

The Royal wedding

What do you need to know about the Royal wedding?

The Royal wedding hasn't left the headlines since it was announced that Prince Harry and Meghan Markle were engaged! The wedding will be taking place on 19 May in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. The decision to hold the ceremony on a Saturday differs from tradition, as Royal weddings usually take place on a weekday (the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge got married on a Friday and the Queen got married on a Thursday). Saturday 19 May is the same day as the FA Cup Final at Wembley, a match that the Duke of Cambridge, as President of the Football Association, usually attends to present the trophy. However, the wedding is due to take place before the match begins, so fans of football and the Royals can celebrate both.

How can the Royal wedding be used to teach literacy?

Utilising popular trends is a great way to engage children with literacy and learning. Our research shows that children who enjoy writing are seven times more likely to write above the level expected for their age compared with children who do not enjoy writing. Similarly, children and young people who write outside school daily are five times more likely to be writing above the expected level for their age compared with young people who never write outside school¹.

Our **Craze of the Month** resource taps into current trends to improve outcomes in literacy and make literacy engaging and relevant. The activities featured here relate to the English programmes of study from the national curriculum in England².

Using the Royal wedding in the classroom

The popularity of the Royal wedding makes it a good choice for themed activities and offers a number of engaging opportunities to promote learning and literacy. Students apply and develop a range of literacy skills covering reading, writing, speaking and listening. The activities can be used on a cross-curricular basis, as starter and plenary tasks, for homework and extensions or in form time. They are adaptable for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. You can also print off the activities page and put it on your staff room notice board to share these ideas with colleagues.

¹ Clark, C. (2016). [Children's and Young People's Writing in 2015](#). Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual survey. London: National Literacy Trust

² DfE (2013). The National Curriculum in England. Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document.

Grab 'n' go

Activity one: Imaginative invites

Ask students to imagine they are planning a street party to celebrate the big day! Who will they invite? What information should they include? How can they make the street party sound exciting? Remember it's to celebrate a Royal wedding! What style of writing will they use? See how creative they can be but remember to include:

- *Date, time and venue of the street party*
- *Who is the invite sent from and who to?*
- *What food, drink and entertainment will be on offer?*

Optional extras: Students can design and write up invites for homework. You could extend the theme by asking students to create bunting and posters to advertise the event. Perhaps you could even use the invites and host a 'playground party' to celebrate the Royal wedding!

Activity two: Making a meal of it

What wedding would be complete without a huge banquet? Challenge students to create an imaginative menu for the day. Encourage students to exaggerate the way they describe each dish, making their menus enticing and memorable using sensory language and imagery to help. What kind of food would the Royal Family enjoy? Examples could include:

- *Sumptuous stately salad: Hand-picked, organic lettuce leaves, lightly drizzled with olive oil, delicately grated parmesan cheese and finely chopped seasonal tomatoes.*
- *Grand gateaux: Rich, dark chocolate pudding, with a crumbling biscuit base and a sprinkle of fresh strawberries. The Queen's favourite and a delicious dessert!*

Optional extras: Embed cross-curricular learning by adding some mathematics! For example, give students a budget, a cost list for ingredients and a set number of guests to include in their planning.

Activity three: Attending the Royal wedding

Imagine being invited to the Royal wedding! What would it be like? Ask students to create a diary entry describing the event. What would they see, smell, touch, taste and hear? What would the castle be like? Who would they meet? Would it be the most memorable day of their lives?

Examples:

- *Hear: chiming church bells, the crash of cake falling to the floor, the wail of a bored baby*
- *Smell: the waft of freshly baked bread to accompany the dinner, the smell of smoke as the wedding cake candles accidentally set fire to the curtains...*
- *See: beautiful gowns, fabulous flowers, tears of happiness, crowds of well-wishers, cameras*

Optional extras: Ask students to present their diary entries to the class. Encourage them to think how they can communicate their thoughts and feelings through their tone of voice and expression. Who has created the most memorable day? Vote for the favourite!

Recommended reading inspired by the Royal wedding

These books all relate to the Royal Family in one way or another and can be used to promote reading for enjoyment. There are examples of fiction and non-fiction with options for different ages and abilities:

Young adult/adult fiction:

- *Red Queen* by Victoria Aveyard
- *The Girl of Fire and Thorns* by Rae Carson
- *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman
- *How to be a Princess: Real-Life Fairy Tales for Modern Heroines* by Katy Birchall

Fiction for younger readers:

- *The Queen's Knickers* by Nicholas Allan
- *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery (one of Meghan Markle's favourite books!)
- *The Royal Wedding Crashers* by Clementine Beauvais
- *Lupo and the Secret of Windsor Castle* by Aby King
- *The Happy Prince and Other Stories* by Oscar Wilde

Non-fiction:

- *Horrible Histories: Gruesome Great Houses* by Terry Deary
- *The Royal Family: The Queen* by Julia Adams
- *The World's Most Amazing Castles* by Ann Weir
- *The Royal Family* by Fiona Munro

Further resources

This theme provides a good opportunity to teach children about the history of the Royal Family. The British Council has a good page to support teaching ideas themed around the Royal Wedding:

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/royal-family>

For parents who are interested in using their children's favourite TV shows, hobbies and games as learning opportunities, have a look at the National Literacy Trust's Words for Life resources, which provide further ideas to help encourage children to read and write for pleasure:

<http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/7-11>.

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