

Y5/6 – How has the rise and fall of the fishing industry impacted on the town of Grimsby?

Procedural knowledge

Use primary and secondary sources of evidence to answer historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity, difference and significance.

Compare different accounts of events from different sources – fact or fiction

Link sources and work out how conclusions were arrived at.

Factual and Conceptual knowledge

Timeline						
The Dock Tower was completed in 1851.	No 1 Fish Dock was completed in 1856.	No 2 Fish Dock was completed in 1877.	By 1863, 112 fishing vessels were operating from Grimsby Docks.	During the 1950's, Grimsby was the biggest fishing port in the world.	The Cod Wars (1960's and 70's) prevented UK trawlers fishing in Icelandic waters.	The Fishing Heritage Centre, which depicts the 1950's heyday of Grimsby, opened in 1991

Why were Grimsby docks developed?

The arrival of the railway in 1848 made it easier to transport goods to and from the port to markets and farms. Coal mined in the South Yorkshire coalfields was brought by rail and exported through Grimsby. Rail links direct to London and the Billingsgate Fish Market allowed for fresh "Grimsby Fish" to gain a nationwide reputation.

What caused the fishing industry to change dramatically?

Two inventions dramatically changed the fishing industry: steam power, enabling the trawler, a large fishing vessel, which dragged a net along the seabed, to sail faster and reach the fishing grounds of Iceland, and man-made ice, preserving the fish on board and allowing ships to stay at sea for weeks on end.

What was the fishing industry like at its height?

In 1970, 400 trawlers were based in the port of Grimsby. Each would go on a three-week trawling trip to the waters of the Arctic. The crew were on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The hard manual work was done by deckhands: shooting the trawl; then hauling in the net. For up to 48 hours, they gutted the fish. When they returned, lumpers would unload their catch and filleters would fillet the fish before it was sold at the market. Skippers, deckhands and trawler men would return home for three days and spend the money they had earned in Freeman Street before returning to sea.

What caused the industry to begin to decline?

The three Cod Wars between 1958 and 1976 saw a dramatic decline in Grimsby's fishing industry. The wars were a series of confrontations between the UK and Iceland on fishing rights in the North Atlantic. Each ended with an Icelandic victory. In 1976, the UK conceded to a 370-kilometre (200 mile) Icelandic exclusive fishery zone. As a result, British fishing communities lost access to rich fishing areas and thousands of jobs were lost.

What's happened after the decline?

Massive unemployment occurred although food companies and fish smokehouses still exist in the area. By 2013, only 5 trawlers were based in the port. The current port is a centre for car import (and export). Since 1975, it handled general cargo. In the early 21st century, the port has developed as a wind farm maintenance base.

Key Vocabulary

docks, trawler, thrive, booming, decline, trade, industry, fleet, skipper, quota, vessel, skipper

Links

Horizontal link with UK, London and World trade Y5/6 B
Diagonal links with Cleethorpes Y1/2 B and Cleethorpes in the Past Y1/2 A

