

# The British Armed Forces

...and their history

WALT understand the role  
of the British Armed Forces



# Who Are the Armed Forces?

The British armed forces consists of:

The  
British  
Army

The  
Royal  
Navy

The  
Royal  
Air Force

Together, they make up the military, whose task it is to protect and defend the United Kingdom and other countries who share our Queen. They also help with peace keeping and aid all over the world.



# Who's in Charge?

The Queen is in charge of the armed forces and her title is 'Commander-in-Chief'.

However, as head of the Government, it is the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Defence and head of the Ministry of Defence, that make the important decisions about the armed forces.



# Chiefs of Staff

Each part of the armed forces has a professional commander, who is responsible for its effectiveness and the morale of the servicemen.

	British Army	Royal Navy	RAF
Head	Chief of the General Staff	The First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff	Chief of the Air Staff
Who is it?	General Sir Nicholas Carter	Admiral Sir Philip Jones	Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier



# How Many People

All the forces have regular personnel, who do all the usual things that are expected.

Reserves are used in case there is a big emergency.

Force	Regular People	Reserves
Army	92 000	20 480
Navy	33 450	1940
Air Force	35 030	1500

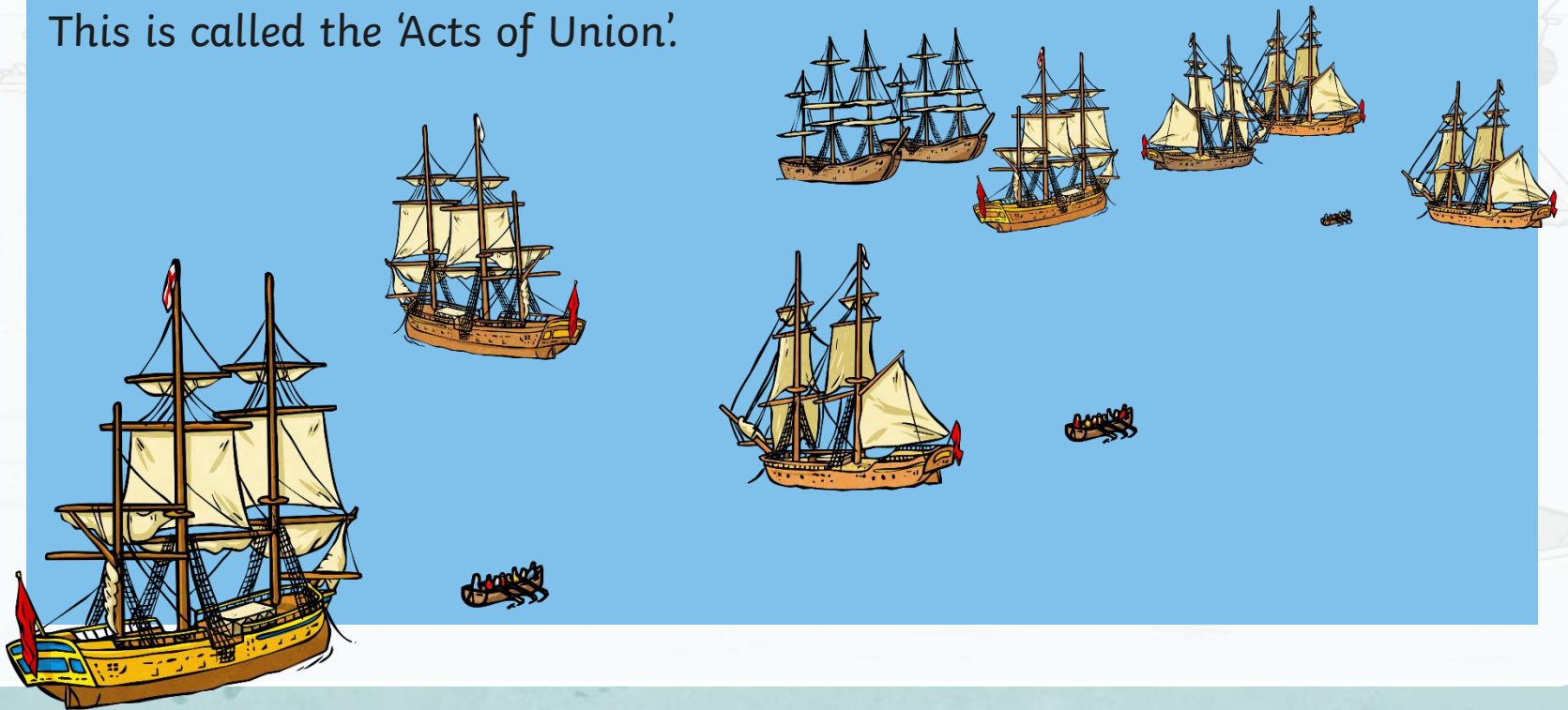
These numbers are from the end of 2015.

