change the way people understand history?
- Who decides what words are used to describe events in the past?
- What might be the modern equivalent of "reclaiming" history today?

Use the template on page 61 to help you plan out your argument.

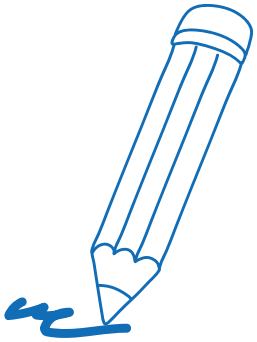
Lesson 5

'The events that happened at Chatterton should be remembered as a massacre and not a riot.'

AGREE	DISAGREE

Lesson 6

Art Activity



History Detectives, do you remember the memorial that I discovered on my walk with Flossy on page 30? It describes the Lancashire Weavers' Rising as a 'riot'. What do you think of the language used?

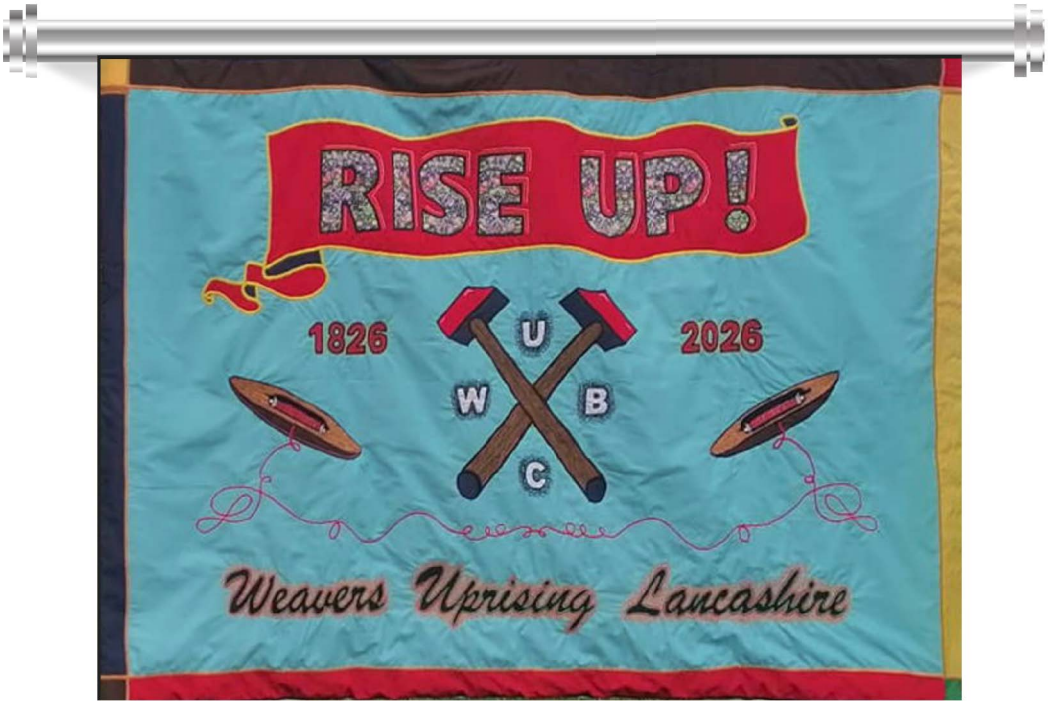
2026, marked 200 years since the Lancashire Weavers' Rising and the Chatterton Massacre. This was an important moment in the history of Pennine Lancashire. Thousands of people joined a big protest because many families were starving and struggling after machines began to take over handloom weaving. Nearly 1 in 10 people in the area took part. Although the protest was mostly peaceful (some of the protestors carried wooden sticks and some threw stones), it showed how unfair life was for working people at the time and marked the beginning of big changes in how people lived and worked.

To commemorate this, artist James Fox was commissioned by the Weavers Uprising Bicentennial Committee (WUBC) to create a banner that honours those who resisted and those who died due to social injustice.

