

KS1 History – Great Fire of London
Understanding the reasons why there are women
working as operational fire fighters today

This lesson will highlight to children the reasons why Britain has fire fighters. They will look at the history of the British fire service and its introduction of women. They will sequence the story of the first known female fire fighter, Molly Williams. They will also learn that, today, women and men undertake the same physical tests to become fire fighters.

Learning Objectives:

To know what makes cities safer from great fires today
To understand that men and women have to pass the same tests to become fire fighters
To sequence a story in chronological order

Success Criteria:

Children should be able to:
Explain the reasons why cities have fire fighters
Describe the physical tests men and women have to pass to become fire fighters
Understand the concept of chronology

KS1 National Curriculum Links:

History – *Programme of Study: Great Fire of London - To know what makes cities safer from great fires today.*

Literacy - 2b: *assemble and develop ideas on paper.*

Citizenship - 3g: *to know rules for, and ways of, keeping safe, including basic road safety, and about people who can help them to stay safe.*

Resources:

Powerpoint display
Worksheets

Introduction:

Ask the children to list all the things they have to do when the fire bell rings. Then ask them to explain who they wait for when they are made to stand in the playground after a fire alarm. Explain to the children that, during The Great Fire of London, children did not have a fire service like they do today.

Point out to the children that their school is made of stone and is equipped with fire exits and smoke alarms. Ask them if they think these existed in the 17th century.

Teacher Led Activity:

Describe to the children a brief history of fire services in the UK using the Powerpoint display or by linking to a local Fire Brigade website (e.g. <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/OurHistory.asp>). Highlight to them a brief history of female fire fighters.

Development:

Paired work:

Show the children a picture of Molly Williams (the first known female fire fighter in the world). Read out a short story of her life. After telling the story, give the children an outline, cut up into strips. Ask the children to reorder the story after discussing the meanings of any unfamiliar words. After a time, order the story as a whole class.

Independent work:

Ask the children to draw pictures to go with their strips of cards.

Differentiation:

G&T – Ask the children to think of any questions they would like to have answered about Molly's life.

SEN – Number the strips for the children.

Plenary:

Explain to the children that Molly went on to inspire many more women to become fire fighters.

Describe to the children how, today, men and women have to pass the same physical tests in order to become fire fighters. In pairs, ask the children to link the image of each physical test to their correct vocabulary (e.g. link a picture of someone lifting a ladder to 'ladder lifting and lowering' using the Powerpoint display). Then ask the children to pick the tests they think they would find the hardest to pass!

Finish by explaining to the children that fire services in this country want more women to join them. Can they think of ways to persuade women to join?

Homework / Extension:

Ask the children to write a short story of their mother's/grandmother's/aunt's life using 6 or 7 strips of cards. Can they mix the cards up and reorder them?

Possible Follow-Up Lesson:

Ask the children to watch 'Female Firefighters in the UK' – a UK clip about women fire fighters and their experience in the fire service. Ask the children to write down on whiteboards all the things they see fire fighters doing in the clip. What else do fire fighters do, besides putting out fires?

<http://flashovertv.firerescue1.com/media/113-Female-Firefighters-in-the-UK>

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