

# Trafalgar Tales

## Teacher Resource

The Fall of Nelson, Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805



This resource for teachers provides guidance to help you prepare for and follow up your visit to the National Maritime Museum.



NATIONAL  
MARITIME  
MUSEUM



Travel back in time to Trafalgar, join the Royal Navy and retell the story of the triumph and tragedy of life and victory on board ship during this thrilling and influential moment in British history.

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## Introduction

This resource supports teachers to prepare for and follow up on the Trafalgar Tales session at the National Maritime Museum, so they can develop children's writing back in the classroom.

The Museum session explores the narrative writing process and immerses pupils in a highly engaging context for their story writing – life in Nelson's Navy at the time of Trafalgar. It forms the introductory stimulus and provides a scaffold for pupils' own story writing which takes place back in school following the visit.

In school, pupils complete their own 'Trafalgar Tale', using research, notes and ideas from the session. This can be a one off creative writing session or built into the wider literacy curriculum as a full unit of work on narrative writing. Further development into non-fiction writing can be explored in the Trafalgar Times section.

As a celebration of pupils' work, the National Maritime Museum invites schools to send copies of completed stories to us to be displayed on the Museum's blog, encouraging writing for purpose and audience and honing those publishing and presentation skills!

Send completed work to [trafalgartales@rmg.co.uk](mailto:trafalgartales@rmg.co.uk) and view the published stories on [rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog](http://rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog)

## Curriculum links for Museum session

This session is linked to the following National Curriculum aims and subject content from the KS2 English and History programmes of study:

### English:

#### Aims:

- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

#### Content:

##### Lower KS2

- plan their writing by discussing and recording ideas
- draft and write narratives by creating settings character & plot
- retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction

##### Upper KS2

- plan their writing by; identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing; noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary:

##### Spoken Language

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas

### History:

#### Aims:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses

#### Content:

- a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066  
(*e.g. a significant turning point in British history*)

# TRAFALGAR TALES:

## Narrative writing

### Getting ready to write

At the start of the **museum session** pupils begin to think about the sea and its relevance to them. They warm up their writing skills by exploring, playing and sharing words then creating a poem.

Poetry is a perfect vehicle for playing with language, which is an inherent part of the writing process. This feeds directly into narrative writing.

The role of the sea in our nation's history is at the heart of the National Maritime Museum, with Nelson's navy playing a significant part. So, personal response around the theme of the sea is an ideal introduction to the wider narrative to come.

The first part of the **museum session**, in the Voyagers Gallery, including its wave soundscape to stimulate exploration of words, explores:

- the world of the sea
- what the sea means to each child
- the importance of the sea in our history
- developing rich 'sea' vocabulary
- creating a shared poem around the senses

Pupils will bring back collected sea words in their logbooks for reflection back in the classroom. You may want to remind pupils of the activity and discuss in more depth the words and phrases they suggested or add further ideas and vocabulary to their word collection. A selection of words found in the gallery are provided as a starting point here:

aggression ... sadness ... anticipation ... joy... love... pride...  
infinite...grey vault...boundless...blustering winds...bitter and  
wild...spray...salt...infinite...conflict...exploration...trade

### Writing a Sea Poem

This simple model was used in the session to build a short collaborative poem with pupils. Now they are familiar with the model, encourage them to draw on their extended word collection to write their own sea poem, choosing, crafting and extending the model as they go.

Pupils may want to share, perform and display their poems and if the class is going on to explore the **Trafalgar Times** section of this resource, they can be used for the poetry page of the souvenir magazine they are designing.

**Further work** on sea poems, using senses as a scaffold, or longer models could extend this element of the work.

Extracts from *Sea Fever* by *John Masefield* and the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by *Coleridge* can be found on the walls of the museum and could be investigated. One popular poem, which works well as a longer scaffold is *Waves* by *Jackie Kay*.

Use these images from the Museum's collections as starting points for collecting further words and descriptions.

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/119039.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/119039.html)

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/13426.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/13426.html)

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/125821.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/125821.html)

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12296.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12296.html)

<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/13064.html>

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/101905.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/101905.html)

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12226.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12226.html)

### Model Sea Poem:

When I think of the sea, it reminds me of .....

It makes me feel .....

It seems to .....

It sometimes .....

It can .....

It will .....