# When Did They Start?

Since medieval times, Scotland and England have had armies and navies commanded by the King or Queen of the country.

However, in 1707, both the Scottish and English Governments passed acts to join their forces together.

This is called the 'Acts of Union'.



# Early Wars

In the 1700s and 1800s, Britain was in conflict with France and other neighbouring countries over trading and who owned what countries.

These conflicts included:

1756-1763	The Seven Years' War
1792-1802	The French Revolutionary Wars
1803-1815	The Napoleonic Wars, including the victory of Trafalgar in 1805, when the Royal Navy won, led by Horatio Nelson aboard his ship HMS Victory.

# The British Empire

After the Napoleonic Wars, Great Britain was the most powerful country in the world, governing over the British Empire.

This time was known as 'Pax Britannia'.

British armed forces in many countries were like a global police force. Britain's Navy controlled most of the seas and trade routes around the world.





# The Rise of Germany

At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Russia was less of a threat, as Germany was growing in strength.

The tension between European countries led to the First World War (1914-1918).



During the Second World War (1939-1945), approximately 39 000 Commonwealth troops lost their lives.

# Towards Peacekeeping

In 1949, after the Second World War, British Forces were involved in creating NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization).



The 28 members of NATO (including UK and USA) have agreed to support each other in case they are attacked.

For example, if another country attacks Norway, then our British armed forces would help defend Norway.

# The British Army

The British Army is made up of many different groups of soldiers, who serve our country in different ways. The groups all have different roles, from medical roles to engineers, catering and musicians.



The British Army work in the UK and all around the world in their duties associated with peacekeeping, fighting terrorism and providing aid.





# What Do All the Group Names Mean?

The British armed forces consists of

This chart shows the different names for each of the groups of soldiers as they join together and get bigger until they make an 'army'.

Squad  
4 – 10 Soldiers

Battalion  
(3 - 5 Companies)  
500 – 600 Soldiers

Corps  
(2 - 5 Divisions)

Platoon  
(3 - 4 Squads)  
16 – 40 Soldiers

Brigade  
(3 or more Battalions)  
3 000 – 5 000 Soldiers

Company  
(3 - 4 Platoons)  
100 – 200 Soldiers

Division  
(3 Brigades)  
10 000 – 18 000 Soldiers

Field Army  
(2 - 5 Corps)

# Household Cavalry

The Army can be seen at many official events in the UK including royal processions.

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, who are the soldiers on horseback, escort the Queen and perform royal duties.





# The SAS

The SAS (Special Air Service) Regiment is a corps of the British Army and a part of the United Kingdom Special Forces (UKSF).

They are some of the most highly trained soldiers and have to undergo gruelling training in order to join. Out of 200 who take the training, only around 30 pass.

In July 2016, the Government lifted the ban on women joining the SAS.

