

PRIMARY LESSON PLAN

Soldier to Healer: Sir Walter Raleigh's medicinal garden at the Tower (English/PSHE)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

For students to:

- Know who Sir Walter Raleigh was and some key facts about his life.
- Understand the impact Raleigh's imprisonment had on his mental and physical health and how some of the activities he did while imprisoned may have improved them.
- Identify similar or different activities that they can do themselves to improve their own mental and physical health.

BEFORE THE LESSON

Read students the story of Sir Walter Raleigh's Garden (SM1).

Room set-up

Space for pupils to discuss in groups and work independently at tables.

Additional resources needed

- A flipchart or large piece of paper
- Interactive whiteboard or large screen
- Post-it notes

CURRICULUM LINKS

KS1 & 2: Speaking and Listening

- Use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings

KS1: Reading

- Listening to, discussing and expressing views about a wide range of contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently
- Discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
- Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done

KS2: Reading

- Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion

PSHE Association - Health and Wellbeing

KS1 Students learn:

- How to recognise and name different feelings
- How feelings can affect people's bodies and how they behave
- About ways of sharing feelings; a range of words to describe feelings
- About things that help people feel good (e.g. playing outside, doing things they enjoy, spending time with family, getting enough sleep)

KS2 Students learn:

- That mental health, just like physical health, is part of daily life; the importance of taking care of mental health
- About strategies and behaviours that support mental health — including how good quality sleep, physical exercise/time outdoors, being involved in community groups, doing things for others, clubs, and activities, hobbies and spending time with family and friends can support mental health and wellbeing
- A varied vocabulary to use when talking about feelings; about how to express feelings in different ways

INTRODUCTION

Explain that in this lesson, students will be learning more about Sir Walter Raleigh's imprisonment in the Tower of London, and its impact on his mental and physical health. The students will also be thinking about what they could learn from Raleigh's experience to look after their own physical and mental health.

ACTIVITY 1

Raleigh the prisoner

This activity explains some further background information about Raleigh's imprisonment in the Tower, its impact on him and how his mental and physical health improved during his incarceration despite his circumstances.

Pack resources: Activity Card 1 | AR1 | SM1 | SM3

ACTIVITY 2

Raleigh's 'Happy Place'

In this activity, students will explore some of the activities that may have contributed to Raleigh's improved health and wellbeing over the course of his imprisonment. This activity could be mainly discussion-led or be recorded on the worksheet (AR2).

Pack resources: Activity Card 2 | AR2

ACTIVITY 3

Wellbeing Benefits of Gardening

This activity demonstrates how scientists and researchers today are looking at the link between gardening and improved mental health. (This activity is optional and could be missed out or done at a later time).

Pack resources: Activity Card 3 | SM2

ACTIVITY 4

My Happy Place - generating ideas

In this activity, students are encouraged to relate Raleigh's experience to their own lives and begin to consider what they could do to create their own 'happy place'.

Pack resources: Activity Card 4 | AR2

ACTIVITY 5

My Happy Place

In this activity, students record their ideas for their own 'happy place'. This could be completed on the worksheet (AR3) or be extended into a piece of creative artwork.

Pack resources: Activity Card 5 | AR3

ACTIVITY 6

Plenary

This activity encourages students to reflect on what they've learnt, and how they could use their 'happy place' to support them through challenging times in their lives.

IDEAS FOR ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

These activities could be set as homework or extension tasks, or instead of one of the activities suggested in the lesson plan. You could also use them if you want to plan follow-up lessons.

Letter from the Tower

Imagine that you are Sir Walter, or his wife Bess. Write a letter to a friend explaining why you feel sad and anxious in the Tower. Describe your medicinal garden and how you think it helps to keep you all well. You could include a plan of the garden with a key to some of the different plants growing there.

My Great Cordial!

Find out more about plants that are used in medicine and herbal remedies today. Decide which of them you would use in your own cordial to keep you and your family well. What ingredient would you add to make it taste sweet?

