

Grace O'Malley **in** **the Literacy Hour**



Year 3 Scheme of Work

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St Paul's 'Ireland in Schools' week

St Paul's Junior School, Liverpool, is a Roman Catholic school with over 460 pupils.

In the week beginning Monday, 17 March 2003, the school held its first 'Ireland in Schools' week. In most year groups, in most subjects, work revolved around Ireland.

Subject	Year 3	Year 4	Year 6
Art	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geography	Yes	Yes	No
History	No ¹	No ²	No
Literacy	Yes	Yes	No
Music	Yes	No	Yes
PE/Dance	Yes	No	No

¹ Historical texts - on Grace O'Malley - used in Literacy Hour.
² Historical texts - on the Irish Famine - used in Literacy Hour.

The beneficial impact of the week on the whole school - staff, children and parents - cannot be exaggerated. It did enrich and enliven the curriculum and it gave many children an opportunity to discover and explore their Irish roots.

Grace O'Malley

Grace O'Malley, alias Granuaile, chieftain, pirate and trader was born around 1530 and died in 1603, the same year as Elizabeth I. More than the 'pirate queen' of Irish legend, Granuaile was a courageous woman who stood up for her rights during the turbulent Tudor conquest of Ireland. When young, it is said she cut off her hair and wore male clothes to go to sea.

More than a woman, Granuaile was a Gaelic chieftain. She commanded a fleet of war and merchant ships, trading with France, Spain, England and Portugal, dominating the waters off Western Ireland, and resisting and then treating with the invading Tudors. By land Granuaile stormed and defended castles, engaged in the then favourite Irish practice of cattle-rustling, gave birth to four children and generally showed she was the equal if not the better of any man.

According to one horrified Tudor official, she *'hath impudently passed the part of womanhood and been a great spoiler and chief commander and director of thieves and murderers at sea'*. Such was Granuaile's power that in 1593 Elizabeth I agreed to meet her in London to consider requests for money and permission *'to invade with sword and fire'* the queen's enemies.

The only Gaelic woman ever to appear at court, *'the wild grandeur of her mien erect and high, before the English Queen she dauntless stood ... well used to power [and] dominion over men of savage mood'*. Her petition was successful, but Granuaile died ten years later outwitted and impoverished by Tudor officials who never forgave her earlier 'betrayals'.

Granuaile's is an enthralling story which develops children's historical skills, stimulates productive cross-curricular work, and raises challenging questions about the choices facing individuals and the nature of sixteenth century society and politics. Was she simply a political realist, compromising in face of Tudor might? Or, is popular tradition right to celebrate Granuaile as 'a nationalist heroine and ... a feminist icon'?

Timeline

c.1530 Granuaile is born.

Granuaile cuts off her hair and goes to sea with her father.

1546 marries Donal O'Flaherty.

Donal captures small castle in Lough Corrib from the Joyces.

Donal is killed by the Joyces.

The Joyces attack Hen's castle but Grace maintains control.

1566 marries Richard ('Iron Dick') Bourke

1577-1579 imprisoned in Rockfleet.

1588 granted a pardon by Queen Elizabeth I.

1593 audience with Elizabeth I in London.

1603 dies in poverty.

The texts

'Grace O'Malley' in *Time Traveller 2* (by Day, R. et al., CJ Fallon, 0-71441-129-9, pp 83-7), this outline of Grace's life includes four stories (how Grace came to be called 'Grace the Bald' the legend of Howth Castle, the defence of Hen's Castle and Grace's meeting with Elizabeth I) and two modern songs, 'Free and Easy' (about trading) and 'The Defence of Hen's Castle'.

A 'big book' adaptation of this story, 'Grace O'Malley, Granuaile', is available from 'Ireland in Schools'.

The story of Grace O'Malley, alias Granuaile, in pictures, by D. Rooney in *Granuaile, Chieftain, Pirate, Trader* by M. Moriarty & C. Sweeney, O'Brien Press, 0-86278-162-0.

