

**National
Literacy
Trust**

Change your story

In partnership with



Marching Through Time

Join Sabrin, Grancha Terry and Elizabeth
on a Story Quest through Newport!



1 / 4

Chartist History Story Quest – Complete them all!

Dear Story Questers,

Hello and welcome!

This is one of several Story Quests across South East Wales, written especially for YOU. Each adventure introduces new characters exploring their local history, nature and brilliant buildings – and today, we're heading right into the heart of Newport city centre.

As you follow in our characters' footsteps, you won't just read the story ... you'll step inside it. There'll be riddles to solve, statues to study, letters to write, coins to design and powerful ideas to explore.

Today's adventure uncovers stories hidden in stone and brick – stories about ordinary people who helped change the world.

And remember, as Elizabeth might say:



**"When voices join and hearts agree,
Small steps can shape history."**

Once you've completed this Story Quest, there are more waiting for you. Can you complete them all?

This Story Quest takes place around: Newport city centre, South East Wales

Starting point: Unity, Prudence and Energy sculpture, Westgate Square, Commercial Road, Newport, NP20 1JN

Duration: Around 60–90 minutes

Activity level: A city centre stroll with plenty of stopping points. There is one set of steps, but a lift is available.

You will need:

- A pencil, pen or a notes app on a phone
- Something firm to lean on (a clipboard or notebook would work well)
- Your imagination
- A grown-up explorer (recommended!)
- Optional: coloured pencils for sketching and coin design – or colour them at home!

Acknowledgements

The Voices for the Future team would like to thank National Lottery Heritage Fund, Patrick Jones, Andy O'Rourke, Eden Gate, the Newport Rising Hub and Our Chartist History, Newport Museum, Trosol and the community in Newport for helping us deliver this project.

The National Literacy Trust is a registered charity no. 1116260 and a company limited by guarantee no. 5836486 registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in Scotland no. SC042944.



Meet Your Guides



Sabrin (age 11)

She loves playing games with her friends and looking after her guinea pig, Milo.

Grancha Terry, Sabrin's grandfather

He's lived in Newport his whole life and knows stories hidden in every street.

Elizabeth

A girl who lived in Newport ... nearly 200 years ago. Today, she's ready to tell her story.

Grancha Terry stops in front of the Unity, Prudence and Energy sculpture.

“Here we are,” he says.

Sabrin sighs. “We’re stopping here? It’s just a statue.”

“It’s far more than a statue. Stand back and watch history come to life!” he winks and wiggles his fingers.



OVER TO YOU

MAGIC SPELLS

Write down as many magic words as you can think of to help Grancha Terry bring history to life:

The silver ribbons of the sculpture twist upward. At the top, three powerful words curve through the air:

Unity. Prudence. Energy.

And then ... one of the children in the sculpture wiggles her fingers.

“Oh! That’s better!” she says cheerfully. “It’s hard staying still for so long.”

“I’m Elizabeth,” she smiles.



“Hi Elizabeth, I’m Terry, and this is Sabrin. Tell us about Newport when you were growing up.”

Elizabeth explains how, in the 1830s, life wasn’t fair. Only a few wealthy men could vote. Working people had no say.

“So,” Elizabeth says proudly, “we marched together.”

Grancha Terry nods. “That movement was called Chartism. Ordinary people asking for fairer rules.”

Elizabeth squeezes Sabrin’s hand.

“Unity means standing close together. Prudence means thinking carefully. Energy means never giving up.”

“On 4 November 1839, I walked with my dad from our home through Newport, to the Westgate Hotel!” she explains.



“I’ll show you ... follow me!”

FACT FILE

The Chartists were ordinary working people: miners, ironworkers, labourers and shopkeepers who believed Britain’s political system was unfair.

OVER TO YOU

LOOK LIKE A STATUE

Remember Elizabeth's three explanations of unity, prudence and energy. Can you pose close together, facing the same direction and look determined?

How does it feel standing like that?

Why do you think standing together might help people feel brave?

If one of the statues in Newport came to life for you, which figure would you most like to speak to?

What would you ask them?

What might they tell you about Newport long ago?

WORD DETECTIVE

Use a dictionary (or ask a grown-up!) to define:

Chartism

Rights

Unity

Prudence

Energy

Grancha Terry says:

“These words still matter today. Share your definitions with someone and ask what they mean to them today, you might get some interesting answers!”



Now it's time to follow Elizabeth's footsteps...

Head along High Street toward a tall brick building that once witnessed one of the most dramatic nights in Newport's history. If you look up, it has **WESTGATE HOTEL** written on the arch above the door.



"It looks ordinary," Sabrin says.

