






Changing Britain

vol 1: 1948–1969

Key to interactive features

Press Teacher's Resources box right to go straight to Contents page. Click on any item in the Contents to go to that page. You will also find yellow arrows throughout that allow you to:

-  **1 A** go to worksheet
-  go back to previous page
-  go forward to next page
-  go back to contents
-  go back to information for that topic

Teacher's Resources

Multimedia resources can be found
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Lisa Magloff

Curriculum Visions

**A CVP Teacher's Resources
Interactive PDF**

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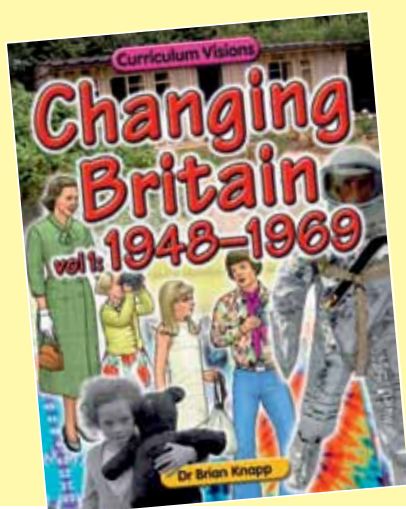
Section 1: Resources

Welcome to the Teacher's Resources for 'Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969' Revised Edition.

The Changing Britain resources we provide are in a number of media:

1

The 48 page Curriculum Visions 'Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969' Revised Edition.



2

The 32 page Explorers title, 'Exploring Britain vol 1: 1948–1969'.



3

Volume 2 both 48 page and 32 page editions. First World and Second World War titles are also available.



3

The Second World War PosterCard Portfolio and Picture Gallery.



4

You can buy the supersaver packs that contain all four Changing Britain titles, or various combinations of the two editions and volumes, along with the Teacher's resources (what you are reading).



5

Our Learning Centre at **www.curriculumvisions.com**

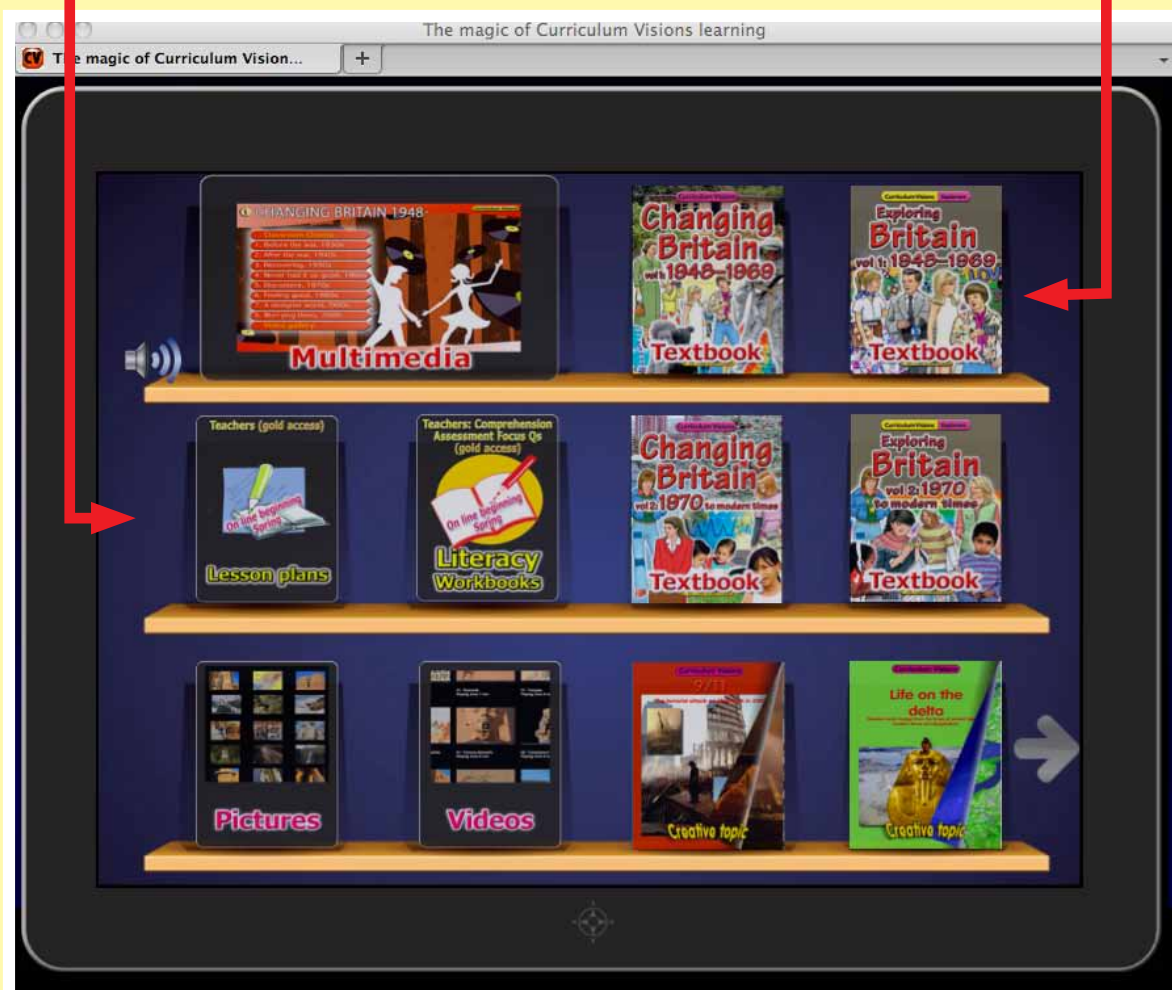
has almost everything you need to teach your primary curriculum in one convenient Virtual Learning Environment.

You can use support videos, e-books, picture and video galleries, plus additional Creative Topic books, graphic books called Storyboards, and workbooks. Together they cover all major curriculum areas.

All topics are easily accessible, and there is a built-in context search across all media.



You can also use our printed student books online as part of your subscription to the Learning Centre. There page-turning versions of every printed Curriculum Visions book for use on your whiteboard.



▼ The Changing Britain home screen



▲ 'Classroom cinema' video



▲ Web site page



► Web site caption

Matching the curriculum

These resources of books and web site aim to ensure that students:

- Find out about how people lived and about important events between 1948–1969.
- Make links across different periods of history.
- Learn about different aspects of British and world history.
- Have the chance to discuss why things happened or changed, and the results.
- Can carry out historical enquiries using a variety of sources of information, and look at how and why the past is interpreted in different ways.
- Can use their understanding of chronology and historical terms when talking or writing about the past.
- Learn about the experiences of people in the recent past, and why they acted as they did.
- Learn how events from the past can be portrayed in many different ways.
- See how people in the recent past have changed the society in which they lived.
- Develop respect for evidence, and the ability to be critical of the evidence.
- Develop an understanding of some of the ways in which British culture and society changed in the years 1948–1969.
- Understand, and adjust for some popular myths and stereotypes.

Furthermore, because history provides so many opportunities for improving communication skills, the resources aim to provide a body of material that can be used to reinforce English studies and which could, for example, be used in a literacy hour or numeracy hour.

Last, and by no means least, these history resources can be linked to many other subjects, particularly maths, English, art and through the use of science where appropriate.

Curriculum Visions products are renowned as a successful way to help teachers to get children of all abilities, ages and ethnic backgrounds to develop confidence in themselves, and to make the most of their abilities through the wide range of materials, the different levels of reading skills represented on each page, and through the wide range of tasks in the photocopiable worksheets.

It should be noted that this material has been designed to be accessible by those teaching children in years 3/4 or 5/6 (SP4/5 or 6/7). This can be done with the help of the teacher by selective use of the worksheet material and by using the information in the student book to go into the appropriate level of depth.





Section 2: Background and photocopiable worksheets

Introduction

Each unit of the student book is supported by background information and photocopiable worksheets in this *Teacher's Resources*. They have been designed to be a fast and efficient way of working through the study of post-war Britain and have life changed in this period.

Variety and selection

Each photocopiable worksheet is supported by information on its facing page which includes a resources list (where appropriate), suggestions on how the worksheet may be used and outcomes that may be achieved. There are probably more worksheets than you would use with any particular class so it is important to have a look through them all, and select which ones you wish to use to support your approach.

Linking background and worksheet to the student book

Each chapter of background information and each set of worksheets have been given a unique number which is in a circle at the top of the sheet. This is related to the number of the chapter in the book. For example, pages 4 to 7 is the chapter 'Before the Second World War'. Each numbered worksheet is then also labelled A, B, and so on. At the head of each worksheet are the relevant pages of *Changing Britain vol 1: 1948-1969* for easy reference for students. They may find it useful to look back in the student book to help them with the activity on the worksheet. If the worksheet is testing understanding or evaluation of the information in the chapter, it will be essential for the students to use the student book with the worksheet. Some of the worksheets provide instructions for practical activities which also support the topic.

A closer look at the worksheets

Cross curricular work

The worksheets provide a wide range of activities for the students. The aim of the worksheets is to help the students appreciate what it was like to live in Britain between 1948-1969, and to learn how Britain changed during that time. Some of the worksheets look at how we gather evidence with examples from reading people's description and surveys.

Activities discussing people's actual experiences are balanced by readings and activities about different aspects of daily life, such as TV, clothing styles, interior design of houses, cooking and other topics. Although the main thrust of every activity is to help the students gain a perspective on life during a particular decade in British history, you may be able to use some of the activities in cross curricular work. For example, activities involving survey data can be used in work on maths, and activities about food and cooking can be used in discussion of health. Recipes can be assessed for providing a healthy diet and both can be assessed for use in PSHE on providing a healthy diet.

Activities involving clothing design, interior design and tie dye can be used in art and design lessons; while activities discussing inventions can be used as examples in science and design studies.

Some of the activities are repeated in each section, for example, there are activities providing information on interior design in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Students could do each of the activities and compare them, or different groups could be assigned to different activities. Each group could then make a presentation of what they have learned. This also allows students to learn how some aspects of British life changed over discrete periods of time.