## Putting planning into action

At the heart of the visit is an exploration of the Battle of Trafalgar story and life in Nelson's Navy. This has a clear structure which brings this period of history alive by immersing pupils in what it would be like to serve in Nelson's Navy. It will

- focus pupils' research and enquiry skills
- support pupils to prepare and plan their own story based on the Battle of Trafalgar
- motivate pupils to write

During this part of their visit pupils will:

- retell, communally, the story of the Battle of Trafalgar
- research and plan their retelling of the battle through the eyes of their chosen character
- scaffold a story structure for writing back at school

**First**, through a model story based on the real life character Sir John Franklin (see supporting resources section), pupils consider :

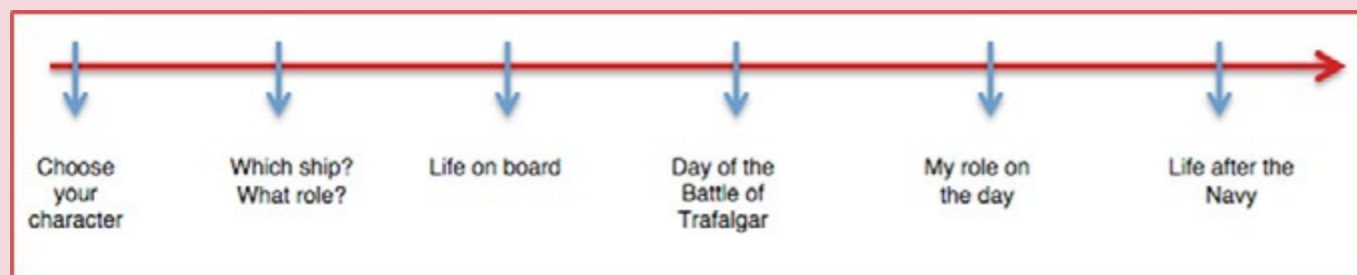
- the different backgrounds, roles and responsibilities of the sailors in Nelson's Navy
- what life on board a ship at this time might be like for different members of the crew
- key events of the Battle of Trafalgar.

**Next** they are challenged to work as researchers, exploring the gallery to plan their own story based on a similar structure – see grid below. They may base their story on a real life character or invent a character of their own but accurate research to support their story is essential. Pupils will work on their own logbook (handed out during session) to make notes and develop ideas.

**Back in school**, pupils revisit their logbook and notes, research key areas further and write their own stories of what it was like to be at Trafalgar. This can be done as a creative writing session or developed over time in line with focus narrative and writing targets for the class as part of a full narrative unit.

Provided along with this guidance are a selection of story planner question prompts to support further research and planning before pupils craft their stories.

### Story String Structure:



## Supporting resources

### Story Script for John Franklin Tale

John Franklin was born in 1786. His father was a wealthy merchant and he had 11 brothers and sisters! Now, from a very early age John was desperate to go to sea. He dreamed of adventure and living a life on the ocean waves. His father, however, wanted a different life for his son.

Finally his father gave in and at first John, then aged 15, was sent on a merchant ship to get his sea legs. Later his father secured him a far better appointment as a first class volunteer in Nelson's Navy and eventually he became a midshipman on the ship *Investigator* under a man named Captain Flinders.

John at last was on a real adventure and set off with the Navy on an expedition to Australia. And adventure was what he got! His shipmates fell ill with scurvy, his ship was in bad shape and eventually had to be abandoned, then only six days later his new ship, the *Porpoise*, was wrecked on a reef so Franklin and the crew spent six weeks shipwrecked on a sand bank in the ocean.

Not put off by these adventures, John Franklin clearly loved his life at sea. He came home for a while then returned once more to Navy war duty in 1804 on a very special ship named the *Bellerophon*. *Bellerophon* was the name of a Greek warrior who rode the winged horse Pegasus and slew many monsters. A great name for a ship! But many sailors found the name hard to say so they nicknamed her the 'Billy Ruffian'.

She was a 74 gun third rate ship who had been in many battles and was known as one of the fastest ships of the line. Strangely, she was exactly the same age as John, who was still only just 18.

John's new Captain was a Captain Cooke. As a midshipman, John was an officer and he had a very special job on board. He was a signalman, one of a small team in charge of reading and passing on signals, which were all done by hoisting flags. This was how ships communicated with each other and battle orders were passed on.

Unlike ordinary sailors who lived in the lower decks of the ship in cramped conditions, John, as an officer, had a cabin and quarters in the space on board the gunroom - a far more comfortable space than most of the ship's crew. A lucky man. He ate and drank well and was respected on board.

Just one year later, on 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 1805, John and the Billy Ruffian were in the thick of war once again – the day of the Battle of Trafalgar. With the French and Spanish line before them, Admiral Nelson, known for his unusual and brilliant plans, lined up his ships facing the enemy in two lines. Nelson headed one line and Admiral Collingwood the other. The Billy Ruffian was number 5 in Collingwood's line.

