



## What should we put in an online biography of Thomas Clarkson?

Enquiry question	Activities	Outcomes	Resources
<p><b>1. How did Thomas Clarkson get written out of history?</b></p> <p><b>In this Scheme of Work pupils repair the damage done to Thomas Clarkson’s reputation by the publication of a biography of William Wilberforce, which was written by Wilberforce’s sons.</b></p> <p><b>The Scheme uses drama and research to reinforce the importance of gathering and sorting historical evidence to help distinguish between opinion and fact.</b></p> <p><b>Combined History and Literacy Learning Objective</b> To understand how the destruction of original</p>	<p><b>Withhold</b> the overarching title of the Scheme of Work and enquiry question for the sake of keeping the element of surprise for the first activity. The text below sets up this activity as a drama exercise.</p> <p>For the following activities you and your pupils will need to access images from the E2BN Gallery (local and regional archives) (<a href="#">Resource A</a>) at <a href="http://www.e2bn.org">www.e2bn.org</a> (search for “Thomas Clarkson”) to show to the whole class. If you would like pupils to do their research on line, they will need access to computers.</p> <p><b>Starter</b> <b>Prepare</b> a space in the corner of the room, arranging a chair and desk (wooden if possible). Load the desk up with as many old books (wrap old covers around modern books) and rolls of paper (yellowing/hand-written) as you can. Ask a male colleague to dress up as an early Victorian upper class gentleman (a hat, turned up shirt collar and long coat will suffice). This character should be sitting at the desk.</p> <p>As pupils enter the room the man must be frantically crossing out parts of documents or destroying them, throwing documents in the bin or even setting fire to them (Health and Safety permitting). <i>The more extreme the better the effect.</i> Initially the character should be so absorbed in what he is doing that he ignores the pupils until he is asked direct questions by them, which he will answer in role.</p> <p><b>Encourage</b> pupils to ask questions of the person (e.g. Who are you? What are you doing? Why? Where are we? When is this happening?). Through these questions pupils should determine the date, who he is, what he is doing and why.</p>	<p>To have participated in questioning a person in role as Samuel Wilberforce.</p> <p>To have understood some simple details about Thomas Clarkson and the campaign to abolish the British slave trade.</p> <p>To have understood how the actions of Samuel Wilberforce and his brother damaged Thomas Clarkson’s reputation.</p> <p>To have skimmed, scanned and taken notes on a range of historic evidence about Thomas Clarkson.</p> <p>To have participated in discussion as to how this research adds to their knowledge of Clarkson.</p>	<p><b>Early Victorian costume/props.</b></p>  <p><b>Samuel Wilberforce c. 1860</b></p> <p><a href="#">Resource A. Images from <a href="http://www.e2bn.org">www.e2bn.org</a> Gallery</a></p>