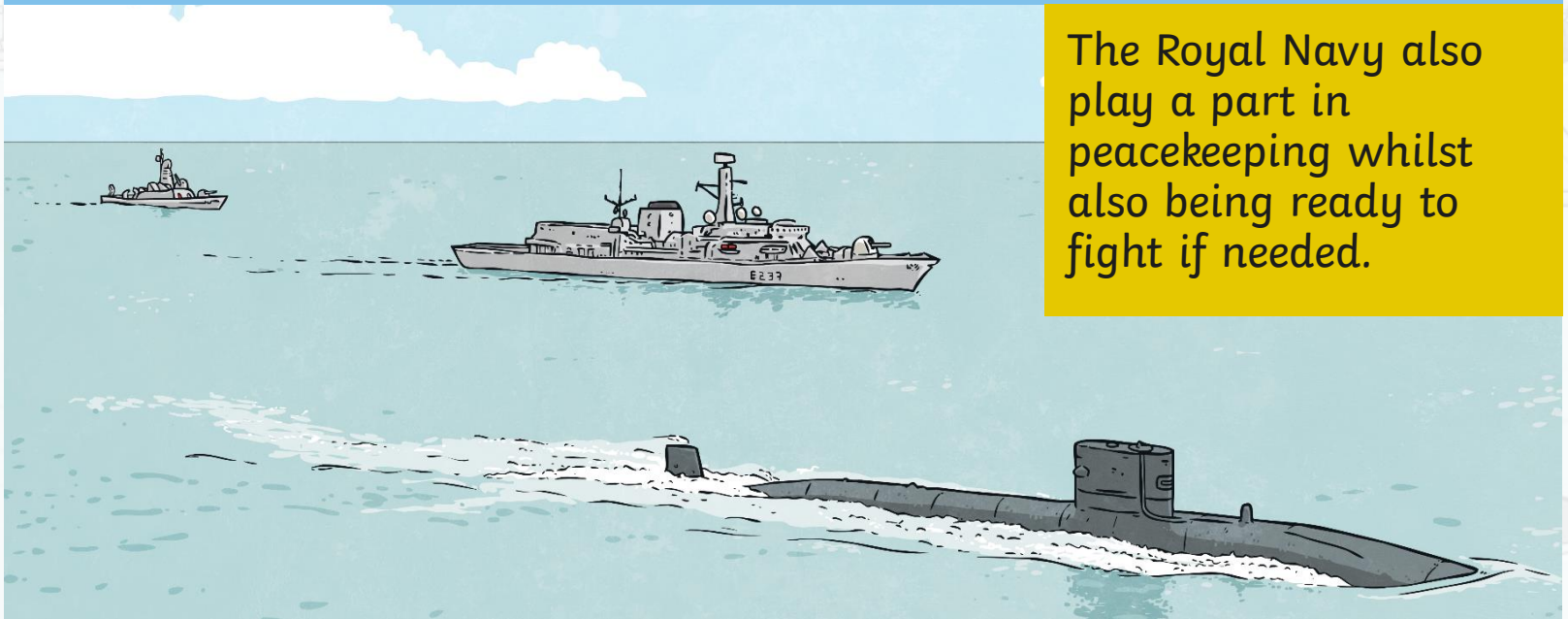


# The Royal Navy

The Royal Navy is a very important force for the UK, as we are an island, we need to keep our seas safe.

Part of the defence of our country is the submarines that keep our nuclear missiles.

The Royal Navy also play a part in peacekeeping whilst also being ready to fight if needed.



# The Royal Marines

There are about 7000 Royal Marines who are part of the Royal Navy.

Royal Marine Commandos are known to be one of the world's best forces. They are always on high alert to be ready to get to anywhere in the world quickly.





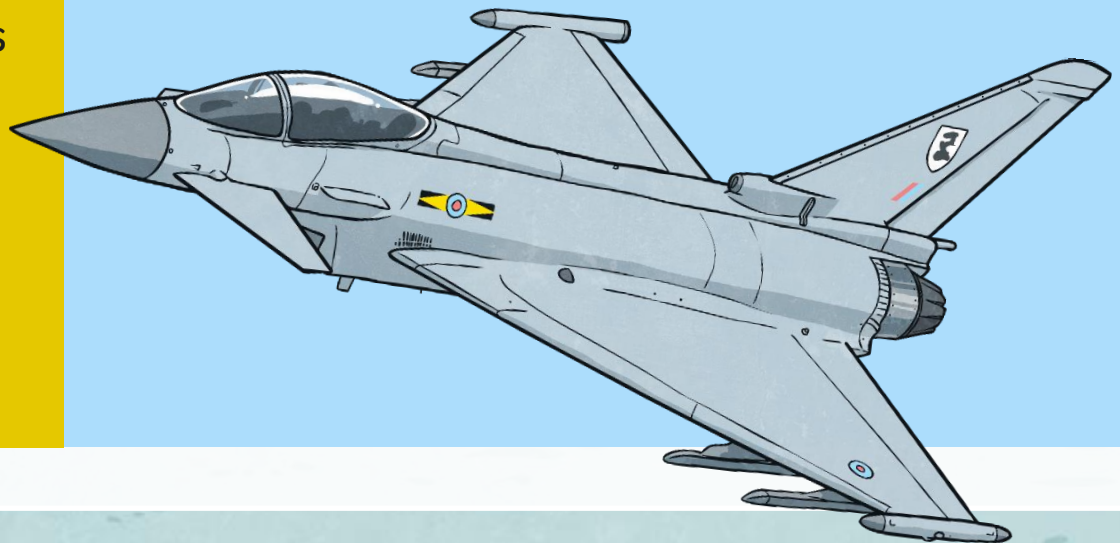
# The Royal Air Force (RAF)