The ship was a hive of activity and the atmosphere tense but with an air of excitement. John's floating home became a battlefield. The 'beat to quarters was given' ready for battle. Decks were sanded, cooking fires put out and thrown overboard, fire water casks filled, sails doused and decks cleared. Even goats and cows were killed and thrown overboard. The gun crews wrote the words "Victory or Death" in chalk on their gun barrels. Everything was cleared and made ready – nothing could get in the way. All had their jobs, guns were manned, carpenters ready for repairs and the surgeons warmed their tools ready for casualties. Then still and in order .....ready and waiting for the moment to engage.

At around 11 am, John, on the quarter deck behind Captain Cooke, spotted Nelson's famous signal, "England expects that every man will do his duty", a loud cheer

went up from the men and an hour and half later the Billy Ruffian entered the battle.

The ship cut through the enemy line, firing broadsides at close range. She locked together with a French ship and muskets and grenades joined the noise of the broadsides as the battle raged.

Under full attack now, the Billy Ruffian's main masts were shot away and at 1.11pm Captain Cooke received two musket balls in the chest, his distinctive Captain epaulettes had given him away as an officer to target and he fell to the deck and died. There was now hand to hand fighting with the French boarding the ship they were so close together.

Heavy casualties were everywhere and fire had broken out. The fire was extinguished and at 1.40pm one of the Spanish ships lowered her colours and the French ship began to move away.

Finally, at 5pm, the Billy Ruffian's job was done and she ceased firing. Victory had come and only later was John to find out with the rest of the fleet that at 4.30 Nelson, their great leader, had lost his life.

John himself was in one piece yet the furious noise of gunfire like a 'wind of ball' had partially deafened him for life.

After making urgent repairs, the Billy Ruffian had the great honour of escorting Nelson's body aboard HMS Victory back to Britain for his state funeral.

Life after the Battle was no less exciting for John. In 1814 he was promoted to lieutenant and in peace time after the war he lived on ½ pay until his adventurer blood took over once more. He spent his final years as an Arctic explorer. Tales of murder and cannibalism left him with the nickname 'The man who ate his boots' ... but that's another story.

In 1829 he was knighted by the King and on his final fatal voyage aboard HMS Terror (!) his ship was trapped in the ice and he was never heard from again, his body never recovered.

His life at sea was finally at an end.

## Story Planner Prompt Question Cards

### 1. Choose your Character

|   |  |
|---|--|
| What age did your character join the Navy?  | Where is your character from?<br>England?<br>Somewhere else in the world?                              |
| What is your character's background?<br>Wealthy?<br>Poor?   | Why did your character want to join the Navy?<br>Or perhaps they didn't want to join but were made to? |
| How long has your character been in the Navy at the time of Trafalgar?<br>Did they have a different job before? | What does your character look like?  |

### 2. Which Ship? What Role? Responsibility?

|   |   |
|---|---|
| What kind of ship does your character serve on?   | What is the name of the ship?<br>Does it have a figurehead?<br>Is it a famous ship? |
| What is your character's role?<br>An officer?<br>An ordinary sailor?<br>Perhaps they have a special role like a sailmaker or carpenter? | What are your character's main duties on board?                                     |
| Which is your character's most favourite and least favourite job?   | Has your character had other roles before?<br>Or worked on other ships?             |

### 3. Life on Board

|  |   |
|--|---|
| What does your character do to entertain themselves? | Does your character play a musical instrument?                              |
| What kind of food does your character eat on board?  | Has your character ever been in trouble on board?<br>What happened to them? |

### 4. Day of the Battle

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Where was your character's ship on the day of Battle? | What was the ship's task on the day?  |
| Who is in charge of the ship?                         | If your character is not on HMS Victory, how did they get their orders and hear of any battle news? |
| How long did the Battle go on for?                    | What was the mood on board your ship before the Battle began?                                       |

### 5. Role on the Day

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Does your character survive the Battle?<br>Are they injured?          | What happens to your character's close friends?  |
| What happens to your character's ship?                                | What are the jobs your character has to do during the battle?  |
| How does your character feel:<br>before, during and after the battle? | Where is your character when they<br>a) hear of Nelson's death and<br>b) hear the Battle is won?<br>How do they feel? What do they do? |

### 6. Life after the Navy

|  |   |
|--|---|
| What happens the very next day after the Battle?               | Does your character attend Nelson's funeral?        |
| How long does your character stay in the Navy after Trafalgar? | Does your character take part in any other Battles? |
| Why does your character eventually leave the Navy?             | What happens to them after they leave the Navy?     |

# Battle of Trafalgar fact sheet

**21st October 1805**  
**During the Napoleonic Wars**

## Who's who?

**British Leader:** Lord Admiral Horatio Nelson

**French Leader:** Napoleon Bonaparte

**English Ships:** HMS Victory, HMS Bellerophon  
(ship John Franklin was on, Collingwood's division)

**French Ships:** Bucentaure (Flagship), Redoutable  
(shot that killed Nelson came from this French ship)

**Spanish Ships:** Santa Anna (Flagship)

## Background

In 1805 Napoleon Bonaparte and his first French Empire dominated continental Europe, while the Royal Navy ruled the seas. Napoleon had ambitious plans to rule all of Europe, including Britain, and had attempted an invasion in 1804. When this failed, Napoleon turned his attentions to Austria, which had recently declared war.

