

History Knowledge Organiser

It's a Smugglers Life for Me

Year 6

Our learning

In our history lessons this term we will be learning about smuggling in Sussex. We will consider what the **causes and consequences** of this illegal trade in goods were as well as analysing some of the **similarities and differences** between the smuggling trade during the 18th century and modern day. We will learn about how smuggling in the 18th and 19th century has had a lasting impact on our local history and was responsible for the formation of HM coastguard in the 1800s.



A Martello Tower where Blockademen watched for signs of smuggling

Information

Smuggling was prominent in Sussex in the 18th century due to high tax on goods entering the country.

Popular goods that were smuggled included tea, wine, lace, tobacco and spices.

The coastline from Hastings through to Eastbourne was used for smuggling. Several gangs operated in this area including The Little Common Gang and The Hawkhurst Gang.

Smuggling allowed people to bring in goods without paying tax and sell them to make a profit.

Smugglers were given severe punishments for their crimes.

Smuggling declined by the mid 19th century as taxes were reduced.

Smuggling still exists in the present day but different things are smuggled.

Vocabulary

Smuggling— the illegal movement of goods in and out of a country.

Tubman— a smuggling job. Someone who would carry goods away in two barrels on their body.

Lander— a smuggling job. Someone who would organise the unloading of the goods.

Spotsman— a smuggling job. Someone who would direct the ship to shore.

Batsman— a smuggling job. Someone who carried a bat to defend against customs officers

Customs— an authority responsible for what comes across the borders of a country

Crime— an action that breaks the laws of the country.

Punishment— a penalty given to someone who breaks the law

Taxation— charges on goods paid to the government

Goods— products or items that are transported

Coastal Blockade— a group of men (Blockademen) who were sent to watch for smuggling along the Sussex coast

Coastguard— a preventative force created due to smuggling that still exists today.

Important Dates

1817— The 'Coastal Blockade' was set up

1831— The coastguard replaced the Blockademen

