

Isabel knew the expedition was very risky for the children. 'The king must promise that the boys will be well looked after,' she insisted. So Balmis got a royal order for the boys.

The boys will be well treated, supported and educated until they have an occupation according to their class. These boys will be brought back to their hometowns.

Finally, Isabel decided to accept on one more condition: she wanted to go on the expedition with them. She also sent Dr Balmis a list of all the things the boys needed to take with them.

Each boy will be given 2 pairs of shoes, 6 shirts, a hat, 4 pairs of trousers, 3 jackets, 2 neckerchiefs, 3 handkerchiefs, a comb, a glass, a plate and a set of cutlery.



So in November 1803, the expedition set sail for New Granada on the *María Pita*. On board were 22 boys, Dr Balmis and his assistant, Dr Salvany, a few other nurses and doctors, Isabel Cendala and the crew. During the voyage the boys were healthy and well fed, and the ship was clean. Once a week the doctors took a small amount of pus from two boys they had vaccinated the week before, and used it to vaccinate another pair of boys.

Activities

4 Number the sentences for the vaccination procedure in the correct order.

Lift the scab and extract some pus.

Put cowpox pus into a person's arm. 1

Wait a week until there is a scab on the wound.

Put the pus into another person's arm.

The original destination of the *Maria Pita* was the port of La Guaira, but just as the ship was arriving, a tropical storm blew it further down the coast. Eventually the expedition arrived in Puerto Cabello, in what today is Venezuela.

There the boys got off the ship at last. They stayed in the governor's palace and played in the wonderful gardens. It was all so new and strange. The flowers were different, the birds were different and the weather was different! The children found the hot, humid climate quite uncomfortable.



A few days later Dr Balmis and Isabel took the boys into the town to begin the vaccination process. As the boys arrived at the square, they saw a group of people in chains. They asked Isabel who these people were and if they were criminals. 'These poor people are slaves. They're going to be sold in the market', explained Isabel. She thought about the horrors of this terrible practice and despised the slave traders for their cruelty.



Isabel decided to try to protect the boys as much as she could.

Activities

5 Find and underline eight irregular past tense verbs.  List their infinitive and past tense forms.

6 Compare the orphans and the slaves. Write *O* (orphans), *S* (slaves) or *B* (both).

a) They were sold.

b) They were badly treated.

c) They were separated from their families.

d) They were educated.

e) They were brought from another continent.

f) They had no control over their lives.

Story focus

1 Complete the sentences using *before* or *after*.

- a) The orphans had no contact with smallpox they left Spain.
- b) There was a smallpox epidemic in New Granada the vaccine arrived.
- c) The orphans were vaccinated they arrived in New Granada.
- d) The children in New Granada were vaccinated the orphans arrived.
- e) More people died of smallpox the vaccine arrived.
- f) The vaccination expedition went to the New Spain New Granada.

2 Answer the questions.

- a) Why did Dr Balmis go on the expedition?
.....
- b) Why did Isabel Cendala go on the expedition?
.....
- c) Why did the orphans go on the expedition?
.....

3 Choose a character and complete the sentence. Compare with a classmate.



Dr Balmis



Isabel

For the expedition was/
wasn't successful because

.....

.....

4 Answer the questions. Tick your reasons for question c) and discuss them with a classmate.

- a) Were the orphans asked if they wanted to take part in the expedition?
.....
- b) Were they asked if they wanted to go on a long voyage?
.....
- c) Was this right? because:

• the orphans had better food and housing. <input type="checkbox"/>	• the orphans weren't given a choice. <input type="checkbox"/>
• the orphans were used like glass bottles. <input type="checkbox"/>	• the orphans got a better education. <input type="checkbox"/>
• many lives in the Spanish colonies were saved. <input type="checkbox"/>	• the orphans were taken away from their home. <input type="checkbox"/>



At the end of the story we don't know what happened to the boys. Imagine you are one of the boys. Write a letter to the king petitioning for his help.

Puebla, November 1804

Your Majesty,

By the King's mercy and the grace of God we, the orphans of Galicia, are now living in a fine house in the city of Puebla. From the house, we can see snowy mountains. They're nothing like the mountains in our homeland, for these are volcanoes with smoke coming from the top.

We wish to thank our royal Benefactor for his gracious support. The teachers in Puebla follow the king's commands and now every one of us can read, write and do sums. The people here are kind and we have many friends among the local children.

The vaccination expedition continues under the guidance of Dr Balmis. Working with him as an assistant is our matron, Isabel Cendala. She has been our guidance and comfort since we left our home in Galicia. We humbly beg your Majesty to send her back to us here in Puebla.

Your obedient servants,
the orphans from Galicia

1 Use the key to underline and classify the sentences in the letter.

— a description — things to be thankful for — a petition

2 Answer the questions.

- a) Who wrote the letter?
- b) Who was the letter for?
- c) Where was the letter written from?
- d) When was the letter written?

3 Copy and complete the table using information from the story and your own ideas. Compare your table with a classmate.

The expedition was: ...	
good for the orphans.	bad for the orphans.

