

Grade 7 Unit 4. Daredevils

NIAGARA FALLS - DON'T LOOK DOWN!

At Niagara Falls, on the border between the USA and Canada, the River Niagara suddenly falls more than fifty metres. Every hour, 2.5 million litres go over the waterfalls. Niagara Falls is popular with tourists and in the past it was also popular with daredevils. Three of the most famous were The Great Blondin, Signor Farini and Annie Taylor.

In 1859, Blondin walked across Niagara Falls eight times. Once he cooked eggs while he was standing on the tightrope. Another time, he nearly fell into the river while he was carrying a man on his back. That day, a man called William Hunt was at Niagara with his girlfriend. As they were watching Blondin, Hunt decided to invent stunts which were more spectacular and daring than Blondin's. He changed his name to Signor Farini and began to practise.



In 1860 a crowd went to see Farini at Niagara. He was walking along his tightrope when he stopped and climbed down a thirty-metre rope to a boat. He had a drink, then climbed up the rope again and continued walking. He was the new king of the falls.

There were many heroes of Niagara and also some heroines. In 1901 Annie Taylor became the first woman to go over the falls in a barrel. People were waiting for forty minutes before Annie's helpers opened the barrel. People weren't expecting to see Annie alive, but in fact she survived.



Many others survived stunts at the falls in barrels, balls or simply a bathing suit, but a lot of people also died. These days, daredevil acts are prohibited there and there is a maximum fine of \$10,000.

Match the headings 1-4 with the paragraphs A-E

A new tightrope champion C

1 A lady at the Falls

2 Tightrope hero

3 The end of stunts at Niagara

4 Facts about Niagara Falls

Read the text, and then write *True* or *False*.

- 1 Tourists go to Niagara Falls now.
- 2 Blondin watched and copied Farini.
- 3 Farini became popular with his new stunts.
- 4 It wasn't a surprise for the crowd when Annie Taylor survived.
- 5 Only one or two people do stunts at Niagara now.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

Complete the sentences

Daredevils spectacular daring heroes heroines
stunts

- 1 My___and___are all sportspeople. I admire them.
- 2 He's very___and brave. He doesn't think anything is scary.
- 3 I saw some___on TV. They were sailing around the world.
- 4 He can do some new___on his bike.
- 5 This place is fantastic. The mountains are__.