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<p>evidence can distort the way later generations interpret an historic figure.</p> <p><b>Links with renewed Framework for Literacy, Year 6 Non Fiction, Unit 1 Phase 1</b></p> <p>Children explore the biography of a particular person as presented in a range of different texts, on paper and on screen. They build up a picture of the life from the various perspectives offered, as well as discussing and evaluating the differences between the texts.</p>	<p>The year is 1838 and the character is Samuel Wilberforce, son of the great abolitionist and reformer, William Wilberforce, who is writing a <u>biography</u> of his father. Samuel is deliberately destroying/ignoring documents sent to him by his father's former colleague, Thomas Clarkson. Samuel thinks Clarkson has taken too much credit for the successful campaign to abolish the slave trade (which succeeded in 1807) and wants to ensure that his own father's reputation goes down in history as the most important campaigner.</p> <p><b>Summarise</b> what has been learnt by the interrogation. <b>Explain</b> that most subsequent accounts of the movement to abolish the British Transatlantic Slave Trade relied heavily on this biography written by Samuel Wilberforce – who literally wrote the abolitionist Thomas Clarkson out of history. This led to Clarkson's role becoming downplayed since his death. Remind pupils how important and influential biographies can be by referring to “<b>The Interesting Narrative</b>”.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p><b>Display</b> a range of source material on Thomas Clarkson that you have collected from local and regional archives using the E2BN Gallery (<a href="http://www.e2bn.org">www.e2bn.org</a>) (<a href="#">Resource A</a>). <b>Explain</b> how you found the material and share what it might tell you. Explain that the task is for pupils to do their own research, learning as much as they can about Thomas Clarkson. <b>Divide</b> the class into pairs.</p> <p>Ask pairs of pupils to <b>skim and scan</b> a variety of texts available. They could be as diverse as extracts from his diary to photographs unveiling a late nineteenth century monument to him. Ask pairs to note what each image is, when it was produced and what it can tell us about Thomas Clarkson. <b>Hold a class discussion</b> about what new things they know about Thomas Clarkson as a result. Pupils could create a pin board of annotated material.</p>		<p><a href="#">Resource A</a> <a href="http://www.e2bn.org">www.e2bn.org</a> - Gallery (search for Thomas Clarkson)</p> <p>also <a href="http://abolition.e2bn.org/index.php">http://abolition.e2bn.org/index.php</a></p>
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<p><b>2. How well does the feature film “Amazing Grace” write Thomas Clarkson back into history?</b></p> <p>Having introduced Thomas Clarkson, the Scheme of Work now focuses on the interpretation of Clarkson’s character and role in the recent film “Amazing Grace”.</p> <p>Pupils will interpret texts (image &amp; film) in the light of what they know about Clarkson and learn that historical interpretation is a matter of personal judgement based on the evidence.</p>	<p>Although this Scheme of Work can be taught as a free-standing unit, <a href="#">Scheme of Work 2: What was the Transatlantic Triangular Slave Trade? Enquiry question 2 Activity 1</a> provides <b>essential</b> background. It should be taught here before continuing, if pupils have not completed it.</p> <p>Have the quote (<a href="#">Resource C1</a>) and the image of Sewell as Thomas Clarkson (<a href="#">Resource B</a>) ready to display on the IWB to the whole class. Pupils will need Post It notes.</p> <p><b>Prepare</b> enough sets of the information cards (<a href="#">Resource C2</a>) for pupils to work in pairs or threes (these must be printed onto card and cut out). Each group will also need an large copy of the Venn diagram (<a href="#">Resource D</a>).</p> <p>Be prepared to screen two short film clips from “<b>Amazing Grace</b>”: The dinner party scene (25 mins) and Clarkson at Equiano’s grave (1hr 40mins).</p> <p><b>Explain</b> that in 2006 a feature film was made about abolishing the Transatlantic Slave Trade called “<b>Amazing Grace</b>”. <b>Display</b> the following claim about the film from a website (<a href="#">Resource C1</a>). Make sure pupils understand the claims of the quote. <b>Divide</b> the class into pairs or threes.</p> <p><b>“The screenplay by Steven Knight has been exhaustively researched and is largely historically accurate.”</b></p>	<p>To have viewed a photograph and clips from “<b>Amazing Grace</b>”.</p> <p>To have decided on suitable words to describe the portrayal of Thomas Clarkson in the film.</p> <p>To have taken part in a class vote on the accuracy of the portrayal.</p> <p>To have worked in pairs, arranging cards on a Venn diagram about the film’s accuracy.</p> <p>To have prepared and performed an oral presentation on the film’s portrayal of Thomas Clarkson.</p>	<p><a href="#">Resource B</a> Still of Sewell as Clarkson from the film “<b>Amazing Grace</b>” <a href="http://www.amazinggracemovie.com">www.amazinggracemovie.com</a> (Film Image Gallery)</p>  <p>For an alternative image see <a href="http://www.aboutrufus.com/amazing_grace.htm">http://www.aboutrufus.com/amazing_grace.htm</a></p> <p>At the time of writing this film clips are available on the homepage at <a href="http://www.amazinggracethemovie.co.uk">www.amazinggracethemovie.co.uk</a>. They might also be at <a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a> Amazing Grace (Part 3 &amp; 11)</p> <p><a href="#">Resource C1</a> Reviewer’s quote</p>