Write out the recipe for your cordial using the headings: 'Ingredients' and 'Method'.

Wellbeing Garden

Watch the video about the RHS Wellbeing Garden (SM2).

Ask the students to design their own wellbeing garden, including some of the plants that Raleigh used in his own garden or other plants of their own choosing. Encourage them to consider their senses - sight, smell, touch and taste - when choosing plants.

This could be linked to a planting activity in school (including planting the Superbloom seed mix if your school is an official partner in the project).

Raleigh's Timeline

Order the key events from Raleigh's life on a timeline (SM3 - differentiated versions).

ACTIVITY CARD 1

Pack resources: AR1 | SM1 | SM3

Raleigh the prisoner

Introduce the story of Sir Walter Raleigh and his imprisonment at the Tower using the presentation AR1. Explore how his health and wellbeing suffered as a prisoner and introduce the idea that some of Raleigh's activities while imprisoned may have helped to improve his wellbeing. You may find it useful to hand out printed copies of a short biography of Raleigh (SM1).

Pause at slides 4, 6 and 12 to discuss the question prompts:

- Slide 4: How do you think it would feel to lose everything and be locked up, away from your friends and family?
- Slide 6: What do you think changed? What would make you feel better if you were in his shoes?
- Slide 12: How do you think Raleigh found his 'happy place' during his imprisonment?

To check what they've learned, play the Timeline game (SM3 - easy or hard version).

ACTIVITY CARD 2

Pack resource: AR2

Walter Raleigh's 'Happy Place'

This activity encourages students to reflect on the things that might have improved Raleigh's health and wellbeing during his imprisonment, specifically: working on his garden, making medicines, writing books and spending time with his friends. This activity could be mainly discussion-led or recorded on the worksheet (AR2).

Organise students into pairs or small groups.

- Give each pair/group one of the cards (AR2)
 - Ask them to discuss how they think the idea on their card may have contributed to Raleigh's improved health and wellbeing throughout his imprisonment. Elicit ideas about keeping busy and distracting himself from his situation, doing things which gave him pleasure, finding a sense of purpose, setting himself achievable goals, spending time with friends.
 - Ask some groups/pairs to share their ideas (at least one for each of the cards). You may want to record their responses on a flipchart or ask them to write ideas on post-it notes.
 - Ask the students if they have any other ideas about things that might have helped Raleigh through his time as a prisoner.
 - *Optional:* Students can record their ideas about Raleigh's Happy Place on the worksheet (AR2)
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ACTIVITY CARD 3

Pack resource: SM2

Wellbeing Benefits of Gardening

This activity could be missed out or done separately alongside some of the optional tasks in the Teachers' Guide if you are pushed for time.

Explain that, although people have been gardening for hundreds of years, researchers and scientists are still investigating the link between gardening and mental and physical health.

Show students the short videos from the Royal Horticultural Society on YouTube (SM2).

Ask students to reflect on their own experiences of planting/gardening, whether they have done it much before, whether they enjoyed it, etc.

ACTIVITY CARD 4

Pack resource: AR2

My Happy Place - generating ideas

Explain that students will be using Raleigh's experience, as well as their own, to think about how they can create their own 'Happy Place' – a resource they can use when they are having a challenging time in their lives.

- Look again at the 4 things that may have improved Raleigh's health and wellbeing during his imprisonment (AR2).
- Ask students to think about times when they have been unhappy or bored (e.g. you may wish to ask them to reflect on experiences of Lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic). Do they think any of these things have helped them? Did they do anything similar?
- Give each child a post-it note and ask them to write down something that they like to do to help them to calm down, relax or cheer themselves up.
- On a large piece of paper (e.g. a flipchart), ask 5 children to stick their post-it up. Look at the ideas - are there any similarities between the children's ideas and Raleigh's?
- Begin to group the ideas together into similar categories - e.g. Spending time with friends and family, hobbies, playing, etc.

