

The Lifeblood of London: Key Stage 2 – Pre-Visit Work

3 lessons have been developed to be used prior to your visit to City Cruise and are designed to last about an hour each. A PowerPoint and accompanying worksheets have been designed to aid and guide you through the lessons. Resources that are needed are also listed. The lessons have been structured as starter, main teaching and then plenary.

The three pre-visit lessons are:

- Using river definitions to understand how a river is formed
- Thames Watermen and their integral part in the history of the River Thames
- Using the River Thames as a storytelling device

Curriculum Links

Geography	To understand and describe key aspects of physical geography including rivers.
History	To know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day.
English	To use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas.

After completing the pre-visit lessons and having been on the trip on City Cruises, XX further lessons for post-visit work are available.

Lesson 1 – River Definitions

Learning Objective

To understand and describe the main geographical features and geographical vocabulary for the River Thames from its source to the sea.

Resources

- Supplied River Thames PowerPoint
- Supplied river vocabulary and mapping worksheet
- Trays filled with soil or sand
- Beakers filled with water
- Dictionaries
- Colouring pens or pencils

STARTER

Slide 1

Explain to the children that they are going to visit City Cruises for a boat trip on the River Thames.

Slide 2

Show them a picture of a City Cruises boat on the River Thames on the whiteboard. Ask children what they know about rivers. Thought shower and create a list of words and facts about rivers.

MAIN TEACHING

Slide 3

Explain that the children are going to investigate how rivers are formed and then learn about the source and geographical aspects of the River Thames.

The following activity could be done outside:

Give the children a tray filled with soil or sand. Give them beakers filled with water and ask them to pour the water into the tray. What happens to the water? (It soaks into the soil or sand until it becomes saturated). Where can the water go? (It can flow away). What happens to the soil or sand if they pour the water into one spot only? (It separates the soil or sand and leaves a gap).

Slide 4

Explain to the children that this is how rivers are formed. But first, can they guess how they think rivers are formed? What happens to the rain when it falls, why is it not a straight line to the sea?

Slide 5

1. Clouds release their water over the hills.
2. The water soaks into the ground to become ground water.
3. Some ground water comes to the surface to form springs.
4. Springs join together to make streams.
5. Streams join together and get bigger until they become rivers.
6. Rivers twist and turn as they try to find the quickest way to the sea.
7. Blockages mean a river must turn in a different direction.

Slide 6

Show the children a map of the River Thames from source to sea. The children are going to learn key river vocabulary and label their own worksheet. They will label the source of the River Thames, a meander in the River Thames and the mouth of the River Thames.

Give out the worksheet and ask the children to fill in the key vocabulary from the list they are given. They can use dictionaries to look up the definitions of the key vocabulary and label maps illustrating the key vocabulary areas on the River Thames.

Slide 7

Trace the path of the River Thames along its route through London (the white area on the left is Heathrow) to see how much it twists and turns, even just in London.

Explain it takes thousands of years for a river to form. Over those years, cities and towns develop along its course. This is because people need water to survive. They would use the water to drink and to grow their crops. It was also a source of food. Can you imagine drinking water or fishing direct from the Thames now?

PLENARY

Slide 8 and Worksheet “River Definitions”

Ask the children to recall the key vocabulary and the definitions. Remind the children that they will see some of the river features on their visit to City Cruises and to see if they can spot the bends as they travel past all the sights.

Lesson 2 – Thames Watermen

Learning Objective

To examine the history of Watermen and Lightermen on the River Thames.

Resources

- Supplied River Thames PowerPoint – starting from Slide 9
- Supplied worksheet with Watermen and Lightermen coat of arms
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Atlases
- Books about different countries – for children to research their family backgrounds
- Access to computers

STARTER

Slide 9 and 10

- Remind the children that you will be visiting City Cruises. Explain to the children that they will be meeting the people who work on the boats. They are called Watermen and they are very special people who work on the River Thames.

Slide 11

- In 1510, Henry VIII gave a licence for people to work on the river – they were called Wherry Men. They would be trained to row on the River Thames. If a person wanted to travel East, they would shout: “Eastward Ho!”; if they wanted to travel West, they would should “Westward Ho!”
- Rivermen still operate the City Cruises boats on the River Thames.

MAIN ACTIVITY

- Explain to the children that the Thames Watermen were first brought into line when parliament established the Company of Watermen and Lightermen in 1555.
- Since then, generations of London families have undertaken a five-year apprenticeship, specific to the Thames, to become a Waterman, who captains passenger vessels, or a Lighterman, who handles freight.

Slide 12

- Apprentices finish with a gruelling rowing competition on the river, the Doggett's Coat and Badge. This competition started in 1715 (over 300 years!)

Slide 13

- Point out the coat of arms for the Company of Watermen and Lightermen. Ask the children to analyse what they think the different pictures and colours mean.

Slide 14 and worksheet "Coat of Arms"

- Ask the children to create their own coat of arms to reflect their own families:
 - Nationality
 - Flag of the country they are from.
 - Colours to reflect their beliefs and personality.
- Provide children with atlases to look up countries of origin and flags and information books and the internet to research different aspects of their family history.

PLENARY

- Ask the children to share their designs and meaning. Create a display of their coat of arms.

EXTENSION

- Ask the children to write about the meaning of their coat of arms.

Lesson 3 – Thames Fun Facts and Storytelling

Learning Objective

To write an extended story featuring different kinds fun facts about the River Thames.

Resources

- Supplied River Thames PowerPoint – starting from Slide 15
- Supplied Thames fun facts worksheet
- Supplied Fun Facts Writing frame
- Supplied Story Starters worksheet
- Pencils
- Pens

STARTER

Slide 15

- Explain to the children that you are taking them on a visit to City Cruises.
- Explain to the children that the River Thames is an ancient river and you would like them to write a thrilling story about the river.

MAIN TEACHING

Slide 16

- Ask children to name some genres.

Slide 17

- Ask the children to give some definitions of genres for thrilling stories –
 - Horror
 - Thriller
 - Mystery
 - Spy

- Drama
- Action Thriller
- Ask the children to thought shower different stories they know from the genres you have presented.

Slide 18

- Explain to the children that they will choose a genre and characters and then use the setting of the River Thames and London. They will use the different facts worksheet to decide on a focus for their stories.
- Give out the “fun facts worksheet” to the children.
- Explain that they are going to write a thrilling story about one or two of the fun facts in the worksheet.
- Give the children the “writing frame worksheet”
- If required, hand out the “story opening worksheet” to support their writing and to help them get started.
- Ask the children to plan their story and then write as a piece of extended writing.

PLENARY

- Ask the children to read their stories to a partner and to make constructive criticism to improve the story.

Slide 19 – preparing for your trip

Explain that the children will be going on a school trip along the River Thames. Here are some things to look out for.