

This unit introduces children to the soldiers of the British Civil Wars and uses a lesser-known battle to demonstrate how the war was fought.



## Overview of Resources



### Introduction

1

Teachers' Notes  
'Soldiers of the British Civil Wars'

1.1

Ten Civil War Words  
Vocabulary list for children's books

### Shorter 1 lesson activities

1.2

Meet a Civil-War Soldier  
Listen to soldiers as they introduce themselves and their equipment. Create illustrated factsheets

1.3

How to Win a Civil-War Battle  
Find out what was involved in leading an army to victory. through card-sort and discussion activities

1.4

Fight a Civil-War Battle  
Become cavalry commanders and find out how the war was fought

### Longer 2-4 lesson activities

1.5

Find the Battlefield  
Work as historians and use sources to work out where the battle took place

1.6

What happened to John Hussey?  
Examine John Hussey's armour and find out what historians can learn from this fascinating object

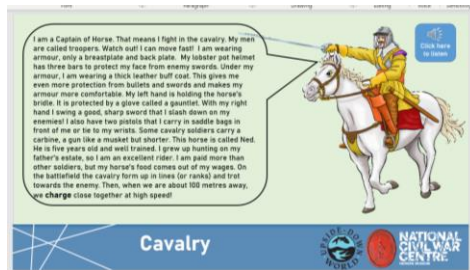


### National Curriculum Learning Objectives

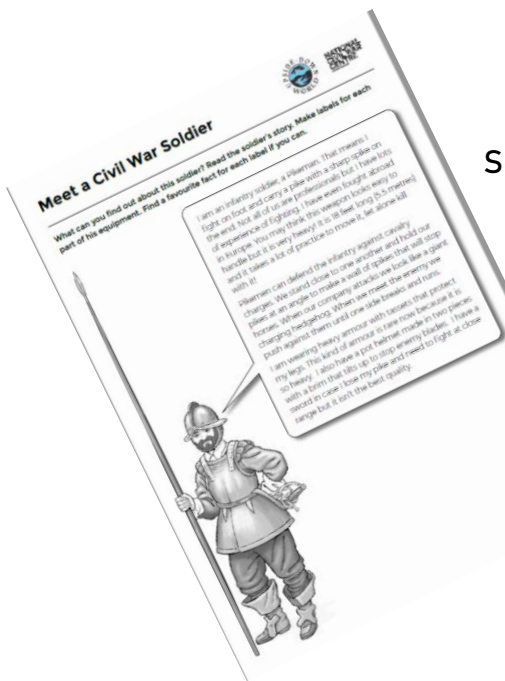
- *learn to construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information.*
- *understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources*



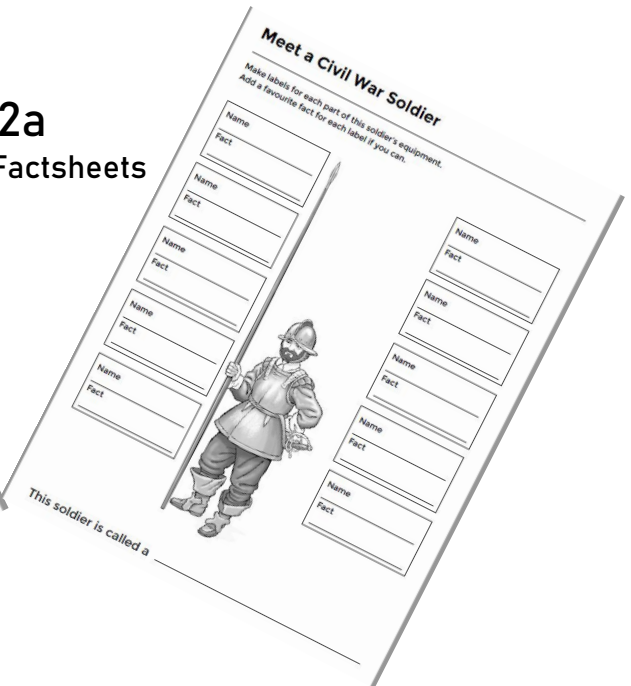
## 1.2 Meet a Civil-War Soldier



This PowerPoint slide pack introduces infantry and cavalry soldiers through illustration, photographs and audio recordings