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<p><b>Combined History and Literacy Learning Objective</b></p> <p>To assess the relative accuracy of an audio-visual text as an historical interpretation of a past figure.</p> <p><b>Links with renewed Framework for Literacy, Year 6 Non Fiction, Unit 1 Phase 2</b></p> <p>Children access the same biography from an audio or visual source, make notes and then prepare and give an oral presentation to answer some key questions about the person's life.</p>	<p><b>Explain</b> that the class is going to test out whether this claim is true by looking at and comparing how the film portrays Thomas Clarkson. <b>Display</b> a still image of Rufus Sewell as Thomas Clarkson (<a href="#">Resource B</a>) from <a href="http://www.amazinggracemovie.com">www.amazinggracemovie.com</a>.</p> <p><b>Ask</b> groups to discuss 'what kind of person' he looks like and to write describing words onto Post It notes against the clock. Invite groups to put their Post It notes up on the IWB, describing what they think (e.g. that he looks kind, cruel, drunk etc. because...).</p> <p>Next, <u>with the sound turned down</u>, <b>show two clips</b> from the film that depict: Clarkson displaying shackles and chains to abolitionists at a dinner party; Clarkson drinking on the grave of Olaudah Equiano. Ask groups to <b>discuss</b> whether the clips support the words they chose earlier to describe Sewell as Clarkson on their Post It notes.</p> <p><b>Repeat</b> the clips <u>with the sound turned up</u> and hold another discussion. <b>Take a vote</b> on whether, based on what they know so far, the film-makers have portrayed Thomas Clarkson accurately.</p> <p><b>Give out</b> enlarged versions of the Venn diagram (<a href="#">Resource D</a>) and sets of information cards (<a href="#">Resource C2</a>). <b>Ask</b> pairs/threes to sort the cards, deciding whether each card in turn supports the quote (yes) or does not support the quote (no), placing them in the appropriate circle on the diagram. Cards that pupils are 'not sure' about can be placed in the centre or discarded as irrelevant. Pupils could refer to their Clarkson pin board.</p> <p><b>Circulate</b>, gauging understanding &amp; prompting where necessary.</p> <p>Ask pupils to <b>prepare and perform</b> a short presentation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What have we learned about Thomas Clarkson?</li> <li>2. How accurate do we think the film portrayal of Clarkson is?</li> </ol>		<p><a href="#">Resource C2</a> Information cards</p> <p>Website reference <a href="http://www.thomasclarkson.org/grace10.html">http://www.thomasclarkson.org/grace10.html</a></p> <p><a href="#">Resource D</a> Venn Diagram</p> <p><a href="#">Resource C2</a> Information cards</p>
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<p><b>3. What were the key turning points in Thomas Clarkson's life?</b></p> <p>The scheme now traces Clarkson's life in local, national and international contexts, creating timelines, maps and graphs and beginning to distinguish the most significant moments of his career.</p> <p><u><b>History Learning Objective</b></u> To identify the key turning points in the life of an historical figure.</p>	<p><b>Prepare</b> enough sets of date cards from the <b>Thomas Clarkson Timeline</b> (<a href="#">Resource E</a>) for small group work, by printing it onto card and dividing it. There are up to 30 separate cards, but the number can be reduced depending on the abilities of a group.</p> <p>You will also need enough A3 copies of a map of the British Isles (<a href="#">Resource F</a>), a World map (<a href="#">Resource G</a>) and coloured pencils.</p> <p>Use the living-graph (<a href="#">Resource H</a>) as a plan and create large versions on A2 or A1 paper for each group. Provide some Blue Tack. Lower ability groups may need a language bag to help with this activity.</p> <p><b>Starter</b> <b>Divide</b> the class into small groups, ensuring there is at least one strong reader in each group.</p> <p><b>Give</b> each of the groups a set of timeline cards (<a href="#">Resource E</a>). <b>Explain</b> that pupils should read and then sequence the cards into a chronological timeline and use Blue Tack to stick them down on the table. Ask groups to keep their timeline intact, as they will need it again. This activity could be timed or set as a competition between groups.</p> <p><b>Activity 1</b> <b>Give out</b> maps of the British Isles (<a href="#">Resource F</a>) and ask groups to <b>plot</b> Clarkson's <b>movements</b> around the country, using different colours for different years. Able pupils could create a key.</p>	<p>To have sequenced a set of cards into accurate chronological order.</p> <p>To have plotted Clarkson's movements around the British Isles on a map.</p> <p>To have plotted Clarkson's global connections on a world map, differentiating between the strengths &amp; weaknesses of a link.</p> <p>To have rearranged a set of information cards on a living graph.</p> <p>To have participated in pairs and group discussion justifying their living graph.</p>	<p><a href="#">Resource E</a> Clarkson timeline</p> <p><a href="#">Resource F</a> Maps of the British Isles</p> <p><a href="#">Resource G</a> World maps</p> <p><a href="#">Resource H</a> Living graph</p>

