

Name _____

Date _____



What Is History?

What is history? Her story, his story, our story, your story, yeah...

SAMUEL DROWNE:

If you want a history lesson, I got one for you,
History can be like the box of Pandora.
It's an account of the past, but who gets to say
What really happened on any given day?
I'm no historian, I don't analyze the past,
But I know there's no such thing as historical fact.
For example, nobody can seem to agree
What happened on March 5, 1770.
It was the Boston Massacre, and I swear,
I know what happened, 'cause I was standing right there.
The soldiers had been causing trouble for years,
We were forced to let them live with us, we weren't volunteers.
The day of the attack, my people followed the group
Of soldiers, and then, I heard the leader of the troop
Order his men to fire, and fire they did,
Killing five of us who had so much life left to live.
That's my sworn testimony, my name is Sam Drowne,
I was there the day the Boston Massacre went down.

THOMAS PRESTON:

I go by Tom Preston, captain of the soldiers,
"Come on you rascals, fire!" is what the crowd told us.
They were throwing rocks and taunting,
Daring my men to shoot, that tragic day in Boston.

Tension was high, my men were flustered and afraid,
And they fired, but not how the colonists say.
I never made the order, I never said to shoot,
I'm a captain, not a cold-blooded brute.
I write this from a jail, awaiting judgment from the court,
I hope they see I'm innocent and not the violent sort.
History, yeah, we all want to know where we came from,
The who, what, when and why of the past.
Historians find evidence from primary sources
Of people, places, cities and things that didn't last.
Oh, history is a science and study
Of all genders and races of human faces, beliefs and pedigrees.
Historians research more than just the word of one
To learn all sides of history.

HISTORIAN:

Who do we believe? Preston is locked up,
If his men made a mess, he's trying to get it mopped up.
And Drowne had beef with the captain, that's clear,
He probably wouldn't mind seeing the end of his career.
So we don't know why the British shot their guns,
When it comes to the past, there's always more than one
Story, and there's never a single answer,
But historians ask questions to paint the fullest picture.
They are like detectives, sifting through evidence
To come up with theories about the way they think things went.
They collect primary and secondary sources,
'Cause any one source is only a portion
Of the full picture, they put their evidence in context,
'Cause the background helps make sense of the content.
Like Preston's in jail, his life's on the line,
Is there a reason to believe he'd be telling a lie?

We study the past to make sense of right now,
History's the pursuit that shows us how.
And we aim to see the future in the past,
By traveling down history's countless paths.

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