The banner is made out of fabric and highlights Lancashire's link to the Weavers Industry.

It uses both text and images to symbolise the uprising and also remembers the lives of several 19th-Century Weavers whose stories haven't been told before.

Now it's your turn to create a banner to help tell the story of resistance by ordinary working people to the harms of the industrialisation. Use the instructions on page 63 to help you!



BANNER MAKING ACTIVITY

Materials :

- a large sheet of paper
- assorted coloured papers
- pencil
- coloured pencils or crayons
- scissors
- glue

Instructions:

1. Using a large piece of paper as your background, start laying out text and images to highlight what you've discovered about the Lancashire Weavers' Rising.

You could include drawings or paintings or even write new stories about Tommy – what would you say if you were a child in Lancashire in 1826 and writing about their experience to a child in the present day?

2. As well as drawing and writing directly onto your main sheet of paper, use scissors to cut out interesting shapes and silhouettes linked to events in Chatterton. You could include the different tools they used as weavers; the landscape of the route they walked, and maybe the names of those who lost their lives.

3. Glue these shapes onto your main sheet of paper to create a colourful banner.

People choose to commemorate in different ways. You may prefer to use movement to express the emotions, through dance. There is no single right way to commemorate people; everyone can remember and honour them in ways that feel meaningful to them. Be as creative as you want in how you want to remember these significant people.

Well done!

History Detectives, with only a few primary sources, we have used our inference skills and imagination to bring the lives of Tommy, Mary Hindle and others to life. The stories of working-class people in Britain have often been overlooked, but uncovering these hidden histories gives us a much richer picture of the past. People from all over the world have lived here for centuries, and it's up to us to remember and celebrate their lives.

If you want to learn more, check out the resources on page 68. You can also find books, TV programmes and websites about the Lancashire Weavers' Uprising. Across Lancashire, there were creative activities, exhibitions and talks to commemorate the 1826 uprising. Look at the resources section and share these important stories with everyone.

Appendix

Glossary

Affray	A legal term that means a fight or violent disturbance in a public place that makes other people feel scared for their safety.
Civilians	Ordinary people who live in a town or country and go about their daily lives, especially during times of war or conflict.
Commemorate	To remember and show respect for an important person or event from the past.
Depression	A time when businesses fail, people lose jobs, and money be comes hard to earn.
Economy	The way money, jobs, and resources are used in a place, like a town, country, or the whole world.
Handloom weaver	A person who made cloth by hand using a wooden weaving frame called a loom.
Industrialisation	When new machines and factories were built, and people started making goods in large amounts instead of by hand.
Injustice	When people are treated unfairly or denied their rights.
Marginalised	When a group of people are pushed to the edge of society and ignored or treated as less important.
Massacre	When a group of people are killed unfairly and without defence, usually by those in power.
Mill	Large factory buildings where machines made things like cloth, powered by water or steam.
Mob	The word mob originally was a shortened version of the word "mobility" but over time it gained a more sinister meaning and "mob" often implies a threatening group of people who are intent on doing harm.
Petition	A written request signed by many people asking those in power to make a change or take action.