Napoleon instructed the Franco-Spanish fleet, under the command of Vice-Admiral Pierre Villeneuve, to sail from the port of Cadiz, Spain, into the Mediterranean to support his operations. On 19 October 1805, 33 ships set sail for an attack on Naples, in order to divert Austrian forces towards Italy and disrupt their campaign in central Europe.

The British were keen to destroy the Franco-Spanish fleet, which they believed posed a threat to British security and its dominance of the seas. Nelson, having spent the last summer chasing Villeneuve's fleet to the West Indies and back to prevent British invasion, assembled his 27 ships for an attack.

## Where?

Cape Trafalgar off of Southern Spain

## What happened?

The British fleet was outnumbered, the enemy totalling nearly 30,000 men and 2632 guns, to Nelson's 18,000 men and 2148 guns. The British ships were to divide into two columns, with Nelson in command of one, and his good friend and comrade Vice-Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood in command of the other. Both were to sail directly at the enemy, with Nelson leading the northerly column towards the enemy flagship, and Collingwood attacking the rear of the enemy line. Approaching this way, they faced unarmoured the broadsides of the enemy's ships. Their approach depended on a calculated risk that British naval gunnery was vastly superior to that of the enemy, and ensured that a close-range, decisive battle would be fought.

If you have time, watch an animation of the battle on this link

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire\\_seapower/...](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire_seapower/)

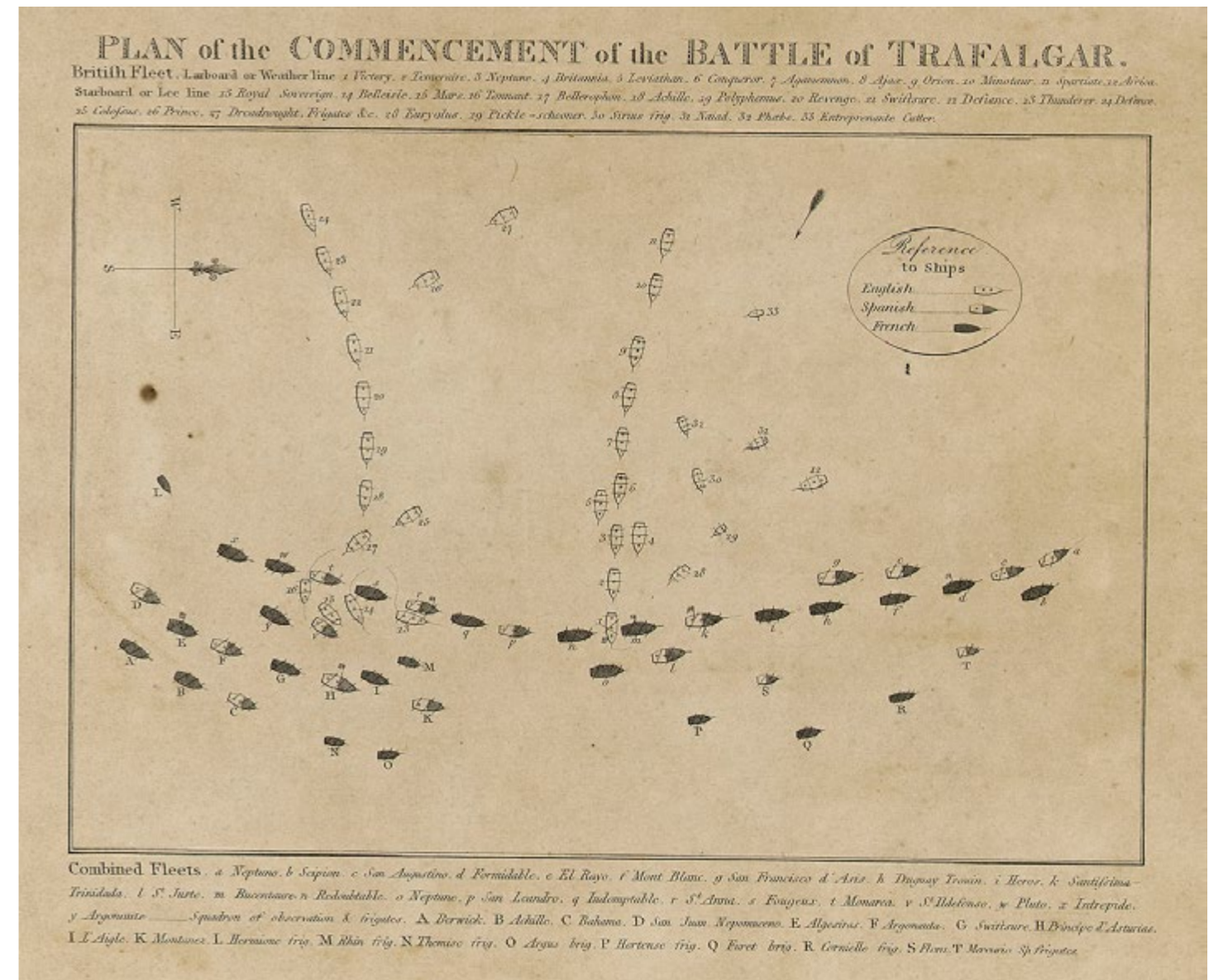
## How did it end?