The last of the three forces to be formed, in 1918, was the Royal Air Force, because aeroplanes were invented after ships.

Their motto is:

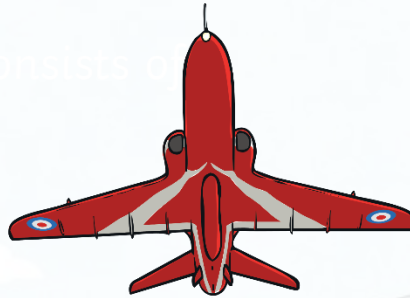
**Per ardua ad astra** which means:  
'through struggle to the stars'.

The RAF fought in every battle of the Second World War, its most famous battle being the Battle of Britain in 1940.

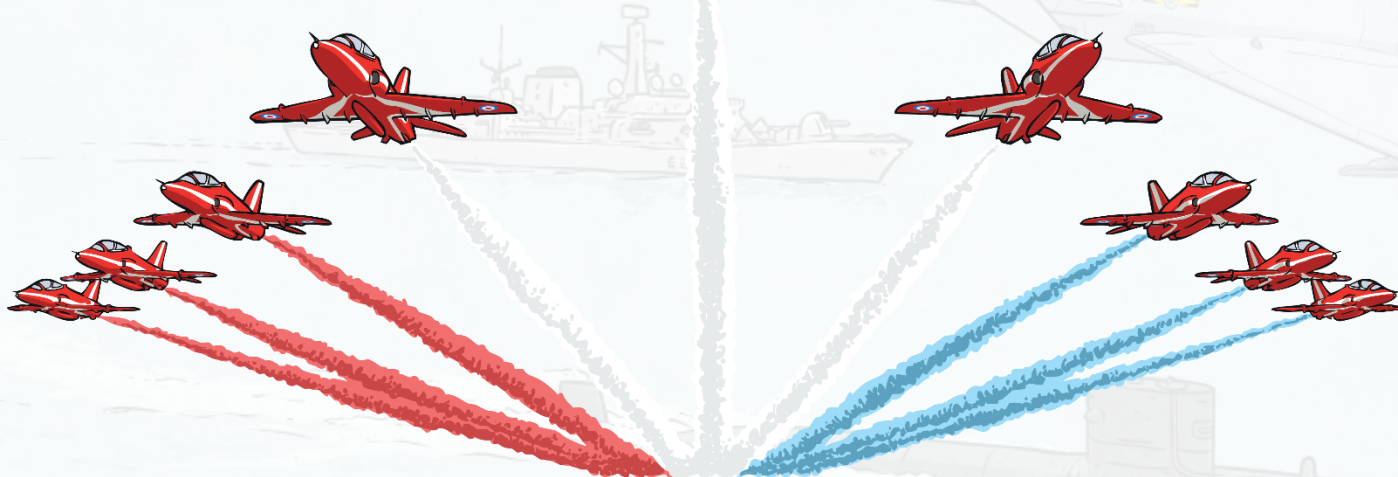


# The Red Arrows

The Red Arrows are part of the Royal Air Force. They have been the official display team since 1965.