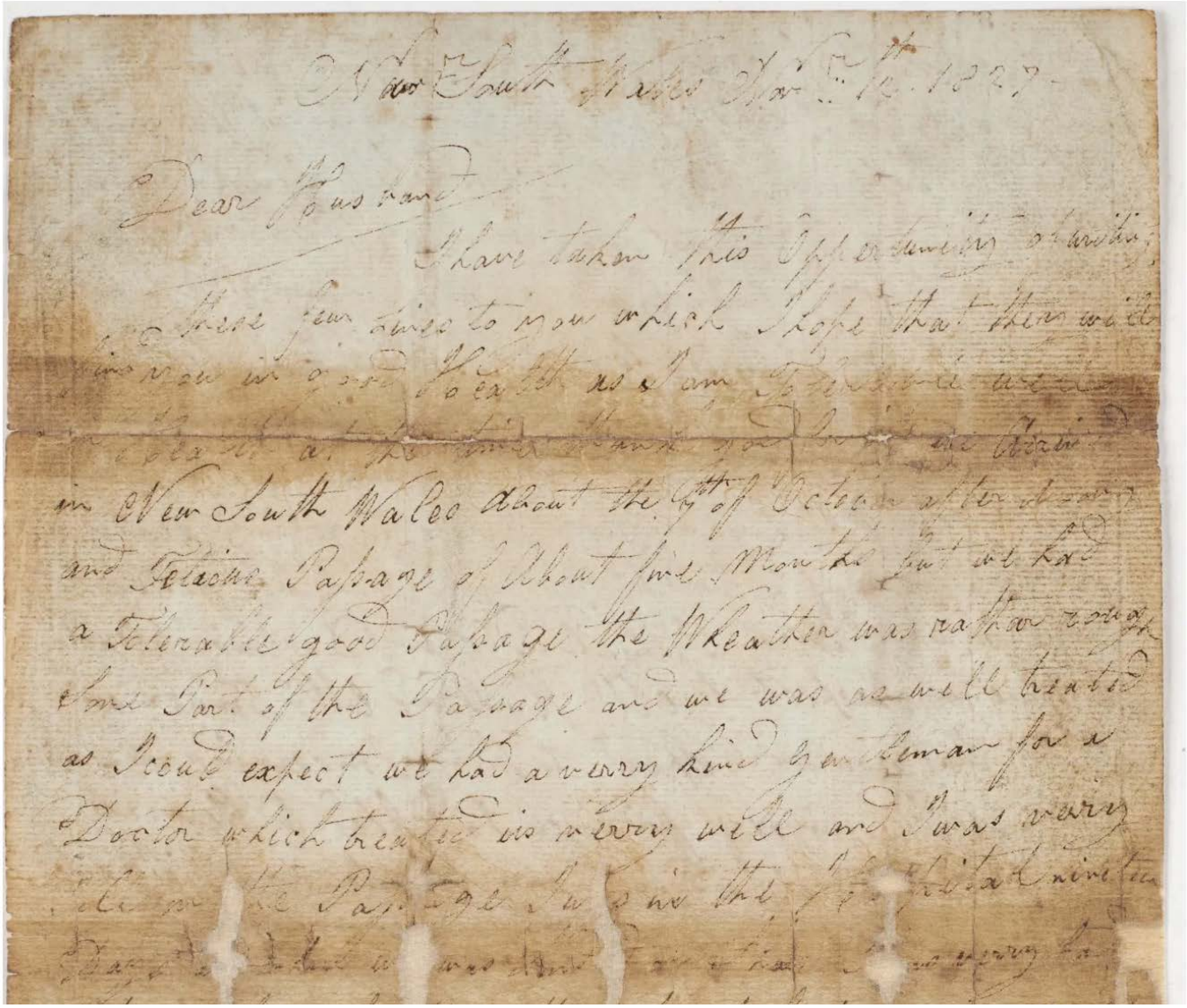
Glossary

Power loom	A machine used in factories to weave cloth using steam or water power — much faster than by hand.
Primary source	Something made or written at the time an event happened — like a letter, diary, or photograph.
Promise notes	Early versions of money — handwritten notes that promised to pay someone a certain amount later.
Protest	When people come together to show they are unhappy about something and want it to change.
Recession	A time when the economy slows down, fewer goods are made or sold, and people may lose jobs.
Riot Act	A law that allowed the government to order large crowds to go home; if not, soldiers could use force.
Riot	Today the word riot implies a disorganised, chaotic and violent event involving lots of people that is an ill-thought out reaction to a problem.
Rising	A large protest or rebellion where people join together to fight against unfair treatment.
Secondary Source	Something created later that explains or describes the past — like a history book or documentary.
Starvation	When people do not have enough food for a long time and be come very weak or die from hunger.
Weavers	People who make cloth by interlacing threads, either by hand on a loom or by machine.
Welfare	Help or support given to people who are poor, sick, or struggling — such as food, housing, or money.

