



Florence Nightingale

Florence Nightingale - also known as the 'Lady with the Lamp' - was the founder of modern nursing. She was also a statistician and social reformer who helped care for soldiers during the Crimean War. After the war, she set up the Nightingale School of Nursing, which aimed to formalise the education of nurses.

Top 10 Florence Nightingale Facts for Kids

- Florence Nightingale was born to a wealthy family on the 12th May 1820
- She was named Florence after the place of her birth: Florence in Italy.
- She lived in Derbyshire and Hampshire and she died in 1910.
- Florence Nightingale was a nurse and she saved the lives of many soldiers during the Crimean War (1854-56).
- She was dedicated to her profession and she worked hard day and night. She became known as the Lady with the Lamp as she carried a lamp to check on her patients throughout the night.
- She met Queen Victoria in 1833 when she was awarded the Royal Red Cross medal.
- She was the first-ever woman to be accepted into the Royal Statistical Society.
- Every year on the 12th of May, nurses celebrate International Nurses Day. This is held on Florence Nightingale's birthday!
- She opened a school of nursing and wrote a book called Notes for Nursing.
- King Edward VII gave Florence a special award called the Order of Merit in 1907. She was the first woman to receive this award and she changed the way that women were seen in the workplace.

Why is Florence Nightingale so famous?

Florence Nightingale changed the way that hospitals cared for their patients. Before, hospitals were overcrowded and dirty places with rats. This meant that germs and diseases were easily spread. There wasn't enough doctors or beds to go around, so often people didn't get the care they needed.

Florence Nightingale changed all of this by making hospitals cleaner places. She also trained more nurses to help care for patients. She made sure patients were well looked after and had good food to eat, which saved many lives.

How did Florence Nightingale change the way women were thought of in society?

At the time Florence was born, girls were not usually well educated. However, her father thought it was important that all girls had a good education and taught her subjects like mathematics, science and history.



Women at this time were often expected to marry and take care of the domestic duties at home. Florence Nightingale was different because she became highly educated and chose a career outside of the home.

In 1840, Nightingale begged her parents to let her study mathematics but her mother did not approve of this idea. Although William Nightingale loved mathematics and had bequeathed this love to his daughter, he urged her to study subjects more appropriate for a woman. After many long emotional battles, Nightingale's parents finally gave their permission and allowed her to be tutored in mathematics. Lessons included learning arithmetic, geometry and algebra and prior to Nightingale entering nursing, she spent time tutoring children in these subjects.

Nightingale's interest in mathematics extended beyond the subject matter. She used all her mathematical skills whilst transforming nursing in both military and civilian hospitals.

Using maths

Whilst in Turkey, Nightingale collected data and organised a record keeping system, this information was then used as a tool to improve city and military hospitals. Nightingale's knowledge of mathematics became evident when she used her collected data to calculate the mortality rate in the hospital. These calculations showed that an improvement of the sanitary methods employed would result in a decrease in the number of deaths. By February 1855 the mortality rate had dropped from 60% to 42.7%. Through the establishment of a fresh water supply as well as using her own funds to buy fruit, vegetables and standard hospital equipment, the mortality rate in the spring had dropped further to 2.2%.

Sample questions:

1. In what year was Florence Nightingale born?
2. What medal was she awarded by Queen Victoria?
3. What was Florence Nightingale's nickname?
4. What book did she write?
5. When she was a young lady, what did her parents want her to do with her life?

Challenge 2: Florence Nightingale was famous for her use of statistics in her work. Have a go at this statistics task. Remember to make your findings clear to others.



There are lots of different races and games that will go on in the Olympic Games.



Is there a race or game that you would like to be in?

Or

Do you have a favourite race or game that's part of the Olympic Games?

What about the rest of your class, do they have a favourite race or game?



Can you think of a way that would tell other classes what race or game is liked by most of your class?

Could you also think of a way to show what is least popular?

How would you do that?

Another thing that you may be able to do is to show other classes which races or games are most liked by your class.

