BBC
Learning Scotland

AROUND SCOTLAND

Autumn 2008

Fridays 11.40–12.00

26 September to 10 October

BBC 2

Scottish Wars of Independence

Curriculum for Excellence

These notes relate to re-transmitted programmes, and were conceived within the 5–14 framework. While the 5–14 terminology has been retained, teachers are encouraged to consider the content in terms of its contribution to promoting successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Around Scotland

Autumn 2008

Scottish Wars of Independence

Programme One **The Wallace**

—Transmission date 26 September 2008

Programme content

The programme is divided into sections, beginning at the Wallace Monument.

The Wallace Monument
Gavin Mitchell (as *Gavin Black-Teeshirt*) explains the events leading up to the battle of Stirling Bridge. He relates the traditional version of the battle. At the end of his story he is interrupted by his alter ego (*Gavin White-Teeshirt*) who goes on to cast doubts on the events as they are usually related and the reliability of the book from where he got his information.

The pair of them decide to look more closely at the myths and facts surrounding the life and death of William Wallace with the help of current historians and historical thought.

The Battle of Stirling Bridge
Professor Ted Cowan explains how little accurate detail is known about the battle and that the primary source material that is available is fragmented and partisan. He casts even more doubt on the secondary material that Gavin Mitchell is using and explains that its purpose makes it very biased and unreliable material.

Is it William Wallace's sword?
Gavin Black-Teeshirt is horrified to learn that, due to it being the wrong date, the wrong type and the wrong size, it is extremely unlikely that the sword in the Wallace Monument was ever used by William Wallace. There is still a mystery about why it was welded back together and where the bottom portion came from. He feels that tourists who have come to view the sword have been deceived. *Gavin White-Teeshirt* explains that the information displayed with the sword has a specific purpose and this again means it has a certain bias. He goes on to underline the importance of myth and symbols to society.

Wallace's Birthplace
Gavin Black-Teeshirt has another myth exploded when modern historical research reveals that Wallace was not born in Elderslie but in Ayrshire. He also discovers that his father was not a knight but a tenant farmer and his name was Alan. The information is very recent compared to the traditional view but came from studying a primary source rather than the usual secondary source material of the minstrel Blind Harry's poem 'The Wallace'.

At this point both Gavins combine into one grey teeshirted Gavin as he realises that he must start thinking more carefully about historical tradition rather than accept it at face value.

Wallace's Death
Gavin Mitchell visits Robroyston to investigate the myths and facts surrounding Wallace's death. He again comes the secondary source material of Blind Harry's 'The Wallace' and historian Dr. Fiona Watson explains the purpose behind the writing of the poem and tells him that this means that it is biased and unreliable regarding the details of Wallace's capture. She goes on to say that even the primary source of English court records had a purpose, making them biased.

Key vocabulary

Words used in the programme:

myth   symbol   evidence   face value   vested interest   historian

Words useful for explaining the concepts being taught:

bias   sources   primary sources   secondary sources   oral tradition

Before the programme

Discuss with the children the difference between fact and opinion, such as the difference between the statements

     'Rovers is the best football team in the world', and

     'Rovers are number two in the league'.

Establish that facts can be proved to be true while opinions are personal beliefs that cannot always be proved to be true.

Using a KWL (*Know, Want* and *Learn*) grid and/or working in pairs, ask the children to write down as much information as they can about William Wallace and to list things they would like to know about him. The children should then feed their thoughts back to the class and their statements can be categorised as either fact or opinion. Talk with the class about where their information came from. Was it, for example, something that someone told them, or did they see it on a documentary or a dramatisation, or read it in a book? make sure they understand that as historians they have to be careful about their sources of information. Explain that historians may use oral tradition, primary sources of evidence and secondary sources of evidence. Discuss the differences between these source materials.

Tell the children that they are going to watch a programme about William Wallace and, in particular, about the battle of Stirling Bridge. They will be asked to differentiate between the different types of sources mentioned in the programme. They will also be asked to recall as many reasons as they can why the sword in the Wallace Monument is not the sword used by William Wallace. They may wish to take notes during the programme.

Follow-up activities

1 Ask the children to talk, as a class, about why the sword in the Wallace Monument is unlikely to be that of William Wallace. Do they agree with Gavin Mitchell's assertion that hearing the new information makes them 'feel a bit odd' about this?

2 Use worksheet 1 to write about the different sources of historical evidence discussed in the programme. Where possible, the children should fill in the last column of their KWL grid.