The student book focuses on the way that culture and society changed, but you may also like to discuss political changes, and how people's attitudes changed in relation to events that were going on in the rest of the world, for example, the cold war.

You may also like to extend your study of the years 1948–1969 by having students organise a 1950s day or a 1960s day. Students could dress in outfits from the era (examples of which they might be able to find in charity shops or on eBay). They could bring in samples of the food from the decade, as well as music, games and other types of entertainment.

Britain in the 1930s

▶ 1A





House building in Liverpool



The 1930s kitchen



Britain was not alone in having financial problems. They were affecting the whole of the industrial world and culminated in the time of the Great Depression at the end of the 1920s.

But the point to note with children is that there was also great change in the nature of manufacturing. Steam was on its way out and it was being replaced by electricity and oil. The impact of this can hardly be overstated because it changed the whole manufacturing geography of the country.

Steam based industries were on the coal fields because steam boilers used coal and that was the most expensive material to move about. When steam-powered electricity power stations were built, it was still cheaper to build them close to coal mines, but it was no longer necessary to build the factories that used the electricity to make goods nearby.

Electricity was so important because it allowed the factories making the new goods (and many of those were electrical, like vacuum cleaners and washing machines) to be built close to markets. The biggest market was in London and so new factories with new jobs were built there and around Birmingham, not in the North, to replace the flagging industries of the Victorian age.

Probably the British government was slow to see the changes that were coming and was reactive rather than proactive. When millions of people lost their jobs, and when famous protests like the Jarrow Crusade march began in the 1930s, the government simply could not react fast enough, and when it did, it tended to

be with the awarding of military contracts for ships and munitions to the North. In a way this simply fossilised the North's disadvantageous position and put off the day when true change would have to occur.

The other important industry of the 1930s was the rise of the motor car industry. Its origins were at the end of the 19th century, but it was when people in the South became more prosperous, that the demand for motor cars (and, of course, buses and coaches across the country) increased. This gave rise to motorcar manufacturing in the Midlands in particular.

One of the striking things about this period was the rise in the building of the semi-detached houses in streets that were remote from railway stations. These were the new motor suburbs, and they spread out from the older Victorian suburbs, each house having its longer gardens and more space. Streets in these regions were no longer built on grid-iron patterns but were built in 'countryside' curves. They are especially noticeable in the South and Midlands and less so in the North for the reasons mentioned above.

So what was happening was a flip of prosperity from the North to the South. It was becoming a true North-South divide.

When the Jarrow marchers went through southern towns many people could not understand what they were about because the difficulties of the North were not shared by the South and communications were poor – there was no national news watched by everyone as there is today.

During the 1930s there was also a shift in attitudes as to what was the most desirable place to live. Just as we are now more environmentally aware on a global scale than people a generation before, so the middle classes in particular (and this was the fastest growing group) began to think that life in smoky cities was not for them. They also began to think of an (imaginary) time of peace and tranquillity in the countryside. Builders advertised their homes as 'in the country' and as 'your own castle', building semi-detached houses in mock-Tudor styles.

What this tells us is that more or less the whole of the 20th century was a time of change – even the early years. But the changes that occur in one decade are felt by subsequent decades and generations.

Yet, some things had not changed. The majority of families still only had one wage-earner. Father went to work, mother stayed at home and looked after the children. Divorce and living together without marriage was uncommon. There was still a hangover of class in society, so there had not been the social change that had accompanied the economic change. This was to come.

It is also worth telling children that life in the home was still more difficult than it is today. In the 1930s, washing was done by hand, and cleaning was done with a mop and broom, just as it always had been.

Above all, it was still difficult to get about. The roads were not designed for long distance travel. Main roads like the A1 were still single carriageway and most vehicles could not do high speeds. So this meant that people did not commonly travel much, or if they did, then they still used the train.

The lack of travel meant that people in one part of a country would not necessarily be aware of what was going on in another part, but this began to change with the arrival of the radio. It would change much more with the television, but this had to wait until the 1950s. Also, children should be told that radio programmes were not like those of today. They were run by people who did not see it as their job to help promote social change – rather the reverse. They saw their role as keeping the status-quo. But people did go to the cinemas, and there they saw films where people lived in quite different surroundings and had more glamorous lifestyles. Yet they were mostly resigned to the fact that these people were going to remain different from themselves.



It is worth showing pictures of working class people with their flat caps, waistcoats, wrap-around aprons and dark, ill-fitting overcoats, to see that the lives of many people were very far removed from what we know today.

As the Second World War approached, things actually appeared to get better, especially in the North. Factories became active again as the government spent money on trying to catch up with the threat of Germany.

So why is all this important to studying the



1950s and 60s? The answer is that there were profound imbalances in society which would result in massive changes after the war. The great changes of the post war era were not a result of people suddenly thinking it would be nice to change, but the result of a pent-up desire to change that was held in check by lack of wealth as much as anything else.

Then there was the war. It ended all change – or did it? Certainly not. In fact, it was the

catalyst for much change. With men overseas in the forces, women went to work in huge numbers – and many enjoyed it. This would make a profound difference as soon as the war was over.



Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 4 to 7** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

Unemployment in 1930s Britain (i)

Here is some data about unemployment in Britain during the 1930s. Use this data to make a graph.

Unemployment Figures in Britain	
January 1929	1,434,000
January 1930	1,534,000
January 1931	2,671,000
January 1932	2,794,000
January 1933	2,979,000
January 1934	2,457,000
January 1935	2,397,000
January 1936	2,229,000
January 1937	1,766,000
January 1938	1,927,000
January 1939	2,133,000

Questions

1. What year had the highest number of people unemployed?

.....

2. How many more people were unemployed in 1933 than in 1929?

.....

3. After 1939 the number of unemployed people started to go down very quickly. Why do you think more people found jobs in the early 1940s?

.....

.....

4. Make a graph of these figures.

Unemployment in 1930s Britain (i)

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, graph paper, coloured pencils or pens for making graphs.

Using the worksheet

For many people in Britain the 1930s was a period of great hardship. The American Wall Street Crash in 1929 started a worldwide economic depression that lasted for much of the decade. Old industries such as steel, ship-building and coal mining suffered the most. For the people of Britain the spectre of unemployment was always present.

These numbers may not seem that high to children today, but you may want to remind them that the population of Britain was lower in the 1930s.

For the generation that grew up between the wars, this was a very difficult time. World War I was still fresh and now people had to do without many things. It would be a long time before Britain saw any real prosperity.

You may like to use this data to have students create any one of a number of types of graph. A bar graph may be the most appropriate for this type of data, but some students may want to try other types of graphs and see how they work out.

In 1931, the UK's population was around 47 million. The number of working age men, however, would have been less than 15 million (at this time, men did most of the work outside the home). So, even 2 million unemployed represented a fairly high unemployment rate.

Younger students

The students may need some help in making their graphs. You may like to have them answer question 3 as a class discussion.

Answers

1. 1933.
2. 1,545,000.
3. As Britain geared up for war, people found work in wartime industries and the military.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Make a graph from data.
- Know that many people were unemployed in Britain during the 1930s.
- Know that unemployment in Britain was high for the entire decade of the 1930s.

Older students

The students may like to try making different types of graphs.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Make a graph from data.
- Know that many people were unemployed in Britain during the 1930s.
- Know that unemployment in Britain was high for the entire decade of the 1930s.

References

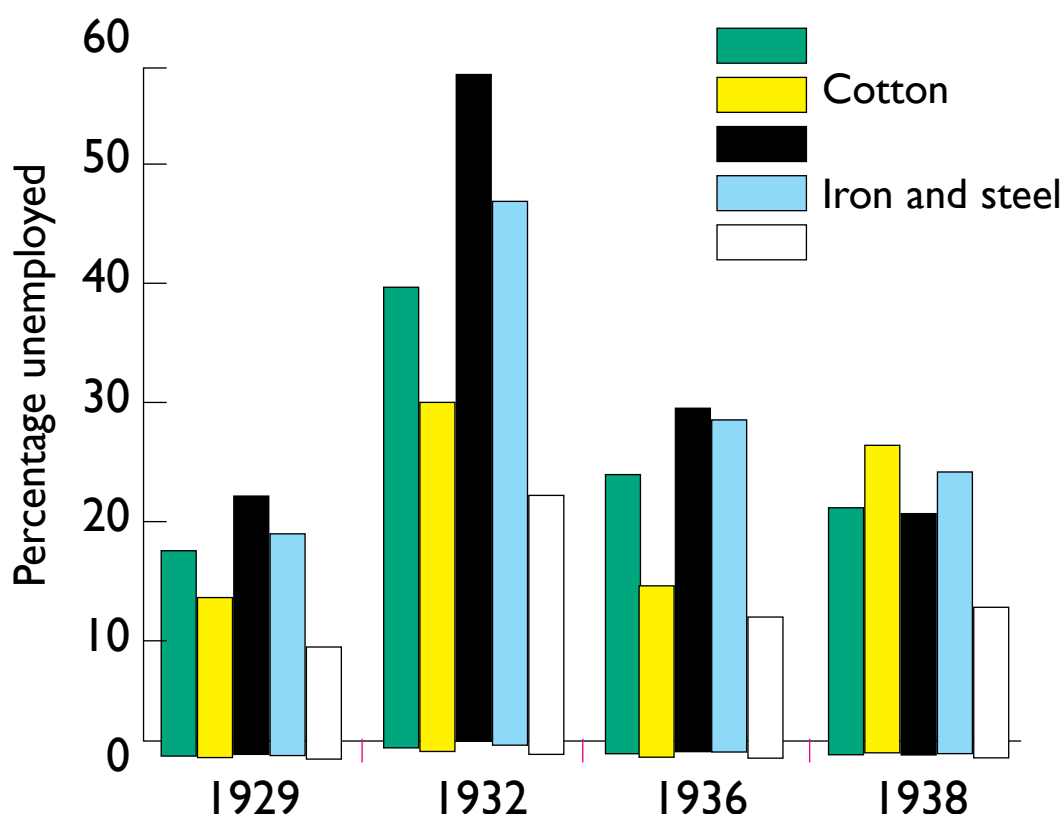
You may want to read this House of Commons report on population change.