NB. Be aware of ideas that children bring which may actually increase stress (such as playing online games for long periods of time), that may affect their sleep, or expose them to cyberbullying. Do not reject any ideas - encourage students to think of limits or caveats which ensure such activities do not have adverse effects. Also, be aware of activities which they would not be able to do on demand (such as going swimming, trampolining or on holiday). Encourage students to think of things they can do within their daily lives - remind them of the limitations of Raleigh's experience.

- Ask some more students to come up share and sort their ideas - do they belong in any of the groups we have already or are they separate? Give some of the groups labels if appropriate.
 - Look at the collection of ideas together - have their peers come up with any ideas that they do as well? Do they do something from each of the categories?
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ACTIVITY CARD 5

Pack resource: AR3

My Happy Place

Children complete the worksheet (AR3) to record 4 things that they can do to create their own 'Happy Place', using the ideas generated during Activity 4 to help them. Encourage them to choose ideas from different sections.

You may wish to extend this activity to include creating some artwork inspired by their happy place - such as an illustration of a place that includes spaces for all of the things they have chosen.

They could also do a piece of writing to describe their happy place, a bit like a setting description, or comparing their happy place with Sir Walter Raleigh's - identifying similarities and differences.

ACTIVITY CARD 6

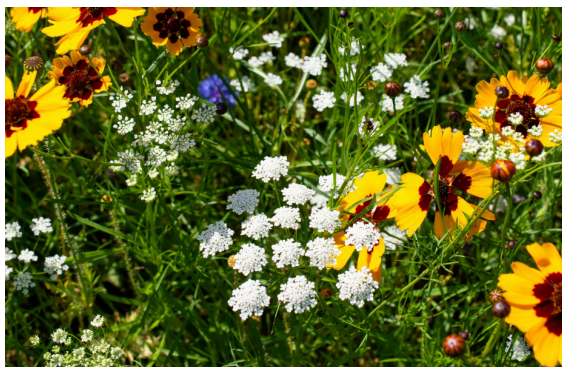
Plenary

Ask students to reflect on the elements that they chose for their happy place. Ask them to share some of the ideas they have included and when they might use them. Ask them to think about anything they might need to have ready for the next time they want to do these things and whether there is anything they could do to prepare for that (e.g. asking their parents/carers to get them a notebook for writing in).

Explain that sometimes just thinking about the things that make them happy is enough to give them a boost, such as reminding themselves of happy times they had with friends and family or thinking about things they are proud of that they have made.

Finish the session by having a silent minute reflecting on things that make them happy and thinking about how those things will help them to have a happier and healthier life.

This is available to download as a separate pdf from
<https://www.hrp.org.uk/superbloom-schools-learning-resources/>