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Next give out a World map ([Resource G](#)) and ask pupils to **plot** Clarkson's **connections** with other countries in the world. (Include his visits, correspondence etc.). Here pupils will need to refer to their research pin board and the timeline. Ask pupils to demonstrate the **strength** of the connection with the thickness of the line (e.g. a thick line if Clarkson visited the country regularly, a dotted line if he occasionally corresponded with the country). Pupils can write descriptive notes along the joining lines, to remind them of the connection and to create a key. These could be put up on the wall.

### Activity 2

**Give** each group an enlarged version of a living graph ([Resource H](#)), which has Clarkson's dates along the bottom axis and feelings (ranging from happy to sad) on the vertical axis.

Ask pupils to place all the timeline cards along the bottom axis in chronological order. Then ask them to move the cards up and down on the graph, depending on whether they feel Clarkson was very happy or very sad at the time, to create an emotional pattern for Clarkson's life. The living graph could also be annotated with other words/phrases to describe Clarkson's feelings at different stages of his life. A language bag could be provided for lower ability pupils.

If a group finishes early, **ask** them to divide Clarkson's life into five episodes and to think of a headline for each.

As a form of peer assessment, ask each group to **review** a graph plotted by at least one other group.

**Hold** a whole class discussion where pupils suggest reasons for the differences between the graphs and encourage pupils to justify the decisions they have made.

Lastly **ask** pupils to select (and highlight) **three major turning points** in Clarkson's life, justifying the decisions they make.

[Resource H](#)  
Living graph

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<p><b>4. What should we put in an online biography of Thomas Clarkson?</b></p> <p>Using the motivation of saving Clarkson’s reputation, the Scheme of Work culminates in pupils writing a biography.</p> <p><b>Combined History and Literacy Learning Objective</b> To draft and complete an outline biography of an historical figure.</p> <p><b>Links with renewed Framework for Literacy, Year 6 Non Fiction, Unit 1 Phases 3 &amp; 4</b> 3. Children re-read and analyse some of the</p>	<p><b>Prepare</b> enough computers for pupils working in pairs, with access to the E2BN Gallery (<a href="http://www.e2bn.org">www.e2bn.org</a>) (<a href="#">Resource A</a>) and Wikipedia. Alternatively, pupils could do this activity off-line with copies of source material you have downloaded and printed out. Pupils may need a writing frame (<a href="#">Resource I</a>) and will refer to the decisions they have made in previous activities.</p> <p><b>Starter</b> You may have completed this activity previously.</p> <p><b>Organise</b> pupils into pairs.</p> <p><b>Display</b> an online biography (from the website Wikipedia) of an historical figure with whom pupils may already be familiar (e.g. John Lennon or Henry VIII) and give out printed versions.</p> <p><b>Ask</b> pairs to <b>highlight</b> the headings used in the text. Then ask them to use two other colours to highlight examples of fact and opinion.</p> <p><b>Lead</b> a class discussion on these features of the text, highlighting them on the whole-class version.</p> <p><b>Explain</b> to pupils that they will write an online biography of Thomas Clarkson for Wikipedia and that they will do this in stages. If necessary, <b>change</b> pupil pairs to include one strong reader.</p> <p><b>Activity 1: Deciding what to include</b> <b>Explain</b> to pupils that, once again, they are time travellers and their mission is to try to save Clarkson’s reputation by travelling back in time to find evidence (source material) that demonstrates the crucial role he played in the abolition movement.</p>	<p>To have selected material on Thomas Clarkson for use by historians in saving his reputation.</p> <p>To have participated in pairs and group work, expressing a view in turn and listening carefully to a partner.</p> <p>To have analysed the characteristic features of an online biography.</p> <p>To have planned the framework for writing an online biography.</p> <p>To have drafted most of the biography.</p> <p>To have drafted and completed an online biography of Thomas Clarkson.</p>	<p><a href="#">Resource A</a> The E2BN Gallery <a href="http://www.e2bn.org">www.e2bn.org</a> (Search for Thomas Clarkson)</p> <p><a href="#">Resource I</a> Writing frame</p>