French and Spanish lost 18 ships, English none.

Nelson's body was brought back to England in a barrel of brandy!

**Britain became most powerful navy in the world**

In 1843, Nelson's Column and Trafalgar Square in London, were built to honour Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson.





# Naval roles

Here are some ideas for choosing characters for Trafalgar Tales.



**Admiral** – In charge of a whole group of ships. Lives in the best cabin.



**Purser** – Looks after the Ship's supplies like clothing and bedding and sells them to the crew.



**Midshipman** – Often young men training to be officers. They attend lessons on the ship. If they pass exams, they become a Lieutenant.



**Bosun** – In charge of the sailors on deck. Makes sure sailors do their jobs, sometimes using force.



**Captain** – The person in charge of a ship and responsible for making sure it has enough crew.



**Marines** – Soldiers on the ship. They fight, act as look outs and keep order.



**Master at Arms** – Keeps control of the sailors on the ship (a bit like a ship's policeman).



**Carpenter** – Looks after and repairs the wooden ship. In a battle makes sure that damage is fixed so that the ship doesn't sink.

## Women and girls on board

There were definitely women on board ships during the Napoleonic Wars, although the records are scant. Some women did disguise themselves as men, and as such could have done a variety of jobs. Most women who were on board would have been there as wives of a crew member, as assistants to the surgeon, or as powder monkeys (bringing powder for the guns).

Elizabeth Bowden, alias John Bowden, was listed on the HMS Hazard as Boy, 3<sup>rd</sup> Class. In 1807, when she was fourteen years old she enlisted and was discovered to be a female after six weeks on board. Once discovered, she remained on board as an attendant to the officers, but she was given her own quarters. Her parents had died and she walked from Truro to Plymouth to find her sister, but unable to find her, she decided to join the Navy.

Jane Townshend applied for the Naval General Service Medal for service at Trafalgar. Her application was endorsed by the HMS Defiance's captain, but was later rejected by the board deciding medals: *Upon further consideration this cannot be allowed-there were many women in the fleet equally useful, and it will leave the navy supposed to innumerable applications of the same nature.*



**Cabin Boy** – These young sailors could act as servants or be given jobs looking after the animals kept on board.



**Cook** – Often a disabled sailor. Prepares food for all the sailors.



**Surgeon** – Looks after the health of the crew, especially injuries.



**Sailor** – The crew were divided into groups based on different jobs. This could mean climbing high in the rigging or hard work on deck

## Useful Links

There is a wealth of information on the National Maritime Museum website and in particular in the online collections available for the *Nelson, Navy, Nation* gallery.

Background to the Battle of Trafalgar: [.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-trafalgar-background](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-trafalgar-background)

The Battle of Trafalgar: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-trafalgar](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-trafalgar)

Nelson's Trafalgar Uniform: [rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/...](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/...)

Who shot Nelson's killer: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/who-shot-nelson's-killer](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/who-shot-nelson's-killer)

The Death of Nelson: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/death-nelson](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/death-nelson)

Nelson's funeral: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/nelsons-funeral](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/nelsons-funeral)

Nelson's Legacy: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/nelson's-legacy](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/nelson's-legacy)

Life at Sea: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/life-sea-age-sail](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/life-sea-age-sail)

Rated Royal Navy Ships: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/rated-navy-ships-17th-19th-centuries](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/rated-navy-ships-17th-19th-centuries)

The Ship's Biscuit: [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/ships-biscuit](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/ships-biscuit)

What are watches on board ship : [rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/what-are-watches-board-ship](https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/what-are-watches-board-ship)

National Maritime Museum Online Collection: [collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html...](https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html...)

## Further information and additional websites

[hms-victory.com](https://hms-victory.com)

[nationalarchives.gov.uk/nelson/introduction.htm](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/nelson/introduction.htm)

Women in Nelson's Navy: [bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire\\_seapower/...](https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire_seapower/...)

