

Unit 1: What is Big History?

Unit 1 Driving Question:

- Why do we look at things from far away and close up?

Learning Outcomes

1. Define thresholds of increasing complexity, origin stories, and scale.
2. Understand that Big History is a modern, science-based origin story that draws on many different types of knowledge.
3. Understand how you fit into the Big History narrative, using the concept of “thresholds” to frame your past, present, and future and the history of the Universe.
4. Understand what disciplines are and consider how the viewpoints of many different scholars can be integrated for a better understanding of a topic.
5. Learn to use timelines as a way to compare the scale of personal and historic events.
6. Identify a thesis statement and how writing is structured, and evaluate both of those elements in writing.

Key Concepts

Big History is a course that tells the story of the Universe from the Big Bang to the present, which means you and your students are going to be looking at billions of years of history. Because telling the story of the Universe covers so much time and so many topics, it will probably require a different approach than other courses you’ve taught.

Est. Time to Complete: 2 Weeks

	1.0	Welcome to Big History
	1.0.1	Activity: History as Mystery
	1.0.2	Activity: Easter Island Mystery
	1.0.3	Watch: What is Big History?
	1.0.4	Watch: Crash Course Big Bang
	1.0.5	Activity: Big History Website Scavenger Hunt
	1.0.6	Watch: A Big History of Everything - H2
	1.0.7	Closing: Investigation 0
		Lesson 1.0 Quiz

	1.1	Scale
--	-----	-------

	1.1.1	Watch: To Scale
	1.1.2	Activity: Vocabulary
	1.1.3	Activity: DQ Notebook
	1.1.4	Activity: Big History Football Earth's Entire History (Visualized on a Football Field)
	1.1.5	Activity: Scale of Human History on a String
	1.1.6	Activity: Timelines and Scale
		Lesson 1.1 Quiz

	1.2	Origin Stories
	1.2.1	Watch: Big Questions - H2
	1.2.2	Activity: Intro to Origin Stories CC Mythology: What is Myth? CC Mythology: Creation from the Void - others may need parental previewing for content
	1.2.3	Article: Origin Stories Introduction Three Close Reads Checklist Writing Practice: Key Word Outline on all Origin Stories I printed them out using the Unit 1 Text Reader. I just copy and pasted the Lexile I wanted into a doc to print. That way they could practice highlighting the key words and take notes right on the paper.
	1.2.4	Article: Origin Story: Modern Scientific
	1.2.5	Activity: Origin Stories: Article Collection
	1.2.6	Article: Origin Story: Chinese
	1.2.7	Article: Origin Story: Judeo-Christian
	1.2.8	Article: Origin Story: Iroquois
	1.2.9	Article: Origin Story: Mayan
	1.2.10	Article: Origin Story: Greek
	1.2.11	Article: Origin Story: Zulu
	1.2.12	Article: Origin Story: Efik
	1.2.13	Article: Cosmology and Faith

	1.2.14	Activity: DQ Notebook
		Lesson 1.2 Quiz

	1.3	Claim Testing CC: History of Science: Scientific Method
	1.3.1	Opening: Claim Testing Snap Judgment
	1.3.2	Activity: DQ Notebook
	1.3.3	Activity: Vocabulary Part 2
	1.3.4	Article: Approaches to Knowledge
	1.3.5	Watch: How do we decide what we believe? • Media Literacy YouTube Video by Brain Pop • PBS War of the Worlds: The Panic Broadcast - clip • The War of the Worlds Mass Panic (That Never Happened)
	1.3.6	Article: The Claim Testers: Episode 1 - First Contact
	1.3.7	Activity: Analyzing Investigation Writing: Claim & Focus
	1.3.8	Closing: Investigation 1
		Lesson 1.3 Quiz

	1.4	Yardsticks and Clocks
	1.4.1	Opening: Measuring great distances Part 1
	1.4.2	Article: How did we find the distance to the sun?
	1.4.3	Watch: CC Astronomy: Distances
	1.4.4	Activity: Measuring distances using parallax
	1.4.5	Video: How old is the earth?
	1.4.6	Activity: Modeling measuring time using radioactivity
	1.4.7	Closing: Measuring great distances part 2
		Lesson 1.4 Quiz

--	--

	Watch: The Big History
	Watch: One Student of Big History
	Activity: Visions of the future
	Article: BANG! The universe verse book
	Infographic: Notations and Measures

YouTube Playlist

- [My Big History Project Playlist: Unit 1](#)
- [Official Big History Project Playlist: Unit 1](#)

Web Links

[Naomi Oreskes: Why we should trust scientists? - TED](#)
[The Scale of the Universe 2](#)
[Timelines of the Universe - Ross Mays](#)

Documentaries, Lectures & TV Shows

- My Favorite Universe - Great Courses Plus
 - Lecture 7: Onward to the Edge
 - Lecture 9: The Greatest Story Ever Told

Media Literacy

- [The Language of Persuasion](#) PDF by the New Mexico Media Literacy Project for reference
- [Orson Welles broadcast of War of the Worlds](#)
 - [PBS War of the Worlds: The Panic Broadcast](#) - clip
 - [The War of the Worlds Mass Panic \(That Never Happened\)](#)
- [Media Literacy](#) YouTube Video by Brain Pop