Additional Resources

Mary Hindle Letter

The original letter from Mary Hindle to her husband includes four lines where she refers to the ethnicity and race of people in New South Wales in an offensive manner. If teachers choose to use this part of the text, it is their responsibility to unpack why this language is problematic. This includes discussing the negative tone, the stereotypes implied, and the fact that Mary would likely have had little prior experience with people from different backgrounds, which shaped her biased views. Addressing this sensitively helps pupils understand historical attitudes while critically reflecting on the impact of prejudiced language.



New South Wales Nov.r 12th 1827

Dear Husband

I have taken this Opportunity of writing these few lines to you which I hope that they will find you in good health as I am happy to inform you that I am in good health at the time I have wrote in New South Wales about the 9th of October after a very and pleasant Passage of About five Months but we had a Tolerable good Passage the Weather was rather rough some Part of the Passage and we was as well treated as I could expect we had a very kind Gentleman for a Doctor which treated us very well and I was very [illegible] the Passage [illegible] the [illegible] nine [illegible]

Mary Hindle Letter, 12th November 1827 © Lancashire Archives

Transcription: Mary Hindle Letter, 12th November 1827

Dear Husband,
I have taken this opportunity of writing these few lines to you, which I hope that they will find you in good health, as I am toleraby well and healthy at this time. Thank God for that!

We arrived in NEW SOUTH WALES about the 7th October after a long tedious passage of about five months, but we had a tolerably good passage and we was as well treated as I could expect, we had a very kind gentleman for a Doctor which treated us very well, and I was very ill on the passage I was in the hospital nineteen days, I was very bad with my legs swelling through not having any exercise on board of the ship. But I have got a situation in Sydney, but I have a very hard situation, I have got a great deal of work and the time appears to me to go very slowly and one day appears to me as long as a month and I am very much confined, we are not allowed any liberty to go away from the place where we live, and if we do go away and stop out till eight or nine o'clock we are sure to get put in the WATCHOUSE and very likely to get sent to the factory, a place where they punish the women very severely, but I hope that the God Almighty will give me health and strength to get through all my difficulties, and now I am in a far distant country.

I hope my dear little ELIZABETH will be took good care of and I hope she is well, for I very often am thinking about her and I should like very much to see her, but God knows whether that ever will be my lot again or not.

Please to give my kind love to my mother and likewise to your father and mother and likewise to my brothers and sisters and all enquiring friends, and I am waiting very anxiously to hear from you my dear husband and I hope and trust that you will try all that lays in your power to get my sentence mitigated for if I thought that you could not get something done for me I think I should die of despair.

Please to give my respects to Mr. Hurst and Mr Turner and I hope you will speak to them concerning me, and I shall feel myself forever indebted to them if please God, they should get my sentence mitigated. And now my dear husband I am going to give you some little information of the country. THE natives of NEW SOUTH WALES are black and they are very uncivilised people. They won't learn to do anything at all and they are very savage, except just round SIDNEY. Up the country they will take every opportunity of killing and eating all the white men they can get hold of.

Mary Hindle (Sydney, New South Wales, 12th November 1827)

Additional Resources

How can I learn more about the Chatterton Massacre?

These diverse artistic, creative, and community heritage activities were scheduled, coordinated and rolled out with a coherent and shared narrative across all sites, networks and events.

The commemorations reached all areas of the 1826 uprising. Lancashire Cultural Services created a touring exhibition and facilitated educational talks at several LCC libraries across Lancashire.

Visit

The permanent exhibition on the 1826 Lancashire Weavers' Rising at:
Helmshore Mills Textile Museum, Holcombe Road, Helmshore, Rossendale BB4 4NP

Find out more at:
helmshoremuseum@lancashire.gov.uk | 01706 226459
www.lancashire.gov.uk/museums

You can also visit the spot of the Chatterton Massacre:
Chatterton Peace Park, Chatterton Rd, Stubbins, Lancashire.