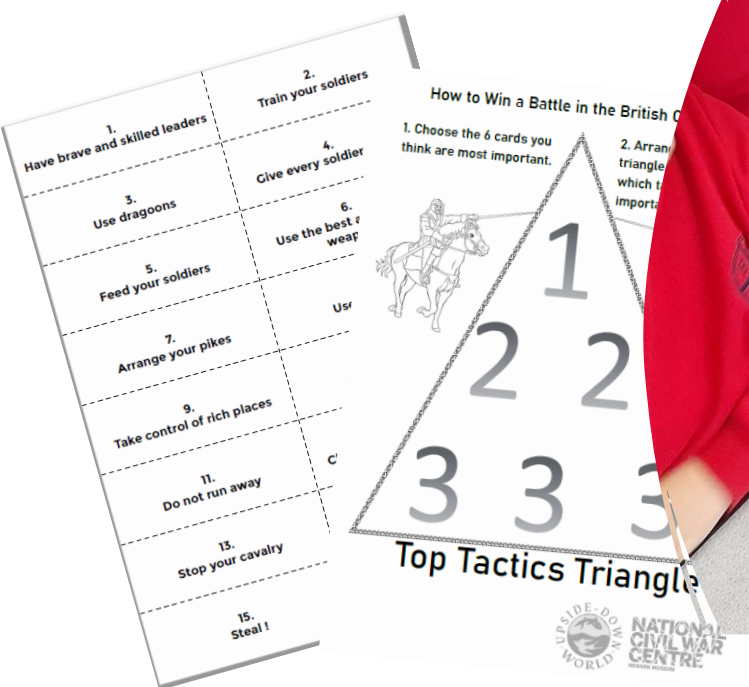


### 1.2a Soldier Factsheets



Children choose their favourite facts from the information voiced by each soldier, and create a labelled factsheet.

### 1.3 a-c How to Win a Civil-War Battle



These cards can be sliced and sorted onto a frame (1.3b) or the classroom desk! Children group the tactics under the headings Soldiers, Supplies, Terrain and Fighting Power and then choose the most important 6 to place onto the Top Tactics Triangle (1.3b). Teacher's notes (1.3c) support this activity

## 1.4 Fight The Battle of Gainsborough

The slide pack consists of several overlapping slides. The top-left slide features a cartoon illustration of King Charles I and a Parliamentarian soldier, with text: "It is 1642. Civil war has broken out! King Charles I is at war with Parliament. Every town and city must choose a side." The top-right slide shows a portrait of Oliver Cromwell and a Parliamentarian flag, with text: "Groups 4 and 5: You are Oliver Cromwell" and a list of facts: "43 years old", "Had never ever fought a battle before this war.", "Became a captain only last year", "Has won some small battles", and "Colonel of several cavalry regiments". The middle-left slide shows a landscape illustration with a river and a hill, with text: "Look at the terrain. What might be difficult about fighting this battle?". The middle-right slide features a cartoon of a Parliamentarian soldier and text: "It is time to fight a battle to take control of Gainsborough. Cavendish, where will you place your army?" followed by two options: "1. On the lower ground?" and "2. On top of the hill?". The bottom-right slide has a "Decision Point: group 1" label. Logos for "Upside Down World" and "National Civil War Centre" are visible at the bottom of the slides.

It is 1642.  
Civil war has broken out!  
King Charles I is at war  
with Parliament.  
Every town and city must  
choose a side.

Groups 4 and 5: You are  
**Oliver Cromwell**

- 43 years old
- Had never ever fought a battle before this war.
- Became a captain only last year
- Has won some small battles
- Colonel of several cavalry regiments

Parliamentarian

Look at the terrain.  
What might be difficult  
about fighting this battle?

It is time to fight a battle to take  
control of Gainsborough.  
Cavendish, where will you place  
your army?

1. On the lower ground?

2. On top of the hill?

Decision Point: group 1

Upside Down World  
National Civil War Centre

This interactive PowerPoint slide pack demonstrates how the war was fought by using the example of the Battle of Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. This lesser-known battle has been chosen

1. to demonstrate how the war reached small towns and villages all over the country.
2. to introduce a key character in the war, the rising military star Oliver Cromwell, who first displayed his talents as a cavalry commander during this battle.
3. to show that objects like the armour of John Hussey, who fought at this battle, can be used by historians as sources.

Children are divided into 5 groups each taking on the role of one of the officers in the battle. Each group makes key strategic decisions as their character, learning how battles were fought during the British Civil Wars.



# 1.5 Find The Battlefield

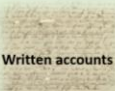
This cross-curricular activity could include work in literacy/geography lessons.

