Local History for Year 3

Highbury Hall & Park

Lesson Duration
Pre-visit: 1 hour (classroom-based introduction)
Visit Day: Half-day trip (3 hours on site)
Post-visit: 1 hour (reflection & art completion)

Lesson Structure
1. Pre-Visit Lesson (Classroom – 1 hour)

Starter (10 mins)
Show pictures of Highbury Hall.
Ask: "What do you think this building was used for? Who might have lived here?"

Main Input (30 mins)
- Introduce Joseph Chamberlain using a short biography and a timeline.
- Highlight his contributions to Birmingham: education, housing, clean water.
- Look at Victorian architecture features (e.g., towers, ornate brickwork, stained glass).
- Discuss why buildings and people from the past are important to our city today.

Activity (20 mins)
Create "Fact Files" on Joseph Chamberlain (template provided).
In small groups, predict what they might see and learn on the visit.

2. On-Site Visit to Highbury Hall & Park (2–3 hours) This needs to be prebooked
Guided Tour (45 mins–1 hour)
Explore rooms of Highbury Hall.
Learn about the Chamberlain family and their impact on Birmingham.
Identify key Victorian architectural features.
Q&A with guide.
Art Session (45 mins)
Sketching session: pupils sketch parts of the building or garden that interest them.
Optional: collect textures/rubbings (with permission), take notes for later collage work.
Outdoor Exploration (30 mins)
Walk through the park/gardens, observe changes in themed gardens.
Link to how parks were created for health and leisure in the Victorian era.
Reflection (15 mins)
Group discussion: What did we learn? What surprised us? How do we feel about the place?

3. Post-Visit Lesson (1 hour)
Main Task (45 mins)
Use sketches and notes to create an art piece inspired by Highbury Hall (collage, mixed media, or refined drawing).
Extension: Write a short paragraph starting with: "Joseph Chamberlain helped Birmingham by…"

Plenary (15 mins)
Display art pieces.
Share one thing they learned and one question they still have.
Revisit initial predictions – were they right?

Resources Needed
Pre-visit: images of Highbury Hall, fact file templates, Joseph Chamberlain timeline.
Visit: sketchbooks, pencils, clipboards, art materials, digital cameras/tablets (optional).
Post-visit: paints, paper, glue, scissors, photos/sketches from visit.

Assessment Opportunities
Participation in discussions and activities.
Quality and content of Joseph Chamberlain fact files.
Sketches and final art pieces demonstrating observation and historical inspiration.
Ability to explain key facts about Chamberlain and Victorian Birmingham.

Differentiation
Provide sentence starters and scaffolds for less confident writers.
Use buddy support during sketching or reflections.
Extension tasks for early finishers: deeper research into how nature inspired Highbury Hall

Key Vocabulary
Local history
Victorian
Joseph Chamberlain
Architecture
Heritage
Civic pride
Development

Plan your trip and download resources
www.highburyhallandpark.co.uk
Year 3 local history

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