

## Great Scot - Eric Liddell 100

This resource is designed to celebrate the life of Eric Liddell, an inspirational Scottish athlete. Although born in China, Eric played rugby for Scotland, and was an Olympian for Great Britain. Eric Liddell won a gold medal in the 1924 Paris Olympics and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this win will be at the Paris Olympics in 2024. The values which defined Eric Liddell's life are passion, compassion and integrity. This resource is designed for learners at levels 1 and 2.

### Biography

Eric Henry Liddell was born in 1924, in China. His parents were Christian missionaries. Eric spent his school life in England, while his parents continued to live in China. Despite being born in China and educated in England, when the family came together they lived in Scotland, mainly in Edinburgh. Having shown himself to be a talented athlete during his school career, athletics and rugby played a large part in Eric's life when he came to Edinburgh University, in 1920, studying pure science.

In 1922, he played in seven rugby international games and scored four tries mainly due to his great speed as a sprinter. He also ran the 100 and 200 yard sprint races for Edinburgh University and for Scotland. During his time at university, he became known for being the fastest runner in Scotland.

In 1924, Eric took a break from university and competed in the Olympic Games in Paris. He ran the 200 metres race where he came third, gaining the bronze medal. In the 400 metres, he turned in an amazing performance, moving at such a pace that other runners fell trying to keep up. He won the gold medal, finishing in 47.6 seconds, which was an Olympic and world record. After competing in the USA, he returned to Edinburgh and graduated from university.

A committed Christian, Eric spent the remainder of his life working in China, along with his brother and parents.

### Resources

Wikipedia

[Eric Liddell - Wikipedia](#)

Eric Liddell Centre

[About Eric Liddell - The Eric Liddell Community](#)

Britannica

[Eric Liddell | British athlete | Britannica](#)

The Famous People

[Eric Liddell Biography - Facts, Childhood, Family Life & Achievements \(thefamouspeople.com\)](#)

### Experiences and outcomes

Having selected a significant individual from the past, I can contribute to a discussion on the influence of their actions, then and since.

SOC 1-06a

## **Possible Learning Activities**

A starting point for learning might be to watch a film produced for the Eric Liddell 100 celebrations which can be found at: [ericliddell.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EL100-Educational-Film-2023.mp4](http://ericliddell.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EL100-Educational-Film-2023.mp4)

Teachers may also choose to show some excerpts from the film Chariots of Fire, which is based on the life of Eric Liddell.

### Activity One

The Paris Olympics take place in Summer 2024. Use the PowerPoint presentation attached, to start an Olympics themed schools sports day. Schools could promote the values of passion, compassion and integrity in their activities.

It may be possible to choose an Eric Liddell 100, sports day champion/s. A learner/s who embodies the values of passion, compassion and integrity. Schools could use the attached PowerPoint to launch this at an assembly. The attached PowerPoint can also be used as an introduction for class activities.

### Activity Two

Learners could research the life of Eric Liddell and present their findings. The websites in the resources section should be helpful.

Learners could present this in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, a news report, or as a newspaper front page. They should try to find images to illustrate their report.

The report should include the following:

- Where and when Eric Liddell was born?
- Where did he spend his early life, and why was he there?
- When and where did he discover his talent for sport, and in which sport did he first excel?
- When and where were the Olympics in which Eric competed?
- In which events did he compete?
- Who were his competitors?
- Did he win and what were his times?
- Did Eric continue to compete in sport? If not what did he do?
- What was controversial about Eric Liddell and his approach to racing?

### Activity Three

The 'Legacy of Liddell' are the values which he held, of passion, compassion and integrity. This could be described as his legacy.

Firstly explore the idea of a 'legacy'. The dictionary has a number of definitions of the word legacy.

In pairs, learners could look up the meanings and then discuss what kind of legacy they think Eric has left.

Learners could continue to work in pairs and choose a figure from history and find out about their legacy, examples might include Martin Luther King, John F, Kennedy, Queen Elizabeth II.

Learners could consider their own life and think about what kind of legacy they would like to live on after them.