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Explain the importance of understanding history in today's society

In today's society, understanding history is crucial. While some may view the study of the past as a dying art, to truly understand history is essential in pushing modern society forward.

The sayings "history repeats itself", or "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" may be somewhat cliché, but they contain essential truths. The study of historical patterns and cycles allows one to understand the outcomes of certain decisions and behaviors, and project that knowledge onto current social and political situations. For centuries, governments and countries across the globe have looked back to the past for guidance on how they should shape the future. By understanding past events and their consequences, the comprehension of historical events can offer insight into the issues of today's society. For example, when looking at the history of pandemics, it is easy to see parallels between the Great Influenza of 1918 and the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic of 1918 involved social isolation, mask wearing, and the closure of public spaces – all measures that were similarly adopted in 2020. However, when looking back, one can also see the progress that has been made since then and how the understanding of history allowed for the progression of modern medicine and safer isolation measures. Examples such as this demonstrate that the study and understanding of history serve as a powerful analytical tool for policymakers and governments as a whole.

Gaining an understanding of history teaches the importance of cultural heritage and traditions, as well as the importance of the preservation of traditions and cultural artifacts. Understanding this part of human history helps to shape cultural identity and instill a sense of national pride and unity into the observer. In addition to understanding one's personal history and heritage, comprehending the history behind cultural practices and international customs also helps to develop a deep empathy and understanding of different cultures and societies.

Today's society is diverse and complex, made up of people with many backgrounds, and, as a result, many histories. Understanding the many perspectives of history teaches one how to promote and practice tolerance, empathy, and cooperation, and gives a diverse and expansive world view – something that is crucial in our current world. For example, Ontario schools have recently placed a greater importance on studying history from an Indigenous perspective. By analyzing Canadian history from different perspectives, the oppression of and cruelty toward Indigenous peoples becomes much clearer and leads to a better understanding of their current struggle for equality. Learning about Indigenous heritage, culture, and history from a young age leads to today's Canadians becoming more empathetic and understanding towards current Indigenous issues.

Understanding history is not only important, but crucial, in today's society. In an ever changing, diverse, and complex world, the study of history provides the necessary knowledge to maintain a progressive society. By understanding history, one is able to push

society forward, while avoiding the repetition of past mistakes.