



History

Significant Explorers

Felicity Aston



Meet Quizby!

Can you spot me in the
Lesson Presentation?

The questions that appear will help you to think about the key learning throughout the lesson.



Aim

- To compare Felicity Aston's experience of polar exploration with Matthew Henson's.

Success Criteria

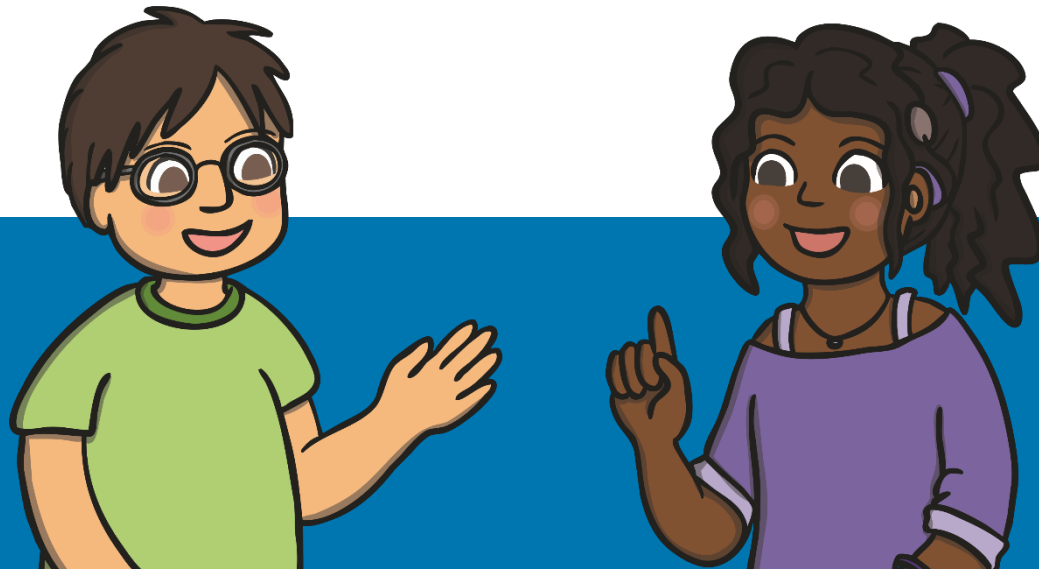
- I can explain why Felicity Aston is a significant explorer.
- I can compare the ways in which we can find out Matthew Henson's exploration and Felicity Aston's exploration.
- I can compare a polar exploration in the recent past with one from over a hundred years ago.

Polar Exploration

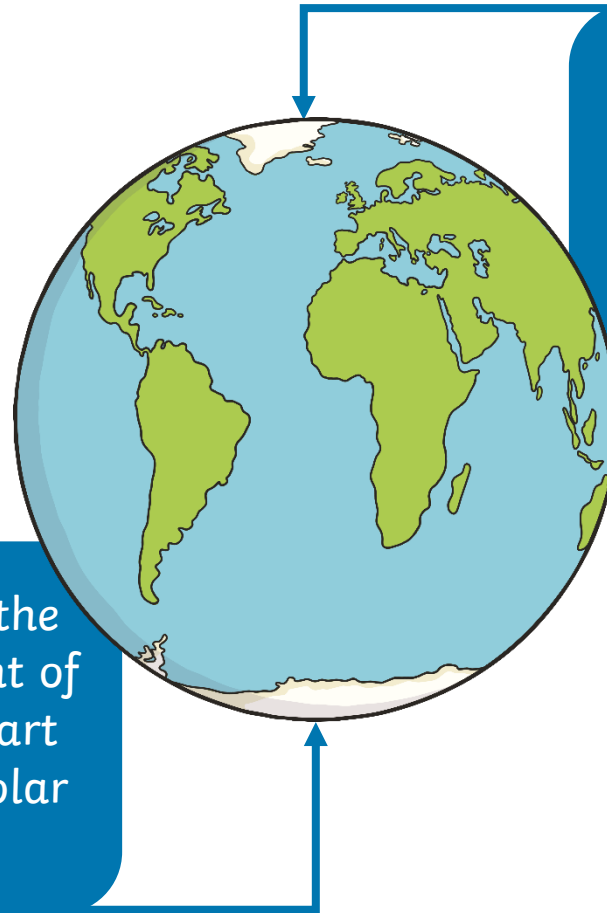


Polar exploration means exploring the areas of the world around the North and South Poles.

