

The Entire History of London

2,000 Years of History

Video + Research

Third Conditional

~90 mins

A WARM-UP — WHAT DO YOU ALREADY KNOW?

London's history stretches back over 2,000 years. Before you watch, activate what you already know with the tasks below.

Task 1 | The timeline below shows the main eras covered in the video. Working with a partner, try to add **one event or fact** you already know for each period.

The Romans AD 43–410	The Saxons 410–1066	Medieval 1066–1485	Tudor & Stuart 1485–1714	Georgian & Victorian 1714–1901	20th–21st Century 1901–present
ROMANS 	SAXONS 	MEDIEVAL 	TUDOR & STUART 	GEORGIAN & VICTORIAN 	20TH–21ST CENTURY

Task 2 | Discuss these questions with your partner. You have 5 minutes.

1

What do you know about how London got its name? Do you know any other names the city has had throughout history?

2

Which foreign powers have invaded or conquered England? What do you think they brought with them?

3

London has survived several major disasters. Can you name any? What impact do you think they had on the city?

4

How do you think London's role in global trade shaped the modern world? Can you think of any examples?

B PRE-WATCH — KEY VOCABULARY

Task 3 | Match each word or phrase (1–10) with its meaning (a–j). Then check with a partner before you watch.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Londinium | ☐ | a. The river running through the heart of London |
| 2. the Thames | ☐ | b. The Roman name for the city founded in AD 43 |
| 3. the Magna Carta | ☐ | c. A powerful trading corporation founded in 1600 |
| 4. the Great Plague | ☐ | d. The German bombing campaign on London in WWII |
| 5. the Great Fire | ☐ | e. A 1215 charter limiting the power of the monarchy |
| 6. the East India Company | ☐ | f. A deadly epidemic that killed thousands in 1665 |
| 7. Westminster Abbey | ☐ | g. The uncontrolled growth of a city into surrounding areas |
| 8. the Norman Conquest | ☐ | h. William I's takeover of England in 1066 |
| 9. the Blitz | ☐ | i. The 1666 disaster that destroyed much of the city |
| 10. urban sprawl | ☐ | j. A famous Gothic church where monarchs are crowned |

Task 4 | Complete each sentence using the correct word or phrase from the box below. Change the form if necessary.

decimated | thriving | infrastructure | reconstruction | pivotal | commerce | metropolis | excavate

1. The Romans built roads, walls, and public buildings, laying the _____ for London's future growth.
2. By the 9th century, London had become a _____ trading hub.
3. The Great Plague of 1665 _____ London's population.
4. After the Great Fire, a major _____ effort reshaped the city.
5. London's location on the Thames made it a _____ centre for trade.
6. Today, London is a global _____ home to millions of people.
7. Archaeologists continue to _____ Roman remains beneath the city's streets.
8. The signing of the Magna Carta was a _____ moment in English constitutional history.

C WHILE WATCHING — COMPREHENSION TASKS

You will watch the video once. Complete both tasks as you watch.

Task 5 | Timeline ordering. Number these events 1–10 in the order they appear in the video.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ The Great Fire destroys much of London | ☐ William the Conqueror invades from Normandy |
| ☐ The Romans found Londinium on the Thames | ☐ The Magna Carta is signed at Runnymede |
| ☐ Elizabeth I presides over a cultural golden age | ☐ The Great Plague kills thousands of Londoners |
| ☐ The Blitz devastates large parts of the city | ☐ Victoria is crowned, beginning an era of empire |
| ☐ The East India Company is founded | ☐ Anglo-Saxons re-establish London as a trading hub |

Task 6 | True, False or Not Given? Write T, F or NG in the box. Correct any false statements.

- 1 The Romans called the settlement on the Thames "Londinium" and established it as a major commercial centre. ☐

- 2 After the Romans left, London immediately became the most important city in Europe. ☐

- 3 The Magna Carta, signed in 1215, placed limits on the power of the king and influenced the development of democracy. ☐

- 4 The Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of 1666 both occurred within a single year of each other. ☐

- 5 During the Victorian era, London became the capital of the world's largest empire. ☐

- 6 The Blitz during World War II caused more damage to London than the Great Fire of 1666. ☐

FORM & MEANING

We use the **third conditional** to talk about imaginary situations in the **past** — things that did not happen, and the consequences they would have had.

IF + subject + **had (not) + past participle** , subject + **would (not) have + past participle**

"If the Normans hadn't invaded in 1066, English might have developed very differently."

"If the Great Fire hadn't destroyed so much of the city, London wouldn't have been rebuilt with wider streets."

"If the Romans hadn't founded Londinium, there might not have been a capital on the Thames at all."

Note: We can also use *could have* / *might have* instead of *would have* to show possibility or ability.

Task 7 | Complete each third conditional sentence about London's history using the verbs in brackets.

- If the Romans _____ (not / choose) the Thames as the site for Londinium, the city _____ (not / grow) into such an important trading port.
- If William the Conqueror _____ (not / win) the Battle of Hastings, the English language _____ (not / develop) so many French words.
- If the Magna Carta _____ (not / be) signed in 1215, the power of the monarchy _____ (remain) unchecked for much longer.
- If the East India Company _____ (not / be founded), Britain _____ (not / build) such an extensive global trade network.
- If the Great Fire _____ (not / sweep) through London in 1666, the city _____ (not / be rebuilt) with the improved streets and buildings we see today.
- If London _____ (not / suffer) the Blitz, many of the city's historic buildings _____ (survive) to the present day.