Nelson and the Battle of Trafalgar: [bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire\\_seapower/](https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire_seapower/)

Animated map of Trafalgar: [bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire\\_seapower/launch\\_ani\\_trafalgar...](https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire_seapower/launch_ani_trafalgar...)

Life at Sea: [bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire\\_seapower/life\\_at\\_sea\\_01.shtml](https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/empire_seapower/life_at_sea_01.shtml)



# TRAFALGAR TIMES

## non-fiction writing

A cross curricular literacy-based resource to extend the *Trafalgar Tales* National Maritime Museum session:

**engaging pupils and raising writing attainment at KS2**

*Create your own edition of the 'Trafalgar Times' and explore a wide range of writing outcomes set in this significant and fascinating period of our national history. A purposeful collaborative class literacy project to engage, inform and inspire pupils' writing.*

## Trafalgar Times - Overview & Guidance:

### Overview

This section provides a range of activities to support KS2 writing development. Pupils are set the task of designing, creating and publishing their own souvenir newspaper to commemorate, entertain and inform readers at the time of Trafalgar.

It offers opportunities to explore a wide variety of writing forms with clear audience and purpose and bring alive key National Curriculum objectives, which focus on the writing process of planning, drafting, crafting and evaluating.

Pupils work collaboratively to explore the newsroom experience and develop content to engage their audience. They can include feature articles about the Battle of Trafalgar, interviews with Nelson's sailors, eye-witness accounts, competition page, the letters pages, adverts, perhaps a poetry section ... the possibilities are endless.

Choice and collaboration are two great motivators for writing. The delight and pride in the final published newspapers, which can be displayed and shared – perhaps even on the National Maritime Museum's blog - will make for a memorable project to add to your yearly curriculum themes.

## Guidance

The resource is designed to be flexible and to fit with the new English Programmes of Study. It can be used as a whole half term unit of work, adapted to form a shorter unit or even a week long or whole day project, depending on curriculum needs.

The National Maritime Museum session, *Trafalgar Tales* is the ideal starting point to inspire this project and immerse pupils in Nelson's world and has a clear **narrative** focus. These activities supplement this aspect

## GETTING STARTED – The buzz of the newsroom

These starter activities can be done prior to a *Trafalgar Tales* museum visit to begin pupils' immersion in the world of Nelson and encourage preparation and research on site during the museum session. Alternatively they work as a follow-up to the visit which provides a stimulus and introduction to further activities back at school.

### Staff

#### Organisation

Explain to pupils their *Trafalgar Times* task. The class can either work on one whole souvenir magazine to which they can all contribute with groups working on different elements or split the class into groups of no more than 5 so that each group can produce their own collaborative magazine. The latter is usually more engaging for upper key stage 2 pupils as they have more ownership of their tasks and greater editorial control.

Exploring at the outset the audience and purpose of the souvenir newspaper is essential. They can write for a modern day audience or, even better, imagine the nation post-Trafalgar, a nation full of pride but devastated by the loss of their great hero Nelson – a nation in mourning but keen to celebrate victory, though still engaged in war.

by exploring **non-fiction writing** forms and purposes whilst deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding of this significant period of British history.

Suitable for both lower and upper key stage two pupils, teachers can select activities best suited to their pupils' needs. Some writing outcomes may be explored in depth, such as a recount of the Battle of Trafalgar for a feature article, whilst others provide more incidental writing opportunities, for example, a recruitment poster for Nelson's Navy.

## Roles and responsibilities

Have a range of example newspapers or magazines available to pupils to explore and research. What are the different types? What features do they have in common? In producing a newspaper, what are the different roles needed for success? Encourage pupils to notice design and layout features and common non-fiction features like headlines, fact boxes, time lines etc. Perhaps as a group they could create a mock up design board with notes, comments and pictures of features they might like to include in their own newspaper. Some elements may be compulsory such as a contents page, editor introduction, feature article, advertisements page etc. and others optional, e.g. competitions page, short story feature, poetry page.

Of course it will be key to talk about their target audience as this will greatly affect the choice of content. Will they be writing for the general public or for other pupils?

Setting some key roles and responsibilities is always a great idea. Creating 'press passes' for each role complete with lanyards and journalists' notepads can be an added incentive for children to immerse themselves fully in the task.

Below are some common roles you might want to suggest, in a group of 5, pupils may have one key role and all take on the researcher and writer roles in addition.