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<p>biographical and autobiographical texts, identifying key language, structure, organisation and presentational features as preparation for writing.</p> <p>4. Following teacher modelling, children set their own writing challenge and, based on a range of biographical information, write biographies (or simulated autobiographies) of the person concerned, selecting their own approach and medium, as required by the purpose and audience.</p>	<p>From the living graph (<a href="#">Resource H</a>), the E2BN Gallery (<a href="#">Resource A</a>) and their earlier research, ask pupils to <b>select</b> three documents, three pictures and ten information cards to take back to the present where they can be used by modern historians. To help pairs choose, they could use a traffic lighting system for this sorting process: they mark the information cards green for ‘definitely take forward in time’, amber for ‘maybe’ and red for ‘definitely not’. The activity could also be timed.</p> <p><b>Ask</b> pairs to share their choices with another pair. Then ask that foursome to share with another foursome. Lastly, hold a discussion, taking suggestions and probing pupils’ understanding. <b>Decide</b> as a class what will be taken back in time, justifying the choices. Stress that individuals can change their decisions at any time.</p> <p><b>Activity 2: Drafting the biography</b> Ideally, each individual pupil will decide on the headings for their own biography, what facts go in it and what gets left out.</p> <p><b>Select</b> some of the events and linked material chosen by pupils for <b>What were the key turning points in Thomas Clarkson’s Life?</b></p> <p><b>Model</b> how to write these turning points into a few sentences, “thinking aloud” about the wording as you write. Deliberately include an opinion in the wording and invite pupils’ comments, stressing the difference between fact and opinion.</p> <p><b>Draw attention</b> to the use of the first person in autobiography and third person in biography, explaining that this is a major difference between writing a biography and an autobiography. Some comments on the use of speech or quotation marks might be helpful.</p> <p><b>Give out</b> a writing frame with some sentence starters (<a href="#">Resource I</a>), which individuals can use to help them if they wish. Ask pupils to fill in the main section of Clarkson’s life first (1760-1846) but leave writing the introduction until later.</p>		<p><a href="#">Resource H</a> Living graph</p> <p><a href="#">Resource A</a> Images from <a href="http://www.e2bn.org">www.e2bn.org</a> Gallery</p> <p><a href="#">Resource I</a> Writing frame</p>
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While pupils are writing, **circulate**, gauging progress, probing understanding and supporting where necessary.

**Ask** pupils to choose illustrative documents and images from their earlier research to include in the body of the online text or from the E2BN Gallery to create links to.

Once drafts are complete, **give feedback** using the three to one marking model\* and any success criteria you have developed (these could be based on the Learning Outcomes). \*Mark three places in the draft in one colour where the pupil has met the success criteria and mark one place where they may improve their work by redrafting. At this place in the text, you could suggest an improvement through a question prompt or sentence starter, depending on the ability of the pupil.

### **Activity 3: Completing the biography**

**Model** writing a few sentences that summarise Clarkson's achievements, and which could be used as an introduction to the biography. These will veer heavily towards opinion.

Ask pupils to **write and share** their own introductions and to complete any redrafting of their biographies as necessary.