

Independent learning to be completed during school closure

**ENGLISH** During a two-week period you would ordinarily have 7 English lessons.

During the next few weeks you are going to be completing a creative writing project based on the poem *Flannan Island* by W.W. Gibson. The poem is based on true events.

**Lesson 1**

**Task 1** - Using the three images in Source 1, make a prediction about what you think will happen in the poem (scroll down to find the sources below the tasks). If you can print the images, annotate them to help you make this prediction.

**Task 2**- Now read the first two verses in Source 2, looking for further clues. What do you think may have happened now?

**Task 3** – Now read through the full poem. What has happened? Using Source 3 re-arrange the events in the order that they occurred.

**Lesson 2**

In December 1900, three lighthouse-keepers, Thomas Marshall, James Ducat and Donald McArthur, on the lonely outcrop of the Flannan Isles (approximately 20 miles from the Outer Hebrides, western Scotland) disappeared without trace. No solution to their disappearance has ever been found, and for over 100 years now, this case has been one of endless fascination.

**Task 1**-Watch the video and make notes on the key events.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxXCTFQ-BiM>

**Task 2**- Complete the True or False grid in Source 4

**Lesson 3**

Read through the poem again and answer the following questions:

1. Verse 3- What does the simile “as gallant as a gull” tell you about the boat?
2. Verse 4 - Why do you think the lantern was “blinded”?
3. Verse 4- What did the men discover at the crag? What do you think these were?
4. Verse 5- Why do you think the poet uses repetition in this verse?
5. Verse 6- How does the poet increase the tension here?
6. Verse 7 - How do the men know something bad has happened in the room?
7. Verse 11- What had happened to the other lighthouse keepers?
8. Verse 13- How do the men feel at the end of the poem?

#### Lesson 4

Story map the events of the poem in no more than 20 images. Add key quotations from the poem to further show your understanding. You may wish to look at this website to help you with your story-map. <http://robbloomfield.blogspot.com/2011/06/mystery-of-flannan-isle-final-images.html>

#### Lesson 5

Design a map of the island and label it using details from the poem. Think about the details that are mentioned about the whole of the island, not just the lighthouse.

#### Lesson 6

Imagine you were one of the lighthouse keepers who disappeared. Write a diary of the events leading up to the night of your disappearance.

This will be used as a part of a crime report you will be writing in the next series of lessons.

#### Lesson 7

This is your **ACCELERATED READER** lesson and you should spend the hour reading your book. Alternatively you could read JK Rowling's new children's story which can be found here: <https://www.theickabog.com/read-the-story/> There is a competition that you may wish to enter based on this story. Details can be found on this link: <https://www.jkrowling.com/j-k-rowling-introduces-the-ickabog/>

If you require further information please email:

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Source One



## Source 2

### **Flannan Isle**

1. "THOUGH three men dwell on Flannan Isle  
To keep the lamp alight,  
As we steered under the lee, we caught  
No glimmer through the night."

2. A passing ship at dawn had brought  
The news; and quickly we set sail,  
To find out what strange thing might ail  
The keepers of the deep-sea light.

3. The Winter day broke blue and bright,  
With glancing sun and glancing spray,  
As o'er the swell our boat made way,  
As gallant as a gull in flight.

4. But, as we neared the lonely Isle;  
And looked up at the naked height;  
And saw the lighthouse towering white,  
With blinded lantern, that all night  
Had never shot a spark  
Of comfort through the dark,  
So ghostly in the cold sunlight  
It seemed, that we were struck the while  
With wonder all too dread for words.  
And, as into the tiny creek  
We stole beneath the hanging crag,  
We saw three queer, black, ugly birds—  
Too big, by far, in my belief,  
For guillemot or shag—  
Like seamen sitting bolt-upright  
Upon a half-tide reef:  
But, as we neared, they plunged from sight,  
Without a sound, or spurt of white.

5. And still too amazed to speak,  
We landed; and made fast the boat;  
And climbed the track in single file,  
Each wishing he was safe afloat,  
On any sea, however far,  
So it be far from Flannan Isle:  
And still we seemed to climb, and climb,  
As though we'd lost all count of time,  
And so must climb for evermore.  
Yet, all too soon, we reached the door—  
The black, sun-blistered lighthouse-door,  
That gaped for us ajar.

6. As, on the threshold, for a spell,  
We paused, we seemed to breathe the smell  
Of limewash and of tar,  
Familiar as our daily breath,  
As though 't were some strange scent of death:  
And so, yet wondering, side by side,  
We stood a moment, still tongue-tied:  
And each with black foreboding eyed  
The door, ere we should fling it wide,  
To leave the sunlight for the gloom:  
Till, plucking courage up, at last,  
Hard on each other's heels we passed,  
Into the living-room.

7. Yet, as we crowded through the door,  
We only saw a table, spread  
For dinner, meat and cheese and bread;  
But, all untouched; and no one there:  
As though, when they sat down to eat,  
Ere they could even taste,  
Alarm had come; and they in haste  
Had risen and left the bread and meat:  
For at the table-head a chair  
Lay tumbled on the floor.

8. We listened; but we only heard  
The feeble cheeping of a bird  
That starved upon its perch:  
And, listening still, without a word,  
We set about our hopeless search.

9. We hunted high, we hunted low;  
And soon ransacked the empty house;  
Then o'er the Island, to and fro,  
We ranged, to listen and to look  
In every cranny, cleft or nook  
That might have hid a bird or mouse:  
But, though we searched from shore to shore,  
We found no sign in any place:  
And soon again stood face to face  
Before the gaping door:  
And stole into the room once more  
As frightened children steal.

10. Aye: though we hunted high and low,  
And hunted everywhere,  
Of the three men's fate we found no trace  
Of any kind in any place,  
But a door ajar, and an untouched meal,  
And an overtoppled chair.

11. And, as we listened in the gloom  
Of that forsaken living-room—  
A chill clutch on our breath—  
We thought how ill-chance came to all  
Who kept the Flannan Light:  
And how the rock had been the death  
Of many a likely lad:  
How six had come to a sudden end,  
And three had gone stark mad:  
And one whom we'd all known as friend  
Had leapt from the lantern one still night,  
And fallen dead by the lighthouse wall:  
And long we thought  
On the three we sought,  
And of what might yet befall.

12. Like curs, a glance has brought to heel,  
We listened, flinching there:  
And looked, and looked, on the untouched meal,  
And the overtoppled chair.

13. We seemed to stand for an endless while,  
Though still no word was said,  
Three men alive on Flannan Isle,

### **Source 3**

1. The men walked up to the lighthouse.
2. The meal had not been eaten.
3. The light in the lighthouse had gone out.
4. The door was open.
5. They searched the island and there were no signs of the missing lighthouse keepers.
6. A chair lay toppled on the floor.
7. When they arrived on the island they saw three large and ugly birds.
8. In the lighthouse the table was set for dinner.
9. Three men were sent to Flannan Island to investigate.
10. A bird was starving in its cage.

### **Source 4**

True or False

Read the following statements after you have watched the video and indicate whether they are true or false.

1. The lighthouse was built in 1905.
2. The lighthouse cost £7,000 to build.
3. The lighthouse was 85 feet high.
4. The light flashed twice every 30 seconds.
5. The light could be seen for 30 miles in every direction.
6. Flannan Island is in the North Atlantic.
7. There was a stone chapel on the island.
8. Shepherds were very happy to spend the night on the island.
9. The lighthouse keepers worked two weeks on their shift.
10. The lens of the lighthouse was polished every week.