Tell your partner anything you know already about the North Pole and the South Pole.



Polar Exploration



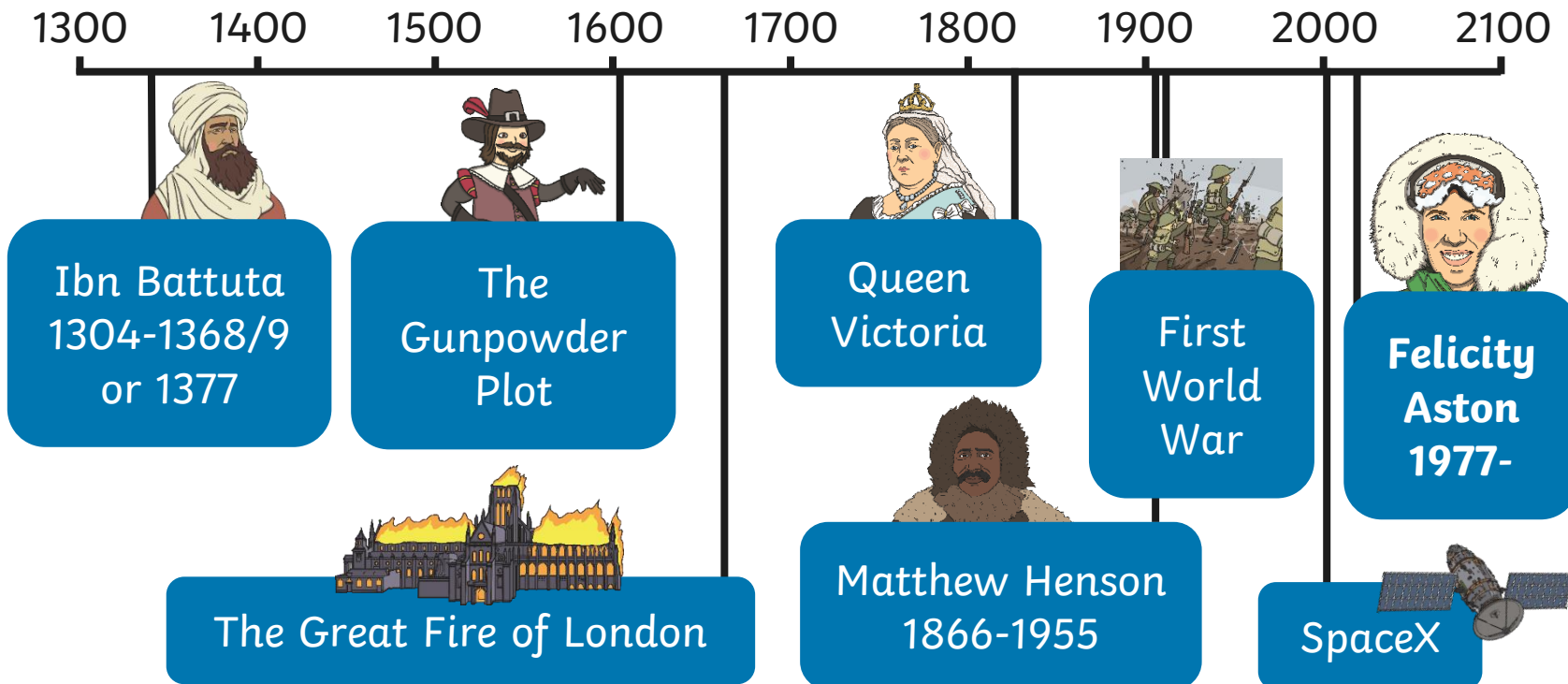
The North Pole is the northernmost point of the Earth and is part of the Arctic polar region.

The South Pole is the southernmost point of the Earth and is part of the Antarctic polar region.

Polar Exploration



Many believe Matthew Henson was the first person to set foot on the North Pole in April 1909. Today, we will learn about a polar explorer who has explored both the Arctic and the Antarctic. Her name is **Felicity Aston** and her explorations are part of recent history.



Felicity Aston



Felicity Aston was born in 1977.

After school, she went to university and then got a job as a meteorologist at one of the research centres based in Antarctica.

Meteorologist: someone who studies the weather.

While working in Antarctica, Felicity took measurements and made observations about the weather and the environment there.

Felicity Aston



Just like Matthew Henson, Felicity Aston has explored the Arctic.