Walk

You can go for self-guided walks that follow the routes the weavers took during the four days of The Lancashire Weavers' Rising. These routes are broken down into 7 walks which are described in detail on the Weavers Uprising Bicentennial Committee website from September 2026
www.weavers-rising.org.uk

The Remembrance Walks have been organised to follow the historic events of the Weavers Uprising 1826 and recreate the following eight routes taken by the handloom weavers in Lancashire:

24 April 1826: Whinney Hill to Low Moor, Clitheroe (Walk 1)
Whinney Hill to Accrington, Oswaldtwistle & Blackburn (Walk 2)

25 April 1826: Earcroft, Darwen to Hoddlesden & Helmshore (Walk 3

26 April 1826: Haslingden to Rawtenstall, Edenfield & Chatterton (Walk 4)
Chatterton to Summerseat & Bury (Walk 5)
Chatterton to Rawtenstall, Waterfoot & Bacup (Walk 6)

27 April 1826: Tockholes to Brinscall & Chorley (Walk 7)

You can also find out more about these and other related walks in the ***Weavers Uprising Bicentennial Walks*** pamphlet which is available on the WUBC website from March 2026.

Listen

BBC Radio Broadcast BBC Radio Lancashire "Remembering the 1826 Chatterton Massacre"
www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0kwyjq9

Watch

Broadcast BBC North West Tonight, 11th March 2025 "The Chatterton Massacre" BBC IPlayer
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWBDvMi0GGE

The Bicentennial Commemorations - Huckleberry Films recorded many of the 200 year anniversary events and activities that marked the bicentennial in 2026. You can find these on the WUBC website from December 2026. **www.weavers-rising.org.uk**

Rise Up! Study Day Talks - For a series of short talks presented in October 2025 on the weavers uprising and summaries of chapters in the Rise Up! (Book 1)
www.huckleberryfilms.co.uk

Animation – Huckleberry Films have also made a short animation based on events at the Lancashire Rising see **www.huckleberryfilms.co.uk** from October 2026

WUBC digital legacy – there are photographs, videos, walks and films on the WUBC website from February 2027. **www.weavers-rising.org.uk**

The actress Maxine Peake has made two films for the WUBC. The first film provides an overview of the WUBC and its commemorative work and second names the known dead at the April 1826 Chatterton Massacre.

You can find these films, and other WUBC related content, at the True Level Media YOUTUBE channel. www.youtube.com/@truelevelmedia8953

Read

BBC News Online Published BBC online, "Academic's quest to commemorate 1826 mill massacre" 7th March 2025 https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7vzlv8y7yvo

Open Societal Challenges (2022) Rise Up! Raising Awareness and Transforming Understandings of the 1826 Weavers' Uprising. https://societal-challenges.open.ac.uk/challenges/raising-awareness-and-transforming-understandings-of-the-weavers-uprising/363

Scott, D. (2022) 'Historical witnessing for the present: Truth, remembrance and mass deaths in Pennine Lancashire' in HERC, June 2022 https://www.open.ac.uk/researchcentres/herc/blog/historical-witnessing-present truth-remembrance-and-mass-deaths-east-lancashire

Scott, D. (2022) 'Walking as activism: the inaugural weavers uprising remembrance walk' in HERC, June 2022 https://www.open.ac.uk/researchcentres/herc/blog/walking-activism-inaugural-'weavers-uprising-remembrance-walk'

Scott, D. (2022) 'Chatterton, April 1826: Britain's Hidden Massacre' in HERC, June 2022 https://www.open.ac.uk/researchcentres/herc/blog/chatterton-april-1826-britain's- hidden-massacre

Scott, D. (2022) 'Alas Poor Weavers': The context of the April 1826 Weavers Uprising in east Lancashire" in HERC, 7th June 2022 https://www.open.ac.uk/researchcentres/herc/blog/'alas-poor-weavers'-context-april- 1826-weavers-uprising-east-lancashire-0

Scott, D. (2024) [credited as 'Weavers Uprising Bicentennial Committee'] "The 1826 Weavers Uprising Bicentennial" in Archives Summer 2024

