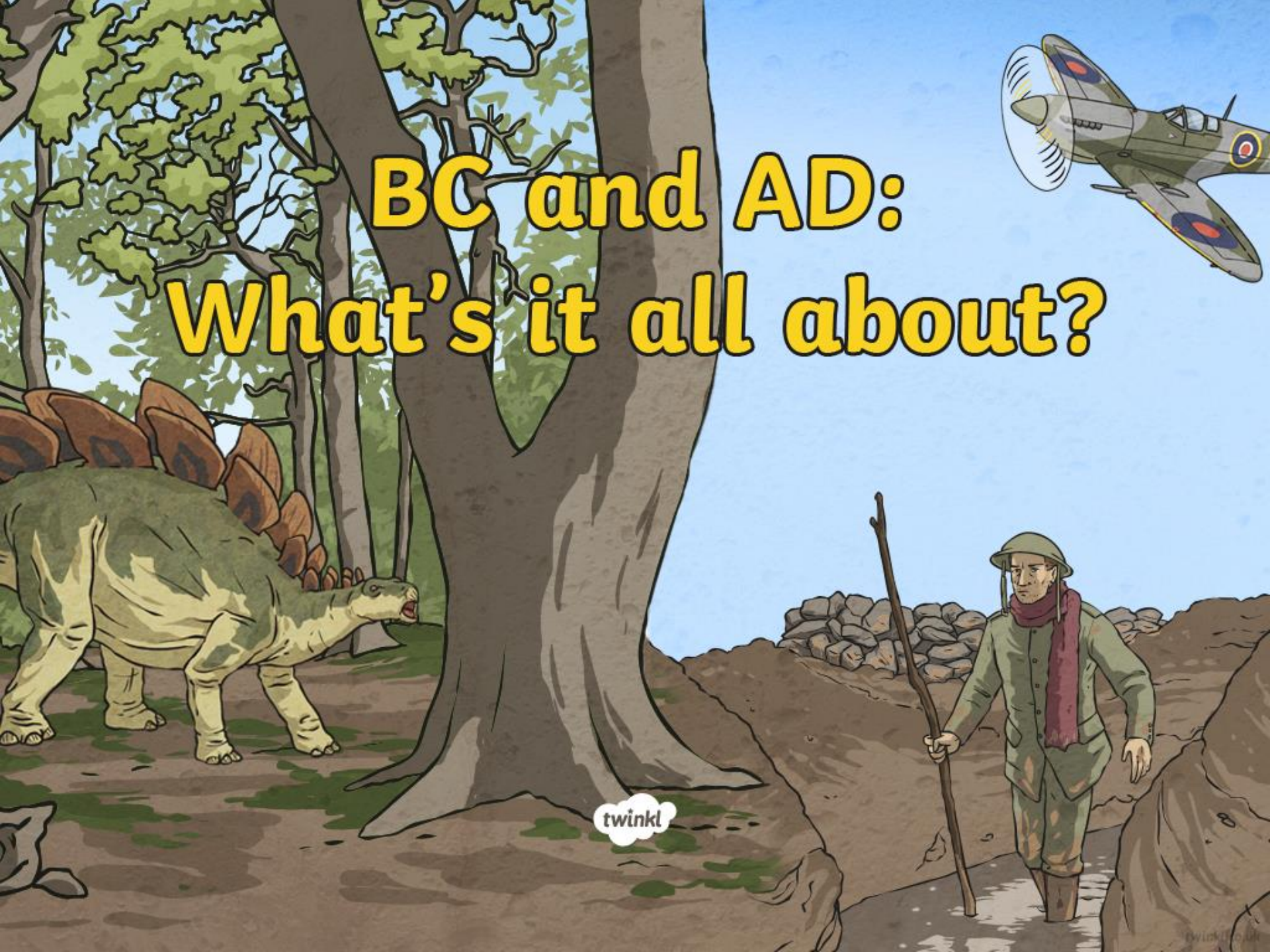


BC and AD: What's it all about?



What do BC and AD mean?

BC and AD are letters often found at the end of dates written in years such as...

