

Hans Brinker

Holding back the sea

1. As pupils enter

Have the [webpage open](#). Play your chosen music and display [the image](#) of a dam.

2. Introduction

- Display the image of a dam. Talk about the different ways we try to remove water from land or try to keep water away from land - pumps, dams, dykes, drainage channels, etc. Are there any locally?
- Flooding can occur following prolonged rainfall or when sea levels rise. If there has been a recent case of flooding locally you may wish to refer to it.
- One of the most important flood defences is the Thames Barrier in London; but there are many other flood defences all around the country.
- The need for new sea defences was made clear in the winter of 1953: on 31 January a huge 'storm surge' in the North Sea inundated coastal areas of East Anglia and the Thames Estuary, causing over 300 deaths.
- In the Netherlands the situation was even worse - because much of the country is land reclaimed from the sea and about 25% of it is actually below sea level - so the sea defences are critical.
- Explain that the assembly is going to watch a story set in the Netherlands. It's not a true story...but it does help to explain the power of the sea.

3. Play the video

The duration is 4' 27". Final words: '...For that I will be eternally grateful.'

4. After the video - Time to talk

Lead a discussion about the story by asking the Video questions:

- What sort of sea defences are used in the Netherlands? How are they different today to how they were in the past?
- Once he realised that help wasn't going to arrive quickly Hans could have given up. What gave him the strength to continue? Have you ever experienced encouragement like this?
- Hans thinks about protecting a single other person - not a large number of people. Why do you think he does this?
- What would it be like to know that your actions may save a lot of people from danger?

6. Opportunity to sing

You could sing 'Give me oil in my lamp' or 'The Lord is my shepherd' from *Come and Praise* or 'God is watching over you' from *All about our school*.

Video page



7. Opportunity to reflect

Now let's think about what we've heard today...

We've heard what a powerful force the water around us can be...

It can promote and sustain life...but it can also be a threat...

Flood defences can help us to control the power of water...

Think of a time when you've experienced that power...perhaps the sea... or a rain storm...

Think about how it made you feel...

8. Opportunity for prayer

Begin with your usual form of address ('Dear God', 'Lord Jesus', 'Let us pray...' etc) and:

Thank you for the beauty of water and the sea...

Help us all to remember that sometimes water can be a threat...

And help us to remember the courage of all those who work hard to protect us from the dangers of water.

Amen.