MAKING HIS GARDEN

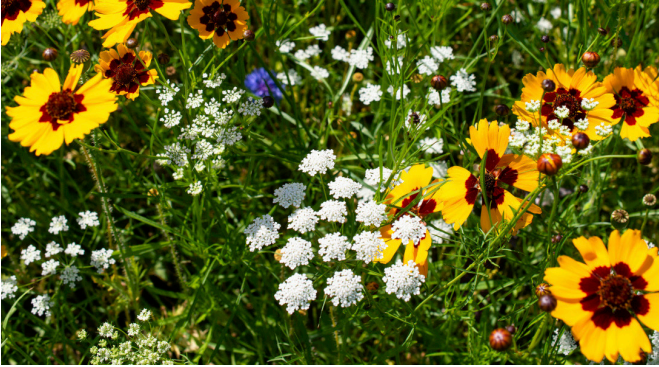
MAKING MEDICINES

READING AND WRITING BOOKS

A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

1. How might each of these have contributed to Raleigh's health and wellbeing during his imprisonment?

MAKING HIS GARDEN



MAKING MEDICINES



READING AND WRITING BOOKS

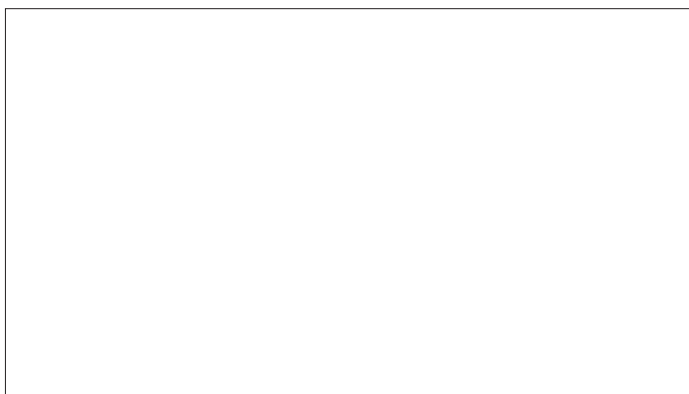


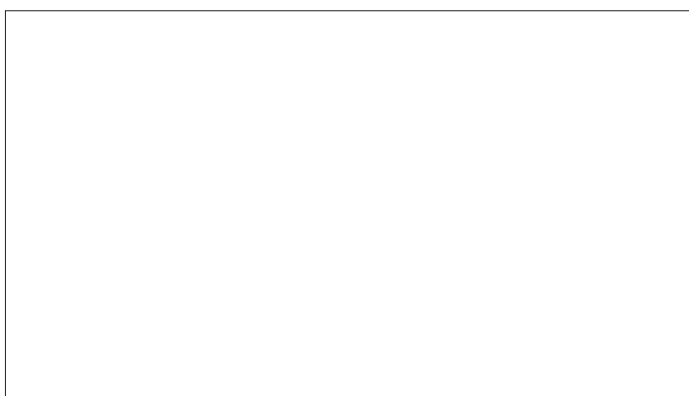
A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

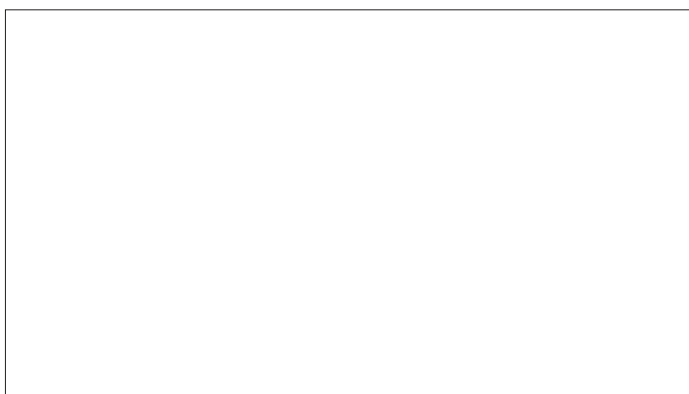


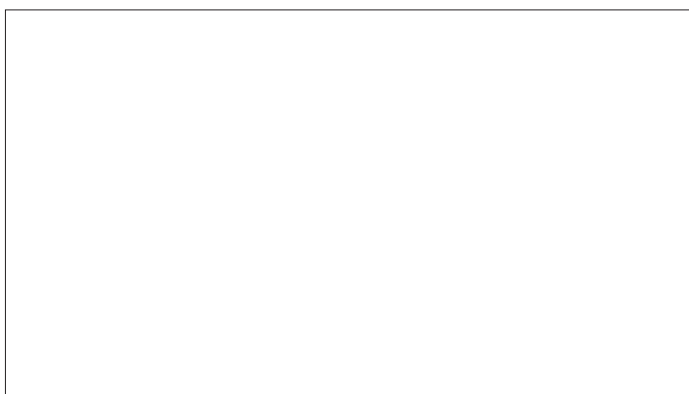
2. What else do you think might have helped Raleigh?

Draw and write the four things you would like to include in your happy place.