It is <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp99/rp99-111.pdf>

Unemployment in 1930s Britain (ii)

Here is some data about unemployment in Britain during the 1930s.

Unemployment in the main industries, 1929–1938



Coal, cotton, steel and iron, and shipbuilding were mostly in the North. Average for all industries includes the southern industries, which were growing.

Where is there the lowest unemployment – coal, cotton, steel and iron, shipbuilding or ‘all industries’?



.....

Unemployment in 1930s Britain (ii)

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

During the interwar period there were at least a million people (ten percent of the work force) unemployed at any one time. This was the case even in the good times and numbers rose dramatically in the depression of the early 1930s.

We need to remember that there were regional contrasts when studying the economy and unemployment of Britain between the wars.

The world looked very different depending on where you lived. On the one hand, there were the industrial areas in the North and West, areas whose industries had expanded enormously in the later nineteenth century and now found themselves with a dramatic shortage of jobs. On the other hand, there were the expanding industrial areas in the South East and Midlands that now needed new workers.

Eventually such regional contrasts in levels of unemployment led to movements of population from the regions of depressed industry to those of growth.

The industries on the graph are all in the North of England. But you can see that the total average unemployment is much lower for all industries than for shipbuilding, cotton, steel and coal. This is because southern industries were actually growing at this time.

Younger students

You may like to go over the graph as a whole class exercise. Students should be able to see that the average unemployment across all industries was much lower than unemployment in coal, shipbuilding, cotton, iron and steel, but they may need some help in analysing what this means. The meaning of the data is that other industries must have been doing much better than those four industries, in order to bring the average down.

You may like to discuss with the students why people couldn't simply move to industries with lower unemployment (the need to retrain, the need to move house, etc).

Outcomes

The students can:

- Interpret data from a graph.
- Understand that shipbuilding, coal, steel and iron and cotton industries suffered more than other industries in 1930s Britain.
- Understand the difference between low unemployment and high unemployment.

Older students

The older students may also need some guidance in interpreting the graph data. You may like to ask them additional questions regarding which industry saw the highest unemployment, and in which years was unemployment the worst. You may also like to point out that unemployment in the four industries here began to drop in 1938 and ask the students why they think this happened? (England was already beginning to gear up for war and had begun building more naval ships, weapons and uniforms, all of which used steel, iron, cotton and coal for energy.)

Outcomes

The students can:

- Interpret data from a graph.
- Understand that shipbuilding, coal, steel and iron and cotton industries suffered more than other industries in 1930s Britain.
- Understand the difference between low unemployment and high unemployment.

The slump. Society and politics during the depression,



Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 4 to 7** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

Three Englands

Here are some excerpts from a book written in 1934 that talks about three different Englands.

“Southampton to Newcastle, Newcastle to Norwich: memories rose like milk coming to the boil. I had seen England. I had seen a lot of Englands. How many? At once, three disengaged themselves from the shifting mass. There was first, Old England, the country of the cathedrals and minsters and manor houses and inns, of parson and Squire; guide-book and quaint highways and byways England...

Then, I decided, there is the nineteenth-century England, the industrial England of coal, iron, steel, cotton, wool, railways; of thousands of rows of little houses all alike, sham Gothic churches, square-faced chapels, Town Halls, Mechanics’ Institutes, mills, foundries, warehouses, refined watering-places, Pier Pavilions, Family and Commercial Hotels, Literary and Philosophical Societies, back-to-back houses, detached villas with monkey-trees, Grill Rooms, railway stations, slag-heaps and ‘tips’, dock roads, Refreshment Rooms, doss-houses, Unionist or Liberal Clubs, cindery waste ground, mill chimneys, slums, fried-fish shops, public-houses with red blinds, bethels in corrugated iron, good-class draper’s and confectioners’ shops, a cynically devastated countryside, sooty dismal little towns, and still sootier grim fortress-like cities. This England makes up the larger part of the Midlands and the North and exists everywhere; but it has not been added to and has no new life poured into it...

The third England, I concluded, was the new post-war England, belonging far more to the age itself than to this particular island. America, I supposed, was its real birthplace. This is the England of arterial and by-pass roads, of filling stations and factories that look like exhibition buildings, of giant cinemas and dance-halls and cafes, bungalows with tiny garages, cocktail bars, Woolworths, motor-coaches, wireless, hiking, factory girls looking like actresses, greyhound racing and dirt tracks and swimming pools.”

England in the 1930s: Excerpt from JB Priestley’s *English Journey* (1934)

Questions

1. What were the three different Englands highlighted by Priestley?

.....

2. Which England sounds like the nicest place to live, and why?

.....

.....

Three Englands

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

JB Priestley (13 September 1894, Bradford, West Riding of Yorkshire, died 14 August 1984, Warwickshire) was an English writer and broadcaster.

Priestley was born in what he described as an “ultra-respectable” suburb of Bradford. His father was a teacher and his mother died young. On leaving grammar school Priestley worked in the wool trade of his native city, but had ambitions to become a writer. He was to draw on memories of Bradford in many of the works he wrote after he had moved South. As an old man he deplored the destruction by developers of Victorian buildings such as the Swan Arcade in Bradford where he had his first job.

He wrote an English journey in 1934 about the question of the North–South divide in England. The excerpts here are taken from pages 371–375.

The three Englands Priestley is talking about are rural England, industrial England and the England of the southern cities, which was becoming more modern. You may want to remind the students that when Priestley uses the term “post war” here, he means post the First World War.

Younger students

The students may need some help in understanding some of the phrases Priestley uses, such as “disengaged themselves from the shifting mass” and “doss house”. You may also like to have students answer the questions as a class discussion.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that the North and South of England between the wars were very different places.
- Interpret a text.
- Learn a little of what England between the wars was like.

Older students

The students may want to discuss the ideas presented in the reading. They may also need some help in understanding the terms used in the reading.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that the North and South of England between the wars were very different places.
- Interpret a text.
- Learn a little of what England between the wars was like.

Answers

1. The three Englands are, broadly, rural England, or 19th century England; industrial England of the northern cities; and the post war England of the southern cities.
2. Answers will vary depending on how students interpret the reading. Some may think rural England sounds nice, while others may think it sounds boring and old-fashioned. Some students may even think industrial England sounds most interesting, although Priestley thinks the third England is the nicest.



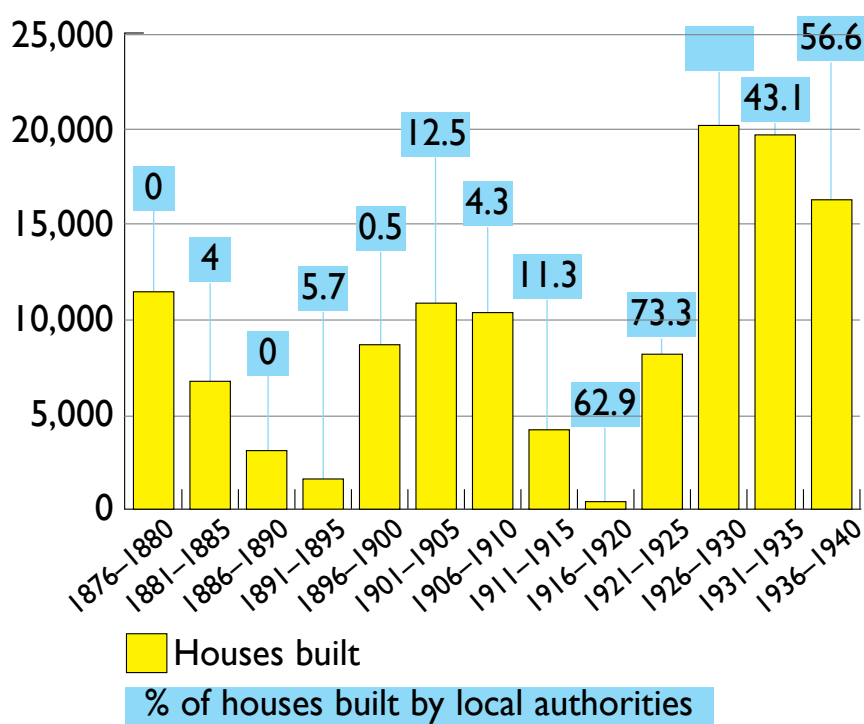
Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 4 to 7** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

House building in Liverpool

Here is a graph with some information about the number of houses built in Liverpool between 1876 and 1940.

Slum clearance and building in Liverpool, 1876–1940



Questions

1. World War I ended in 1918. What happened to the number of houses built by the local authorities in the years after this?

.....

2. In which years were the smallest number of houses built? Why do you think this was?

.....

.....

.....

House building in Liverpool

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

While the bulk of new housing was privately built, a large amount of house building was undertaken by the local authorities as they tried to improve the quality of housing. Much of this effort was associated with slum clearance, as encouraged by the 1930 Act, which made the local authorities responsible for slum clearance and providing alternative accommodation. In the great towns like Liverpool such publicly built housing was extremely important.

Students should see that the amount of publicly built housing increased greatly beginning with the years of World War I and during the inter-war years, when many people were poor. You may like to remind students that Liverpool was an industrial town, so many of the houses built would have been on the site of old slums. You may like to bring in photos of parts of Liverpool where the 1930s houses remain. You may also like to make reference to Curriculum Visions 'The Settlement Book', and the Settlement Picture Gallery in the Geography part of the Professional Zone (if you are a subscriber).

This activity can be used along with activities 1A and 1B, or on its own.

Younger students

The students may need some help in understanding the graph. You may like to have them answer the questions as a class discussion.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Interpret data on a graph.
- Know that many new houses were built in Liverpool in the inter-war years.
- Know that a great deal of public housing was built during the inter-war years.

Older students

The students can answer the questions on their own.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Interpret data on a graph.
- Know that many new houses were built in Liverpool in the inter-war years.
- Know that a great deal of public housing was built during the inter-war years.

