UNIT 3 · LESSON 6

The ship in the sand

How does a historian reason from evidence?

AIMS

How confident are you now? Circle one face for each aim at the end of the lesson.

Content Identify the evidence, reasoning and uncertainty in a historian's explanation of Sutton Hoo. ☹ 😐 ☺

Language Report a historian's reasoning: 'The historian says... because...' ☹ 😐 ☺

Skills Take key-word notes while you listen. ☹ 😐 ☺

Learn: Key words

Say each word. Read the meaning. Write the word in a language you know.

WORD	MEANING	IN MY LANGUAGE
conclude / conclusion	decide something after looking at the evidence / the idea you decide	
reason	why something happens, or why you think something	
support	make an idea stronger, with evidence	

Listen 1: Who was buried at Sutton Hoo?

First, write the words you expect to hear. Then listen once to the end for the answer.



The Sutton Hoo helmet, about 625. British Museum. Photo: Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

BEFORE YOU LISTEN: MAKE A PREDICTION

Which words do you expect to hear in the historian's description? Use the picture and the context to help you.

_____

_____

WHILE YOU LISTEN

Listen for this: who does the historian think was buried? Circle one at the end.

a soldier / ***a rich farmer*** / ***a king***

Listen 2: Notes like a historian

Listen again. Take notes under the four headings. Key words only. You can write in any language.

Spelling help: Sutton Hoo · Byzantine Empire · Bede · Rædwald

Evidence *What did they find?*	**Reason** *Why does the evidence matter?*
Uncertain *What is missing?*	**Conclusion** *What does the historian think?*

Notice: Careful words

The historian is not 100% sure. Read five sentences from the listening. Underline the careful words.

1. It could have been a gift.
2. It's unlikely that this was an ordinary soldier.
3. It seems this was someone very powerful.
4. The body may have disappeared.
5. It's likely that it was Rædwald.

CAREFUL PATTERNS

may / might / could + have + past participle possible, but we cannot prove it	*The soldiers may have protected the emperor.*
It's likely / unlikely that + sentence probably true / probably not true	*It's unlikely that Sima Qian knew about them.*

It seems (that) + sentence the evidence suggests this	*It seems the soldiers were an army.*

Examples: the clay soldiers (Lesson 3).

Practise: Make it careful

Rewrite each sentence with may, might or could + have. One sentence should NOT change. Which one? Why?

Remember: disappear → disappeared · come → come · take → taken

1 The bones disappeared.

2 The silver dish came as a gift.

3 Robbers took treasure from the small mounds.

4 The ship was 27 metres long.

Imagine: Two robbers

Optional. Long ago, robbers dug into the big mound. Imagine they found the treasure! Write their talk. Use may, might or could + have.



Modern illustration. Imagined scene. This is not a source.

Objects: the stone stick · a drinking horn · a small harp · the helmet

A: *This could have been a king's sword!*

B: *Maybe. And this stone stick? It might have been …*

B _____

A _____

B _____

A _____

B _____

A _____

B _____