However, she is most famous for her expeditions in the Antarctic, near to the South Pole.



South Pole, Antarctic



Felicity Aston



Felicity is probably best known for her expedition in 2012, where she became the first woman to ski across Antarctica on her own.

Some people had travelled across Antarctica before with help from machines or by using kites to pull them along.



Felicity, however, was the first person to ever do this alone by just using her own strength on skis.

Felicity Aston



Felicity walked for 1744km over the snow.

This distance is over 1000 miles and even further than if you walked from the very top of Scotland all the way down to the furthest point in the south of England (which is only 970km).

It took her 59 days. She was completely alone.



She pulled a sledge along with all the things she needed.

Felicity Aston has a place in the Guinness World Records for her achievement.

X

Can you name a significant thing Felicity Aston has done?



How Do We Know about Explorations?



Matthew Henson's famous expedition to the North Pole was in 1909.



Over a hundred years later, Felicity Aston travelled across Antarctica in 2012.

These were both significant explorations.

How can we find out information about these explorations?

Tell your partner about some of the ways you think you could find out about these.

Journey across Antarctica



Felicity Aston's exploration across Antarctica was difficult to do.

Why do you think it was difficult?

It was hard work skiing all that way.

It was hard dealing with the icy cold weather.



It was hard to find the strength to keep going and not to give up and go home.

Felicity Aston found it especially hard to get out of the warmth of the tent each morning and to face the next tough day walking.



It was very difficult spending all that time totally alone.

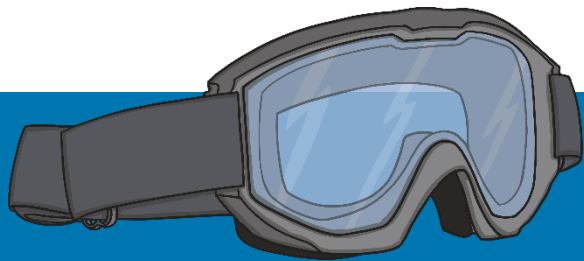
Journey across Antarctica



What special equipment do you think Felicity had to make it easier?

Felicity had warm clothing specially designed and scientifically tested to deal with low temperatures and to be windproof and waterproof.

Felicity made sure all of her skin was covered up when she was outside of her tent.



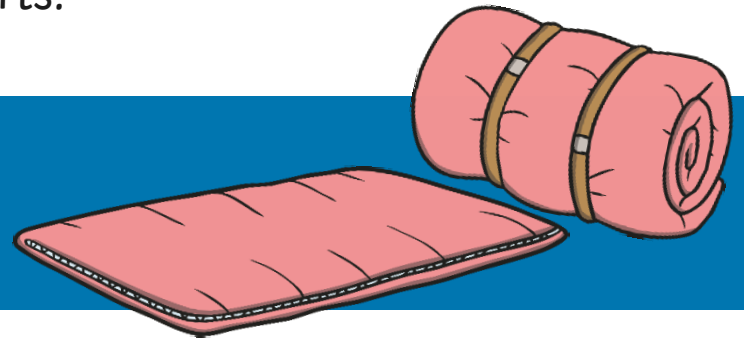
She wore snow goggles to protect her eyes from the sun.

Journey across Antarctica



Felicity Aston must have missed her family and friends and home comforts.

She slept in a sleeping bag designed to keep her as warm as possible.



Felicity carried lots of the things she needed on her sledge.

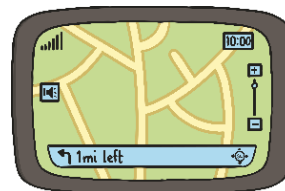
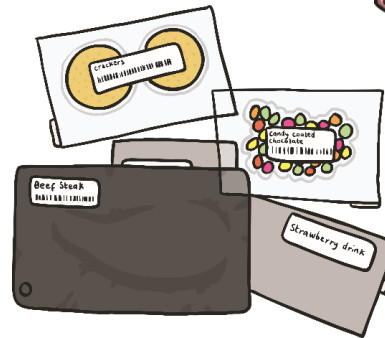
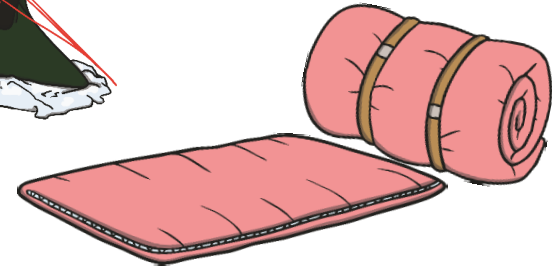
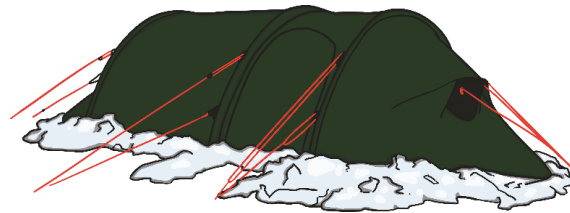
What things do you think Felicity carried with her?

