

## WRITING DEVELOPMENT

### The League in Abyssinia

#### 13. Making Notes IV – timelines

When I was at university, I always began the study of any new topic by building a timeline. A timeline helps fix the sequence of events, around which you can develop your understanding. Extended backwards and forwards, it gives insight into causes and consequences. Facts within a ‘story’ (narrative) are more easily-remembered than ‘factors’ (analysis). Knowledge of a timeline will be vitally useful for most of the AQA’s ‘Write an account of...’ and OCR’s ‘Outline how...’ exam questions.

If you go into Wikipedia and look up its account of the Abyssinian crisis, you will find a bewildering and confusing list of events. Online timelines are often crazily detailed, or far too simple.

Instead:

1. Start by making your own timeline from [the webpage](#) (or your textbook).

Scan-read down the page, finding the relevant dates mentioned, and jot them down, with a short note as to what happened, so as to complete the following table:

Date	Event
1928	Treaty fixes border
1930	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	Italy invades
_____	_____
_____	_____
June 1936	_____

At this point, check to see if you have enough of a frame to write a decent narrative story (see Exercise 15). If you do, you can stop. If not, you can go looking for facts to ‘plug the gaps’ (for instance, in the table above, you might want to find out what happened between January and September 1935, covered in the webpage simply by the phrase: “The League messed on for nine months”).

Be careful not to list too many events – you need to remember them! More than ten is probably too many.

2. Go back through your work on the Treaty of Versailles and the League. Good topics to have timelines on would be:

The events of the [Paris Peace Conference](#)

[Problems facing the ‘new states’, 1919-39](#)

The [successes and failures](#) of the League in the 1920s

[Diplomacy outside the League](#) in the 1920s and ‘30s

Attempts at [disarmament](#) in the 1920s and ‘30s

The [Manchurian Crisis](#), 1932-33

The Abyssinian Crisis, 1935-36