## Possible Roles:

Editor

Picture Editor

Advertising Manager

Deputy Editor

Research Assistant

Publishing Director

Senior Writer

Fact Checker

Special Contributor

Encourage pupils to use the internet to research what newspapers looked like in 1805 They are many archive documents available in the National Maritime Museum's Nelson, Navy, Nation online collection :

[rmg.co.uk/see-do/we-recommend/attractions/nelson-navy-nation-gallery](http://rmg.co.uk/see-do/we-recommend/attractions/nelson-navy-nation-gallery)

Along with further archives held at the National Archive online:

[nationalarchives.gov.uk/nelson/introduction.htm](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/nelson/introduction.htm)

## News room environment

With pupils, plan and transform your classroom into a newsroom. You might have a permanent news desk set up, crucial deadlines, a mood board for potential images or a research desk with a range of books about the period. The National Maritime Museum's own *Nelson, Navy, Nation* would be a perfect core research book, and a range of postcards are available to decorate and set the scene. Some great ideas along with print out press passes can be found on the BBC Schools Report site : [bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/16872425](http://bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/16872425)

# PLANNING YOUR NEWSPAPER

## Trafalgar Hot Seating

This activity links the work in the Trafalgar Tales **museum session** to the further work in this resource. It can be done as a whole class activity or in smaller groups.

Children will take it in turns to take the 'Hot Seat' and be questioned by their classmates. The class should prepare questions in advance, perhaps using the 6 areas of research from the Museum session i.e. character and background, role and ship, life on board, the day of the battle, my role on the day and life after the Navy, to think about structuring their 'interview'.

The 'interviewee' should use their research (perhaps recorded in their logbooks) to assume their Trafalgar Tales character and answer the questions. Children could also ask higher level questions around motivations for joining the Navy or feelings and emotions during time spent on board and after the battle itself.

'Interviewers' could be encouraged to take notes to form the basis of an interview article for the newspaper.

## Choosing your feature articles

Following your **museum session**, pupils will have begun to explore the captivating events of Trafalgar and have a sense of the impact of Nelson as a national hero. Many of these events and characters provide a range of possibilities for a more in-depth feature for the newspaper. Pupils could choose from the options below, or come up with their own feature ideas. Pupils in a mixed ability group could research together and write their own articles, deciding between them on the best article to be edited and included in the final newspaper. Alternatively each pupil could take a different feature article.

### The Battle of Trafalgar – Nelson's Last Stand

Create a factual recount of the key events of the battle, Nelson's role and tragic death. Encourage research of Nelson's unusual battle plans known as *The Nelson Touch*, explore prints and paintings of his death and create an accurate account of the events of the day from start to finish to write a simple recount. Include non-fiction features such as fact boxes, perhaps with numbers of ships, sailors, lives lost etc. Perhaps a timeline of significant points during the day could illustrate the piece. The research and information gained as part of the *Trafalgar Tales* museum session will be a great starting point.

[http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html?\\_a=1.238907968.1758889929.1456922682#!c-search;searchTerm=Nelson\\_funeral](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html?_a=1.238907968.1758889929.1456922682#!c-search;searchTerm=Nelson_funeral)

<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/147270.html>

<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/136664.html>

### National Maritime Museum Collection Resources to support

[rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/unpicking-nelson's-traffic-uniform](http://rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/unpicking-nelson's-traffic-uniform)

[rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-background](http://rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-background)

[rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/138973.html](http://rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/138973.html)

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/108208.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/108208.html)

### Nelson's Funeral

The pomp and ceremony of a nation in mourning might form a recount of Nelson's famous funeral following the Battle of Trafalgar. Pupils could add descriptions of his elaborate funeral car and barge, they could map the route the funeral procession took on the day to illustrate the whole piece for readers. Add in some role play and encourage pupils to act as interviewers capturing the reaction of mourners then add in eye-witness accounts to the recount. There are even detailed images of his coffin and all the decoration and ornaments which adorned it, to be explored and described.

### National Maritime Museum Collection Resources to support

[rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/unpicking-nelson's-traffic-uniform](http://rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/unpicking-nelson's-traffic-uniform)

[rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-background](http://rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-background)

[rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/138973.html](http://rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/battle-traffic-collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/138973.html)

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/108208.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/108208.html)

## Nelson Biography or an Obituary piece

Encourage pupils to dig deeper into the life of Nelson to create a biography or even an obituary piece for the newspaper. Through investigating Nelson's illustrious career before Trafalgar, pupils will discover more about the Napoleonic Wars and events leading up to Trafalgar. They will continue the journey started in *Trafalgar Tales* to find out more about the ranks and routes into the Navy by looking at Nelson's own journey to admiralty. Images of his letters, personal objects and of course his famous Trafalgar coat help to bring this larger than life hero alive. A timeline of key events in his life would add a visual element to the newspaper article.

## Bringing the magazine alive

A myriad of opportunities to explore other forms of writing whilst considering the layout and design of your souvenir newspaper make for fun research and writing activities.