Journey across Antarctica

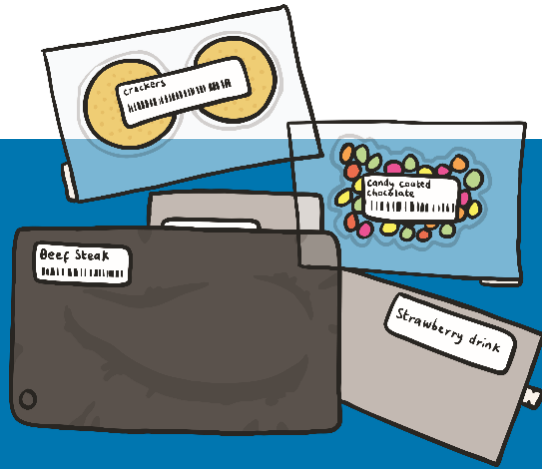


Felicity carried many things on her sledge including:

- a tent
- a sleeping bag
- a sleeping mat
- a camping stove
- lighters to light the stove
- changes of clothes
- freeze-dried food
- drinking bottle
- satellite phones
- a mobile phone for taking photos
- GPS device



Journey across Antarctica



Felicity would melt snow on her camping stove and add this to the freeze-dried food. Freeze-dried food is specially designed for explorers to give them a meal that is high in energy.

Matthew Henson and his fellow explorers did not have freeze-dried food like this. Instead, they had some high-energy food called pemmican (a mixture of dried meat, dried berries and fat).



Journey across Antarctica



To help Felicity find her way, she used a compass and different things she could see, such as the sun and wind direction. She also used GPS to check her locations and marked these on a map.



GPS also allowed others to track her progress. GPS stands for Global Positioning System. Special satellites circle the Earth sending signals down to Earth to help people find their way around.

The first GPS satellites were sent up into space around the time when Felicity was born.

Do you think Matthew Henson had GPS?

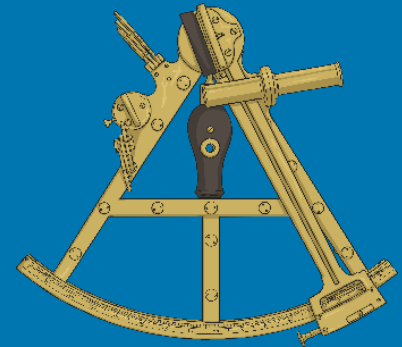
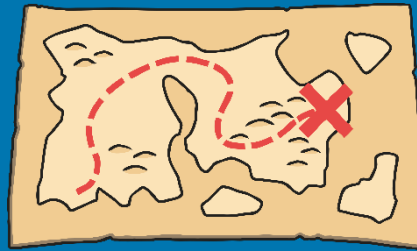
No, Matthew Henson went on his explorations before GPS existed.

Journey across Antarctica



How do you think Matthew Henson and his team found their way and checked their location on their various explorations?

They would have used a map and a compass on some explorations. They also used a measuring instrument called a sextant. This allows people to use the sun, the moon or stars to help take measurements to work out where they are.



X

If you went on an exploration, would you rather have Felicity Aston's or Matthew Henson's equipment?
Can you explain why?



Comparing Polar Exploration Then and Now



Did you find some things that were similar and some that were different about the explorations?



Did You Know...?

Matthew Henson and Robert Peary made igloos to sleep in on their exploration to the North Pole but some explorers living at the same time used tents to sleep in. Matthew and Robert learned a lot of techniques from the Inuit which is why they used igloos.

X

Can you tell your partner one thing that was the same and one thing that was different about these two explorations?



Celebrating Felicity Aston's Achievements



As well as being in the Guinness World Records, Felicity Aston was also appointed an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) for services to polar exploration.

