

**Quotes about History-** *How do they present different perspectives?*

1. "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. -George Santayana
2. "There are two kinds of historians, parachutists and truffle hunters". –Brian Fagan
3. "To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction". –Howard Zinn
4. "History is fables agreed upon". –Voltaire
5. "That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons that History has to teach". - Aldous Huxley
6. "There is a history in all men's lives". - William Shakespeare
7. "Historians should use hedging language such as, 'I suspect, I suppose, and we speculate', instead of from the perspective of absolute fact. Textbooks write from the position of absolute fact"- Bob Bain
8. "It would be better not to know so many things than to know so many things that are not so" -Josh Billings
9. "Concealment of the historical truth is a crime against the people" -Gen. Ptero G. Grigorenko
10. "Those who don't remember the past are condemned to repeat the eleventh grade"- James W. Loewen

“Invitation to History: The Map of Human Character” By: Will Durant, November 18, 1945

This is an example of historical perspective.

- A. Highlight all items you agree with
- B. Underline all words you do not know the meaning of
- C. Circle items that pertain to history on a personal level

“History”, said Henry Ford, “is bunk.” As one who has written history for twenty-five years, and studied it for forty-five, I should largely agree with the great engineer who put half the world on wheels. History as studied in schools – history as a dreary succession of dates and kings, of politics and wars, of the rise and fall of states – this kind of history is verily a weariness of the flesh, stale and flat and unprofitable. No wonder so few students in school are drawn to it; no wonder so few of us learn any lessons from the past.

But history as man’s rise from savagery to civilization – history as the record of the lasting contributions made to man’s knowledge, wisdom, arts, morals, manners, skills – history as a laboratory rich in a hundred thousand experiments in economics, religion, literature, science, and government – history as our roots and our illumination, as the road by which we came and the only light that can clarify the present and guide us into the future – that kind of history is not “bunk;” it is, as Napoleon said on St. Helena, “the only true philosophy and the only true psychology.” Other studies may tell us how man might behave, or how he should behave; history tells us how he has behaved for six thousand years. One who knows that record is in large measure protected in advance against the delusions and disillusionments of his time. He has learned the limitations of human nature, and bears with equanimity the faults of his neighbors and the imperfections of states. He shares hopefully in the reforming enterprises of his age and people; but his heart does not break, nor his faith in life fade out, when he perceives how modest are the results, and how persistently man remains what he has been for sixty centuries, perhaps for a thousand generations.

It is a mistake to think that the past is dead. Nothing that has ever happened is quite without influence at this moment. The present is merely the past rolled up and concentrated in this second of time. You, too, are your past; often your face is your autobiography; you are what you are because of what you have been; because of your heredity stretching back into forgotten generations; because of every element of environment that has affected you, every man or woman that has met you, every book that you have read, every experience that you have had; all these are accumulated in your memory, your body, your character, your soul. So with a city, a country, a race; it is its past, and cannot be understood without it. It is the present, not the past that dies; this present moment, to which we give so much attention, is forever flitting from our eyes and fingers into that pedestal and matrix of our lives which we call the past. It is only the past that lives.

Therefore I feel that we of this generation give too much time to news about the transient present, too little to the living past. We are choked with news, and starved of history. We know a thousand items about the day or yesterday, we learn the events and troubles and heartbreaks of a hundred peoples, the policies and pretensions of a dozen capitals, the victories and defeats of causes, armies, athletic teams. But how, without history, can we understand these events, discriminate their significance, sift out the large from the small, see the basic currents underlying surface movements and changes, and foresee the result sufficiently to guard against fatal error or the souring of unreasonable hopes?