Unit 4  Why do we remember Florence Nightingale?

ABOUT THE UNIT
This unit looks at the life of Florence Nightingale, why she went to the Crimea, and what happened as a result of her work. The approach could also suit the study of other famous people, eg George Stephenson, Grace Darling, Tutankhamen, Rosa Parks, Pocahontas, Mary Seacole.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN
This builds on Units 1–3 by focusing on the way of life of a famous person who lived at a time before living memory. It could contribute to cross-curricular work on ‘people who help us’.

PRIOR LEARNING
It is helpful if the children have:
• ordered events in time and used everyday terms about the passing of time
• answered questions about people/events in the past using pictures and written sources
• recounted episodes from stories about the past
• looked for similarities and differences between today and the past

VOCABULARY
In this unit, children will have opportunities to use:
• words associated with the passing of time, eg Victorian, a very long time ago, before, after, when
• words associated with the Crimean War, eg war, Crimea, Scutari, Russia, soldier
• words associated with hospitals, eg nurse, doctor, ward, hygiene, disease, germs, wounds
• a range of adjectives to describe human qualities, eg kind, caring, patient, hard-working, brave

RESOURCES
• story books or a video about the life of Florence Nightingale
• pictures of Florence Nightingale, the inside of the hospital at Scutari, and Victorian ships
• sets of cards with sentences on them describing aspects of Florence Nightingale’s life and work
• a simple, large-scale map of Europe, on which the British Isles and the Crimea can be easily identified
• school texts and picture packs could be used to provide picture and reference collections
• a class time line

EXPECTATIONS
at the end of this unit
most children will:
know some of the main events in Florence Nightingale’s life and be able to sequence them correctly; give at least one reason for her actions; use pictures, books or video to find out about Florence Nightingale; recount the story of Florence Nightingale

some children will not have
made so much progress and will:
be able to sequence some of the events in Florence Nightingale’s life correctly; recount episodes from the life of Florence Nightingale

some children will have
progressed further and will:
provide a detailed account of the life and work of Florence Nightingale; identify a number of reasons for her actions; understand how we know about Florence Nightingale from the evidence available; use a wider range of sources, eg CD-ROMs or children’s encyclopedias, to find out about her life; use ICT to make their own interpretations of her life
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN
• to identify information from pictures of the past
• to locate the site of a historical event on a map
• about the life of a famous person from the past and why she acted as she did
• to infer information from a written or visual account of a person’s life

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Who was Florence Nightingale?
Encourage the children to think about what the word “famous” means. Who do they know who is famous? Why is this person famous? What other famous people from the past do they know about? What did they do to become famous? How do we find out about famous people?
Tell the children they will find out about a famous person who lived a long time ago, before even their parents and grandparents were alive.

Why did Florence Nightingale go to the Crimea?
Show the children an extract from a video about Florence Nightingale and ask them to look for clues as to who she was, what her life was like as a child, and what work she did. Ask them what they found out. Talk about why she wanted to be a nurse and about what nurses do.

What was it like for Florence Nightingale working in the Crimea?
Explain simply why there were British soldiers fighting in the Crimea. Describe to the children what soldiers do and why they might end up in hospital.

Which pictures help us tell Florence Nightingale’s story?
Show the children pictures of Florence Nightingale’s life. Help them recount her story by choosing the most appropriate pictures and putting them in sequence. Encourage them to discuss their choices.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

CHILDREN
• identify present and past people who are famous, and explain why they are famous
• describe clothes worn a long time ago
• suggest what is different about Florence Nightingale’s clothes from clothes worn by women of all generations today

POINTS TO NOTE

• extract some information about the early life of Florence Nightingale from a video
• identify how Florence Nightingale travelled
• explain that journeys in the past used to take longer and were dangerous

• select appropriate pictures to illustrate the main events in Florence Nightingale’s life
• identify features of life in the hospital in Scutari that were not hygienic

A story and picture pack about Florence Nightingale could replace the video.

Guide the children on what to look for in the video, eg Where did Florence Nightingale go? How did she travel? Why were nurses needed there?

The word bank will help children appreciate that people are famous for their qualities as well as their actions. This idea could be developed in the context of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, by considering the contribution made to society by individuals with certain qualities.

Teachers could encourage the children to talk about what they know about nurses, doctors and hospitals today, before looking at the pictures of Florence Nightingale.

Enlarging a picture of Florence Nightingale in nurse’s uniform to A3 or A2 size and mounting it on card, or projecting a slide, would make it easy to point out items of clothing.

This activity makes sure that the children know the main events of Florence Nightingale’s story.

Including pictures of nurses today and modern hospitals will help children to develop criteria for recognising events today and events in the past.

This activity could be extended by asking the children to discuss what information can and cannot be obtained from pictures and stories.

