Great Steam Locomotives

Since George Stephenson's Locomotion No. 1 carried its first excited passengers along the Stockton to Darlington railway in 1825, Britain has loved steam locomotives.

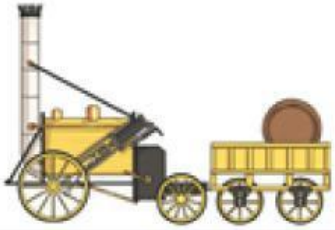
Railways travelled by steam locomotives let people travel further than they had ever done before and businesses could now transport their goods to market much more quickly.

Many great steam locomotives were made and some of them are still famous today.

Rocket

In 1829 father and son team George and Robert Stephenson entered their steam locomotive, Rocket, into the Rainhill Trials. This was a competition to find a locomotive for the new Liverpool to Manchester Railway line. Six locomotives started the competition but the Rocket won.

To many people the Rocket will always be the greatest steam locomotive. It was the fastest of its day reaching a record speed of 29 miles per hour in the Rainhill trials.



Flying Scotsman

The Flying Scotsman was designed by Sir Nigel Gresley and built in Doncaster in 1923. The Flying Scotsman was named because it provided The Flying Scotsman passenger service between London and Edinburgh.

The Flying Scotsman was the first steam locomotive to travel non-stop from London to Edinburgh in 1928 and in 1934 it was the first steam locomotive to reach a top speed of 100 miles per hour.

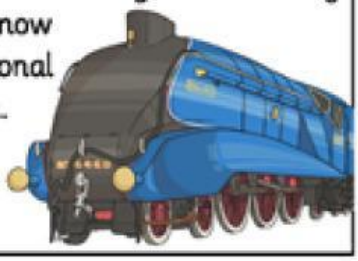


Mallard

The Mallard was another of Sir Nigel Gresley's designs. It was very fast, sleek and could pull long passenger trains at more than 100 miles per hour.

On 3 July 1938 the Mallard reached a top speed of 126 miles per hour. This world record still stands today.

In its time the Mallard travelled nearly one and a half million miles. It stopped working on the railway lines in 1963 and is now on display at the National Railway museum in York.



Evening Star

The Evening Star was famous before it was even built in 1960 because it was to be the last steam locomotive to be made.

The Evening Star pulled heavy goods trains and carried passengers in its time. It often travelled at speeds of over 90 miles per hour.

The Evening Star stopped working for the railways in 1965.

The introduction of diesel locomotives in the 1960s meant that steam locomotives were used less and less. The golden age of the steam locomotives had come to an end.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Great Steam Locomotives

I can explain why some steam locomotives are historically significant, say how and why steam locomotives changed over time and describe the similarities and different differences of different steam locomotives.

Read the text carefully and then answer the following questions in detail.

1. When did the first steam locomotive passengers travel? _____

2. Which steam locomotive won the Rainhill Trials? _____

3. Who designed the Flying Scotsman? _____

4. What did the Flying Scotsman do in 1934? _____

5. What was the Mallard's world record speed? _____

6. Where is the Mallard today? _____

7. Why was the Evening Star special? _____

8. Which steam locomotive do you think is the best? Explain your answer using evidence from the text

Challenge: Using your knowledge and evidence from the text, draw and label one of the great steam locomotives you have learnt about.

LIVEWORKSHEETS