

My selection of subject started with those that would relate to the National History Day theme as well as capture my interest. At school, as part of our curriculum we are studying Empire Builders and their actions. Being of Indian descent, I was fascinated by how a vast nation could be colonised by a small island. After a quick research, I chose the Battle of Plassey as it was the decisive point that changed the course of Indian history.

My research started with visits to the school library and I soon realised that because my subject was over 250 years old there was a paucity of primary sources. I needed to gather them through the internet and museums. I contacted the Victoria Memorial Museum in Kolkata and persuaded the curator to send me pictures of maps and documents pertaining to the Battle. My reliance on secondary sources was therefore exhaustive. I reached out to a number of eminent historians and authors, both British and Indian to get a balanced perspective of opinions. I also researched through a number of websites, history books on both the Battle itself and the British Empire, critic reviews in newspaper articles and found pictures that would give me a sense of the historical context. A fortunate step in my project was making contact with the Director of the movie “Palashi Ki Jung (or Battle of Plassey)” and get an insight into the emotions of the Battle and the outcomes thereafter.

Presenting the results through a website became a natural choice as I could integrate different media sources to present my analysis of this Battle in a logical, engaging and visually appealing manner. I took advantage of the Weebly platform to help me make continued improvements as I gathered fresh sources and perspectives.

The Battle of Plassey event resonates with this year’s theme of “**Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events**” as it marked the establishment of the British Empire in India for the next 190 years. Any hopes of other European nations who had begun to develop their own economic interests in India would also be shattered as a result of this battle.

Though a very short battle, it had far reaching effects. With a fine mix of deceit, shrewdness and plenty of greed, the Battle had a dramatic twist leading to the defeat of the Nawab of Bengal in 1757 and paving the way for the British to strengthen their military might across India and make massive economic gains – some would say plunder. These gains would serve as a big boost to the British coffers and further the geopolitical ambitions of the British making the British East India company a vehicle to reverse the traditional flow of wealth from the West to the East.

The colonisation of India would result in many more mutinous events and revolution movements that would culminate in the independence of India yet leave behind a positive industrial, political and cultural legacy.

Word Count: 492