3 Use worksheet 2 to write about some of the documents mentioned in the programme. Discuss the likelihood of bias in written sources.

4 Ask the class if the information they have found about William Wallace makes him more interesting or less interesting as a person. What would they have written to be placed in the coffin at the exhibition in Stirling museum? This could be recreated as a class exercise and used as the basis of a display.

5 Ask half the class to design and make posters showing William Wallace the way he was perceived by the English, and the other half to make posters showing how he was perceived by the Scots.

6 Ask the children create their own personal seal, using a range of different media.
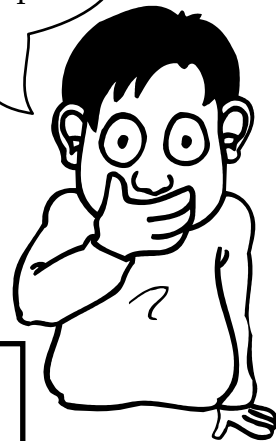
Name of Historian

_____

_____

Sources of evidence

As a historian, you must use skill to decide what is historical fact and what is myth. Like a good detective, you must examine where and whom your evidence comes from before you can decide whether it is reliable history or not.

Think of the game 'Chinese Whispers'

What sources are reliable?

In an oral tradition, stories are passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. The more they are repeated, the more they may be believed. Can you think of two reasons why the oral tradition stories might not be reliable?

Sources of evidence can be divided into **primary sources** and **secondary sources**.

Primary sources come from the same time as the things they describe. They could be documents written at the time or artefacts made then. Legal documents, letters, weapons, buildings and coins are often useful primary sources.

Secondary sources were written or created after the time that they give us information about. Books, videos and replicas of artefacts are all secondary sources. The video you have just watched is a secondary source!

In the box alongside each of these documents, write either 'P' if it is a primary source or 'S' is it is a secondary source.

'A Week at the Bridge of Allan' by Dr. Charles Rodger	
The records of the arrest and trial of William Wallace	
The letter sent by William Wallace to the port of Lubeck	

Why can primary sources be more reliable than secondary sources?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name of Historian

_____

_____

Evaluating evidence

When you are thinking like a historian, you must ask
yourself why people wrote the documents you are using.

You need to know   — who wrote the document?
                   — what are they writing about?
                   — what is the purpose of the document?
                   — what *bias* might they have?

Think about each of the sources below, and write some notes about them.

Document: 'A Week at the Bridge of Allan' by Dr Charles Rodger

Content: _____

_____

Purpose: _____

_____

Bias: _____

_____

Document: 'Wallace' by Blind Harry

Content: _____

_____

Purpose: _____

_____

Bias: _____

_____

Document: English court records of the arrest and trial of William Wallace

Content: _____

_____

Purpose: _____

_____

Bias: _____

_____

Document: Information that went with the Wallace Monument sword to the USA

Content: _____

_____

Purpose: _____

_____

Bias: _____

_____

Programme Two **The Bruce**

Programme content

The programme examines the life of Robert the Bruce to establish whether he merits the title of Scottish hero. It then goes on to look at the Battle of Bannockburn and the possible sites of the battle. Different sites are presented with evidence for and against them being the actual site. The Declaration of Arbroath is examined as a primary source and as an important historical document in both Scottish and world history.

Key vocabulary

Words used in the programme:

artefacts   leprosy   cavalry   excommunicated   flood plain   sources

heritage   chronicles   schiltron   topography   historian

Before the programme

Recap the different types of sources that a historian may use. Remind the children of the problems inherent in each of them.

Ask the children to suggest a variety of documents that might be used as sources by historians in the future to find out about someone alive today. They might suggest things like a passport, a utility bill, a driver's licence, a pension book, a national insurance card, a birth certificate, a death certificate, a marriage certificate and so on.

Explain to the children that they are going to watch a programme about Robert the Bruce and, in particular, the battle of Bannockburn. They will be asked to decide the most likely site of the battle. They will be asked to differentiate between the different types of sources mentioned in the programme. They will be asked to remember some important facts to do with the Declaration of Arbroath and why it is important in Scottish History. They may wish to take notes during the programme.

Follow-up activities

1   Ask the children to work in pairs to complete worksheet 3, then feed answers back to the rest of the class.

2   Working individually, the children could draw a comic strip relating the legend of Bruce and the spider. This could also be developed into a role-play activity.

3   Break the class into groups to discuss why it is unlikely that the Battle of Bannockburn was fought on the Carse. Ask them to think about how important it is to know exactly where the battle was fought, and to be prepared to give reasons for their decision. Worksheet 4 can be used to note their answers.

