

# Activity: Introductory session

History  
Years (3/4)

## ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

*As with all of our activities, this is designed to complement the work done in school – it is not meant to be a complete history unit.*

The group arrives at the base room, and is introduced to the subject and the day, including:

- introductions and safety messages
- issue of I.D. cards and ration books (as appropriate)
- discussion of the need for security
- discussion about evacuation and evacuees

## WHERE THE ACTIVITY FITS IN

### to a visit to Beaumanor

The introduction ensures that everybody (including teachers and parents) starts with the same level of basic knowledge. Learning during the rest of the day is built on this knowledge base. The visit also includes a wartime schoolroom, playground games and songs, ethical discussions and, where appropriate, research of primary historical sources (newspapers, oral testimony, etc.).

### to the QCA scheme

**History unit 9**      What was it like for children in the Second World War?

## ADAPTING THE ACTIVITY FOR A DIFFERENT AGE GROUP

Year 5 and 6 children could:

- consider the messages given in the posters of the time and explore the concept of propaganda
- read local newspaper reports about the evacuated children and how they got on in the area (*on the Beaumanor CD*).

## PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if the children have learned:

- about evacuation.
- about air raids and the need to carry gas masks.
- some contemporary slang expressions, such as “moaning minnie”, spiv, etc.
- about acceptable behaviour, such as ladies before gentlemen, hats off indoors, etc.

## VOCABULARY

In this activity, children will have opportunities to use:

- words associated with evacuation, *eg. evacuation, evacuee, rationing, evacuation areas, reception areas and neutral areas, foster parents.*
- words associated with feelings, *eg. empathy, sympathy, frightened, panic.*
- words associated with geography, *eg. London, Sheffield, Southampton, Liverpool, countryside.*

## RESOURCES

- Base room, I.D. cards, Ration books, pencils, posters, wartime music.

## EXPECTATIONS

### At the end of this activity, due to age or ability

<i>most children will:</i>	understand the need for evacuation, I.D. cards and Ration books.
<i>some children will not have made so much progress and will:</i>	understand what an evacuee is and why they must carry an I.D. card.
<i>some children will have progressed further and will:</i>	understand about evacuation and be able to empathise with the feelings and fears of real wartime children evacuated to the countryside. They will also understand the paranoia about spies and saboteurs and the need to stop the public panicking.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

### In addition to the 'Group Visits - General Risk Assessment', the following specific risks have been identified

Hazard	Risk control
Walking to the base room	Children are escorted, by the safest route, to whichever base room is allocated to them.
Fire evacuation procedures	Leaders and children are instructed in the fire procedure for the room. In each room there are marked fire exits and information about where to assemble in the event of a fire.
Safety around the grounds	Children are told about the roads and the courtyard, and are expressly warned about being careful while near them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES CHILDREN LEARN	ACTIVITY	LEARNING OUTCOMES CHILDREN	POINTS TO NOTE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About behaviour and good manners, appropriate to a WW2 child.</li> </ul>	<p>Before they enter the base room, children are told about gentlemen allowing ladies to go first and about taking their hats off on entering a room. Once in the room boys are told about walking on the outside of the pavement and raising their hats to ladies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are calmed down and start to enter into their role of the day. We do treat this quite seriously</li> </ul>	<p>They are told that these things are a sign of good breeding and reflect upon their school and upbringing. This idea could be expanded later to explore other notions of courtesy and good manners.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About safety while at Beaumanor.</li> </ul>	<p>The group is seated and welcomed to Beaumanor in 1939. Children are told about the fire precautions and safety on roads. They are also told about toilets and where to leave bags, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/a</li> </ul>	<p>There is nowhere children can get to which is out of bounds. There is a fence all the way around the site so it isn't possible to wander off-site accidentally.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About spies and I.D. cards</li> </ul>	<p>The group is told that no more can be said about the site for security reasons unless the leader is satisfied that there are no spies present. I.D. cards are issued and filled in and an explanation of them is given.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the regulations and paranoia present at the start of the war.</li> </ul>	<p>We issue separate child and adult I.D. cards which everyone takes home afterwards. Residential groups are issued with ration books as well.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About evacuation.</li> </ul>	<p>If time permits, the leader starts a general discussion about evacuation and its causes. Lots of the terminology is used and explained and groups are pointed at ways of researching evacuation in their local area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>And adults become quite knowledgeable about the causes of evacuation and its effects on the population.</li> </ul>	<p>We tell the children that they are probably from Sheffield as this is where most evacuees to the Loughborough area came from. We have lots of contemporary newspaper articles about evacuees on the C.D.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About the structure of the day's programme.</li> </ul>	<p>All of the day's activities are explained in some detail. Groups are organised and the visiting leaders are briefed about their roles during the day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/a</li> </ul>	<p>The programme is adjusted to fit in with bus times, weather, etc.</p>