KS 1 Mary Seacole

Storytelling/drama
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Curriculum links

KS1 History

The visit links to KS1 History study of Mary Seacole, Victorian Britain and black history. In particular to QCA unit 4 ‘Why do we remember Florence Nightingale/ Mary Seacole?’ It also links to work on ‘People who help us’ and Citizenship study of living in a diverse society. Although Mary Seacole is often studied during Black History Month, study of her life is relevant throughout the year.

Session description

The actor/storyteller will be dressed in costume as Mary Seacole, but comes in and out of character, so that children are not confused into thinking they have met the ‘real’ Mary Seacole, and so that the storyteller can answer pupils’ questions out of character, reflecting back on Mary’s life in general. Pupils will be encouraged to ask questions and join in short dramatised parts of the narrative, such as singing a song.

The story telling takes place in the atmospheric Pleasure Gardens area in our galleries and is set immediately after the Crimean War, when Mary’s book was published. The storyteller tells of Mary’s childhood in Jamaica, her extensive travels, her time in the Crimea and her old age in London. The storyteller will reflect on Mary’s position as a black British woman in Victorian society, and on her ability as a nurse (using skills learnt from her mother in Jamaica), a businesswoman (running the British Hotel at which she cooked and sold provisions to soldiers) and as a biographer (who wrote her own successful biography, from which we know about her life).

Gallery time

You will be allocated an hour of self-directed time for your pupils to explore the Expanding City, Victorian Walk and People’s City galleries. This might be either before or after your session.

If you wish to visit other galleries you will need to book these. To ensure that the galleries do not become overcrowded, please keep to the times you have been allocated to each gallery.

To help you and your class to get the best possible educational value from your visit, we suggest some pre- and post-visit activities within this pack and offer a selection of activity sheets that can be used in the galleries.

The gallery activity sheets are offered in Microsoft Word format so that teachers can adapt them to the needs of their own class. You will need to photocopy enough for each group prior to your visit, and provide clipboards and pencils. We recommend teachers make a preparation visit to the Museum.
Timetable: Mary Seacole

Your group has been allocated ONE of the following session times; please check your confirmation letter:

Group 1
10am            Arrival
10.30 – 11am    Mary Seacole in the Pleasure Gardens
11 – 11.30am    Visit to Expanding City
11.30 – 12pm    Visit to the People’s City
12 – 12.15pm    Visit to Victorian Walk
12.30 – 1pm     Lunch

Group 2
10.15am         Arrival
10.45 – 11am    Visit to Victorian Walk
11 – 11.30am    Visit to Expanding City
11.30 – 12pm    Mary Seacole in the Pleasure Gardens
12 – 12.30pm    Visit to the People’s City
12.45 – 1.15pm  Lunch

Group 3
11.30am         Arrival
11.45 – 12.15pm Lunch
12.30 – 1pm     Mary Seacole in the Pleasure Gardens
1 – 1.30pm      Visit to Expanding City
1.30 – 2pm      Visit to the People’s City
2 – 2.15pm      Visit to Victorian Walk

Group 4
11.30am         Arrival
11.45 – 12.15pm Lunch
12.30 – 1pm     Visit to Expanding City
1 – 1.15pm      Visit to Victorian Walk
1.15 – 1.45pm   Visit to the People’s City
1.45 – 2.15pm   Mary Seacole in the Pleasure Gardens
Practical guidelines

Arrival, cloakroom and toilets
When you arrive at the Museum please check in and show your confirmation form at the information desk at the main entrance. You will be directed to the Clore Learning Centre where you will be able to leave your coats and bags and go to the toilet before entering the galleries. Please do not leave valuables in the cloakroom area.

Lunch
You will be allocated a 30 minute slot when you arrive at the Museum. There is no eating or drinking in the galleries, so please ensure that all food stuffs are left in the Lunch Space.

SEN provision
The Museum is fully accessible. Parking is available for SEN groups. Please contact our SEN Officer to discuss any specific needs on 020 7814 5549 or at SEN@museumoflondon.org.uk

Shop
The shop sells a variety of books and products to support learning, as well as pocket money items. Please request a time slot in the shop by calling 0870 444 3850 and quoting your reference number. If you would prefer the shop offer a time saving goody bag service at great value. For further details contact the shop by email at shop@museumoflondon.org.uk or call 020 7814 5600.