31BC Augustus became the Roman Emperor

AD79 Eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Pompeii

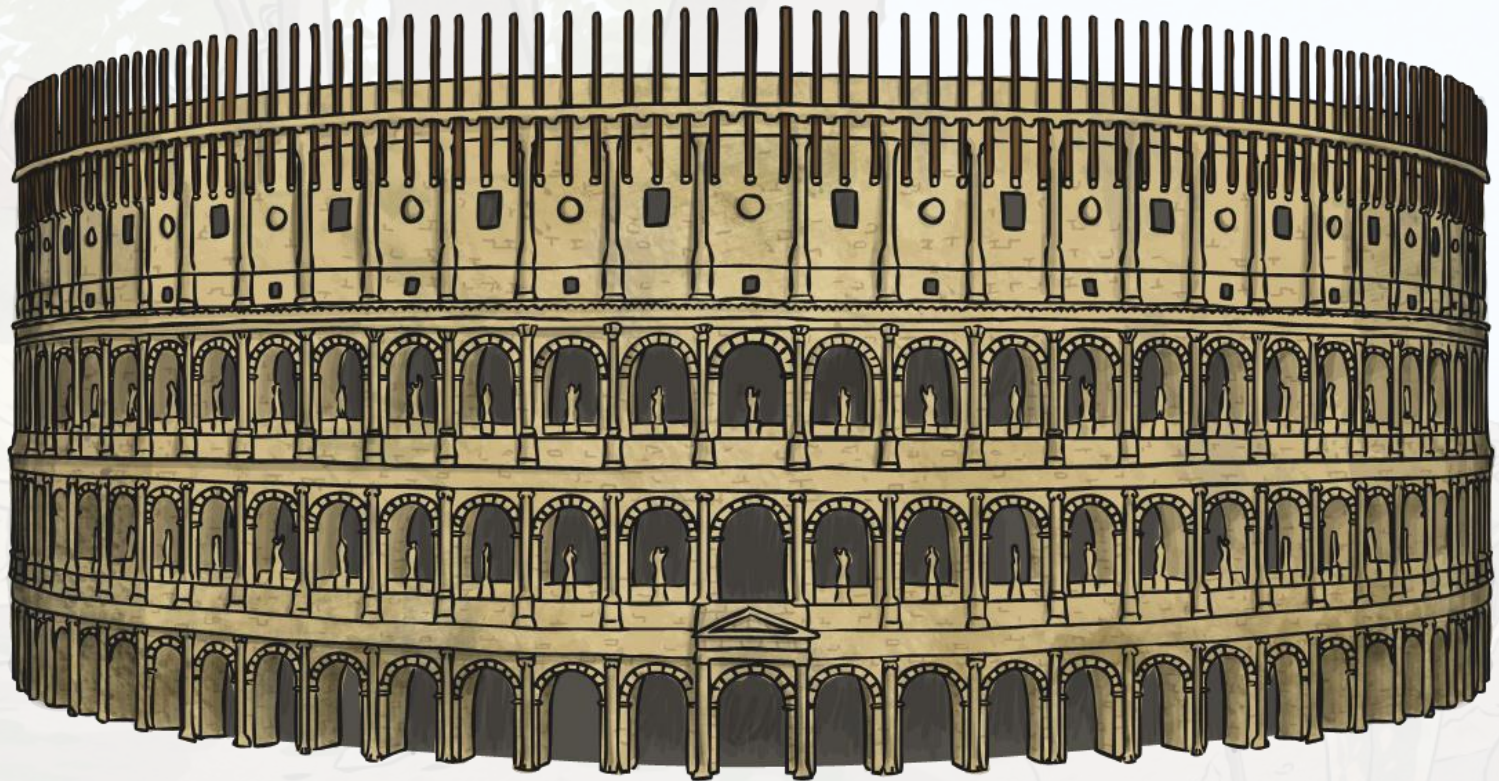
BC and AD are initials that stand for:

Before Christ
and Anno Domini



Who thought of it?

This method of dating years is called the Gregorian Calendar. It started life as the Roman Catholic Calendar, which was introduced by the Romans.



When is BC and AD?

BC refers to the years that come **before** the year 1.

AD refers to the years from year 1 **onwards**.



Did You Know...?

There is no year 0!

The year 1 BC is followed by AD 1.



1 BC | 1 AD

← BC | AD →

BC: Before Christ

This refers to any date that is before the year Jesus was born in Christian belief.

So, really Jesus is said to be born in year 1 as the Romans had no sign for '0'.

Rather than say the year before was -1, we say it is 1BC.



AD: Anno Domini

Anno Domini is a Medieval Latin phrase that means,

'In the year of our Lord'

and means anything after Jesus was born in the Christian belief.



How did the use of these dates spread?

As Christianity grew, Christians travelled around the world and colonised various areas and countries. As they travelled the globe, they used their calendar as they went.



What about now, when there are so many different faiths and non-faiths?

Just so people do not get confused, around the world the BC/AD calendar is still used. However, more often than not, its letters have changed a little bit...

BC = BCE

BCE means 'Before the Common Era'

AD = CE

CE means 'Common Era'

'Common Era' basically means the time when we are all counting the same. This is a good way of keeping the same dates but making the letters non-religious.