Weekly planning: 'Ireland in Schools'/Grace O'Malley, Granuaile, Pirate Queen

	Class: Year Groups 3 Term Spring Week beg: 17.03.03 Teacher: Mrs Denton		Guided group tasks (reading or writing)	Guided group tasks (reading or writing)	Independent group tasks	
Day NLS Obs [^]	Whole class shared reading & writing	Whole class - phonics, spelling, vocabulary & grammar	Children will be given a line drawing to represent Grace. Three questions will be posed. They will study the text 'Grace O'Malley', pp 84-5. * Discuss answers by giving evidence from text. Chn will record answers in their exercise books.			Plenary
Mon T1, S1, 11 T2, W17- 19	Talk about IiS. Discuss slideshow on Ireland. What do chn know about Ireland? Any famous people?	Look at spelling list. Any patterns? Any unknown words? Go through - put into context.			Children will put words from spelling list into sentences. Encourage chn to make sentences interesting - using powerful verbs and adjectives.	Invite chn to share their most interesting sentence with the class. Use expression and project voice well.
Tues T1, T17 T3, T1	Display text of Grace in pictures. Has anyone heard of her. What does 'alias' mean? Is this fact or fiction?	Read through all pictures and captions			Children will work in pairs and match the pictures to the text.	Chn can suggest matches. Teacher will ask for volunteers to stand in pairs with correctly matched work.
Wed T1, S3 T3, T10	Recap on work done so far. Read text 'Grace O'Malley', p. 83.* Then ask chn to say what they think happened at Hen's Castle (picture 3).	Teacher will act as scribe - writing chn's version. Teacher will now read p. 86.* Look at verbs used - fought, attacked, captured			Children will recount the story of Donal O'Flaherty's death and Grace's victory over the Joyces. They will record these events in pictures with captions (Hen's Castle).	Chn will be invited to share work with the class, identifying powerful verbs used. Explain and distribute homework.
Thurs T1, S11 T2, S2 & T7	Read over main text (pictures/captions). Focus on how she behaves - hair cutting, fighting pirates. Look for words which tell us how she is feeling, eg, angry, longed.	Invite children to express what sort of person she was. List adjectives which best describe her, eg, tough, clever, strong, determined.			Children will complete the worksheet, Grace O'Malley, Pirate Queen, circling suitable adjectives and completing sentences.	Children will be asked to identify powerful adjectives and the effect these have on our impression of Grace.
Fri	Recap of week's work. Chn will form 3 teams - 10 in each - and devise a quiz about Grace.	Teacher & TA will give support to less able group. Spelling test.			Children will take turns to ask each other questions about Grace. Wrongly answered and the child is out. Teacher will score, recording points gained on blackboard. Sweet each for participants.	Tot up scores. Focus on areas of strengths/gaps in knowledge. Congratulate chn.

[^] History skills developed include 1a-b; 2a-c; 4a-b; 5c.

* In the IiS 'big book' adaptation, 'Grace O'Malley, Granuaile', for p. 82 read p. 1; for pp 84-5 read pp 2-3; and for p. 86 read p. 3.

Grace O'Malley, Pirate Queen - three questions



Who was Grace O'Malley?

What do we think she looked like?

What happened when Grace went to Howth Castle?

Grace O'Malley, Pirate Queen - descriptions

A. Put a circle around the words that describe Grace.

soft-hearted

determined

cowardly

courageous

fearful

brave

quiet

weak

brave

skilful

rough

nervous



B. Complete these sentences.

1. Grace O'Malley as a famous chieftain, trader and _____ .

2. Grace _____ her hair and wore boy's clothes so her father would take her to sea.

3. Queen _____ was ruler of England when Grace was alive.

4. Grace as imprisoned in the dungeons of _____ .

Elizabeth

cut

pirate

Dublin Castle

C. Now you can use the words you have circled in section A to make sentences about this Pirate Queen.

Grace O'Malley & the Tudor conquest of Ireland

Grace O'Malley or Granuaile is a name associated with the west of Ireland and more particularly with the western coastline around Clew Bay. Legends and stories of her exploits in the sixteenth century abound, some based on fact exaggerated with the lapse of time, others founded completely in the realm of fantasy. The name 'Grace O'Malley' conjures up for some an image of an amazon-type woman, ruthless and domineering, performing incredible deeds with no particular end in mind; for others the name is associated with a figure of fiery patriotism, whose sole aim in life was to expel the foreign invader from native soil.

