

KEEPING IN TOUCH

INVESTIGATING WAYS TO KEEP IN TOUCH WHILE ON AN EXPEDITION

POLAR LIFE KS2

Curriculum mapping:

English

Aims:

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

KS2 – composition

- evaluate and edit by:
 - assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
 - proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
 - proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning
 - ensuring the consistent and correct use of tense throughout a piece of writing
 - ensuring correct subject and verb agreement when using singular and plural, distinguishing between the language of speech and writing and choosing the appropriate register
 - proofread for spelling and punctuation errors
 - perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear

Introduction activity

Discuss with the class how we now keep in touch in many different ways. It might be a quick call on a mobile or a text if we want to get an important message to someone quickly. We might send an e-mail if we don't need an instant reply, or we might even send a card or a letter.

Ask the class when did they last receive a letter or a card? Do people still send messages through the post?

Discuss sending a message if we are a long way away from the person we want to contact. Does this matter anymore? We usually have mobile phones that are ready and available to use.

Explain that in the Antarctic there is no mobile phone reception, so modern day explorers or workers at the South Pole have to use a satellite phone, which uses a satellite to receive and make calls.

Look at the satellite telephone image located on page 8 in Polar Stories:
http://polar.lgfl.org.uk/polar_stories.html#book/10

It looks like a normal mobile phone but uses different technology. Look at the image of the explorer making a radio call. From this picture we can see that he has broken his leg and is calling an incoming aircraft on the radio phone, perhaps to arrange being taken off to a nearby hospital.

Watch the video of Peter Clarkson talking about the use of the satellite phone in the Antarctic.

Main part of lesson

Discuss how in the early expeditions made by Captain Scott and his team, the only method of communication was by letter; these would take a very long time to be delivered and a long time for a reply. Many families would go for months with no news of the explorers.

In this lesson the pupils are to imagine that they are an explorer on one of Scott's expeditions.

They are going to write a letter home explaining what they have been doing and any discoveries they have made.

Show the 'Scott's men in the hut image' resource and/or the leisure time image located on page 55 of the Encyclopaedia of Artefacts: http://polar.lgfl.org.uk/encyclopaedia_of_artefacts.html#book/57



Ask them to imagine the conditions they would be in whilst writing home.

Explain that for this letter writing activity, we are going to use paper and pencils, not the computer. Ask the class why they think this is so?

Pupils can read and share their letters.

Next explain to the class that what you are going to show them is the last thing that Captain Robert Scott wrote.

He left a letter about his person as he died in the tent on his journey back to base from the Terra Nova expedition in 1911. This was the expedition when the team did get to the South Pole, only to find that another explorer from Norway (Roald Amundsen) had already got there only a short time before them. On the return journey, the whole team perished; although they died in March, their bodies, still inside the tent, were not found until November because of the freezing conditions.

Show the class the 'for God's sake look after our people' image and read out what it says, discussing how family and friends must have felt when they read this message. Also discuss how Robert Scott must have felt, knowing that he was dying and this letter would be found after he had perished.

We shall stick it out until the end but we are getting weaker of course and the end cannot be far..... it seems a pity but I do not think I can write more

R Scott

Last entry

For God's sake look after our people.

Plenary

Watch the 'homesick' video located on page 22 in Polar Stories (http://polar.lgfl.org.uk/polar_stories.html#book/24) where Peter Clarkson, a modern day explorer, explains how he felt being so far away from home and how important news from home becomes.

Discuss with the class how Peter felt and why.