

The British Empire

History

Year 3/4

Lesson 1 of 6

Learning Objective	Resources	
<p>To understand when, how and why Britain's 'first' empire was established in the Americas and Africa.</p>	<p>Slides A Sailor's Life Information Cards Worksheets 1A/1B/1C World Beliefs 1 (FSD...? activity only)</p>	
Teaching Input		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our learning starts with the year 1497. To the nearest hundred, how many years ago was the year 1497? • The 15th and 16th centuries are known as the 'Age of Exploration'. Why do you think this is? Discuss, then show slides briefly explaining how little was known of the geography of the world prior to this time. • Either download <i>Marble</i>, a free virtual globe application, and show the <i>Behaim Globe</i>, 1492, or show the <i>Martellus World Map</i>, 1490, on the slides. What do you notice? How do these compare to modern globes/maps? Discuss, then explain. • In 1497 an explorer called John Cabot sailed from Bristol to explore the Americas and trade with its people. His voyage was the first of many over the next century, leading to a much better understanding of the Americas and Africa. • Elizabeth I was queen of England from November 1558 to March 1603. How long was her reign? • Elizabeth I helped pay for many expeditions. Her fleet fought the Spanish and Portuguese in many sea battles. England was becoming a global superpower. Show children the portrait of the queen with her hand resting on a globe. Allow some time for children to discuss what they can see in the painting. • Why do you think Elizabeth I helped pay for so many seafaring expeditions to explore the new world? Discuss, listing reasons on scrap paper or mini-whiteboards. Did you think of these reasons (show the list on the slides)? • During this period, our understanding of the world improved significantly. Show the <i>Ortelius World Map</i>, 1570. What do you notice? How does this differ from the globes and maps from the 1490s? Discuss. • England was becoming a seafaring superpower thanks to the dangerous and difficult voyages of the explorers. What do you think life was like for a sailor aboard these expeditionary ships? 		
Main Activity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the differentiated worksheets, children are firstly to write their own responses to each of the questions shown about life as a sailor aboard an expeditionary ship. • After that, either provide groups with a set of the A Sailor's Life Information cards each, or arrange a random selection of 8-12 cards on various tables around the room so that children must visit each to learn about sailors. • They should note on their sheets the numbers of any cards which relate to each of their questions. • Allow time to discuss the questions: Which did you get right? Which did you get wrong? Which pieces of information did you find most interesting/surprising/horrifying? 		
<u>Lower ability:</u>	<u>Middle ability:</u>	<u>Higher ability:</u>
Worksheet 1A.	Worksheet 1B.	Worksheet 1C.
Fancy something different...?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give children World Beliefs 1, which includes descriptions of widely held beliefs about the world prior to the 'Age of Exploration'. • Challenge pairs or small groups to discuss these statements and think about how our understanding of the world today differs, and why. Allow some time for pairs or groups to feed back. • Having discussed the statements, children are to write statements explaining how what we know today differs from them. 		
Plenary	Assessment Questions	
<p>The 'first' British Empire is said to have existed between roughly 1583, when Elizabeth I was queen, to 1783, when George III was king. The Plenary slides show a number of significant historic events from before, during and after this period. Challenge children to identify which occurred during the 'first' British Empire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can children identify changes between maps from the late 15th century and the mid 16th century, suggesting reasons why? • Can children describe what seafaring expeditions were like and suggest why they were important? • Can children identify some significant historic events which occurred before, during and after the Age of Exploration? 	