Answers

1. The amount of public housing built went up greatly after the end of WWI. There are several reasons for this. One is that there was more money available to build houses, because it was not all being used for the war effort. During the depression (roughly 1929–1940), the government also embarked on a drive to rebuild slums and put people to work, so there was a great deal of public house building during that time as well.
2. 1916–1920 This was during World War I and most public money was being spent on the war. The people who remained in Liverpool had jobs in war industries and did not need government built houses.

The graph's source is: CG Pooley, *Local authority housing, origins and development*, (Historical Association), 1996



Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 4 to 7** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

The 1930s kitchen

Here is a description of some parts of a 1930s kitchen. Write a description of your kitchen and how it is different. You may also like to draw a plan of your kitchen and compare it to the one described here.

Flooring

Rubber blocks or sheet linoleum in ‘battleship brown’ with a pattern to hide dirt. Square-tiled patterns and marble-, jasper- and granite-grained designs were also popular.

Tiling

Tiling was popular but expensive. The areas around the cooking stove and sink were always tiled. If possible, cream tiling was used from the floor up to the dado rail and topped off with a narrow band of black and white chequered tiles.

Walls

The space from tiles to the ceiling was either painted in oil, enamel, or gloss paint for repeated washing, or lined in wallpaper, which was then varnished. A popular paper had a tile pattern. Pastel colours were fashionable; white, cream, apple green, pale grey and powder blue were particular favourites.

Ceiling

The kitchen ceiling suffered from rising steam, so gloss paint was best. To avoid condensation sometimes whitewash was used but it was apt to crack and flake, so many houses had papered ceilings with whitewash over the paper.

Windows

In the 1930s kitchen the window was low and large and placed over the sink so that the housewife could keep an eye on her children in the garden while washing-up.

Lighting

It was important that the housewife did not stand in her own light when cooking. For daylight work the cooker would ideally be placed so that the window was on the left-hand side. An electric filament lamp was recommended – placed to light up the whole kitchen. Lamps were totally covered by round shades to prevent steam or dust entering.

The 1930s kitchen

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, paper or graph paper, pencils, pens.

Using the worksheet

The 1930s kitchen was smaller but lighter than its Edwardian counterpart. While the Edwardian kitchen was usually the domain of servants, now the housewife herself did the cooking and cleaning.

In the space of about 25 years, the kitchen was transformed from a transient place for the preparation of food to the new heart of the home. By the end of the 1950s it was a multi-functional living space as well as the powerhouse and nerve centre of family life. The availability of new materials and finishes, as well as modern electric appliances came together in the fitted kitchen, changing the look and layout of a space which was now clearly to be enjoyed rather than merely endured.

You may like to assign this as homework, so the students can draw up detailed plans of their kitchens. The differences will vary depending on individual kitchens, and some students may well have kitchens resembling this one. However, most students should see that there is more light and more appliances in their kitchens than in the one described here, and that the wall and floor materials are easier to clean.

You may like to begin by asking students what their kitchen is used for. Everyone will say cooking, but some students will also say eating and playing or doing work. You may then explain that before the 1930s, members of the family rarely went into the kitchen because kitchens were often small. In high income families a cook was still employed and so no members of the family went into the kitchen at all. After the war, there were fewer servants and also new appliances and materials made servants unnecessary. It was now possible for one person (the housewife) to do the cooking and cleaning. However, in the 1930s, people would not have used the kitchen for a living area or for eating.

Younger students

The students may like to display their drawings and explain them to the class.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Compare text with real life personal situations.
- Make an accurate drawing.
- Know that kitchens and their uses have changed a great deal since the 1930s.
- Know that the kitchens of the 1930s were different from those of today.

Older students

The students may like to display their drawings and explain them to the class. Students may like to discuss how their kitchen is different from the 1930s kitchen. Students can discuss which type of kitchen they feel would be easier to cook and clean in.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Compare text with real life personal situations.
- Make an accurate drawing.
- Know that kitchens and their uses have changed a great deal since the 1930s.
- Know that the kitchens of the 1930s were different from those of today.



Chapter ②: After the Second World War

(pages 8–13)

Britain in 1945–1949

Britain in 1945–1949

Britain was one of the ALLIES who beat Germany and Italy in Europe, but Britain was now an exhausted and impoverished country. It was a battle to survive. Nevertheless, some vital new changes to schools and health were introduced.

World War II lasted six years, from 1939 to 1945. At the end of the war, many countries in Europe were in a poor way – both those who were defeated and those who had won. Britain had spent much of its national wealth fighting to win from America. It had turned most of its factories from making goods for people, to making guns, airplanes and other war machines.

The struggle to keep going
The end of the war did not mean everyone had things easy after. On the contrary, there had to be an enormous struggle just to keep going, and at the same time to try to rebuild a life for the future.

Baby boomers

Major important events happened just after the war. For example, cinema, culture and children came back home and were welcomed from the front – it was called being 'homefront'. Each person was given a place and a small amount of money. There was food in that week – something that was not easy.

As couples got back together again

As it was found that many children were born, it was then called the **BABY BOOMERS**, meaning that the number of babies being born was quickly increased (growth). It was through the years that these babies became adults and started living new lives.

During the war women had done many of the jobs in factories that men had done before the war. So after the war women felt they could go to work, too. As time this made families with two generations much wealthier as we shall see.

No let-up in rationing
During the war, Britain had had to try to use food as best it could be using as much food as possible and also controlling the amount of food people could buy. This was called rationing.

At the end of the war rationing did not stop. This was because Britain had to be sure to buy food from overseas. At that time you could get all of the food your parents were allowed to eat for a whole week under one small box. This is what it was like.

However, the rationing was slowly being given the chance to be given a little bit more of what was needed and the food of what was the best for the future.

By 1946 more food was coming. Most rationing was on until 1954, and that's finally what was 1954.

1945–1949 timeline

The timeline shows the years 1945 to 1949. It includes the following events:

- 1945: The war ended. The Allies won.
- 1946: The baby boom began.
- 1947: The rationing was lifted.
- 1948: The economy was boosted.
- 1949: The war was over.

Post war rationing

➤ **2 A**

➤ **2 B**

➤ **2 C**

NHS timeline

➤ **2 D**

The important point about the war was that, as in the First World War, we won the war and lost the peace. That is, at the end of it we were again nearly bankrupt and only surviving with financial help from the United States.

Children also have to realise that six years of total war was a unique event. In previous generations – including World War I – forces had gone off to fight overseas and although there were great losses of men, the war had always seemed somewhat remote to those still in Britain.

This war was different because it involved the whole population. Young and old joined the Home Guard; young women joined the Dig for Victory land army or went and worked in factories. In the inner cities bombing had completely changed people's lives and large numbers of homes had been destroyed.

It is worth noting that the areas most damaged were the Victorian parts of the great cities because these were near factories and docks and railways. So it was the 'working class' people who had lost most.

You might also like to point out that great natural disasters also made things worse. The winters just after the war were the most severe of the century, so people were having to try to

keep warm in a country where there was not enough coal to go around.

Many children might also think that when a war ends, everything goes back to normal in a few days. Of course, it does not. In this case, the country was under a food, and other essentials, rationing regime. When the war was over things actually got worse for a while and bread was added to the ration list by 1946. Rationing did not finally end until 1954, that is nine years after the end of the war.

But some things changed very quickly. Forces were demobbed and families got together again, so 1946 saw a huge rise in the number of babies born – known as the baby boomers. This would work its way through the school system, requiring more classes, etc, and is still working its way though now as a huge extra wave of people is about to retire. Events of the past can last for many decades.

The economy had been artificially boosted by the war effort. There was full employment in the war, but many factories were geared to making war equipment and it took time to rekit them for peacetime work. At the same time there was little money to buy things and to stimulate factories and increase demand for



Rationing diary



Rationing cartoon



NHS cartoon



Immigration stories



Immigration poem



jobs. In fact, many of the forces found it very difficult to get work after the war.

But on the positive side there were lots of profound changes and you might like to ask children “When did the free NHS start?” (1948); “Do you know why we all go to school until we are 16 (originally 15)?” (Education Act 1944); “Do you know when the United Nations was founded?” (1946); as well as “Did you know when the first new colonies/commonwealth people immigrated to Britain?” (1948). And also remind people that Britain had always had immigrants and asylum seekers.

Some of these things changed society, resulting in a more educated and healthier population with a true free-on-need philosophy (adopted by most of Europe).

In amongst all this there was the need to find new homes for people who had been bombed. Prefabs were the first answer. Some of these sturdy little houses still survive and people preferred them to the old houses they had lived in before. But even before the war planning had gone on to try to think how to build new homes to last. The plans they had were on a stupendous scale. They would not come into effect until the 1960s (and cause much havoc and later regret), but they were planned at this time as some people looked to a Brave New World.

Post war rationing

Here is a story describing how one person felt about rationing.

Remember – there was no refrigeration in people’s homes then, (nor such things as cling film or tin foil) and people would buy daily what they needed. But some things were bought longer than for a day, and would sit and age...

Cheddar cheese. A block would be purchased and it would age, and get harder and drier each day. Fresh vegetables and fruit were in short supply. One day, towards the end of the life of the cheese, when it was hard and dry and almost tasteless, mother couldn’t stand that this was all that we had to eat. So she waited until it was dark, then stole out into the garden; she tiptoed quietly, squeezed through the neighbour’s fence, and stole an onion from their vegetable patch. She sneaked back inside, and with great, great pleasure sliced it – and ate it with the cheese.

Tea leaves were used, saved, and used again. And maybe, even again.

I had a plaid skirt to wear to school, with a white blouse. Year 1: it had straps that went over my shoulders, crossed at the back, and buttoned at my waist, with the hem falling below my knees. Year 2: it had straps that went over my shoulders and buttoned at the back at my waist, falling to my knees. Year 3: the hem was let down; the straps were attached at the front with safety pins to the very edge of the fabric, and it went over my shoulders to the waist, falling above the knees. Shame is what was felt at wearing this outfit.

My brother started school 3 years after me and he was dressed in my winter coat and woolly hat. He was embarrassed at having to wear this outfit.

