

Activity: Wartime Spy Mystery

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 finds clues and tries to work out the identity of the German spy who has infiltrated Beaumanor, including:

- map reading their way around the grounds to find the clues
- reading the statements of the six suspects
- comparing what the suspects said that they did with their real movements as evidenced by the clues

WHERE THE ACTIVITY FITS IN

to a visit to Beaumanor

an exciting activity, which gives the wartime theme an outdoor education dimension. It reinforces map reading and group work and gives the school lots of literacy follow-up work. It complements the BBC "Spywatch" broadcasts which many schools use as a focus to their topic. The visit also includes a wartime schoolroom, an air raid shelter experience, 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?

Geography

ADAPTING THE ACTIVITY FOR A DIFFERENT AGE GROUP

Year 5 and 6 children could:

- use the mystery as a model for writing their own mystery back in school.
- Investigate more complex ways of gathering evidence such as plaster casts, paper chromatography, microscope examinations.

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if the children have learned:

- The wartime history of Beaumanor
- Some wartime slang expressions
- Basic concepts of map reading

VOCABULARY

In this activity, children will have opportunities to use:

- words associated with Beaumanor, eg. *spy, secret, radio, enigma, code, message, spiv*
- words associated with map reading, eg. *north, orientate, direction, route*
- words associated with the investigation, eg. *deduce, evidence, suspect, clues, compare,*

RESOURCES

- Workbooks, clues, torches.

EXPECTATIONS

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

most children will:

Have found the clues and answered the questions in the work book. They will understand the problem and be ready to read the suspects' statements when they get back to school.

some children will not have made so much progress and will:

Have been shown where the clues are and been helped to write answers to the questions in the work book.

some children will have progressed further and will:

Have found the clues, read some of the statements and be starting to draw conclusions about the identity of the spy.

RISK ASSESSMENT

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

Hazard	Risk control
Groups in the grounds	Children are instructed to stay in their working teams at all times and not to split up. A finishing time is established and the signal – an air raid siren – is demonstrated. Beaumanor and visiting staff patrol the grounds while the groups are searching for clues.
Working at night	All groups are equipped with torches and made aware of the location of adults during the event.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES CHILDREN LEARN	ACTIVITY	LEARNING OUTCOMES CHILDREN	POINTS TO NOTE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The background to the mystery. 	<p>The group sits in the base room (the Armoury if space permits) and the history of Beaumanor during the war is briefly explained.</p> <p>The mystery is explained and all relevant facts are given out.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radio interception is explained. The role of the A.T.S. and the use of despatch riders to transfer messages to Bletchley Park is outlined. 	<p>Although the actual story is fictional, the background to the mystery is genuine.</p> <p>We tell the story as factually as possible and treat it as though it is completely genuine – without actually saying so.</p> <p>We suggest that the children can help us to decide whether the person arrested, really did the crime.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to conduct themselves safely while out in the grounds. 	<p>The group is seated and safe practice is explained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are put into groups and made aware of safety rules. 	<p>We always work in groups, preferably of around 4 to 5 children.</p> <p>They are instructed to always stay together and to return when they hear the siren.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What the clues are. 	<p>Groups are allowed out into the grounds to find the clues and answer the questions in their booklets.</p> <p>At the end of the time children return to the base room.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clues are found, questions are answered and children return. 	<p>Staff patrol the area while the search is in progress and help children as necessary. Occasionally, clues have to be replaced.</p> <p>Groups are checked as they return and numbers are counted. If necessary, children are searched for.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About the suspects and what they said happened during the robbery. 	<p>Children read the statements of the suspects and compare them with the clues found in the grounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are allowed to sit in their groups and discuss the mystery and their solution of it. 	<p>Staff mix with the groups and help, where necessary, with the reading and deduction.</p> <p>Time is adjusted to suit the capabilities of the children.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who was arrested and whether they worked out the identity of the spy. 	<p>Children sit back in the base room and in a general discussion of the mystery, the correct conclusion is reached.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are prompted and steered, where necessary, until they arrive at a conclusion. 	<p>Groups who correctly identified the spy are congratulated, then everyone is congratulated on being close and working well as a team.</p>