Task 8 | Write your own third conditional sentences about London's history. Use the prompts below to help you.

- ...if the plague hadn't killed so many people...
- ...if the Anglo-Saxons hadn't settled in London...
- ...if Queen Victoria hadn't expanded the British Empire...

DISCUSSION — WHAT IF HISTORY HAD BEEN DIFFERENT?

With your partner, discuss the questions below. Try to use the third conditional as much as possible in your answers. Be ready to share your ideas with the class.

- ▶ "If the Romans hadn't built Londinium, where do you think the capital of England might have been? Would it have developed in the same way?"
- ▶ "If the Great Plague hadn't killed so many people in 1665, how might London's population and society have developed differently?"
- ▶ "If the East India Company hadn't been founded in 1600, do you think Britain would still have built a global empire? Why / Why not?"
- ▶ "If the Blitz hadn't happened, how do you think London's architecture and identity might look today?"
- ▶ Think about your own country's history. Choose one major event and make a third conditional sentence about it. Share it with your partner.

F POST-WATCH DISCUSSION — EVENTS FROM THE VIDEO

Task 9 | The video covers many significant historical events. With your partner, briefly discuss what you remember about each one. Use these questions to guide you.

The Great Plague (1665)

What caused it? Who did it affect? How did London respond?

The Great Fire (1666)

How did it start? What did it destroy? What changed as a result?

The Norman Conquest (1066)

Who was William I? What did he change? What did he build?

The East India Company (1600)

Why was it founded? What role did it play in London's growth?

Now turn over for your Research Task. You will investigate two of these events in greater depth.

Research Task — Digging Deeper into London's History

You have already seen these events mentioned in the video. Now it's time to find out more.

Instructions: You will research **two historical events**. Event 1 is **compulsory** — The Founding of the East India Company. For Event 2, choose **one** from the options on page 7. Use reliable online sources (BBC History, [britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com), [historic-uk.com](https://www.historic-uk.com), etc.) to complete your research cards. You will present your findings to the class afterwards.

★ Event 1: The Founding of the East India Company (1600)

COMPULSORY

Research this event and complete all sections below.

DATE FOUNDED & BY WHOM

ORIGINAL PURPOSE / AIM

KEY COUNTRIES / REGIONS INVOLVED

HOW IT CHANGED LONDON'S ECONOMY

ITS ROLE IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

WHEN AND WHY IT ENDED

ONE SURPRISING FACT YOU FOUND:

THIRD CONDITIONAL REFLECTION — COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

"If the East India Company hadn't been founded,

SOURCE(S) USED:

2 EVENT 2 — CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TO RESEARCH

○ Option A: The Great Plague of London (1665)

One of the deadliest outbreaks in London's history — a bubonic plague epidemic that killed an estimated 100,000 people.

WHAT CAUSED IT / HOW IT SPREAD

HOW MANY PEOPLE DIED & AREAS AFFECTED

HOW THE AUTHORITIES RESPONDED

HOW IT CAME TO AN END

LONG-TERM IMPACT ON LONDON

A KEY FIGURE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS EVENT

THIRD CONDITIONAL REFLECTION — COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

"If the Great Plague hadn't spread so rapidly,

_____ "

SOURCE(S) USED:

○ Option B: The Great Fire of London (1666)

A catastrophic fire that began in a bakery on Pudding Lane and burned for four days, destroying over 13,000 houses and 87 churches.

HOW AND WHERE IT STARTED

SCALE OF DESTRUCTION

WHAT THE REBUILDING INVOLVED

NEW BUILDING REGULATIONS INTRODUCED

KEY FIGURE IN THE REBUILDING

ONE LASTING LEGACY TODAY

THIRD CONDITIONAL REFLECTION — COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

"If the Great Fire hadn't destroyed so much of the city,

_____ "

SOURCE(S) USED:

Option C: The Signing of the Magna Carta (1215)

A landmark legal document signed by King John that limited royal power and laid foundations for modern democracy and human rights.

WHY IT WAS CREATED / WHAT LED TO IT

ITS MAIN CONTENTS / KEY RIGHTS

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN SIGNING IT

IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON LONDON / ENGLAND

ITS INFLUENCE ON MODERN LAW / DEMOCRACY

WHERE YOU CAN SEE A COPY TODAY

THIRD CONDITIONAL REFLECTION — COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

"If the barons hadn't forced King John to sign the Magna Carta,

SOURCE(S) USED:

Option D: The Norman Conquest (1066)

William the Conqueror's victory at the Battle of Hastings transformed England's language, culture, governance, and architecture forever.

CAUSES OF THE INVASION

WHAT HAPPENED AT HASTINGS

CHANGES WILLIAM MADE TO LONDON

IMPACT ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

BUILDINGS COMMISSIONED AFTER 1066

LEGACY THAT SURVIVES TO TODAY

THIRD CONDITIONAL REFLECTION — COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

"If the Normans hadn't invaded in 1066,

SOURCE(S) USED:

PRESENTATION — SHARE YOUR RESEARCH

Once you have completed your research cards, prepare a short spoken summary to share with the class (3–4 minutes). Use the structure below.

- 1 **Introduce your events.** Give the name, date, and a one-sentence overview of each.
- 2 **Key facts.** Share 3–4 details you found most interesting or surprising from your research.
- 3 **Third conditional.** Share your two completed reflection sentences and explain your thinking.
- 4 **Your opinion.** Which of your two events do you think had the greater impact on London today? Why?