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# Clues from Names

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This title takes an interesting sidelong look at our past through the medium of names: first names (not only Christian, of course), surnames, and place names. It is a tale of changing peoples and languages, of forgotten crafts and new faiths, of honouring the past and seeking to shape the future. A lot of the interest is particular (everyone looks for their own name first), and Clegg keeps a knowledgeable balance between general historical developments and fascinating examples, and highlights some real curiosities. She also provides a helpful separate index of names. Names is not a subject that cries out for illustration but the photographs of people and places have been carefully selected and captioned, sometimes with an eye to the incongruity caused by change: beneath a photo of a plane taking off, we learn that Gatwick means 'goat farm'. I do not know of another children's book on this subject - or of an adult one that offers this approach - and, apart from its intrinsic interest, the book will be a support for junior and lower secondary school history, particularly useful for local history and researching your family tree. One quibble: more care should have been taken with the glossary; some of the entries seem unnecessary at this level and others are inadequately explained.

Running Order:

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