Scott, D. (2025) "Policing the first global financial crisis: remembering the 1825 Panic" https://university.open.ac.uk/research-centres/herc/blog/policing-first-global-financial crisis-remembering-1825-panic

Scott, D. and Hurst, K. (2025) "Giving Dignity to the Dead: Naming the deceased of the 1826 'Lancashire Rising" https://university.open.ac.uk/research-centres/herc/blog/giving-dignity-dead-naming deceased-1826-lancashire-rising

Scott, D. (2025) "What's in a name? Demystifying the Chatterton Massacre" https://www.academia.edu/128825425/Whats_in_a_name_Demystifying_the_Chattert on_Massacre

Scott, D. and Hurst, K. (2025) Was Chatterton A Massacre? Remembering the April 1826 Lancashire Rising. In North West History Journal (Volume 50)

Scott, D, and Cozens, J. (2026) "Doing History to Reshape Public Memory" in The Historian, Issue 170 (July 2026)

Scott, D. and Gilmore, J. (2025) The Battle for Interpretation: The 1826 Chatterton Massacre and Riot as Denial. Justice, Power and Resistance: An International Journal

Scott, D. and Hurst, K. (2026) "The names that don't appear in the Newspapers: Under 5 child deaths in Pennine Lancashire, April 1826 – March 1827" https://university.open.ac.uk/research-centres/herc/blog/names-did-not-appear-newspapers-under-5-child-deaths-pennine-lancashire-april-1826-march-1827

Scott, D. and Hurst, K. (2026) RISE UP! An Anthology Commemorating the Pennine Lancashire Rising and Chatterton Massacre (Book 1) LCC/Youclaxton

Scott, D. and Hurst, K. (2027) "Georgian women martyrs: three tales of women form the Lancashire rising and Chatterton massacre" Nineteenth Century Gender Studies Journal

Details of the events and commemorations at the Weavers Bicentenary Committee website https@// www.weavers-rising.org.uk

James Fox 'Weavers Uprising Lancashire Banner' - About Us - Weavers Uprising

Newspaper Articles on Weavers Uprising Commemorations (2022-2025)

April 2022 Telegraph article 'Walk to commemorate anniversary of uprising of East Lancashire's starving weavers' https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/

April 2023 'Chatterton Massacre victims remembered in tribute' in Lancashire Telegraph https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/23487418.chatterton-massacre victims-remembered tribute/

May 2024 "Hundreds gather to remember uprising" in Rossendale Free Press,10th May 2024 https://www.pressreader.com/uk/rossendale freepress/

April 2025 "Names of two men who died after 1826 Lancashire Rising uncovered" The Lancashire Telegraph https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/

You can find more newspaper stories on the 200th anniversary commemorations of the Lancashire Rising and Chatterton Massacre via searching online from April 2026.

Knowledge Organiser: The Weavers' Uprising And Chatterton Massacre

Key Vocabulary

Affray A legal term that means a fight or violent disturbance in a public place that makes other people feel scared for their safety.

Depression A time when businesses fail, people lose jobs, and money becomes hard to earn.

Industrialisation When new machines and factories were built, and people started making goods in large amounts instead of by hand.

Handloom weaver A person who made cloth by hand using a wooden weaving frame called a loom.

Mob The word mob originally was a shortened version of the word "mobility" but over time it gained a more sinister meaning (like "mobster") and "mob" often implies a threatening group of people who are intent on doing harm

Massacre When a group of people are killed unfairly and without defence, usually by those in power.

Petition A written request signed by many people asking those in power to make a change or take action.

Power loom A machine used in factories to weave cloth using steam or water power — much faster than by hand.

Promise Notes Early versions of money — handwritten notes that promised to pay someone a certain amount later.

Protest When people come together to show they are unhappy about something and want it to change.

Recession A time when the economy slows down, fewer goods are made or sold, and people may lose jobs.

Rising A large protest or rebellion where people join together to fight against unfair treatment.

Riot Act A law that allowed the government to order large crowds to go home; if not, soldiers could use force.