### Trivia Quiz

A great way of honing pupil research skills is to get them to research and create a trivia quiz. Let them choose a topic or give them a focus to work on – like HMS Victory for example and they have to design a quiz. This encourages pupils to search for interesting and more unusual facts and figures to ask questions about and helps them unpick research to present in a different format. They could also think about where to hide the answers in the newspaper.

### Competitions

Newspapers these days are full of competitions. One of the most famous competitions during the Trafalgar period, was the 500 guineas offered in a press advert by a publisher for the best “Death of Nelson” painting. The winner was Arthur William Devis whose winning portrait can be seen in the Nelson, Navy, Nation gallery itself.

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html?...](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html?...)

Let’s not forget the design competition to create a monument to Nelson, which of course resulted in the creation of Nelson’s Column now standing in Trafalgar Square. What competition can pupils devise to include in their souvenir newspaper? Perhaps one to design a new figurehead for HMS Victory or even a commemorative mug.

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html?...](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html?...)

## Advertisements

From his victory at the Battle of the Nile and then following his death at Trafalgar, Nelson’s popularity and the national grief at his death, was immense. The museum has a host of commemorative items and artefacts on display in the gallery. Pupils could research the types of items from jugs and lockets to prints and pieces of mourning furniture. Pupils can explore the language of persuasion and the features of great adverts to enhance the layout of the newspaper with well-placed adverts selling Trafalgar memorabilia.

[www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/nelson%E2%80%99s-legacy](http://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/nelson%E2%80%99s-legacy)

Even plays were commissioned in honour of the victory at Trafalgar – perhaps pupils could create listings for a new play for readers to see. See below for an example of a Theatre Royal Drury Lane production in 1805.

[collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/158246.html](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/158246.html)

### Job Adverts

With Trafalgar over, Nelson’s Navy still had a job to do - the war against Napoleon was far from over. Naval recruitment posters encouraging men to come and join the Navy, live a life of adventure and glory whilst being paid for their trouble were a feature of the day. Explore some of the collection examples and add to the newspaper. What would entice the pupils themselves to join the Navy?

[images.rmg.co.uk/?service=asset&action=show\\_zoom\\_window\\_popup...](http://images.rmg.co.uk/?service=asset&action=show_zoom_window_popup...)

## Poets Corner

In the [Trafalgar Tales](#) session at the museum pupils have written their own poems about the sea using a simple model. This could be re-used to support further sea or Trafalgar themed poems to include in a ‘poets corner’ section of the newspaper in celebration of the Trafalgar victory.

### Commemorative Song

Not only poems but songs are often written to commemorate significant events. The National Maritime Museum’s new teaching resource *A Sailor’s Life* helps pupils explore life in Nelson’s Navy using songs and linked objects. *National Pride* and *Nelson the naval Hero* themes would be a fantastic and fun way to immerse pupils in the power of song. From this they might write their own versions to include in the souvenir newspaper.

[www.efdss.org/efdss-education/resource-bank/resources-and-teaching-tools/a-sailors-life](http://www.efdss.org/efdss-education/resource-bank/resources-and-teaching-tools/a-sailors-life)

## Design & Publication

Here is where your editors come into their own. Copy needs to be checked for errors, proofed and improved. Layout, illustrations and extra images and features can be added.

There are many possibilities for extra, visual information to be included:

- Maps of the battle
- Maps of the funeral procession
- Labelled diagrams of HMS Victory
- Labelled diagrams of Nelson’s dress uniform
- Timeline of key events of the Napoleonic Wars
- Labelled diagrams of weaponry
- Inventory of ship surgeon’s tools

Finally, the class can design a cover and publish their newspaper it to share with parents, other classes and perhaps even the National Maritime Museum itself!

# NATIONAL CURRICULUM COVERAGE – English Programme of Study

## Lower KS2: Reading

### Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:
- discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- retrieve and record information from non-fiction

## Writing Composition

### Pupils should be taught to:

#### plan their writing by:

- discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
- discussing and recording ideas

#### draft and write by:

- organising paragraphs around a theme
- in non-narrative material, using simple organisational devices [for example, headings and sub-headings]

#### evaluate and edit by:

- assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
- proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors

## Upper KS2: Reading

### Pupils should be taught to:

#### maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:

- continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of ...non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
- reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
- identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

#### understand what they read by:

- summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas
- identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction

## Writing Composition

### Pupils should be taught to:

#### plan their writing by:

- identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own
- noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary

#### draft and write by:

- selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning
- using a wide range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs
- using further organisational and presentational devices to structure text and to guide the reader [for example, headings, bullet points, underlining]

#### evaluate and edit by:

- assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing
- proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning
- proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors





