

Golf History Curriculum

Parent-Teacher Notes

Stage 2 — Learn & Improve

Your role: structured guide and discussion partner · 6 Weeks · 24 Lessons · Homeschool Edition

How to Use This Document

This document contains every parent-teacher note from the Golf History Curriculum for Stage 2 — Learn & Improve. All six weeks, all four lessons per week, organized in one place.

Each note tells you what the lesson is doing analytically, how to facilitate the key discussion or activity, what to watch for in your student's response, and where to push further if your student is ready.

Notes are written for you — the parent-teacher — not for your student. Read the week-level guidance box at the start of each section before beginning that week's lessons.

The Quick Reference table at the back lists every lesson with a single-sentence facilitation priority — ideal for a fast review before each session.

Stage Overview

Your role: structured guide and discussion partner

Stage 2 introduces analytical thinking alongside historical content. Your role shifts from storyteller to discussion partner — introducing primary sources, asking 'how do we know this?', and encouraging your student to form and defend positions. Discussions can go deeper now. Pace each week to your student's interest and energy.

Week 1 — Ancient Origins and Early Rules · Golf's beginnings to 1750

Week Guidance

Encourage your student to distinguish between what is historically known and what is assumed. Primary sources — the actual 1744 rules — are available online and should be consulted directly. Reading a 280-year-old document about golf together is genuinely exciting.

LESSON

1

Did Golf Really Start in Scotland?

Parent-Teacher Note

The comparison exercise develops the historical thinking skill of evaluating competing claims with evidence. There is no definitively correct answer, and students who reach different conclusions through careful reasoning are both succeeding at the task.

LESSON

2

The First Written Rules: 1744

Parent-Teacher Note

Reading the actual original 13 rules is a primary source encounter that should not be rushed. Even if the language is difficult, work through each rule together. The experience of engaging with a 280-year-old document is memorable and motivating.

LESSON

3

St. Andrews and the Royal and Ancient

Parent-Teacher Note

The story of how 18 holes was settled on — by playing the first four holes twice at St. Andrews, reducing from 22 to 18 — is genuinely funny and illuminating. It shows how many 'fundamental' things in golf were originally accidental.

LESSON

4

How Rules Changed the Game

Parent-Teacher Note

The rule history analysis is the first genuinely research-based writing task. Support your student in finding and evaluating sources. The question 'what would golf be like without this rule?' produces the most interesting thinking.

Week 2 — The Open Championship · 1860 to present

Week Guidance

Week 2 introduces institutional history — how a single event, repeated annually, accumulates meaning over 160+ years. If the Masters or Open is on television this week, connect what you are watching directly to what you are studying.

LESSON

1

The First Open: Prestwick 1860

Parent-Teacher Note

The early Open Championship timeline is dominated by Scottish players and a few recurring names — particularly Old and Young Tom Morris. The pattern of family dominance in early professional golf is historically interesting and worth discussing.

LESSON

2

Young Tom Morris: The First Great Champion

Parent-Teacher Note

Young Tom Morris's story is genuinely moving and age-appropriate. The combination of extraordinary achievement and tragic early death makes him a compelling biographical subject. Handle the death with appropriate sensitivity.

LESSON

3

The Claret Jug: 150 Years of Champions

Parent-Teacher Note

The magnifying glass/zoom activity is both practically engaging and symbolically powerful — the student is literally reading history inscribed on a physical object. The three-champion profile spans the full arc of Open history.

LESSON

4

The Open Today: Links Golf's Greatest Stage

Parent-Teacher Note

The links rota research connects geography, golf history, and design knowledge. If any of the courses are ones your student has seen on television, make that connection explicit.

Week 3 — Equipment Revolution · 1850–1950

Week Guidance

Equipment history is where physics and history intersect most directly. Connect this week's content to the Physics and Aerodynamics curriculum whenever possible — cross-subject connections deepen both subjects simultaneously.

LESSON

1

The Gutter Revolution

Parent-Teacher Note

The accidental discovery pattern — observing something unexpected and following the observation — is one of the most important ideas in the history of science. Connecting gutter serendipity to penicillin or Post-it notes builds cross-subject thinking.

LESSON

2

From Gutter to Dimple: Ball Technology Evolves

Parent-Teacher Note

If your student has completed the Physics curriculum, this is a direct connection: they already understand why dimples work. Now they see the historical path that led to their discovery. Make the connection explicit.

LESSON

3

Hickory to Steel: The Shaft Revolution

Parent-Teacher Note

The video comparison is one of the most effective activities in the curriculum because students can see the physical consequences of equipment change in real time. Encourage specific observations about the hands, shaft flex, and follow-through.

LESSON

4

The Modern Equipment Era

Parent-Teacher Note

The driving distance data makes the technology revolution visible in numbers. The resulting policy question — should equipment be regulated? — is genuinely contested and produces strong opinions. Both positions, argued carefully with evidence, are correct responses to the task.

Week 4 — Golf Comes to America · 1888–1930

Week Guidance

American golf history is full of colorful characters and dramatic stories. This week balances social history — who could and couldn't play — with competitive history. Both threads are equally important.

LESSON

1

Six Men and a Cow Pasture

Parent-Teacher Note

Connecting golf growth to economic growth, the rise of the middle class, and urbanization builds genuine historical contextual thinking. The rapid growth of American golf in the early 20th century mirrors the broader story of American prosperity.

LESSON

2

Francis Ouimet Changes Everything

Parent-Teacher Note

The Library of Congress Chronicling America database has actual 1913 newspaper coverage freely available. Reading original newspaper accounts is a powerful primary source experience that produces specific, concrete observations rather than general impressions.

LESSON

3

Bobby Jones and the Grand Slam

Parent-Teacher Note

Augusta National is a genuine intersection of golf history, architecture, and culture. The design principles Jones and MacKenzie used connect naturally to the Environmental Sciences curriculum's treatment of course design — make that link if your student has covered it.

LESSON

4

Walter Hagen: Golf's First Showman

Parent-Teacher Note

The Jones-Hagen comparison essay develops analytical writing skills by requiring students to handle genuine complexity — two admirable figures with different characters and philosophies. Encourage acknowledgment of strengths in both rather than simply choosing a favorite.

Week 5 — Television and the Modern Era · 1950–1990

Week Guidance

Television is the hinge point between old golf history and modern golf history. Help your student see this discontinuity clearly: what changed, why, and what it meant. Everything after television — the money, the celebrity, the global audience — is structurally different.

LESSON

1

Golf Meets Television

Parent-Teacher Note

The prize money data makes the television revolution visible in numbers. The correlation between televised coverage expanding and prize money increasing is striking and measurable. This is quantitative historical analysis in a genuinely accessible form.

LESSON

2

Arnold Palmer: Television's Perfect Golfer

Parent-Teacher Note

The newspaper-to-social-media comparison spans 60 years of media evolution while focusing on the constant: the relationship between a compelling personality and their audience. Palmer's television moment and today's Instagram moment are versions of the same phenomenon.

LESSON

3

Jack Nicklaus: 18 Majors and the Golden Bear

Parent-Teacher Note

The 1986 Masters Sunday is available in highlight form on YouTube and is genuinely thrilling even today. Watching it gives your student a visceral experience of the moment rather than just a description of it.

LESSON

4

The International Game Expands

Parent-Teacher Note

The geographic diversity map makes the shift from Scottish and British dominance to genuine global participation visually undeniable. The visual pattern makes the change unmistakable in a way that statistics alone cannot.

Week 6 — Research Symposium · Synthesis and independent scholarship

Week Guidance

Week 6 is the capstone. The research presentation asks your student to drive their own learning for the first time. Resist the temptation to over-guide. Your role is to ask good questions and ensure the presentation reflects genuine independent thinking.