Riot Today the word riot implies a disorganised, chaotic and violent event involving lots of people that is an ill-thought-out reaction to a problem

Welfare Help or support given to people who are poor, sick, or struggling — such as food, housing, or money.

Lancashire Rising

The early months of 1826 in England were haunted by the devastating impact of the December 1825 economic crisis. The slump's consequences were felt across the country, and the cotton industry in Lancashire was particularly hard hit. Handloom weavers, who made up a large percentage of the workforce in Lancashire, had already experienced many years of declining wages and living standards. During the winter months of 1825/6, they began to face a real existential threat of mass starvation. In a desperate attempt to highlight their hunger and food poverty, thousands arose in protest. During the four-day uprising from the **24-27th April 1826**, protesters targeted the destruction of the **power looms** to send a symbolic message to those with economic and political power that something must be done to alleviate their suffering. This was historically known as ***The Lancashire Rising.***

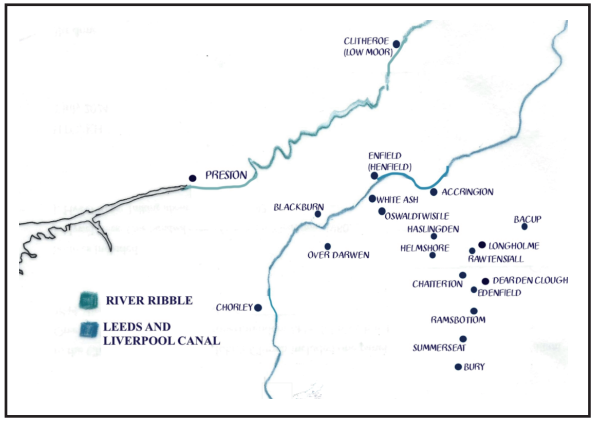
The Chatterton Massacre

The Chatterton Massacre took place on the morning of the 26th of April 1826 outside Aitken's and Lord's Mill, in the small village of Chatterton, near Ramsbottom, Pennine Lancashire. At least six people were shot dead by British soldiers. The massacre occurred on the third day of the Lancashire Rising, which had started on the 24th of April 1826 at Whinney Hill, Accrington and had spread through Oswaldtwistle, Blackburn, Darwen, Helmshore and Haslingden over its first two days. On the third day, an enormous crowd, estimated at between 3,000 and 4,000 people, made their way from the adjacent towns of Haslingden and Rawtenstall along the sides of the south Pennine moors to a mill housing power looms in the village of Edenfield and then down the steep hill towards another mill at Chatterton. When they arrived at Chatterton Old Lane, the local magistrate and the soldiers were waiting for them.

History Skills Vocabulary

Primary source Something made or written at the time an event happened — like a letter, diary, or photograph.

Secondary source Something created later that explains or describes the past — like a



Significant People

Some of those who participated in this largely peaceful form of mass property destruction were to pay a heavy price. The mill owners, government and local magistracy mobilised the yeomanry, special constables, infantry, cavalry and, on one occasion, a local troop of militia with a cannon to defend the mills. With such military capabilities, alongside the little regard in which the lives of the workers were held in comparison to that of property, it was perhaps inevitable that several of the protesters paid with their lives.

The numbers killed by the soldiers during the 'Lancashire Rising', as well as those who protested in West Riding and Manchester in the following days and weeks, may never be fully known.

Whilst there is evidence of other deaths linked to the Lancashire Rising, these names have remained hidden for many years; however, recent research can shine a little extra light on this. The following account, albeit still provisional, brings together all the names of those who are now known to have died during the four days of the rising and its aftermath.

James Lord, John Ashworth, James Rothwell, Richard Lund, Mary Simpson, James Waddicar

Timeline	1768	1779	1792	1808	1812	1817	1819

Key Vocabulary

1760s to the 1830s - In Lancashire, working-class protest developed as industrialisation transformed livelihoods. One of the most symbolic actions was machine breaking, especially of weaving frames and later power looms, used deliberately as a form of negotiation and "voice" when petitions, political representation, or talks with employers were not available

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1780s to the 1830s -The evolution of the power loom and other machinery transformed Britain into an industrial giant, but at great cost to the handloom weavers of Pennine Lancashire.

