

Jacobites

HISTORY Age 9-10



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Learning Aims:

- To understand the key events of the Battle of Killiecrankie.
- To show a basic understanding of different types of historical evidence and bias.
- To understand how the Jacobites' defeat at Culloden impacted on Scottish life/culture.

CONTEXT

Video and still footage was taken at Killiecrankie at the site at which Donald McBane allegedly leapt 5.5 metres across the raging River Garry whilst escaping his Jacobite pursuers. I also visited Culloden Battlefield and took footage of the Memorial Cairn, the Jacobite and Redcoat lines, the crofter's cottage which was commandeered as a field hospital for the British troops and the battlefield itself to highlight the terrain. Children read the story of the battle(s) and discussed the order of events.

PRACTICAL SESSION

After reading and discussing the battles (individually) and gaining an understanding of events, the headsets were introduced to help reinforce key points such as the distance between the two lines of armies at Culloden and how the famous Highland Charge would need to be maintained for some distance over heather moorland before reaching the organised ranks of Redcoat artillery and infantry. Children were then invited to add more thoughts to their discussion points, mindmap and plans, based on experiencing the actual battlefield, including the sound of the wind over the moor. This deepened their appreciation for the stamina involved and, based on how tired the Jacobite troops were from their forced march through the night, how their charge was futile. This is also the case with the Soldier's Leap video footage. As an extension, groups were invited outside to see how far they could leap, as if pursued by soldiers, and then discuss the enormous difficulty in jumping 5.5 metres. The discussion on bias and early propaganda can be raised here and children can debate the feasibility of Donald McBane's efforts.

IMPACT ON LEARNING

Children gain a far deeper understanding of the events having 'witnessed' the conditions first hand and seen the terrain which is not clear in textbooks. So too with the "Soldier's Leap" in which the actual distance is far more realistic with the headsets than from an account in a book, or a diagram. Seeing the river rushing by between the rocks adds a whole level of appreciation, or disbelief. Importantly, every child enjoyed the lesson because of the enhancement from the headsets and therefore will better understand and remember the learning outcomes.