Photography
Photography is included as part of this session. You are also welcome to take photographs within the Museum galleries without flash or tripod use. These images may only be reproduced for personal or educational purposes, which include reproducing the image as a classroom teaching aide or as part of a school project. Any publication of the image for any other purpose is forbidden, which includes publication on any website. As an alternative pictures of many of our key objects are available to download from the Picture Bank on our website, www.museumoflondon.org.uk/picturebank. Postcards and posters can be purchased from the shop and prints may be purchased from our on demand print website www.museumoflondonprints.com

Risk assessments
It is the responsibility of the group leader to carry out a risk assessment and teachers are encouraged to make a planning visit and to carry out their own assessment. The Museum makes regular assessments of sessions and public spaces and this document is available on request, but this is only for teachers’ information and does not constitute an official risk assessment.

Organising your group
Split your class into small groups for working in the galleries and visiting the shop. Please ensure that you have at least one adult for every six pupils and that the adults accompany them at all times. Please ensure the children know the following information:
- work quietly – other groups and members of the public will be using the Museum
- please do not lean on the glass cases
- only use pencils in the galleries.
Pre-visit activities
We highly recommend doing one or more of these activities before the session.

1. Look at books and websites about Victorian times and about Mary Seacole. Mark the Crimea War on a timeline. How long ago was this? Discuss the role of women and black people in Britain at this time.

2. Discuss how we know about the past. Introduce idea of historical evidence. Discuss different sources of evidence for the Victorian period: documents, books, newspapers, art, buildings, music, objects, film etc. Read extracts from ‘The Wonderful Adventures of Mary Seacole’ to your class.

3. Look on a map of the world and find some of the places (Jamaica, the Crimea, London) that Mary Seacole went to during her life. Draw them on the map.

4. Explain that they will meet an actress pretending to be Mary Seacole and discuss what sort of questions they would like to ask and why.

5. Introduce to the group some general background about Museum of London.

http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/Learning/gallmodlondonresources.htm

- Look at the Mary Secole pocket history
- Look at the online interactive maps for the galleries you will visit. This can be shown to the whole class on an interactive white board. Hover over the hot spots and see what objects you can find with your pupils.

Don’t forget to photocopy enough gallery activity sheets for each group prior to your visit, and adapt them for your class if you wish.
Follow-up activities for the classroom

These activities are designed to apply and extend the knowledge gained from your visit to Museum of London back in the classroom.

1. Set up a role-play area of the British Hotel and help children act out healing and feeding the soldiers. Children can use this to help imagine Mary’s life.

2. Make a list of adjectives to describe the conditions in the Crimea that Mary Seacole worked in.

3. Write a diary extract or draw a scene representing a day in the life of Mary Seacole.

4. Create a ‘What we know about Mary Seacole’ book following the visit and after meeting the character. Include a contents page, glossary and page numbers.

5. Imagine that you are Mary Seacole and you are looking for help in the British Hotel in the Crimea. Design an advertisement for staff. Think about the types of staff you would need and their duties.

6. Discuss children’s own experiences of doctors, nurses and hospitals and create a class poster comparing Victorian health care with that of today.

7. Design an advert for a miracle ‘cure’. Include a picture of the product, a description of what it will cure, the price and comments from satisfied customers.

8. Look on a map of the world and find all the places that Mary Seacole went to during her life. Draw them on the map.
You will meet Mary Seacole at different times in her life. The storyteller will come in and out of character to tell her life story.

**Family History**

Mary Seacole was born in Kingston in about 1805 of a Scottish army officer and a native of Kingston. As she was of mixed race, Mary was called a Mulatto or Creole. Her mother was a doctor using traditional herbal medicines from Jamaica and English medicines to cure disease. Being a doctor was one of the few jobs open to Black women. Mary often helped her mother attend the sick, including British army officers. Eventually Mary took over the running of her mother’s boarding house and became a skillful and respected medical practitioner. Mary decided to travel to Panama to treat cholera victims. She returned to Jamaica where she learned about the war in the Crimea and decided to head there to tend the soldiers.