She was also awarded a Polar Medal.

Not many people get a Polar Medal. They are given to explorers and scientists who have achieved great things in very difficult conditions.

Celebrating Felicity Aston's Achievements



If Felicity Aston had lived in the time that Matthew Henson lived, do you think she would have been able to ski across Antarctica on her own? Why do you think this?



You might have said that it would be too dangerous for someone to ski across Antarctica alone without the modern technology that Felicity used.

You may have also answered that Felicity Aston would have been less likely to go on this exploration over a hundred years ago because she is female.

In the past, there was more sexism than there is today.

Celebrating Felicity Aston's Achievements



Sexism is when someone is treated differently or unfairly based upon whether they are male or female.

Years ago, women did not have the same chances as men. They were often expected to behave in a certain way - and this often did not involve being adventurous and strong.

Robert Peary's wife, Josephine, did actually go with Robert and Matthew on many of their explorations and she brought many skills to the team. Many commented at the time, though, that the Arctic was 'no place for a woman'.



Celebrating Felicity Aston's Achievements



Nowadays, most people believe that sexism is wrong and that women are just as capable as men.

However, female explorers like Felicity Aston still experience sexism today.

Newspapers, television and websites can sometimes give more coverage to male explorers.



There can still be fewer opportunities for women to join polar explorations.

However, Felicity is trying to inspire more women by leading all female expeditions.

Celebrating Felicity Aston's Achievements



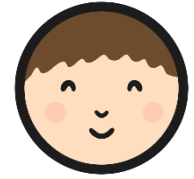
If you were to meet Felicity Aston, what question would you like to ask her?

X

Do you think Felicity Aston is a significant explorer?
Give one reason why you think this.



Comparing Polar Exploration Then and Now



Make some comparisons between exploring now and around a hundred years ago.

Use what you know about Felicity Aston's and Matthew Heston's explorations to help you.

Complete the **Polar Exploration Then and Now Activity Sheets**.

Polar Exploration Then and Now

To compare Felicity Aston's experience of polar exploration with Matthew Henson's.

Read the information on this sheet. Then, cut and stick the correct pictures on the table to show the answers to the questions.

Matthew Henson in the Arctic	Felicity Aston in the Antarctic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1909, Matthew Henson reached what he thought was the North Pole. It was a very long and hard exploration. They had sledges pulled by dogs. They walked on skis. The skis and ski poles were made of wood. Every night they made an igloo from snow to sleep in. They had blankets. They wore warm clothes made from animal skin and animal fur. They used a compass and a sextant. They ate pemmican (a mixture of dried meat, dried berries and fat). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2012, Felicity Aston was the first person to ski alone across Antarctica using just her own power. It was a long and hard exploration. She walked on skis. The skis and ski poles were made of layers of different materials and were lighter than skis used to be in the past. Every night she slept in a tent. She slept in a sleeping bag. She wore warm clothes mostly made from human-made materials. She used a compass to help her find the way. She also used GPS to check her locations and for others to track her. She ate freeze-dried meals that were high in energy.

Polar Exploration Then and Now

To compare Felicity Aston's experience of polar exploration with Matthew Henson's.

Read the information on this sheet. Then, write and draw in the boxes on the table to answer the questions.

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Polar Exploration Then and Now

To compare Felicity Aston's experience of polar exploration with Matthew Henson's.

Read the information on this sheet. Then, write sentences to answer the questions on the following page.

Matthew Henson in the Arctic

In 1909, Matthew Henson reached what he thought was the North Pole. It was a very long and difficult exploration.

Matthew Henson travelled with the Inuit of Greenland and the exploration was led by Robert Peary. Robert had wanted to be the first to get to the North Pole to be famous and make money.

The team had sledges pulled by dogs. They sometimes rode on the sledges but they also walked on skis which were made of wood.

Every night, they made an igloo from snow to sleep in. They had blankets under them and on top of them too. They wore a deerskin shirt and their trousers, boots and coats (or parkas) were also made from fur. Sometimes they wore snow goggles which were made from wood with slits cut for them to see through.

They used a compass and a sextant to find their way and to check where they were. After the exploration, it was Robert's measurements that were questioned when some people said that the team did not make it to the North Pole.

They ate pemmican (a mixture of dried meat, dried berries and fat). This was high in energy but did not provide them with as much energy as modern food for explorers.

Aim



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Success Criteria

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