Friday night is chicken for dinner. Friday – soup made with half the chicken, a potato and carrots in it; Saturday: half the chicken for parents and children. youngest child (my brother – gets the wing; Father gets the drumstick and thigh; Mother gets the breast; I get.... I don’t remember... small pieces).

Post war rationing

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheets.

Using the worksheet

It is one of the great ironies of post war Britain that although Britain (and the other allies) won the war, they still had rationing for many years. To be fair, conditions in Germany and most other parts of Europe were far worse, but people were resentful at having sacrificed so much and yet still having to ration bread and butter.

The reason rationing continued is that Britain had almost bankrupted herself in fighting the war. That, and the fact that most aid from countries that could spare it was going to Germany and other defeated areas in order to prevent starvation and chaos.

If you have already studied World War II, then students would have had a chance to study rationing during the war. But you may like to explain that the fact that rationing continued for so long affected people's attitudes towards life. When rationing ended, people tended to cut loose and really try to enjoy life. Some younger people also began to rebel against some types of authority, because they had been living by strict rules for a long time and wanted to be freer.

Younger students

The students could answer the questions on page 28 to test their comprehension of the text.

Answers

1. Daily.
2. It would get harder and drier.
3. An onion.
4. 3 years.
5. The author's coat and hat.
6. Two meals for four people each.
7. Answers will vary, possible answers include shame, hunger, sadness, anger.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Know that rationing of food and clothes continued in Britain after World War II ended.
- Understand a little of how people felt at having to live with rationing.
- Extract information from a text.

Older students

The students could answer the questions on page 29 to test their comprehension of the text.

Answers

1. There was no refrigeration in people's homes.
2. Answers will vary – she was tired of having nothing to eat, she was hungry.
3. The author grew taller, but there was no money for a longer skirt.
4. Answers will vary and may include: her skirt was too short, she had to wear the same skirt every year.
5. Answers will vary and may include: because he was a boy wearing a girl's clothes; the clothes did not fit.
6. Answers will vary.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Know that rationing of food and clothes continued in Britain after World War II ended.
- Understand a little of how people felt at having to live with rationing.
- Extract information from a text.
- Give opinions based on a reading.

Questions (i): Post war rationing

1. How often did people buy food?

.....
.....

2. What happened to the cheddar cheese over time?

.....

3. What did the author's mother steal?

.....

4. How many years did the author have to wear the same skirt to school?

.....
.....

5. What did the author's brother have to wear to school?

.....
.....

6. How many meals did the family eat from one chicken?


.....

7. How do you think the author felt at not having new clothes or much food?

.....
.....
.....
.....


Questions (ii): Post war rationing

1. Why did people have to buy their food every day?




.....

2. ☐ Why do you think the author's mother stole an onion?




.....

3. Why do you think the writer's skirt was below the knee in length the first two years at school, and above the knee the third year?




.....

4. Why do you think the author felt shame at having to wear the same skirt for three years?




.....

5. Why do you think the author's brother felt shame at having to wear her hat and coat?



.....

6. How do you think the author felt at not having new clothes or much food?



.....

.....

NHS timeline

The NHS began in 1948. Here is some information about the early years of the NHS.

The National Health Service became a reality on 5 July 1948. It was a great step forward and everybody wanted the new service to work.

However, food was still rationed, building materials were not available, there was a shortage of money and a shortage of fuel. The New Towns Act (1946) created major new towns which all needed health services.

Costs

Some of the costs were high because medicine was getting more complicated. Scientists had found new medicines to treat people, and these were expensive. More mothers wanted their babies delivered in hospital instead of at home, heart surgery was more common, and the first hip replacements were beginning to be performed.

Fees

When it began in 1948, the NHS was completely free. But in 1952 the NHS began to charge people one shilling (5p) for prescriptions and £1 for ordinary dental treatment.

The GP

The foundation of the new service was the family doctor or general practitioner (GP). Just like today, the GP was the first to see patients. He then referred them to hospitals for specialist treatment, and prescribed medicines.

Dental services consisted of check-ups and all necessary fillings and dentures. There was a school dental service and a special service for expectant and nursing mothers and young children.

Questions

1. What were some of the difficulties that the NHS had in its first years?

.....

2. Why were costs for medical care rising when the NHS began?

.....

3. Find out what the cost for a prescription is today. You can ask your carer, your GP's office, the pharmacy or find out online.

4. Why do you think the NHS is more expensive today?

.....

NHS timeline

Age range .

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

The NHS provides the majority of healthcare in England, including primary care (such as general practitioners), in-patient care, long-term healthcare, ophthalmology and dentistry (NHS dentistry is done by dentists in private practice doing sub-contracted work for the NHS).

The National Health Service Act 1946 came into effect on 5 July 1948; subsequently it has become an integral part of British society, culture and everyday life.

The NHS was once described by Nigel Lawson, former Chancellor of the Exchequer, as “the national religion”. Private health care has continued parallel to the NHS, paid for largely by private insurance, but it is still used by a relatively small percentage of the population, and generally as a top-up to NHS services.

The vast majority of NHS services are provided free of charge to the patient. The costs of running the NHS (est. £104 billion in 2007–2008) are met directly from general taxation.

Each year the NHS gets more expensive to run. This is partly because advances in medicine mean that more diseases and conditions can be treated, and that treatments are more expensive; and partly because the NHS has grown much larger over the years.

You may like to point out to the students that in many part of the world, people do not have any medical care unless they have insurance or can pay in cash for treatment.

Younger students

The students could work alone or in groups to answer the questions.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand a little of the challenges facing the NHS when it began.
- Extract information from a text.
- Understand a little of how the NHS works.

Older students

The students could work on their own or in groups to answer the questions.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand a little of the challenges facing the NHS when it began.
- Extract information from a text.
- Understand a little of how the NHS works.

Additional activities

Students could research a typical day in the life of a GP. They could use secondary sources to compare this to a day in the life of a GP in the 1950s. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/events/nhs_at_50/special_report/123511.stm for more information on this.

Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 8 to 13** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

Rationing diary

	WWII weekly rations	What I eat in a week
	8oz (225g)/20 tablespoons	
	1lb/two months (500g)	
	6p worth (about 1lb/500g)/3–4 servings	
	4oz (250g)/1–2 servings	
	24oz (1kg) of bread (can take 8oz as flour)	
	6oz(150g)/15 pats of butter/margarine/lard/oil	
	3 pints	
	2oz (50g)/2 slices	
	1 if available or 1 packet dried egg/month	
	2oz (about 15 tea bags)	
	12oz/month/ 1 chocolate bar	
	not rationed, only seasonal	
	not rationed if available	
	3–4 pieces if available	
	not rationed if available	
	not rationed if available	

Rationing diary

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Foods on the sheet, showing portion sizes. Workbook or paper for keeping a diary.

Using the worksheet

You may like to begin by bringing in a typical child's ration of food for one week. Children may be surprised to see how little 2oz of cheese is, for example. You may also like to bring in a few chocolate bars so that children can read the information on the package and see that just one of today's bars is about one month's ration.

Remind the children that rations changed depending on what was available, so this is only an example. Although foods like chicken and offal were not rationed, this did not mean that they were eaten every day. In fact, these foods were not often available. So, children could only expect to eat meat a couple of times each week. Vegetables were widely available but were only what could be grown at that time of year. So, for example, in winter, people would have only had potatoes, carrots, parsnips, cabbage, etc. Fruit was mostly reserved for children, although preserves were available and in summer people could pick things like blackberries and elderberries. Children also received a half-pint of full-fat milk a day, although this was often at school and was for drinking, not use in cooking.

It may not be possible for children to weigh out everything they eat, so they can instead count servings. Older children may want to assign estimated weights to each food. For example, a loaf of bread weighs about 1lb; a typical serving of meat is about 6oz/200g; a slice of luncheon meat for a sandwich weighs about 50g; a pat of butter on a slice of bread is about 10g; a slice of cheese is about 25g; a tablespoon of sugar is about 20g; a sausage is about 100g of meat. Even though these are only estimates, children should be able to quickly see that they eat a lot more meat, sugar and cheese than a child ate during rationing.

Younger students

Let the students keep a food diary of everything they eat. You may like to assign a weight to typical foods, such as: each serving of meat could count as

150g. Children can then keep track of the number of servings and add up the number of servings of meat to see how much they ate in comparison to a child during rationing.

Children could also see that they eat a lot of foods, such as fizzy drinks, crisps, bananas and pizza, that were not available at all during rationing.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Compare portion sizes of foods.
- Use basic maths to determine number of servings of foods eaten.
- Keep track of the foods they eat in a week.
- Compare foods eaten today with foods eaten during wartime.

Older students

If the students have scales at home they could measure out what they eat, otherwise they can estimate the weights of the foods they eat or use the number of servings, as above.

Students should also be encouraged to think about what is in foods like pizza, for example. Two slices of pizza might use up the cheese and meat ration for the week.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Use basic maths to determine portion sizes and number of servings of foods eaten.
- Keep track of the foods they eat in a week.
- Understand how much more of certain foods they eat today compared to during WWII.
- Compare foods eaten today with foods eaten during wartime.

Rationing cartoon

Here is a newspaper cartoon about rationing.



Rationing cartoon

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Extra sheets of paper and pens.

Using the worksheet

As rationing wore on into the late 1940s and early 1950s, people began to lose the wartime spirit that had kept them going through the war. In fact, after the war, Britain's economy got even worse. Factories had to retool for peacetime and this took time and money; Britain was heavily in debt to the US for aid during wartime; domestic food production had not improved and Europe's food production had not recovered – so Britain and the US had to help feed their former enemies to prevent starvation and chaos there; and to top it all off, the weather was very cold.

This cartoon shows the way that the government was under pressure to do something to improve people's situation.

You may want to begin by explaining to students the meaning of the word economy – that it means the way finances are in the country, for example, house prices, food prices, number of people who are employed, amount of yearly wages – all of these things are part of the economy. You can then explain that in 1947 people had jobs, but there was not much food or other goods for people to buy, so the economy was not good and people were suffering. The people in this cartoon are “snowed in” by the bad economy – they can't buy anything to make their lives better. You can then ask students to describe what they think is happening in the cartoon.