**Her role in the Crimea**

Mary applied to the War Office in England for money to set up a hospital in the Crimea but her application went unanswered. She tried to see the Secretary of War, Sidney Herbert, but was told that he was too busy. She then tried the medical department. She even applied to be an assistant to Florence Nightingale, but was told that there were no vacancies. People were prejudiced against the colour of Mary’s skin and refused her money and jobs. There was no organised provision of food for soldiers in the Crimea. Instead ‘sutlers’ sold overpriced food and drink to the soldiers. Mary decided that she could recoup the money she had spent on her fare to the Crimea by becoming a sutler herself. Mary opened the British Hotel, with the help of a distant relative. The British Hotel was very different to the other canteens serving wholesome food at reasonable prices,
along with homemade drinks. Mary also gave medicine to soldiers and attended to the wounded behind the frontline, despite its dangers.

**Her old age in London**

After the Crimean War, Mary found herself bankrupt in London. Soldiers who were grateful to her for her work in the Crimea raised a fund to help support her, and she wrote a best seller about her life entitled *The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands*. She spent her old age between Jamaica and London and died as a well off, respected member of London society. She is buried in London.

**Mary Seacole song**

This song was printed in *Punch* and can be sung to the tune of ‘Old King Cole’.

Sing ‘Old King Cole’ with your pupils: Then sing them this song verse by verse and explain it was printed in a paper during Mary’s lifetime. The words are difficult so you will need to discuss what they mean with your pupils. The storyteller will sing the first verse during the storytelling so it would be good if the pupils could learn this one verse.

**A Stir for Seacole**

**DAME SEACOLE** was a kindly old soul,
And a kindly old soul was she;
You might call for your pot, you might call for your pipe,
In her tent on ‘the Col’ so free.

Her tent on ‘the Col,’ where a welcome toll
She took of the passing throng,
That from Balaklava to the front
Toiled wearily along.

That berry-brown face, with a kind heart's trace
Impressed in each wrinkle sly,
Was a sight to behold, through the snow-clouds rolled
Across that iron sky.

The cold without gave a zest, no doubt,
To the welcome warmth within:
But her smile, good old soul, lent heat to the coal,
And power to the pannikin.

No store she set by the epaulette,
Be it worsted or gold-lace;
For K.C.B., or plain private SMITH,
She had still one pleasant face.
But not alone was her kindness shown
To the hale and hungry lot,
Who drank her grog and eat her prog,
And paid their honest shot.

The sick and sorry can tell the story
Of her nursing and dosing deeds.
Regimental M.D. never worked as she
In helping sick men's needs.

Of such work, God knows, was as much as she chose,
That dreary winter-tide,
When Death hung o'er the damp and pestilent camp,
And his scythe swung far and wide.

And when winter past, and spring at last
Made the mud-sea a sea of flowers,
Doughnut, race and review her brown face knew,
Still pleasant, in sunshine or showers.

Still she'd take her stand, as blithe and bland,
With her stores, the jolly old soul-
And - be the right man in the right place who can -
The right woman was Dame SEACOLE

She gave her aid to all who prayed,
To hungry, and sick, and cold:
Open band and heart, alike ready to part
Kind words, and acts, and gold.

And now the good soul is 'in the hole,'
What red-coat in all the land,
But to set her upon her legs again
Will not lend a willing hand?
Planning your journey

Museum of London
Free admission
Open
Mon to Sat 10am - 5.50pm
Sun 12 - 5.50pm
Last admission 5.30pm

Museum of London
London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN
0870 444 3851
www.museumoflondon.org.uk
info@museumoflondon.org.uk

Free travel
All schools within the Greater London area can take advantage of Transport for London’s School Party Travel Scheme. See www.tfl.gov.uk/schoolparty or call London Underground Customer Services on 0845 330 9881 for details.

Getting to the Museum

By tube - St Paul’s, Barbican

By rail - Moorgate, Liverpool St, City Thameslink

By bus - 4, 8, 25, 56, 100, 172, 242, 501, 521

Travel by coach

The Museum does not have a coach park. Coaches may stop briefly to drop-off and pick up at bus stops on London Wall (travelling towards Moorgate) and Aldersgate Street (travelling towards the Museum). Please note that coaches must move on if requested to do so by a traffic manager/parking warden.

Cancellation charges

More than 8 weeks £30
8-4 weeks £50
Less than 4 weeks £100
On the day £150

Teachers resources
Primary programme