

Lesson 23 — The History Detective

History • ages 8–adult • 30 minutes • one screen, the free game, this page

At a Glance

- Game: The Homeschool Climb, History You Can Touch section (free, no login, plays in the browser) — read.globalsovereignuniversity.org/homeschool-climb.html#history. Also on the Homeschool hub: globalsovereignuniversity.org/homeschool.
- Ages & time: History • ages 8–adult • 30 minutes • one screen, the free game, this page.
- Prep (2 min): read the Teaching Creed once, open the game to the History You Can Touch section, and find one old object at home: a coin, a photo, a tool or a letter. That's the whole setup.

Why this lesson

History is not a list of dates to memorize; that is why dates don't stick. History is detective work: real people left clues, and we read them. This lesson starts with a real object from your own home, teaches the detective's tools (primary sources, artifacts and timelines) and ends with the reason history matters: to learn from the past and build a better tomorrow.

What the learner will be able to do

- Tell a primary source from a story told later.
- Explain what an artifact can reveal about how people lived.
- Place events in order on a timeline, including B.C. dates.
- Say why studying the past helps people make better choices now.

The 30-Minute Climb

How to read this: the gold box in each step is your lesson, word for word — run it exactly. The notes beneath are optional support. “The room/the group” = your family; “host” = you.

1 • The Hook (3 min)

“Here is something old from our home. What can it tell us about the person who owned it, without anyone telling us?”

Say it like this: pass the object around. Every observation counts: worn edges, a date, a place name. That is how historians work.

Watch for / if it stalls: ask smaller questions: how old is it? who made it? why was it kept?

2 • Play Together (12 min)

Climb the History You Can Touch section together. Read each teach card aloud, then vote. After each card, ask what kind of clue your own object is.

Two rituals make it work: (1) read each teach card aloud before the question appears; (2) everyone votes before anyone clicks, so no one just follows the screen.

Watch for / if it stalls: on the B.C. card, draw a quick line on paper: bigger B.C. numbers sit farther left, longer ago. Point to 500 B.C. and 100 B.C.

3 • The Talk (8 min)

1. Is our object a primary source, an artifact, or both? 2. Why might a letter written at the time be more reliable than a story told a hundred years later? 3. What is one mistake from history you hope people never repeat?

You're not fishing for a right answer — you're listening for depth:

- Q1 — an object is an artifact; if it carries words from its own time, it is also a primary source.
- Q2 — the writer was there. Later stories pass through many hands and change along the way.
- Q3 — listen for the reason history matters: learning from the past to build a better tomorrow.

4 • Solo Climb (5 min)

Answer the questions at your own pace.

Why solo: a detective draws conclusions alone from the evidence. Solo questions check that each learner can use the tools.

5 • The Takeaway (2 min)

“The past left clues. Read them like a detective.” • Homework: make a timeline of your own family with at least five events, using one real document or photo as evidence for each.

The badge moment: finishing all five steps earns the Bronze ring of this lesson's badge, The Detective. Mark it on the Passport now; the homework is how Silver and Gold are earned during the week.

The Teaching Creed

You are not the expert; the game is. Your job is to vote last, read aloud well, and ask “why?” one more time than feels natural. Celebrate wrong answers loudly — in here, wrong is where the lesson lives.

GENO — the GSU tutor you can actually TALK to, free, 24/7, understands 70+ languages (32 fully optimized) — can explain any answer a second way.

Adapt It & Measure It

Differentiation

- Younger (8–9): do a mystery-box game. Hide three objects from a grandparent's life and guess what each one says about them.
- One child: interview an older relative and treat the interview as a primary source.
- Large co-op: each family brings one artifact; the group builds a single timeline on the wall.
- Reluctant teen: start with a modern artifact like an old phone. What would a historian in 2100 learn from it?

Evidence of learning (no exam)

Look for three things — Tried (built a five-event family timeline with evidence), Noticed (can tell a primary source from a later retelling), Changed (asks “how do we know?” about a history claim). Those three words are the whole rubric, and they map onto the badge tiers below.

Gamify It — The Campus Climb

Every GSU lesson is one badge on the Climber's Passport, each earned at four depths — the GSU standard Bronze → Silver → Gold → Platinum.

LESSON 23 BADGE — The Detective • Bronze — The Climb: finished the 30-minute lesson, all five steps. • Silver — The Try: built a family timeline of five events with one piece of evidence for each. • Gold — The Proof: reached Gold on the History You Can Touch climb and explained B.C. dating on a drawn timeline. • Platinum — The Teacher: ran this lesson as host for someone else. The harvest of a teacher is teachers.

The book behind this lesson: History You Can Touch, by Dr. Gene A Constant — Chapter 1 (Why the Dates Don't Stick), Chapter 2 (The Method: Read, Then Do) and Chapter 8 (The Timeline on the Wall).

"Every person on Earth is born with an American spirit: an untamed yearning for a better tomorrow." — Dr. Gene A. Constant

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