Younger students

You may like to ask the students directed questions about the cartoon. Here are a few examples:

1. What year is the cartoon about? (1947 – the year on the bus).
2. Why are the people on the bus sad? (The economy is bad – there is not much food or other goods.)
3. What is falling from the sky? (A plan to make things better.)
4. Why is the bus conductor smiling? (He can see the plan to make things better.)

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that things were difficult in 1947.
- Understand what an economy is.
- Interpret a cartoon.

Older students

You may have the students answer the directed questions. Students might like to work in groups to describe what they think is happening in the cartoon. They may like to draw a cartoon of their own about rationing.

Outcomes

- Understand that things were difficult in 1947.
- Understand what an economy is.
- Interpret a cartoon.

NHS cartoon

Here is a cartoon from 1949 at the start of the NHS.



Questions

1. Describe what is happening in this cartoon.

.....

.....

2. Why are the patients struggling against the doctor and dentist in the cartoon?

.....

.....

NHS cartoon

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

You would think that everyone would have been happy with the introduction of the NHS, but in fact it was very controversial. Doctors felt that they would lose their freedom and ability to make their own decisions about both finances and patient care, and some patients worried that the government was going to force them to receive certain kinds of care in certain ways.

This cartoon can be interpreted in many ways. One way is that patients and doctors and dentists are all struggling together – the patients want one thing and the doctors want something different. Another way is that the patients are being dragged kicking and screaming to see the doctor and dentist on the NHS (some services which were good for people, such as regular dental exams, were foisted on people who often didn't want them). A third way is that the patients are not being taken into consideration – the doctor and dentist are only thinking about meeting their targets for treatment. Students should be encouraged to think up their own interpretations and to think about how people might have felt when the NHS started up.

Younger students

You may like to ask the students directed questions about the cartoon. Here are a few examples:

1. What year is the cartoon about? (the start of the NHS).
2. Why are the patients and the doctors struggling? (What the patients want and what the doctors want may be different.)
3. Was the NHS a good thing? (Answers will vary – many doctors worried about the NHS at the time.)
4. Do you think the patients in this cartoon want to be treated? (One worry about the NHS was that it would force people to get treatment they did not want – this turned out not to be the case as most people were desperate for medical and dental care.)

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the concerns people had when the NHS began.
- Understand why the NHS was important.
- Interpret a cartoon.

Older students

You may have the students answer the directed questions. Students might like to work in groups to describe what they think is happening in the cartoon. They may like to draw a cartoon of their own about the NHS.

Outcomes

- Understand some of the concerns people had when the NHS began.
- Understand why the NHS was important.
- Interpret a cartoon.

Immigration stories

Here is the story of one of the early Jamaican immigrants to Britain.

My journey to England

I was born in the district of Belvedere, in the parish of Westmoreland, County of Cornwall, Jamaica, West Indies on the 28th September 1931. I was the eldest of four children; there were two boys and two girls. I went to a small infant school in Belvedere. At the age of seven, I went to the Kew Park elementary school until I was 15. After school I went to work for the Local Government, checking stones which were used for road building, for the public works department. I then worked as an Air Engine Operator at a sugar factory near Montego Bay.

On the 28th of December 1954 I boarded the Napoli, a ship that was used as a troop carrier during the Second World War, and travelled to England. Quite a few Jamaicans boarded the Napoli that day. We sailed out of the Kingston harbour at exactly 1pm. From the deck of the ship I waved goodbye to friends and relatives and sailed off into the unknown.

After leaving Jamaica our first stop was Tenerife in the Canary Islands. On the Saturday we sailed across the Azores. Six days later we reached Genoa. The following morning, Friday, we boarded a train and journeyed through France to Marseille. There was a ferry waiting to take us to Dover. In Dover we got a train into Victoria station. I stayed with a friend for a few days in Hearn Hill, South East London. The following morning I went to the Labour Exchange in Brixton. I was offered a job as a bus conductor in Huddersfield. I had just enough time for a meal and to collect my luggage. I boarded a train to Huddersfield accompanied by the Superintendent of the Huddersfield Transport Department, a Mr Barran, along with seven more recruits.

I am very proud to say I was one of the first West Indian bus conductors in Huddersfield. I have also worked in Nottingham and Derby and was called up for National Service in March 1955. Working on the Railways at the time I was exempted from military service but joined the Territorial Army.

In England I have made many friends and I have many treasured memories. I am retired now, but I still see my old friends all the time. I still remember some of the food of Jamaica, such as ackee and saltfish, curry goat and rice and peas.

Wesley Wiggan Johnson 1954

Questions

1. Why do you think Mr Johnson left Jamaica?

.....

2. Was it easy for Mr Johnson to get a job in England?

.....

3. What challenges did Mr Johnston face as a Jamaican in England in the 1950s?

.....

Immigration stories

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

After the war and by the end of the 1940s, there were already large numbers of foreign workers entering and settling in Britain. They came from Poland, the Ukraine, and even Germany. The 1948 Nationality Act was an important development for Caribbean migrants. It made them more than mere citizens of the Empire, effectively conferring UK citizenship to any member of Britain's colonies.

Not all white Britons welcomed the black Britons. Many found that the colour of their skins provoked unfriendly reactions. For example, despite the desperate shortage of labour some West Indians still found it difficult to get good jobs. Often they were forced to accept jobs which they were over-qualified for, or they were paid less than their white colleagues.

West Indians also experienced difficulties in finding suitable places to live. Since few had much money, they had to find cheap housing to rent near to their workplace. This was often in the poor inner-cities. Even if they did have enough money to rent better quality housing, West Indians had to face the fact that some landlords refused to rent to black people. They would be confronted with insulting signs in house windows that said 'Rooms to Let: No dogs, no coloureds'. This meant that West Indians had little choice but to rent homes in a slum.

In 1958, in areas where bigger numbers of West Indians lived, there were outbreaks of violence against them. In particular, in Nottingham and London mobs of white people attacked black people in the streets, smashing and burning their homes.

West Indians had been invited to come to Britain, so they also felt that it was their home too. To be discriminated against was a shock which they had not been prepared for. Some returned to the West Indies, but many remained – despite the difficulties they faced. They have worked hard and made a contribution to British life.

Younger students

You may like to have the students answer

the questions as part of a class discussion on immigration in the 1950s.

Mr Johnson does not give a reason for why he left Jamaica. Many people came to England in search of a better life, better work or simply for the adventure of being in a new place. You may want to remind students that there was a severe labour shortage in England at the time and so there were plenty of jobs available. But you can point out how easy it was for Mr Johnson to get a job.

The story does not say exactly what challenges Mr Johnson faced, but students can imagine what it would be like to start life over in a new place. They would have to make new friends, find a place to live, possibly put up with people being mean to them because they were different, etc. At the end of the story Mr Johnson mentions food – the immigrants would also have had to get used to different foods than they were used to – and different weather.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand why some immigrants may have come to the UK in the 1950s.
- Understand a little of what life was like for the early immigrants.
- Think about challenges faced by immigrants in the 1950s.

Older students

You may have the students answer the questions on their own or as part of a class discussion. Students may like to research other stories of real-life immigrants.

Outcomes

- Understand why some immigrants may have come to the UK in the 1950s.
- Understand a little of what life was like for the early immigrants.
- Think about challenges faced by immigrants in the 1950s.

Immigration poem

This poem was written by a Jamaican immigrant. It describes the feelings and experiences of many of the early immigrants to Britain from Jamaica.

The men from Jamaica are settling down

From de land of wood an water
Came they to where de air waz cold,
They come to work wid bricks an mortar
They heard de streets were paved wid gold,
From de land of fish an ackee
To de land of fish an chips came they,
Touching on a new reality
Where de sky waz white an grey.

Came they to here wid countless dreams
Came they to here wid countless fears,
In dis drama of many themes
Each one of dem were pioneers,
Each one of dem a living witness
Each one of dem truly profound,
A newspaper said people hear dis
The men from Jamaica are settling down.

There waz no ackee an there waz no salt fish
There waz no star apple an no callao,
Soon there waz no time to dream, wonder or wish
There waz so much community building to do,
An back in Jamaica they waited for letters
Where there were no letters, rumours were abound,
But de newspaper said it was going to get better
The men from Jamaica are settling down.

They went to the foundries, they went to de factories
They went to de cities these true country folk.
An when they got down to de true nitty gritty
These true country lungs were soon covered wid smoke,
Some dreamt of Jamaica, some dreamt of their wives
Some dreamt of returning to bring something home,
Some prayed to de God, an they asked de God why
The men from Jamaica should struggle alone.

Soon there were more ships, an more ships an more ships
Peopled wid colourful Caribbean folk,
Men, women an children were making these trips
Each one of dem carrying ship loads of hope,
From all of de islands they came to dis island
De National Health Service waz so welcoming
An de movietone voice said that things were quite grand
As the men from Jamaica were settling in.

Dis waz de new world, dis waz de white world,
Dis waz de world they had been fighting for,
Dis they were told waz de righteous an free world
Dis waz de reason they had gone to war,
Dis waz de land of de hope an de glory
Dis waz de land of pleasant pastures green,
Dis waz de royal land, dis waz democracy
Where many Jamaicans were proud to be seen.

But it did not take long for de racists and fascists
To show ugly heads as de wicked will do,
Quite soon de arrivants had learnt to resist
An quite soon they were dealing wid subjects taboo,
Blacks in de unions, blacks in de dances
Whites wid black neighbours an black civil rights,
The men from Jamaica were taking no chances
The men from Jamaica were not turning white.

A new generation rose up from these fighters
A new generation wid roots everywhere,
A new generation of buildings an writers
A new generation wid built in No Fear,
They too fought de Nazis, they too put out fires
They too want to broaden their vision an scope,
They too need fresh water for burning desires
The men from Jamaica are so full of hope.

De future is not made of ships anymore
De future is made up of what we can do,
We still haven't got all that freedom galore
An there's all those ambitions that we muss pursue,
De past is a place that is ours for all time
There are many discoveries there to be made,
An if you are happily towing de line
Be aware of de price your ancestors have paid.