Sources and evidence

Grace O'Malley lived at a critical time in Irish history. However, references to her in the pages of Irish history books have been few. Grace remains strangely absent from the Irish annals of that time: 'the Irish annalists, whether out of chagrin that a mere woman could figure so remarkably in the affairs of the time or because that era produced too many such remarkable personages or simply because of lack of space, completely excluded Grace from their record.' Her memory was largely kept alive through her re-invention in song and literature as a nationalist symbol.

However, while much that is remembered of her has gained the status of myth, there remains enough evidence of Grace as a historical person to merit a re-evaluation of her role. Evidence from the English State papers and manuscripts suggests that she played no small part in Irish affairs at that time.

Her name is recorded for posterity in the Elizabethan State Papers; her exploits are reported in official state dispatches of such notables as Sir Henry Sidney, Sir Nicholas Malby, Sir Richard Bingham, Sir John Perrott, Lord Justice Drury and Queen Elizabeth I of England. Her name finds its way into the Sidney, Salisbury and Carew manuscripts, the *Dictionary of National Biography* and a fascinating and informative narrative of her life and lifestyle occurs in her own replies to the eighteen articles of interrogatory put to her by the English government in 1593.

Such records show that, while the mythical figure of Granuaile in song and story has a certain magic, the real Grace O'Malley is more interesting still. She was 'an exceptional woman, alive, vital and daring, who lived life to its limits, and who possessed all the requirements necessary for survival in that era. A woman who plied her family trade with all the expertise it required, and who above all else put her own interests and those of the small remote domain over which she ruled first, in the never-ending struggle for survival.'

Context

The story of Grace O'Malley is 'larger than life', but so also is the turbulent and eventful age to which she belonged. The character of Grace O'Malley must be examined within the context of her time. A century of exploration and discovery, of wars and intrigue, of armadas and invasions; of glorious empires at the pinnacle of their power. She lived in a time in which Ireland saw the final clash and eventual submission of the ancient Irish order, with its hopelessly outmoded medieval structures, to its powerful and persistent English neighbour.

Tudor conquest of Ireland

Sixteenth-century Ireland witnessed the decisive conflict between the Gaelic and English civilisations. The Tudor Conquest of Ireland in this period is arguably as significant as the Norman incursion four centuries before, precisely because it was so complete. It transformed the political, social and economic life and altered the landscape of Ireland.

The arrival of the Normans did not result in the subjugation of Ireland: the Normans superimposed their control on the existing society and coexisted with it. The great Gaelic lordships retained their autonomy and the Normans adjusted easily to the local and regional power structures of the country. By 1500 government control over the country was feeble and haphazard.

A century later, the situation was transformed. The significance of the Tudor dynasty (1485-1603) is that the Tudors consolidated the position of central government in a manner hitherto unknown, and gradually curtailed and ultimately subdued the power of the local lords. This revolution in government affected England and Wales as well as Ireland, but in the Irish case the process was most painful and was achieved only through a series of conflicts, most notably the Nine Years War (1594-1603), and plantations. The apparatus of government was extended, the bureaucracy developed, common law supplanted local custom and Brehon Law. The extension of Tudor control meant that the days of independent figures like Grace O'Malley were numbered.

Apart from the extension of government control, the Reformation was the other great development of the sixteenth century. The fact that the two came together guaranteed that the new religious ideas would receive a hostile reception in Ireland.

Irish economy

While the population of Europe doubled during the sixteenth century, the Irish population was at best static. It is estimated that by the end of the century the population was just over 750,000. Agriculture was mainly pastoral in nature, with cattle, sheep and goats being the major source of wealth. Trade was centred mainly in the port towns where the Old English were strong. Hides, tallow and linen yarn were traded for wine, salt and manufactured goods.