Elizabeth shakes her head. "It's far from ordinary. On that night of 4 November 1839, thousands of marchers arrived here after walking through the dark from the valleys.

They wanted fairness. They wanted their leaders who had been captured to be released. They wanted a voice."

FACT FILE

One of the main leaders in South Wales was the former mayor of Newport, John Frost. He believed strongly that Britain needed to change to include those who weren't born into rich families.

On 4 November 1839, John Frost and his fellow Chartists were angry because some of the Chartists had been arrested and were being held in the Westgate hotel. They marched through the valleys to Newport, to rescue them.

Sabrin points to small marks in the brick.

“Are those bullet holes?” she asks.

“No, those are just scratches,” explains Grancha Terry. “But inside there are pillars with real bullet holes from that night. You can sometimes see them when the doors are open to the public.”

Elizabeth nodded.

“People risked their lives to be heard.”

Sabrin touches the wall gently.

“They weren’t troublemakers,” she says slowly. “They just wanted fairness.”

Grancha Terry smiles.

“Exactly.”



FACT FILE

When the marchers reached the hotel, the soldiers inside shot at them. At least 22 Chartists were killed, and many more were injured.

OVER TO YOU

WRITE A LETTER

Imagine you are a young person in Newport in 1839 watching the march.

Write a short letter to the Chartists. You might include:

- Questions about why they are marching
- Words of encouragement
- What you would ask for if you were them
- How you feel (excited, nervous, proud)
- What would you notice? The noise? The mud? The shouting?

DRAWING

Sketch what you imagine the march looked like.

A large white rectangular area for drawing, framed by a thick green border. The entire page is set against a background with a light beige top half and a light blue bottom half, separated by a horizontal line. The green border is composed of two parallel lines, creating a wide frame around the drawing area.

“There’s more history waiting,” Grancha Terry says.

“Let’s go to the museum and I’ll show you!” Elizabeth skips off.



OVER TO YOU

5 MINUTE WALK TO THE NEXT STOP

Head up the street, in the opposite direction to the statue, until you get to Lloyds Bank. Here, turn left and walk down to John Frost Square. The Newport Library, Museum and Art Gallery is on your right – head on inside and up to the first floor!



Grancha Terry points to a display case with two coins in.

“Chartist coins.”

Elizabeth glows softly.

“Coins weren’t just money,” she explains. “They were tiny secret messages that could pass from person to person. If someone was given one as change, it might have inspired them. They might have thought, ‘I’m not alone’. Some coins were carved with words like HOPE.”

“They’re like secret messages for the world!” said Sabrin.



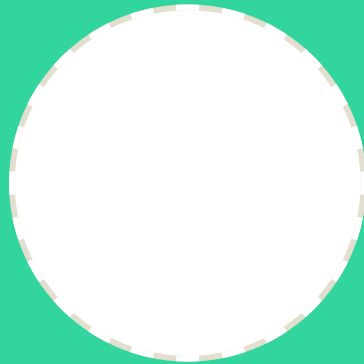
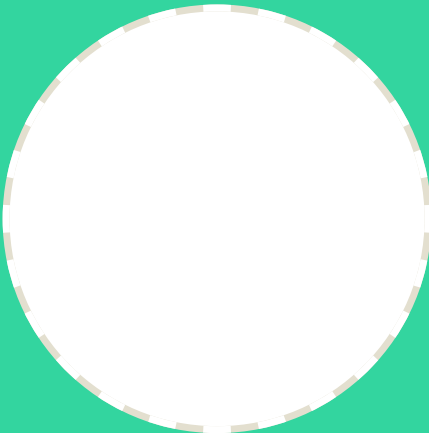
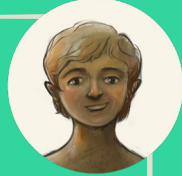
Elizabeth and Terry both nod.

“Yes!” Grancha Terry agreed. “And the messages mattered. The people who made these coins weren’t rich or powerful, but they were clever. They wanted everyone to know: We deserve fairness, justice and a voice.”

OVER TO YOU

MAKE YOUR OWN COIN MESSAGE

“Let’s make our own coins! Think of a message you want to share with the world. It might be peace, kindness or fun. Remember, even small messages can spread big ideas. Draw your message inside the coin below!”



TAKE A LOOK AROUND THE MUSEUM

“Museums are a fantastic and fun way to interact with history. Did you know that most museums are free to enter, and perfect for rainy days? Most towns have a museum – how many have you been to?”



Take a look around the rest of Newport Museum. Maybe you’d like to check out the rest of the 1839 Chartist uprising exhibit before continuing on your adventure!

Elizabeth tugs Sabrin's sleeve.