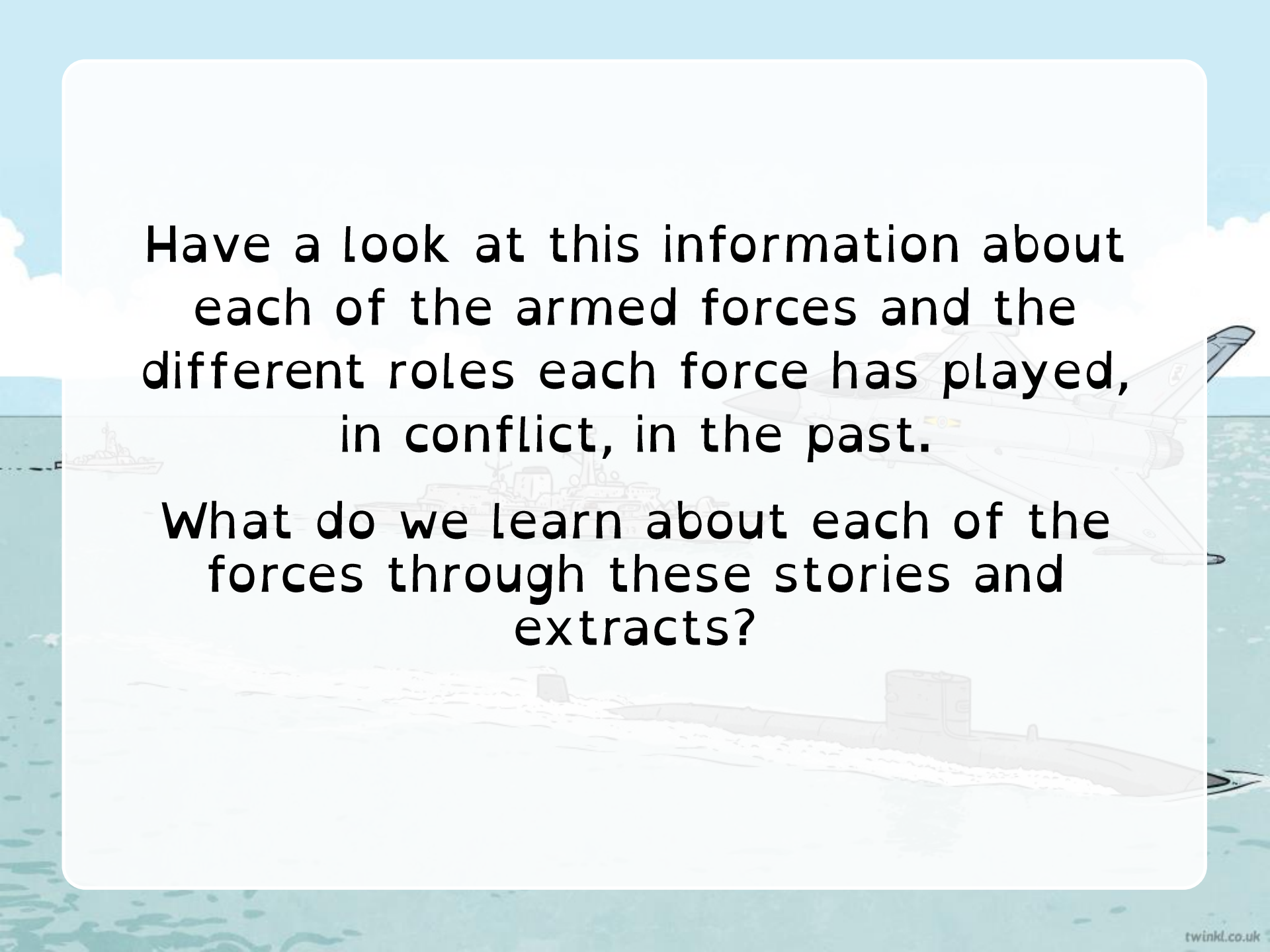


They are amazing to watch, but they are also there to show how good our armed forces can be as well as encourage people to join up to the British armed forces.



They are known around the world as the very best and show excellence, precision and the best of British.



The background features a light blue sky with soft white clouds. Below the sky, there is a stylized illustration of the sea in shades of teal and blue. In the upper right, a grey fighter jet is shown in flight. In the lower right, a grey submarine is depicted on the water's surface, leaving a white wake. In the lower left, a small grey naval ship is visible. The text is presented in a large, bold, black font within a white rounded rectangle.

**Have a look at this information about each of the armed forces and the different roles each force has played, in conflict, in the past.**

**What do we learn about each of the forces through these stories and extracts?**

**Your task today is to choose one of the armed forces (Army, Navy or RAF) and carry out research into that particular force and the role they have played in British conflict.**

**Next lesson, you will need to write an argument as to why your force has contributed the most / had the greatest impact on British conflict.**