4   Ask the children to work in pairs to research the weapons, armour and battle formations, such as schiltrons, used at Bannockburn.

5   As a class, discuss the importance of heritage using the issue raised in the programme about the site of the Battle of Bannockburn and the building of a new school. Worksheet 2 can be used to note their answers.

6 Ask the children, working individually, to complete information on the Declaration of Arbroath on worksheet 2. They could use the websites below for their research.

http://www.geo.ed.ac.uk/home/scotland/arbroath.html

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/scottishhistory/independence/features_ independence_arbroath.shtml

Ask them to copy out the following passage.

> *Yet if he (Bruce) should give up what he has begun, and agree to make us or our kingdom subject to the King of England or the English, we should exert ourselves at once to drive him out as our enemy and a subverter of his own rights and ours, and make some other man who was well able to defend us our King; for, as long as but a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be brought under English rule. It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom — for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.'*

This could be done on tea-stained paper to give an aged look to the paper. Children could create their own seals and attach them to the bottom of the document.

Name of Historian

_____

_____

Where does evidence come from?

Bruce...

There are many historical sources
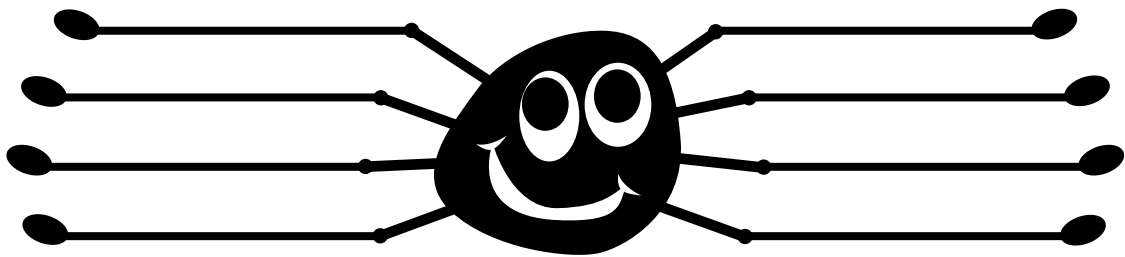about the Bruce family. Why is this?

_____

_____

_____

What documents might a future historian use to find out
about someone who is alive today?

List your suggestions on the legs of the spider.

... and the spider

Which family did the oral tradition about the spider belong to?

Who attached the story to Robert the Bruce?

Why do you think he did this?

_____

_____

_____

Does it matter that the story about Bruce and
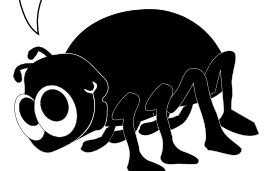Spider probably isn't true? Why?

*I'm off to get
that Gavin Mitchell.
Myth? Me? Huh!*

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name of Historian

_____

_____

The Battle of Bannockburn

Why is it unlikely that the battle
was fought on the Carse?

Suggest three reasons.

1 _____

   _____

2 _____

   _____

3 _____

   _____

Because there are no primary sources about the exact site of the battle, different
places have been suggested. Does it matter that we do not know the exact site?

_____

_____

_____

The great debate about the site —   *Build a new school!*   *Build a new heritage centre!*

Which would you do? _____

Why? _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

The Declaration of Arbroath

When was the Declaration of Arbroath written? _____

What two new and important ideas were written into it?

1 _____

   _____

2 _____

   _____

Programme Three **History and heritage**

— Transmission date 10 October 2008

Programme content

Gavin Mitchell visits various historical sites to see how accurately the history is presented.

Before the programme

Recap the different types of sources that a historian may use. Remind the children of the problems inherent in each of them. Discuss the difference between history on the one hand and myth or legend on the other. Discuss the importance of accuracy in what people are being told at these sites. Why is it important that what they are being told is accurate?

Follow-up activities

1   Working either as a class using a smartboard or in pairs at computers, play the 'Scottish Wars of Independence' board game you can find at

http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/as/warsofindependence/board.shtml

2   Complete worksheet 5, either as a class using a smartboard or in pairs at computers.

3   Using a printout from the board game as a planning sheet, design a poster and a brochure for a 'Scottish Wars of Independence' tour.

Thinking about the board game

Look at the twenty-three objects on the game board. For each one, read the description and the experts' opinions. Then write the name of the object in the table below, and tick the box to show which category it belongs to.

Items sorted by

_____

_____

	Secondary source	Primary source	Myth or legend	Trick
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
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