

GRACE DARLING - HEROINE OF THE SEA

1: At Longstone Lighthouse

SFX Busy shop. Shop till

Louise: Just the carrots and biscuits, love? That'll be £1.71 please.

Hi, my name's Louise. I work in a supermarket in a small seaside town.

There's your change. Thank you.

SFX Louise's pager beeping

Oh...excuse me!

Kirsty! Can you take over on the till? A boat's in trouble! I'm out on a shout! Got to go!

But I also have another job. I work as a volunteer for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution - or the RNLI, as it's called for short.

I'm one of the crew on our local lifeboat. If anyone's ship is in danger, or if someone's swimming and gets swept out to sea, we go out in the lifeboat and rescue them. It's called being out 'on a shout.'

I'm one of almost 400 women crewmembers in the UK. Anyway, enough about me - you heard my pager, didn't you? It's telling me to get a move on! Someone needs our help! We've got to get to the lifeboat! So first stand up in a space.

[PAUSE]

In a moment, at a signal from your teacher, you're going to make your way quickly to the lifeboat station. You'll move quickly through the narrow streets, perhaps crossing roads and finding all the short cuts you can until you get there. Make sure you don't bump into anyone. Come on!

SFX Signal

Stand still in a space to listen again.

[PAUSE]

We've reached the lifeboat station. It took us less than three minutes.

SFX Phone ringing

That's the phone!

Hello. A ship...yes...engine's lost power...right...can you give me the co-ordinates - where she is? Ok...yes...thanks!

Now, you've got your dry suit, your lifejacket and your protective helmet on. There's not much time! Come on! Let's go outside.

SFX Sea, sea gulls

We're out on the beach now. In front of you, close to the water's edge, is the lifeboat. It's sitting on a sort of carriage and behind it is a tractor, ready to push it into the water.

Climb into the lifeboat now. Be careful you don't slip!



[PAUSE]

Right, you're one of four people in the crew and you're the helmsman - that's the driver, or person who steers the boat.

First squeeze the rubber bulbs in front of you to get some fuel into the engine. That's it! Give them a good squeeze!

Good. Now check the steering. Turn the wheel.

[PAUSE]

Everything's ok! Give everyone special thumbs up signal, to let them know it's all fine!

[PAUSE]

Right! We know where we're going on our special satellite navigation system. So we're ready! Stand behind the wheel.

SFX Tractor engine pushing out lifeboat

That's the tractor, pushing us out into the sea. Now press the start button to start the engine.

SFX Lifeboat engine

Hold on tight to the steering wheel! And we're off!

The sea's so rough, that it's very bumpy! Move up and down and from side to side to show how bumpy it is!

SFX Rough seas

LOUISE **And relax. Find yourself a partner and sit with them in a space.**

[PAUSE]

Well, we're back now. And I'm having a nice cup of tea at the lifeboat station to warm up! Luckily no one on the ship was hurt and we were able to tow them back to safety.

Mmm... [Sips her tea]. Nice cup of tea.

I'd like to tell you now about one of my heroines. In fact, it was this person who inspired me to become a lifeboat volunteer myself! Her name is Grace Darling and she lived almost two hundred years ago.

When she was only twenty-two, she became a national heroine, when she performed a daring sea rescue with her father. We'll find out more about that later. But first of all, let's hear her story from the beginning.

SFX Stormy sea

Grace Darling was born in 1815 in Barnburgh - a small coastal village in Northumberland. She was one of eight children. Grace spent her first few weeks at her Grandfather's cottage, but when she was just three weeks old, her mother took her to live on Brownsman Island, a remote part of the Farne Islands, where her father was the light-house keeper. Imagine you can hear the scene, as William Darling welcomes his new baby...

SFX Baby



William Darling: Welcome to Brownsman Island, my little one! It's a bit of a lonely old place here, but I'm sure you're be happy. You'll grow up to be bonny like your mam and a good strong rower like your brothers and sisters!

Louise: **The Darling family lived in a small cottage, which was attached to the lighthouse. Next to the cottage was a walled garden for growing fruit and vegetables.**

SFX Seabirds

Listen to those seabirds! Grace was a very keen ornithologist - that means she loved watching and finding out about the birds.

SFX Seabird cry. Gentle sea and oars going into the water

Grace and her brothers and sisters also loved to row around the islands in their rowing boat and catch little fish.

Young Grace: Pull the net up! We've caught some!

Louise: **They also liked to search the rock pools for shellfish to eat.**

Young Grace: Look at this big crab!

Louise: **Now, with your partner you're going to make three still pictures of a few of the things that Grace and her brothers and sisters did on the island.**

The first picture is of gathering shellfish in the rock pools.

The second picture is fishing out at sea - one of you keep the rowing boat steady, while the other drops the nets.

The third still picture is of pulling up the nets and showing how pleased you are to catch some fish to eat.

So, practise making your three still pictures. Then, be ready to show them to your teacher and the rest of the class. Off you go!

SFX Signal

And find a space of your own.

[PAUSE]

Grace and her family were very happy on Brownsman Island. But then, when Grace was ten, her father had some news.

William: Children, I've got something to tell you. We're going to move. I'm going to be the keeper of a new lighthouse.

Young Grace: Why's that Dad?