"Come on, I want to show you more messages, but this time they're carved in stone!"

OVER TO YOU

TWO MINUTE WALK TO NEXT STOP

Step outside and turn right. Walk straight until you reach the steps leading down to Usk Plaza. Carefully make your way down the steps, using the lift if needed.

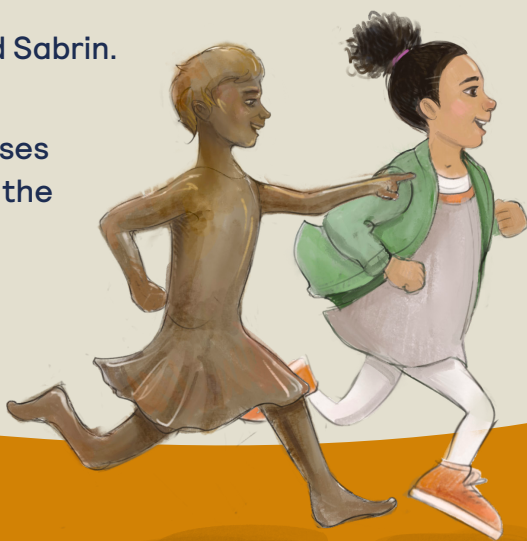
Elizabeth runs to the large stone steps.

"Look!" she calls. "The writing!"

Carved into the steps are the Six Points of the People's Charter.

"What do they mean?" asked Sabrin.

Elizabeth claps. "Each step represents one of the promises we asked for." She points to the first numbered carving.



“One, votes for every man. Back then, only rich men could vote. Working men like my dad had no say at all.

Two, the ballot. That means voting in private so no one could threaten you or tell you how to vote.

Three, no property qualification. We believed you shouldn’t need to own a house or land to have a voice.

Four, payment of members. Members of Parliament, the people in charge, should be paid. That way normal people could be leaders, not just the ones who are already rich.

Five, equal constituencies. That’s a hard word, but it just means fairer areas for voting. Some places had thousands of people and others only a few, but they got the same power. We wanted it to be equal.

And six, annual parliaments. This meant yearly elections, so leaders had to listen to the people or be replaced!”



FACT FILE

The Chartists didn't succeed straight away, but since 1839 five points of The People's Charter have become law! Although we don't have annual Parliamentary elections, we have one approximately every five years.

OVER TO YOU

CHANGING THE WORLD

Finish this sentence: "If I were in charge for one day, I would..."

TEN PROMISES FOR A FAIRER WORLD

The Chartists had six promises.

Can you add four more to make ten?

They could be about:

- Being listened to
- Staying safe
- Looking after the planet
- Fairness at school
- Kindness
- Having fun



“Big changes often begin with small voices. If you can imagine a fairer world, you’re already helping to build it.”



Sabrin pauses. "It says votes for all men ... what about women?"

Elizabeth's smile softens. "We marched too. But change comes in steps."

"The Chartists opened the door. Later on, others marched for women to vote too," Grancha Terry explains. He turns to Sabrin. "When you're sixteen, you'll be able to vote in Wales."

Sabrin's eyes widen.

"Because people like Elizabeth believed your voice matters."

"That's how change happens. Remember our key words from the statue?" asks Elizabeth.

Sabrin nods. "First comes unity. People standing together for a cause."

Terry joins Sabrin, slipping his hand into hers. "Then prudence," he adds. "Thinking carefully, planning and choosing the right moment."

Elizabeth skips over and holds Sabrin's other hand. "And energy. Keeping going, even when it's hard."

"I understand now!" Sabrin beams. "Just like the Chartists, we can make change too."



FACT FILE

After the Chartist Uprising of 1839, John Frost and two other leaders were arrested and charged with high treason. That was an extremely serious crime, the same charge used for people (like Guy Fawkes!) who were trying to overthrow the government. The punishment was brutal: they were sentenced to death!

After many public protests, their punishment was changed from execution to being sent to work in harsh conditions all the way in Australia.

Nearly 18 years later, in 1857, John Frost received a full pardon and was allowed to return to Britain. He lived until age 93 and continued to support political change for the rest of his life.



We hope you enjoyed marching through time with Sabrin, Grancha Terry and Elizabeth.

Before you leave:

- Revisit any stops you'd like to spend more time at
- Share your coin designs
- Take a photo in front of your favourite spots
- Visit our website for details of other Story Quests in South Wales

And remember ... you don't have to be grown-up to make a difference. The next chapter of history starts with YOU.

See you on your next Story Quest adventure!

A blank sheet of lined paper with a gold border and 20 horizontal blue lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. The paper is white and the background is a light gray grid.