Black pioneers came on de Empire Windrush
On June twenty one nineteen forty eight,
These souls were titanic, these minds were adventurous
They came from the sunshine to participate,
They are de leaders, they are de home makers
They have been upfront since their ship came aground,
But in-between lines you'll still read in de papers
The men from Jamaica are settling down.

Immigration poem

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

On 22 June, 1948, the troop ship SS Empire Windrush arrived in Tilbury Dock, England. Many of the passengers on board were ex-servicemen from the Caribbean who had recently fought for Britain during World War II.

Three weeks after their arrival a young reporter called Peter Fryer wrote an article in a national newspaper that carried the headline 'The men from Jamaica are settling down'. It was an update on the progress being made by the passengers of the ship, but like many of the press reports of the time it overlooked the fact that not all of the passengers on the Windrush were Jamaican, and not all were men.

This poem is by a Jamaican immigrant called Benjamin Zephaniah. It was originally written as a commission for an independent television company called Crucial Films, who were working on behalf of the BBC. On receiving the first draft of the poem a representative from Crucial Films told the author that they thought it was a 'wonderful piece' but they would not be using it because they felt that the last few stanzas of the poem were too 'political' and too 'confrontational'; What they were looking for was 'something a bit more celebrational'.

The poem as it is here has been edited to make it a bit shorter. You can find the entire poem on www.benjaminzephaniah.com. The complete poem has more political references.

The poem uses some words of Jamaican patois, such as "wid" for 'with' and "de" for 'the' and you may like to discuss this with the students.

Younger students

You may like the students to read the poem on their own or as a class and then ask them some directed questions about the poem. Here are a few examples:

1. What challenges did these early immigrants face?
2. What are some of the reasons the author gives for why these men came to England?
3. What did the immigrants have to fight against in England? (Taboo subjects such as blacks in the union, racists, fascists.)
4. What does the author think of the people who came on the Empire Windrush?

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand why some immigrants may have come to the UK in the 1950s.
- Understand a little of what life was like for the early immigrants.
- Think about challenges faced by immigrants in the 1950s.

Older students

You may like to have the students answer the directed questions as part of a class discussion, or they could read the poem and write about the challenges faced by the immigrants. Students may like to research stories of real-life immigrants.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand why some immigrants may have come to the UK in the 1950s.
- Understand a little of what life was like for the early immigrants.
- Think about challenges faced by immigrants in the 1950s.



Chapter ③: The 1950s

(pages 14–27)

Britain in the 1950s

The 1950s

Britain in the 1950s

In the 1950s people began to shrug off the effects of war. At the same time, new materials led to new clothes and new products (like TVs) changed the way people lived.

When the 1950s started, most war still raged and clothes looked much like they had before the war. Young people did not know about fashion. Fashion was something that people were told about when they were in their 20s and 30s. Fashion was what men wore, so people who were very rich. Most people in the years after the war were not rich, and the money they had was all spent on their children's clothes. Children were school uniforms, a short skirt, a jacket, cap and short trousers for boys. Girls aged 10 would look just like their sisters.

But during the 1950s, the fashions of the war were gone.

The first important year was 1951 when Britain tried to shake off the war years by staging a Festival of Britain exhibition (shown on the right).

This was the time when visitors looked at designs, clothes and fashions that were not seen before. What is more, they were designed for ordinary people. Nevertheless, they were all worn as luxury items. The government wanted to sell as much as possible to them, so in the early 1950s the British could see the glances, but they could not see it in their own shops.

In the early 50s, people had no TV and their houses were mostly filled by radio. First carps were introduced.

1950s timeline

The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II (1952). The Festival of Britain (1951). The launch of the first television (1936). The end of rationing (1954). The first nuclear power station (1956). The first space shuttle (1957). The first moon landing (1969).

1950 **1951** **1952** **1953** **1954** **1955** **1956** **1957** **1958** **1959**

1950 The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Festival of Britain. The launch of the first television. The end of rationing. The first nuclear power station. The first space shuttle. The first moon landing.

1951 The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Festival of Britain. The launch of the first television. The end of rationing. The first nuclear power station. The first space shuttle. The first moon landing.

1952 The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Festival of Britain. The launch of the first television. The end of rationing. The first nuclear power station. The first space shuttle. The first moon landing.

1953 The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Festival of Britain. The launch of the first television. The end of rationing. The first nuclear power station. The first space shuttle. The first moon landing.

1954 The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Festival of Britain. The launch of the first television. The end of rationing. The first nuclear power station. The first space shuttle. The first moon landing.

1955 The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Festival of Britain. The launch of the first television. The end of rationing. The first nuclear power station. The first space shuttle. The first moon landing.

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1959 The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Festival of Britain. The launch of the first television. The end of rationing. The first nuclear power station. The first space shuttle. The first moon landing.

1950s questionnaire



Summertime Blues



The Festival of Britain



Festival of Britain memories



The first page contains a timeline, and you will see that it has a huge number of events on it. The 1950s were a time of great technological change (the 60s were more a time of social change).

One of the most important ideas that children might find difficult, is that fashion was not important to schoolchildren in the early 1950s. It had not been an important idea to children in any other previous generation either. As it is now so important, this is a point that may take a bit of stressing.

Most boys in early secondary school as well as primary school wore short trousers and all wore school uniforms. Boys going to school wore school caps. Jackets, trousers and ties were still normal wear.

The early 1950s was still a time of austerity. Most homes did not have carpet on the floor, but had lino. Almost no one had a TV at the start of the 1950s and most families gathered around the wireless (note the change of terminology to radio is later).

To modern eyes, everything still looked quite drab. The government sought to try to raise people's aspirations for the future by putting on the Festival of Britain exhibition in 1951. Just a century before, Prince Albert had launched the Great Exhibition. In 1854 the Crystal Palace was filled with the latest technological wonders of the steam age. The Festival of Britain looked to a new space age, new materials and new designs.

Compare the 1950s and today



1950s prices



TV in Britain





1950s kitchen

Food in the 1950s

What people ate in the 1950s

Inventions of the 1950s

School in the 1950s

School bags then and now



If you wanted to find one or two things that were of the utmost importance in the 1950s, you might go for TV and the beginning of the Space Age. These were dramatic events. But underlying it all was a gradual, less definable, increase in the national wealth, so that cars became more and more common in the 1950s, for example.

You may want to spend quite some time looking at the specially drawn pictures on pages 16 and 17. Children should look at themselves and then look at each of the people in the picture. They should think about their parents and then look at the pictures. Detail is important here. Mum is wearing gloves. Do any parents wear gloves now? Dad is indoors, but if he were outdoors he would be wearing a trilby. Do any parents wear trilbies now? Dad is wearing a suit and tie indoors. The son is wearing a jacket and tie indoors. It was a much more formal society than we have today.

There are many lingering ideas of the past, but there are also signs of the future. The wire magazine rack with its space-age knobs portend of the 1960s. Meccano is a sign of more prosperity insofar as parents were able to buy intricate, and thus more expensive, toys. But it also harks back to a time when we amused ourselves in a constructive mechanical way. People in this age could do more for themselves than many can today.

The record is Liberace. Who was Liberace? How old was he? Why on earth should young children look up to a middle-aged man as a celebrity (no such thing as pop stars of course).

Notice also the teenage girl's dress. This is the first idea of fashion and the ideas come from America (scarf, flared skirt, open-necked blouse). The younger girl still has a short dress and jumper. All have sensible shoes.

Of course, these pictures are from the early 1950s. Turning to page 18 and the way things changed is described.

You may wish to remind children that during the 1950s, rationing finished and people gradually began to get back to normal and to become wealthier. But compared with today people still had little money to spend on luxuries. So, as younger people became more aware of fashion, they tried cheap and simple things first. For example, pony tails became fashionable.

During this time many advances were made in synthetic chemical manufacturing, including the production of hair sprays. People now look back on these crude and sticky substances with distaste, but at the time they were revolutionary because they allowed hair to be worn up. At the same time, wages had risen enough for most people to be able to visit a hairdresser and, like many other service industries, hairdressing boomed. This was the time when services began to occupy more jobs than manufacturing, something that would continue to the present day.

There seemed to be a time when many people were earning enough to be able to buy small luxuries. At the time fashion accessories, as we now call them, were things like rows of popper beads. Again, we now think of them as crude, but at the time they were a good way to look different.

On page 19 the text also refers back to stockings. You might wish to describe how stockings were traditionally of quite thick materials. When nylon was invented, they were able to be thinner and so could be used to show off good legs. During the war, when stockings could not be obtained, many women used a pencil line drawn down the back of their legs to imitate the seam in the stockings. In the 1950s stockings were fashionable and



still widely worn.

You might also want to talk about the development of teenagers. Many children wanted to leave school as soon as possible in these times because it meant they could get out and earn enough money to buy clothes and other things. As manufacturers became aware of this new, growing market, the term teenagers was coined. These were people who started the subsequent idea of being fashionable. Thus, by creating fashion trends and changes, manufacturers were able to increase demand. They also increased the throw-away society. No group of people before would have thought of getting rid of anything until it was worn out.

One other big change was that teenagers began to want to meet away from the rest of the family. In the 1950s they met in cafes called milk bars. They gradually defined this separation from older people by wearing distinctive clothes. For this the boys looked back to a previous era of flamboyance and took on the Edwardian look with a difference. This is how the term Teddy Boys (Edwardian boys) came about. They further distinguished themselves by using brilliantine to slick their hair back. Some film stars became icons of this time and, for example, the Tony Curtis look was easy for barbers (men did not yet go to hairdressers) to copy.

It is also worth noting that, until this time, all ages had enjoyed fun together and that people were generally sociable. Every one knew everyone else because they lived in little houses

close together. The development of the new suburbs, where people drove to and from work began to change this. Above all, the 1950s are characterised by the way society went private.

Up to this time children might not have heard of any of the people who were famous in the early days of change that developed towards the end of the 1950s. The first rock and roll came from Bill Haley (who was rather fat and middle aged), but then soon changed to become younger. TV gave the opportunity to see such people almost in real time (although there were few live broadcasts in this era). The most important of these idols was Elvis Presley, but he was copied in Britain by such (I suspect long forgotten) idols as Adam Faith and Tommy Steele.