William: Well, the reason is, that with all these new ships coming through, we need to be in a better position to warn them off the rocks. That's why they've built us a brand new lighthouse - even further out. At a place called Longstone.

Young Grace: But where will we live, Dad?

William: This time, we'll be living in the lighthouse.



Louise: Now you're going to imagine that you are Grace or one of her brothers or sisters approaching the lighthouse for the first time in your boat. So stand up, facing the front, in a space of your own.
[PAUSE]
Now look straight ahead of you. Really try to imagine what I describe.

SFX *Rough sea, wind*

You're getting near now. The island is a bleak sight. It is so exposed to the sea and the wind that almost nothing lives or grows here.

[PAUSE]

Look up at the lighthouse. It's built on bare rock, just a metre above the sea at high tide. It has a red and white circular tower made of rough stone, with iron railings going around the top, where the lantern is.

[PAUSE]

It is a dark, grey day. You've left your cosy little cottage and garden behind to come here. This is your home now.

[PAUSE]

Keep imagining that you are Grace or one of her brothers or sisters and say your thoughts out loud to your teacher. What are your first impressions? How do you feel?

SFX *Signal*

Well done.

[PAUSE]

Now, we're in the top room of the lighthouse. This is called the lamp room. Imagine it while I describe it. You are very high up - twenty-five metres above the sea! All around the room are windows facing out to sea. In the middle, the lantern is burning brightly.

[PAUSE]

Now, you're going to work in pairs, so find yourself a partner and sit down in a space.

[PAUSE]

Are you sitting ready with your partner?

[PAUSE]

You're going to make up a short scene now, in which you show how you look after the lantern. First of all, polish all the lighthouse windows and then polish all the special brass plates, which are around the lantern. It's important that these are shiny, as they reflect the light.

Then, you need to pour some oil into the lamps to keep them burning. So, ready to do your important jobs? Off you go!

SFX *Signal*

Sit down in a space with a partner and listen to the next part of the story.

[PAUSE]

September 7th 1838 was a day, that would change Grace's life forever. A huge storm was blowing and enormous waves were thrashing against the lighthouse.

Grace was now twenty-two and her brothers and sisters had left home. Only she and her parents were in the lighthouse.



SFX *Clock striking*

William: Midnight already! It's rough tonight. I pity any poor soul out in this. Let's hope there are no ships out. Grace, I need your help.

Grace: Yes, Dad?

William: You and I need to go and move the cobble, or the waves will sweep it away, they're so rough. Come on.

Grace: Alright.

Louise: Grace and her father went out of the lighthouse to move their cobble - or rowing boat.

SFX *Thrashing waves, storm building, moving the boat*

William: That's it! Pull her over! A bit more!

Grace: It's so rough!

William: That's it, almost got her!

Grace: I can hardly stand. The winds blowing so much!

William: There! All tied up. Come inside now, quickly!

Louise: That night, Grace couldn't sleep. At a quarter to five, she looked out of her bedroom window.

Grace: Oh no! A ship! I can't see! Mam! Mam! Mam! Mam!

SFX *Footsteps, as Grace runs upstairs to the lamp room*

Louise: Grace ran up to the top of the lighthouse, to the lantern room, to find her mother, who was on watch.

Grace: Mam! Mam! There's a ship out there! I think it's broken in two! We have to help them! Out on Harcar rock!

Louise: As Grace and her mam looked out from the top of the lighthouse they could just make out the shape of a shipwreck on the rocks. It looked like the ship had snapped in two. Half of it had been swept away in the turbulent sea.

Grace: We have to tell Dad!

Louise: Grace ran down to her father who was asleep.

Grace: Dad! Wake up! There's a ship out there!

William: Can you see anyone out there? Any survivors?

Grace: It's too dark! I can hardly see anything!

Louise: Grace and her mother and father peered out into the black night. All they could hear were the waves thrashing, and the howling wind.

Grace: Do you think the lifeboat will be coming, Dad?

William: I don't think so. It's much too rough, even for the lifeboat. We'll wait and see.

Grace: We need to go out, to see if there are any survivors!



William: It's too dark Grace. We'll have to wait a little for some light. Then we'll be able to see if there's anybody left.
Grace: Oh Dad! We need to go soon!

William: I know but it's too dangerous at the moment and there are only two of us - your mam isn't strong enough. It's just you and me, Grace in that big boat! We'll have to wait a little longer.

Grace: Please, Dad!

Louise: **Now, in your pairs, you are going to imagine that you like Grace and her father. One of you - like Grace's father -thinks it is wise to wait a little longer, but your partner, who is like Grace, is desperate to go!**

If you are like Grace, think of all the reasons you can to persuade your father to row out with you now, to rescue any survivors.

If you are William, her father, think of all the reasons why you think it is important to wait. Get working on your scenes now and be ready if you're asked to show them to everyone else.

SFX _____ *Signal*

LOUISE **Well done! And sit down in a space.**
[PAUSE]
Now, if there's time, in a moment, make a big circle with your class. Then, talk about everything you've heard so far today in our story about Grace Darling.

Think about the differences and similarities between Grace's life, all those years ago and our lives today.

And we'll find out what happens next time and see whether Grace and her father are able to rescue anyone from the shipwreck.

But for now, from me, it's goodbye!