Florence Nightingale: The Lady with the Lamp

Learning objective: To understand the life and historical significance of Florence Nightingale and her contributions to nursing.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences.

Florence Nightingale was a brave woman who changed the way we look after sick people today. In 1854, during the Crimean War, she travelled to a hospital in Scutari to help injured soldiers. When she arrived, she was shocked to find that the hospital was dirty and many men were becoming even sicker because of the poor conditions. Florence worked tirelessly to clean the wards, wash the bedsheets, and ensure the soldiers had fresh air and good food. She believed that cleanliness was the most important part of nursing. Every night, she walked through the dark, quiet wards with her lantern to check on her patients, offering them comfort and kindness. Because of this, the soldiers began to call her 'The Lady with the Lamp'. When she returned to England, she used her experiences to teach others how to be nurses. She opened the Nightingale Training School for nurses, ensuring that her high standards of care would continue for generations. Because of Florence's hard work, hospitals became much safer places for everyone.

Word bank: nursing · hospital · hygiene · sanitation · compassion · scutari

1. Why did the soldiers call Florence Nightingale 'The Lady with the Lamp'? (2 marks)

2. What two things did Florence do to improve the hospital conditions in Scutari? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think Florence Nightingale felt it was important to open a training school for nurses? (2 marks)

4. How might the hospital have been different if Florence had not arrived to help? (2 marks)

5. Do you think Florence Nightingale was a hero? Explain your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Florence Nightingale holding her lantern as she walks through a quiet hospital ward at night.

Extension challenge: Ellie the elephant is learning about history! Research one other famous person from the past who made the world a better place and write three interesting facts about them.