Children work as consultant historians, using sources to help the Battlefield's Trust decide where the Battle of Gainsborough took place. A PowerPoint slide pack introduces the available sources and includes audio clips and maps


**You are going to work as historians to help The Battlefields Trust**

Historians use sources to help them understand what happened in the past.


You are going to use three different sources to help you decide where this battle took place



Written accounts




Objects left behind



Cavendish Bog


**Source 1**

About a mile and half from the town we met an advance party of about 100 cavalry soldiers. Our dragoons tried to force them back, but the enemy charged them and four or five of our soldiers were beaten off their horses. Our cavalry charged and pushed them back into their main army. We advanced and came to the bottom of a steep hill on which the enemy stood. It was difficult to get up the hill, but our soldiers tried to do this by following some tracks. The enemy tried hard to stop them.



[Click here to listen](#)

Like this...



**NATIONAL CIVIL WAR CENTRE**


Identified version

**Source 1** Extracts from Cromwell's Accounts of the Battle

About a mile and half from the town we met an advance party of about 100 cavalry soldiers. Our dragoons tried to force them back, but the enemy charged them and four or five of our soldiers were beaten off their horses. Our cavalry charged and pushed them back into their main army. We advanced and came to the bottom of a steep hill on which the enemy stood. It was difficult to get up the hill, but our soldiers tried to do this by following some tracks. The enemy tried hard to stop them.

**Source 2**

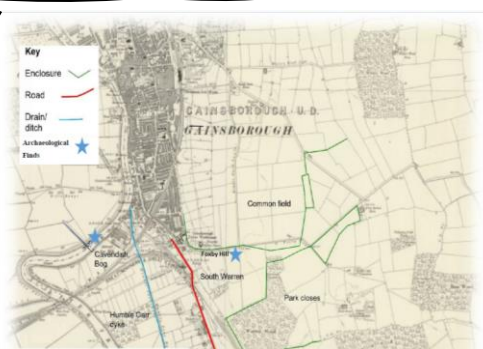
We advanced towards the enemy along the rabbit warren which was on a high hill above Gainsborough. Our army had the Lincoln troops at the front, two troops from Northampton and three small troops from Nottingham in the middle and Colonel Cromwell's troop was at the back. The enemy stayed at the top of the hill. We began to advance up the hill. The enemy opposed us but we fought them off until our whole army reached the top. The enemy held their ground which gave them the advantage. They had three cavalry regiments and another very large regiment held back in reserve commanded by General Cavendish. We formed up our cavalry ready to fight which was difficult because of all the rabbit holes and the difficult



## 1.5a

Children read Cromwell's accounts of the battle, supported by audio clips, and look for clues that suggest where the battle took place.

*(Both Cromwell's original text and a modernised version are provided.)*



## 1.5c

They also use maps to look for clues. [Digimap](#) would be a useful addition to this activity.

Where was the battle of Gainsborough fought?

Submission to Heritage England on behalf of The Battlefields Trust by Consultant Historian


Historical Context: What happened at the battle of Gainsborough?

Historical sources suggest that...

Furthermore, archaeological evidence has been found at...

Geographical clues include...

In conclusion, I would suggest that this battle was fought...



## 1.5d

Using their findings, they produce a persuasive report for Historic England, that argues for the designation of the battlefield in their chosen location

**Find The Battlefield**  
Look at each source. Record the clues you find below.

Clue	Notes
Source 1 : Cromwell's first account	
Source 2 : Cromwell's second account	
Source 3: Map	

## 1.5b

They note their findings on the note-taking frame

## 1.6 What happened to John Hussey?



This PowerPoint slide pack introduces John Hussey who died at the battle of Gainsborough.

Children look closely at a 3D scan of his armour which clearly bears the hole left by the bullet that killed him.



### 1.6a

The Royalists were up on top of a hill.	The Parliamentarians charged uphill, firing their weapons.
At the top of the hill, both sides formed lines and then charged.	There was a long fight on top of the hill.
The Parliamentarians broke the royalist lines. The Royalists ran away.	The Parliamentarians chased the Royalists.
Cromwell stopped his troops from chasing the enemy and stayed on the battlefield.	Cromwell forced the enemy downhill into a bog where Cromwell was killed.

A sequencing activity helps children to remember the key events of the Battle of Gainsborough, in preparation for imagining when and how the death of John Hussey may have occurred



### Certainty mat

Certainly... ← Possibly .. → No evidence to suggest..

### 1.6b and c

After looking closely at John Hussey's armour the children sort statements onto a 'certainty mat' and discuss what we can learn from this object. Teachers' Notes (1.6d) support this activity.