This work could be linked to health education by talking more generally about hygiene and its connection to health. The need for hospitals to be clean and free of germs could then be explained.

This activity could be adapted by mounting the picture in the middle of a large sheet of paper. The children fill out cards/labels of paper with 1 can see... statements and attach these around the picture or draw pictures on their cards to show what they noticed.

The home corner could be set up as Florence Nightingale’s hospital ward.

Who was Florence Nightingale?

Considered the founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale (1820–1910) was born in Florence, Italy, on May 12, 1820. She was the second of 13 children and the only daughter of John Nightingale, an English artist living abroad. Her mother, Fanny, was a socialite who took Florence and her sister, Emma, on travels to Italy, France, and Germany.

When she was 5, the Nightingale family returned to England. After finishing her education at home, she entered a boarding school in Clapham, London. Here Nightingale showed a talent for languages and a love of music. But she was restless and unhappy, and on Christmas Day 1837, when she was 17, she eloped with her first love, Sidney Herbert, a member of the British House of Commons. He was almost 20 years her senior, and his mother would not accept the marriage. She demanded a divorce if the couple were to proceed, but they eloped to Italy and married on January 16, 1838.

The marriage was short-lived, as Nightingale was gradually overcome by a nervous breakdown. She was convinced that she would die, and she could not endure the thought of watching her husband die also. Her modeling career, which had been flourishing, also came to an end. Her marriage was dissolved. Nightingale returned to England in 1840.

Nightingale entered the University of Cambridge and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1841. In 1845, she was ordained as an assistant in the Church of England but never used her priestly title. In 1848, Nightingale was appointed by Lord John Conyngham to the Imperial Health Committee of the Crimean War, where she performed hospital work and organized the nursing service.

In 1854, Queen Victoria appointed her first superintendent of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Nursing Service. The women in the service were organized as nurses, and Nightingale and her nurses established the standard of care for soldiers. She wrote the first detailed report on nursing, Illustrated Manual of Nursing, and published her most famous book, Notes on Nursing: What It Is and What It Is Not, in 1859.

In 1860, she was appointed founder of the Nightingale Training School for Nurses in London. The school, which trained its first nurses in 1860, officially became a nurse training school in 1869. She continued to train nurses until her death in 1910.

Nightingale was made a baronet in 1907, and she was awarded the Order of Merit. She died on May 13, 1910. She was buried in the family plot in the Church of England, and her grave is the site of a popular pilgrimage. Nightingale’s legacy is still celebrated today. Her name is synonymous with nursing, and her work continues to inspire nurses around the world.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

**CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN**
- about some of the improvements made by Florence Nightingale
- to identify some reasons for her actions
- to sequence events related to the life of a person
- why Florence Nightingale is remembered today

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**CHILDREN**
- select statements about Florence Nightingale’s work that show understanding of how she improved conditions for soldiers and nurses
- order the events in Florence Nightingale’s life correctly
- identify at least one reason why Florence Nightingale is remembered today

**POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES**

**How did Florence Nightingale make things better for nurses and soldiers in the Crimea?**
Read a story dealing with Florence Nightingale’s achievements in the Crimea (or show the relevant section of the video). What did she change? Why did these things make it better for the soldiers and nurses?

- Divide the children into groups. Give each group five or six statements about things Florence Nightingale did to improve life for nurses and soldiers in the hospital at Scutari. Ask them to select the three statements they think are the most important and talk about why they have chosen these.
- Ask the children to consider why Florence Nightingale made these changes. Give them a picture of her with a speech bubble containing a sentence stem ending with ‘because...’. Ask the children to complete the sentence by giving reasons for the changes.

**Why do we remember Florence Nightingale?**
Give the children a very simple version of the story of Florence Nightingale. This should use few, if any, adjectives and be broken into separate chapters. Ask the children to put the chapters into sequence.
Work with the children to make the chapters more interesting by using words from the word bank, as well as their own ideas. Ask them to give each chapter a title.
With the children’s help, create the final chapter of her story called ‘Why we remember Florence Nightingale’.

**POINTER TO NOTE**

This could be a class activity where the teacher creates a ‘web’ on a large sheet of paper with the word “Why?” in the centre and a circle of arrows pointing outwards. Children suggest answers.

The children can draw together what they have learnt from different sources of information and communicate their learning in a different way. For example, if children word-process the story, this activity can be linked to Unit 2A “Writing stories: communicating information using text” in the QCA information technology scheme of work.
This activity can be used to develop children’s written composition skills. Children could be asked to create their own stories about Florence Nightingale on the computer using a word bank to improve their account.
The story could be made into a book and be the basis of a class assembly or a school display.
This activity could be extended by asking the children to use a CD-ROM encyclopedia or other reference sources to find additional information about Florence Nightingale.