

# Learning Bundle: Build a Canal

KS2 children aged 7-11 years (can be adapted for KS1 children aged 5-7 years)

## Learning Objectives

### History:

Events beyond living memory; significant historical events in the locality (building of canals).

### Geography:

Human geography (land use, economic activity, trade links).

- Understand how and why canals were built and how they are different to rivers.
- Understand how canals were used in the past and how they are used today.
- Understand how the Industrial Revolution changed the landscape of Britain.

### Literacy:

- Articulate and communicate ideas clearly for a range of audiences, styles, contexts and purposes.
- Improvise, devise and script drama, narrative and composition.
- Use creative writing skills and wordplay to express ideas.
- Facilitate spelling, new vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

## Success Criteria

- Children will know the differences between canals and rivers.
- Children will know why canals were built and who built them.
- Children will know how canals were used in the past and how they are used today.
- Children will understand how the British landscape changed during the Industrial Revolution.
- Children will demonstrate their ability to adapt their writing style to suit a variety of purposes.
- Children will make careful vocabulary choices to communicate their ideas.

## Teaching/Parent Input

Start by finding out what the children already know about canals. Is there a canal local to you? Use the [Canal & River Trust map](#) to search for your local canal.

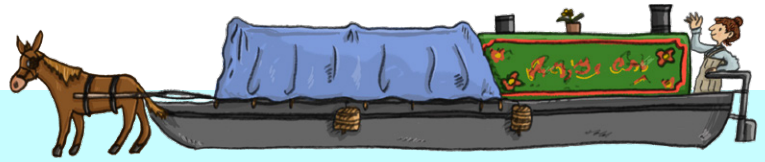
### You could ask...

- Have you visited a canal?
- What do you remember about your visit?
- Did you see any evidence of the past like buildings or factories?
- What makes a canal different from a river?

## Resources

- [All About Canals Resource](#)
- [Book a Virtual or Classroom Visit](#)
- [Build a Canal Presentation](#)
- [Colour, Cut & Make](#)
- [Build a Canal Literacy Resource](#)
- [Build a Canal Interactive](#)
- [Certificate](#)





## Activities

Launch the project	Read <a href="#">All About Canals</a> with your class. Discuss what makes a canal different from a river. Use the teaching/parent input above.
Build a Canal workshop	Book a <a href="#">virtual or classroom workshop</a> from the Explorers team Or use the <a href="#">Build a Canal presentation</a> with your class or children (notes are provided).
Create a Build a Canal display	Create your own canal scene using the <a href="#">Colour, Cut &amp; Make activity</a> . Watch our <a href="#">Build Your Own Canal video</a> for tips.
Find out more and develop literacy skills	Use the <a href="#">Build a Canal Literacy Resource</a> to find out more about living and working on our canals. The six activities within the resource each have supporting material and can be completed in any order.
Check understanding	Use the <a href="#">Build a Canal interactive</a> to review and re-enforce learning. Celebrate and award certificates.

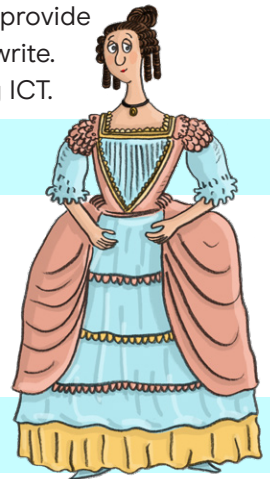


## Differentiation

- The [Colour, Cut & Make activity](#) is a useful way to engage visual and kinaesthetic learners with the reasoning behind canal construction; auditory learners may particularly benefit from the [Build Your Own Canal video](#).
- The literacy resource activities feature visual writing areas to reduce anxiety, inspire ideas and provide 'starter phrases'. Other students may prefer to work more independently with a larger area to write. Some students may wish to develop their literacy tasks further through editing stages or using ICT.

## Suggestions

- Perform a story of canal construction. You could show horses on bumpy roads, navvies digging, boating families and wealthy factory owners. You could act out the story or the use paper models from the [Colour, Cut & Make activity](#).
- Research your local canal online. When was it built? How long is it? Who was the engineer? What cargoes did boats carry?



## Plenary

- Clarify the meaning of the key words.
- Think about the countryside and about towns and cities, such as Birmingham, where the landscape has been transformed by building canals.
- Discuss what canals are used for today.

## Key Words

**Key Stage 1:** Canal, River, Transport, Cargo, Industry, Factory, Navvy, Coal.

**Key Stage 2:** Engineer, Landscape, Labourer, Industrial Revolution, Puddling, Horse-drawn Narrow Boat.

## Useful Websites/External Resources

- [KS1 BBC Teach Living and travelling on a canal boat with William Whiskerson](#)
- [KS2 Waterways Today Topic pack](#)
- [Film of a horse pulling a canal boat at Bingley Five Rise Locks on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal](#)
- [Build a Canal in the Explorers Game Zone](#)

## Get Outdoor Ideas

- Put your engineering skills to the test and build a model canal in your garden using materials from around the school grounds or at home.
- Put learning into context by investigating your local area. Book a visit to your local canal with our Explorers volunteers.

## Where to Next?

Looking for other themes and topics? Check out our other **Learning Bundles** on the [Explorers website](#), for example:

