**Activity 5: Fire Station**

**Collection Areas:** The Fire Station, number 11 on the map.

**Curriculum Links:**

* ***The Arts (Drama):*** Developing Practical Knowledge, Developing ideas, communicating and Interpreting.
* ***English****:* Listening, Reading and Viewing, Speaking, Writing and Presenting.
* ***Social Sciences.***
* ***Technology:*** Nature of Technology.

**Topics/Themes:** Comparing past and present technology. History and development of organisations within our community.

**Resources Pack:** Firefighter costumes, hoses, “The Great Fire of Nelson” Story, Questions for Viewing, Guide for Teachers / Helpers

**Time estimation: The time for this will depend on the size of the groups, and how long it will take each group to develop their skit. Approx. 35- 40mins.**

**Goals:**

Students will be able to:

* Re-enact the story of ‘The Great Fire of Nelson’ in small groups.
* Create their own short drama skit in groups.
* Present their skit.

**Guide for teachers/helpers. What to do at this activity:**

1. Encourage students to look at the fire engines and outfits in the Fire Station.
2. Read students the true story of ‘The great fire of Nelson’.
3. Facilitate a discussion using the ‘questions for viewing’.
4. Put students into small groups. Give them a short amount of time to develop a short skit/play that is a re-enactment of ‘The Great Fire of Nelson’. Encourage students to make it fun and creative!
5. Students may need to be read the story again.
6. Give students enough time to develop their re-enactment skit.
7. Students will have access to some old Firefighter costumes and hoses which they can use when presenting their skits.
8. Students to present their skit to the others in the group, space for this is available on the road outside the fire station or on the grass next to the fire station.

**The Story:**

Early one morning on Tuesday 7th August 1866, Police Officers William Fitzgerald and William Davis were walking back to Nelson after their shift patrolling in The Wood. Suddenly, they saw flames coming out of a window on the second story of the Lord Nelson Hotel (corner of bridge and Collingwood Street). The Police Officers blew their whistles to sound the alarm! Constable Davis quickly ran into the Hotel and rescued some people who were trapped in the burning building. Constable Fitzgerald ran to the Fire station to raise the alarm by ringing the large bell on a tower. Luckily, the fire station was only a few minutes away from the fire, so he got there quickly! However, Constable Fitzgerald had a problem. When he arrived at the fire station, he realised the rope to pull the fire bell was broken!

Oh no! How would the Firefighters know they needed to come and fight the fire!? Constable Fitzgerald came up with an idea. He would have to climb up the tower to ring the bell himself! Finally, after 30minutes, he had managed to climb to the top of the tower and rung the bell. Only six Firefighters woke up and heard the bell and came to the rescue. The fire engines rushed to the fire, but they had another problem. There was nowhere to pump water to put the fire out! By now, the fire was huge and burning through many buildings. The firefighters found a nearby pond called Eel Pond (now known as the Queens Gardens) but, they had another problem. They didn't know how to get the pump to work! This was turning into a disaster as the fire was raging through many buildings and spreading quickly because of the wind. Finally, they got the pumps working and slowly managed to put out the fire. Eight days after this fire, the city folk of Nelson had a big meeting. They realised a lot went wrong during this fire, and they were lucky no one died! They decided to improve the fire service by training the firefighters and building water pumps throughout the city. Since then, technology has greatly improved the way Firefighters are alerted to and put out fires.

<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/nelson-evening-mail/1866/08/07/2>

**Questions for viewing:** (After being read the story,)

* Why was the fire such a disaster?
* How are Firefighters alerted to an emergency call outs now?
* How do you think Firefighters get their water to fight fires with now?
* What technology do we have now that supports Firefighters to do their job better and faster?