



A Sailor's Life

Unit 8: Nelson: Navy Hero

Key Stage 2

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The Full English Extra

The Full English Extra was an initiative to preserve and promote the folk arts, building on the success of EFDSS' flagship project The Full English, which created the world's largest digital archive of folk songs, dances, tunes and customs, and a nationwide learning programme that reached more than 16,000 people. The project was led by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Full English Extra saw the collections of Mary Neal, suffragette, radical arts practitioner and founder of the Esperance Girls Club, and folk dance educator Daisy Caroline Daking added to the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library online archive (www.vwml.org), alongside its collection of 19th century broadside ballads and songsters.

The Full English learning programme worked with three national museums – the Museum of English Rural Life at the University of Reading, the National Coal Mining Museum for England near Wakefield in West Yorkshire and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, London – combining folk arts and museum education to provide powerful new learning experiences for schools and music hubs.

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Unit 8: Nelson Navy Hero



Nelson Navy Hero

Horatio Nelson was born 29 September 1758 in Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk. He joined the Navy aged 12 on invitation of his uncle who commanded a Naval ship. By the age of 20 he had worked his way up to become a captain.

During Britain's war with the French he was involved in many battles and was injured numerous times. This resulted in Nelson losing the sight of his right eye and having his right arm amputated.

Nelson won several important battles which made him famous in Britain as a strong and skilled Naval hero. His final victory was at the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805 when the British defeated France and Spain. However he died during the battle when he was shot through the shoulder.

Nelson's Coat

This is the coat worn by Admiral Lord Nelson during the Battle of Trafalgar on the day he died. Can you list 3 pieces of evidence that tells us this was Nelson's Trafalgar Coat?

- 1) The coat is decorated with lots of medals which show that the coat belonged to a high ranking naval commander.
- 2) The right arm of the coat is folded flat across the body and held into place with a loop over one of the gold buttons. This is because Nelson lost his right arm in a previous battle and therefore did not need to use this sleeve.
- 3) There is a small hole in left shoulder of the coat. This is where the bullet hit Nelson which led to his death.

Activity: Imagine that you are a famous naval hero like Admiral Lord Nelson. Make yourself some shiny medals showing your bravery during battle at sea.

Song 11 - The Death of Nelson

This is a traditional tale of Nelson's Death, which comes from the singing of George Dunn, a singer from the West Midlands. The song dates back to contemporary broadside ballads. It is a narrative song, so great for listening to the story and discussing as a class.

Lyrics

1. 'Twas the twenty-first of October before the rising sun
We formed a line for action, my boys, at twelve o'clock begun.
Our mast and rigging was shot away Besides some thousands in that fray
Were killed and wounded on that day
On board a man o' war.

2. From broadside to broadside our cannon balls did fly;
Like hailstones the small shot around our deck did lie.
Brave Nelson to his men did say, "The Lord has promised us this day.
Give them the broadside, fire away,
On board the man o' war."

3. And then our brave commander with grief he shook his head:
"There is no relief, there is no reprieve, brave Nelson he is dead.
It was a fatal musket ball that caused our hero for to fall.
Let him die in peace, God bless you all,
On board the man o' war."



Glossary

- **Broadside:** the side of a ship, often with all the cannon on
- **Musket:** a heavy, large-calibre smoothbore gun introduced in the 16th century: the predecessor of the modern rifle.

Comprehension Questions

Listen to the song.

- 1) What happens in the story?
- 2) On what date does the story happen?
- 3) How does Nelson die?

Activity:

- **TASK** – Write out the story in your own words

The Death of Nelson

Twas the twen-ty first of Oct - o - ber be__ fore the ri__ sing

sun. We__ formed a line__ for__ act-ion my boys, at twelve o'-clock be-

gun. Our__ mast and rig-ging was shot a__ way, Be__ sides some thou-sands

in__ that__ fr__ ay, Were killed and__ woun - ded

on that__ day, On board a man__ of war.

Song 12 - Drop of Nelson's Blood

This is a traditional song which probably has African American origins. It is a sea shanty, which means that it was a work song that would have been sung in the Merchant Navy, rather than the Royal Navy. Legend has it that Nelson's body was preserved in a barrel of rum, so 'Nelson's Blood' became a nickname for rum, but it can also mean Nelson's spirit or bravery. This song is very catchy and great to learn and sing along with. The verses recount things you would miss if you were at sea, so it's perfect for writing your own additional verses.

Lyrics

1. A drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm
A drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm
A drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm
And we'll all hang on behind.

Chorus:

*And we'll roll the old chariot along
We'll roll the old chariot along.
We'll roll the old chariot along
And we'll all hang on behind!*

2. Oh, a plate of Irish stew wouldn't do us any harm
Oh, a plate of Irish stew wouldn't do us any harm
Oh, a plate of Irish stew wouldn't do us any harm
And we'll all hang on behind.

Glossary

- **Nelson's Blood:** rum, or his spirit/bravery
- **Chariot:** a ship



Comprehension Questions

- 1) This song is a traditional song that sailors would have sung at sea – **does anyone know the name for that type of song?** (sea shanty)
- 2) Sea shanties are always very rhythmic, you could easily tap your foot along to the beat! This is because they were sung by a group of sailors whilst doing a job such as hoisting a sail, or hauling the anchor. **Why do you think it would be good to sing a rhythmic song whilst doing these jobs?**

Activity: Singing the song

- **Don't forget your warm ups!** See p7
- **TASK** – Learn the two verses above and the chorus
- **EXTENSION** – As a class, discuss what you might miss if you were away at sea and write your own verses about them

A Drop of Nelson's Blood

A ___ drop of Nel-son's blood would-n't do us a - ny harm, A

drop of Nel-son's blood would-n't do us a - ny harm, A drop of Nel-son's

blood would-n't do us a - ny harm, And we'll all hang on be - hind ___

___ And we'll roll the old cha-ri-ot a - long, We'll roll the old

cha - ri - ot a - long, We'll roll the old cha - ri - ot a -

long, And we'll all hang on be - hind ___



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