Walter Raleigh was born in Devon in 1554. As a young man he fought as a soldier in France and in Ireland. He went on several expeditions by sailing ship to explore lands that were new to Europeans (including the Caribbean and the Americas) and became a favourite of Queen Elizabeth I. The Queen made him a knight, gave him a big house to live in and made him a wealthy man. It is said that Sir Walter once threw his cloak on the ground so that the Queen could walk across a puddle without getting her feet wet!



In 1585, Raleigh organised several expeditions to Virginia in North America in search of gold and brought back new plants to England. The Spanish had already discovered tobacco plants in South America and Sir Walter made smoking tobacco popular in England. At this time, people thought smoking was healthy.



In 1591, Raleigh secretly married Bess, one of the Queen's maids of honour, without the Queen's permission. When Queen Elizabeth found out, she was furious and imprisoned them both in the Tower of London. They were released soon after, and Raleigh earned the Queen's forgiveness, becoming part of her court once again.



James I © Royal Collection Trust



© Historic Royal Palaces

When Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603, Raleigh's luck started to run out. The new king, James I, did not like Sir Walter and suspected him of plotting against him. He threw Raleigh back into the Tower.

This time, Raleigh remained a prisoner for 13 years. He lived in the Bloody Tower with his wife and family. Their youngest son Carew was born while his father was a prisoner. Raleigh knew that the king planned to have him executed. He felt miserable and became very ill. He even tried to take his own life.

Even though he was a prisoner, Raleigh was allowed to create his own garden beside the Bloody Tower. He grew herbs and other plants, which he used to make medicines in an old chicken shed. Some of the plants he grew were ones that he had brought back on his ship from the Americas, including tobacco and sassafras. One of the medicines Sir Walter made was called 'Raleigh's Great Cordial'. His cordial became quite famous, and rich people who were ill came to buy it.

Over the years, Raleigh began to feel better because he found many new interests to pass the time. As well as making medicines, he began writing books and built up a magnificent library. Some of Raleigh's friends were imprisoned at the Tower at the same time as him - they were allowed to visit each other and spent their time reading, writing and conducting scientific experiments.

In 1616, King James I released Raleigh from the Tower, to go on an expedition to find gold in Guyana (in South America). However, the expedition went badly. When Raleigh came home without any gold, the King sentenced him to death. On 29 October 1618 Raleigh was executed at Westminster.

These videos from the Royal Horticultural Society on Youtube could be used to enhance the children's understanding of the mental and physical health benefits of gardening.



1. Gardening and wellbeing research with Lauriane Chalmin-Pui | Royal Horticultural Society (1:42)
2. RHS Wellbeing Garden (2:42)

1554

Sir Walter Raleigh was born in Devon.

1569-1580

As a young man, Raleigh fought as a soldier in France and in Ireland.

1580-1590

Queen Elizabeth I made Raleigh a knight. She gave him a big house to live in and made him a wealthy man.

Raleigh organised several expeditions to Virginia in North America and brought back new plants to England.

1591-1602

Raleigh secretly married Bess, one of the Queen's maids of honour, without permission.

Queen Elizabeth imprisoned them both in the Tower of London for a short time.

In the following years, Raleigh managed to win back Elizabeth's favour.

1603-1616

Queen Elizabeth I died. The new king, James I, suspected Raleigh of plotting against him and threw him back into the Tower.

Raleigh remained a prisoner in the Bloody Tower for 13 years. Raleigh's mental health suffered, he became very ill and tried to take his own life.

Raleigh created a garden beside the Bloody Tower where he grew herbs and other plants which he used to make medicines.

Over the years, Raleigh's health returned. He began writing books and built up a magnificent library.

1616-1618

King James I released Raleigh to go on an expedition to find gold in Guyana.

The expedition was a failure and Raleigh was sentenced to death.

On 29 October 1618, Raleigh was executed at Westminster.

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1592

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1603

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