

Introduction

This lesson gives children the opportunity to learn about the life of a lock-keeper on the Caledonian Canal and to write a diary account of their own life.

QCA Schemes of Work KS2 NLS Non-fiction Writing Composition

Learning Objectives

To write a diary account of your life using skills in punctuation, spelling, handwriting and presentation.

The Curriculum:

England - KS2 En3 1c, 2a, 2b,2c, 2d, 2f

Scotland - English Language: Personal writing, level C

Wales - KS2 English: Writing 1.3, 1.5, 2.3

Resources

Lock-Keeper's Diary source sheet A and B.

Key Vocabulary

Lock chamber, sea lock, skipper, angler, bollard.

Teaching Activities

Introduction Explain to the children that they are going to find out about the life of one of the lock-keepers on the Caledonian Canal.

Activities Distribute source sheets A and B and read through and discuss them with the children.

Explain to the children that they are now going to write a diary account of their life.

What kind of things might they like to mention? (School, home, hobbies, clubs).

Allow children time to draft their accounts, proof-read and revise as necessary.

Plenary Towards the end of the lesson collect in the accounts. Read out a selection of diaries and ask the class to guess whose account you are reading.

Differentiation

For younger or less able children ask them to write a diary account of the previous day and give them suggested headings.

Cross-curricular

This lesson may be linked with work in People and Place or History.

Follow-up

Ask the children to keep a diary for a week and present a report based on their notes.

My name is Peter Kennedy and I am the lock-keeper at Corpach on the Caledonian Canal. Corpach is at the western end of the canal, near Fort William.

Every day is different for me and depends on the number of boats travelling through the lock, the tides and the other jobs that need doing. Often it can be a cold and wet job so British Waterways supplies me with a uniform.

My first job is to prepare the locks for the day ahead. Then I check the lock chambers and the



Locks near Corpach

life saving equipment to make sure it hasn't been vandalised overnight.

My lock is a 'sea lock' which means that on one side is the canal, filled with freshwater, and on the other side is the salty water of the Atlantic Ocean. The lock is about 63m long, this is 15m longer than the inland locks on the canal.

My customers are from all walks of life: from a boater sailing for pleasure, to fishing boat skippers who make their living from the sea.

Everyone who wants their boat to travel on the Caledonian Canal must buy a licence. Once the boats are tied up, I ask the skipper to come ashore to pay their licence at my office at Corpach.



Peter Kennedy

A big part of my job is ensuring the safety of everyone who visits the canal whether they are boat users, walkers, anglers or simply members of the public. I remind people about how important it is to **Stay Away From the Edge** and I make sure that all the life saving equipment is in place and in good working order.

I like the lock to look neat and tidy so I paint the hooks, bollards and locks once a year and also cut the grass. All these jobs have to be done in between operating the locks and when the weather allows it!

I have a good communication system which means that I can contact boats arriving from the sea or other staff by radio or by telephone. This is really important as it saves the customer having to wait around.



View of Ben Nevis

I love my job, even though I am kept very busy and hardly get time to have a cup of tea! I work in a beautiful place and get to meet lots of interesting people. I have been a lock-keeper for 32 years and I hope to retire in 5 years time. I live in a lock-keeper's cottage near the canal with lovely views of Loch Linnhe and Ben Nevis. I hope that you will get the opportunity to visit the Caledonian Canal and see its beauty for yourselves!



Mooring bollard