LESSON

1

Choosing Your Research Question

Parent-Teacher Note

Spend real time on the research question selection — it determines everything that follows. If your student's first question is too broad, work with them to narrow it. If it is too narrow, help them find the bigger question it connects to.

LESSON

2

Research Methods: Finding and Evaluating Sources

Parent-Teacher Note

The three-source evaluation task teaches source criticism in a concrete, manageable format. The third source — one whose reliability is uncertain — is often the most educational: learning to identify potential bias matters more than finding perfect sources.

LESSON

3

Building Your Argument and Presentation

Parent-Teacher Note

Many students write an outline but skip the practice deliveries — and their presentation is consequently less confident than their thinking actually is. Two practice runs aloud transforms the quality of the actual presentation.

LESSON

4

Presentation, Reflection, and Stage Preview

Parent-Teacher Note

Try to recruit at least one outside audience member — a grandparent, sibling, family friend, or facility staff member. Even a single genuine outside observer changes the quality of the performance and makes the achievement feel real.

QUICK REFERENCE — FACILITATION PRIORITIES

One-sentence facilitation priority for every lesson in this stage

Week	Lessons	Lesson Title	Key Facilitation Priority
1	1	Did Golf Really Start in Scotland?	Accept different conclusions if they are reached through careful reasoning — that is the goal.
1	2	The First Written Rules: 1744	Read the original 1744 rules together — every word, slowly.
1	3	St. Andrews and the Royal and Ancient	Tell the story of how 18 holes was settled on accidentally — it is genuinely funny.
1	4	How Rules Changed the Game	Ask 'what would golf be like without this rule?' — that produces the best thinking.
2	1	The First Open: Prestwick 1860	Build the first 20-year timeline and let the pattern of dominance emerge.
2	2	Young Tom Morris: The First Great Champion	The story is genuinely moving — let your student's emotional response guide the depth.
2	3	The Claret Jug: 150 Years of Champions	Zoom into a photograph of the Claret Jug and literally read the names together.
2	4	The Open Today: Links Golf's Greatest Stage	Connect the links rota to television viewing if any of the courses are familiar.
3	1	The Guttery Revolution	Connect accidental discovery in golf to penicillin or Post-it notes — same pattern.
3	2	From Guttery to Dimple: Ball Technology Evolves	If your student has done Physics, make the dimple connection explicit here.
3	3	Hickory to Steel: The Shaft Revolution	Watch a hickory golf swing on YouTube and compare it to a modern swing in real time.
3	4	The Modern Equipment Era	Graph the driving distance data — let the numbers make the argument for you.
4	1	Six Men and a Cow Pasture	Connect golf growth to American economic history — not just sports history.
4	2	Francis Ouimet Changes Everything	Find actual 1913 newspaper coverage in the Library of Congress digital archive.
4	3	Bobby Jones and the Grand Slam	Connect Augusta National to the Environmental Sciences course on course design.
4	4	Walter Hagen: Golf's First Showman	The Jones-Hagen essay requires holding genuine complexity — two admirable, different people.
5	1	Golf Meets Television	Graph prize money growth — the television correlation is visually undeniable.
5	2	Arnold Palmer: Television's Perfect Golfer	Compare a 1960 newspaper article to a modern golfer's social media post — same phenomenon.
5	3	Jack Nicklaus: 18 Majors and the Golden Bear	Watch the 1986 Masters Sunday highlights on YouTube — it is still genuinely thrilling.
5	4	The International Game Expands	The geographic diversity map makes global expansion visually unmistakable.
6	1	Choosing Your Research Question	Spend real time narrowing the question — it determines the quality of everything that follows.

6	2	Research Methods: Finding and Evaluating Sources	The uncertain source is the most educational — finding bias matters more than finding perfect.
6	3	Building Your Argument and Presentation	Two practice runs aloud transforms presentation quality — this step is not optional.
6	4	Presentation, Reflection, and Stage Preview	Recruit at least one outside audience member — even one real observer changes everything.