December 1825–1827- Britain entered a severe economic recession that hit the cotton trade hard, leaving many workers without wages. Parish charities were overwhelmed, and thousands of weavers faced hunger and the real threat of starvation.

Winter 1825/6 – Economic Recession - During the economic recession of 1825-7, Lancashire's weavers—already weakened by decades of falling wages—had nothing left to sell for food. Hunger led to illness and death, especially among young children, and with their suffering largely invisible, many felt compelled to find a way to make their voices heard.

24 April 1826 – Lancashire Rising-The April 1826 Weavers' Uprising was a planned and organised last resort by workers who felt they were not being heard. On 24 April, up to 10,000 people joined the Lancashire Rising across multiple towns—a collective cry from a community pushed to the brink and demanding that their hardship be recognised.

26th of April 1826 - The Chatterton Massacre happened on the 3rd day of The Lancashire. On the morning of 26th April 1826, the power loom destroyers made their way to mills in Rawtenstall, before setting off up the valley towards Edenfield and eventually to the mill at Chatterton. It has been claimed that 20 sharpshooters from the 60th Duke of York's Own Rifles fired over 600 bullets into the crowd of 3000 protesters.

The Hungry Lookout

The text, 'The Hungry Lookout' describes a period of severe economic hardship and social unrest in 1826, when many people lost their jobs and factories stood idle. Bands of rioters of disconnected work people moved about the county entering mills and places of manufacture wherever they could force an entrance and breaking all the machinery, they could lay hands upon. To protect local property and maintain order, magistrates ordered watches and patrols in key areas. In Bury, a military detachment was stationed in the marketplace, ready to act if trouble began.

A man named Ned Kenyon served as a sentinel (lookout) on the roof of Mr Edmund Grundy's house, which had a clear view of the countryside where protesters/rioters were expected to appear. Although there was widespread fear of attack, no large crowds were seen, and as time passed, Ned grew hungry and went downstairs for dinner. However, 'The Hungry Lookout' sets the scene of the unrest when the 'rioters' eventually arrived.

Relevance

The Weavers' Uprising was a distinct and unique popular rural protest regarded by some historians as the most significant historical event since Peterloo (August, 1819). The uprising is then part of the rich tapestry of regional and national protests demanding that the voice (and suffering) of workers was heard and acknowledged. Though largely forgotten or misinterpreted, it is a key part of England's social history. It is argued that these protests highlighted the inequalities which are still present today.

Sources

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Chatterton, April 1826: Britain's Hidden Massacre | Harm & Evidence Research Collaborative

Mary Hindle

Not all those caught up in the events of the Chatterton Massacre were protesters. Some, like Mary Hindle, were innocent bystanders whose lives were changed forever by what they saw. Mary was a young woman living in the weaving communities of Pennine Lancashire, where the sights and sounds of industrial change were part of everyday life. On the day of the uprising, she found herself drawn into the crowd, witnessing scenes of confusion, fear, and violence.

Mary came from a working-class background and, like many in her community, would have been closely connected to the weaving trade—either through her own work or that of her family. Life in the early 19th century for women like Mary was shaped by long hours, limited rights, and the constant strain of economic hardship.

When thousands gathered at Helmshore to protest, Mary—possibly on her way to market or visiting friends—found herself caught in the middle of a confrontation that escalated suddenly. Her testimony later became an important reminder that protests often swept up ordinary townspeople who had not planned to take part, yet whose lives were just as affected by the violence and fear of the day.

Her sentence was transportation for life to New South Wales (Australia). She endured a journey of many days and was in poor health during the trip. In the colony, she worked as a laundress, got a "ticket of leave" (an early form of conditional freedom) after some years. Sadly, years later, she died by suicide in 1841, reportedly after hearing that her family back home had died.