You may want to talk about the lyrics of the time. Here are some lines from the Elvis Presley song 'All shook up':

All shook up – 12/07/1957

7 weeks at number one – 21 weeks on chart

I well'a bless my soul
What'sa wrong with me
I'm itchin' like a man on a fuzzy tree
My friends say I'm actin' wild as a bug
I'm in love
I'm all shook up
Mm mm mm, mm, yay, yay, yay

Well, my hands are shaky and my knees
are weak
I can't seem to stand on my own two feet
Who do you think of when you have
such luck
I'm in love
I'm all shook up
Mm mm mm, mm, yay, yay, yay

These are some lines from 'Singing the blues', one of Tommy Steele's best-known songs.

Singing the blues – 11/01/1957

1 week at number one – 15 weeks on chart

Well, I never felt more like singin' the blues



'cause I never thought that I'd ever lose
Your love dear, why'd you do me this way
Well, I never felt more like cryin' all night
'cause everythin's wrong, and nothin'
ain't right

Without you, you got me singin' the blues

The moon and stars no longer shine
The dream is gone I thought was mine
There's nothin' left for me to do
But cry-y-y over you

Well, I never felt more like runnin' away
But why should I go 'cause I couldn't stay
Without you, you got me singin' the blues

Well, I never felt more like singin' the blues
'cause I never thought that I'd ever lose
Your love dear, why'd you do me this way
Well, I never felt more like cryin' all night
'cause everythin's wrong, and nothin'
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Without you, you got me singin' the blues

The moon and stars no longer shine
The dream is gone I thought was mine
There's nothin' left for me to do
But cry-y-y over you

I never felt more like runnin' away
Why should I go 'cause I couldn't stay
Without you, you got me singin' the blues

This harks back to the melodies of the older 'crooners' such as Perry Como, who were still very popular at the time.

Adam Faith's lyrics were different and

started to look more like the consumer society with a harder edge.

What do you want – 04/12/1959

3 weeks at number one – 19 weeks on chart

What do you want if you don't want money
 What do you want if you don't want gold
 Say what you want and I'll give it
 you darling
 Wish you wanted my love baby

What do you want if you don't want ermine
 What do you want if you don't want pearls
 Say what you want and I'll give it
 you darling
 Wish you wanted my love baby

Well I'm offering you this heart of mine
 But all you do is play it cool
 What do you want
 Oh boy you're making a fool of me

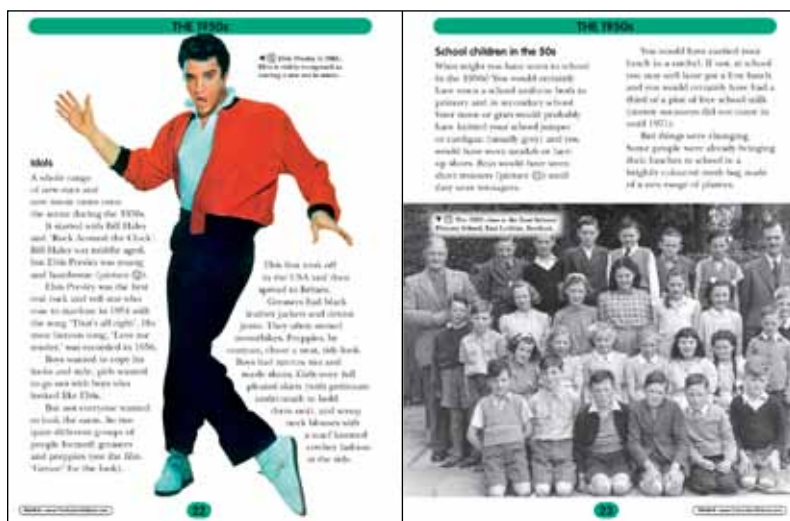
One of these days when you need
 my kissing
 One of these days when you want me too
 Don't turn around coz I'll be missing
 Then you'll wanta my love baby

Well I'm offering you a diamond ring
 But all you do is turn me down
 What do you want
 Oh boy you're goin' to town on me

One of these days when you need
 my kissing
 One of these days when you want me too
 Don't turn around coz I'll be missing
 Then you'll wanta my love baby
 Well then you'll wanta my love baby

With younger children you may want to talk about the changes that took place in toys.

Materials were changing. Most of the toys were still made in cast metal (often with a high lead content!) and few of them were more mechanical than using clockwork. But as the decade wore on, trains became electric and



metal engines became hard plastic engines.

You might also want to point out that some of the toys still incredibly popular were such simple things as hoops, re-invented as the hula hoop, and a new plastic re-invention – the frisbee – arrived at the end of the decade.

Dolls were also about to become revolutionised by trend-setting Barbie doll. Barbie really belongs to the end of this era but will be discussed later on.

It is worth some time getting older people to describe shopping in the early 1950s. The change is very great between this time and the 1960s and beyond.

You may wish to remind children that the first shops dated back to Victorian times and shops had remained very much in that mould. You went into a shop like Sainsbury's and you got your butter made up in pats while you waited. Then you went on and got tea served by a different assistant and so on. There were brands, but shopping was, in the main, not brand led while so much produce was still bought loose.

People also shopped for different things than they do today. No one knew that lard and dripping were bad for you and it was common to have dripping on bread (which actually tasted really good!). It was also cheap and harked back to days when you had to economise.

Foods and shopping were also different because of the lack of refrigeration. The milkman still came round each day – some still with a horse and cart – and if you wanted

milk that lasted longer, you bought sterilised milk. There were no chilled foods and no frozen foods – the Birds Eye adverts belong to the 1960s.

Much of the food was still bought dry or in cans and bottled just as it had been for a century. The off-licence did not have wines from all over the world. It had a wooden floor and a counter on which beer bottle returns were placed. It had almost no variety and no one expected any more.

You may wish to spend a long time looking at the picture on page 27. Some of the brand names have stayed the test of time, but what is different between the ways food was kept (and what it was) and what it is today?

There is also an ideal opportunity to look at the earliest stages of the Space Race (which is more fully covered in the 60s section). However, here you will find Sputnik and so on. If you do want to find more on this (including the Sputnik sound) then go to www.curriculumvisions.com and enter the Professional Zone (our subscription site) and go to Science, then Space. The Sputnik sound and other features are in the gallery.

THE 1950s

Toys and games
In the 1950s, the 1950s die-cast plastic toy cars were widely available, but in the early 1950s, you still played with toys made from wood and metal.

Hoops and hoops
Using a hoop is an ancient pastime. The word 'hoop' was added to the list of words for children's games in the early 19th century. It was then introduced as a plastic toy in 1951 by the American Wham-O company. The hula hoop became the most widely sold toy of the 1950s, with 100 million sold in the year.

Dinky Toys and Meccano
Frank Hornby was one of the most important British toy makers and inventors of Dinky Toys. To go with the trains he developed miniature accessories, such as cars.

The 1950s
The 1950s were a time of great change in the world. In the early 1950s, the first atomic bomb was dropped on Japan. In the late 1950s, the first man-made satellite was launched into space. The 1950s were also a time of great change in the way people lived. In the early 1950s, the first television sets were sold in the UK. In the late 1950s, the first motor cars were sold in the UK.

▲ The 1950s Dinky Toys car.

THE 1950s

The 1950s
The 1950s were a time of great change in the world. In the early 1950s, the first atomic bomb was dropped on Japan. In the late 1950s, the first man-made satellite was launched into space. The 1950s were also a time of great change in the way people lived. In the early 1950s, the first television sets were sold in the UK. In the late 1950s, the first motor cars were sold in the UK.

Meccano
Meccano was a popular toy in the 1950s. It was a model-making kit that could be used to build anything you wanted. It was invented by Oliver Morgan in 1909. The first Meccano set was sold in the UK in 1910. It was a great success and became a household name. In the 1950s, it was still a popular toy. It was used to build everything from simple models to complex structures. It was a great way to learn about engineering and design.

The 1950s
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THE 1950s

How we shopped in the 1950s
If you were to go to a shop in the 1950s, you would find a very different scene to the one we see today. There were no supermarkets, no big department stores, and no big shopping centres. People went to small, independent shops. These shops were often family-run and were a part of the community. People went to the shop to buy everything they needed, from food to clothes. The shop was a place where people could talk to the shopkeeper and get advice. It was a place where people could find things that were not available in the big shops of today.

Refrigerator
In the 1950s, the refrigerator was a new invention. It was a machine that could keep food cold for a long time. This was a great improvement on the old way of keeping food cold, which was to put it in a cool place like a cellar or a larder. The refrigerator was a big machine, often with a double door. It was a great invention that made life much easier. It was a machine that could keep food cold for a long time. This was a great improvement on the old way of keeping food cold, which was to put it in a cool place like a cellar or a larder. The refrigerator was a big machine, often with a double door. It was a great invention that made life much easier.

Black taxi
The black taxi was a symbol of the 1950s. It was a small, black car with a white roof. It was a car that was used to take people to and from the airport. It was a car that was very reliable and very comfortable. It was a car that was a part of the 1950s. It was a car that was a symbol of the 1950s.

THE 1950s

What we ate in the 1950s
In the 1950s, the way people ate was very different from the way we eat today. There were no fast-food restaurants, no big shopping centres, and no big department stores. People went to small, independent shops. These shops were often family-run and were a part of the community. People went to the shop to buy everything they needed, from food to clothes. The shop was a place where people could talk to the shopkeeper and get advice. It was a place where people could find things that were not available in the big shops of today.

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1950s questionnaire

Find someone who grew up in the 1950s and find out what their life was like. Here are some questions that you can ask them.

1. What is your name? 

2. What year were you born? 

3. Who are you in relation to the interviewer? 

4. What do you remember about the 1950s?



5. Who was your favourite musical performer at the time?



6. What was the name of your favourite song back then?



7. Where did you buy your groceries? How often did you or your parents go shopping for food?



8. If you were a child in the 1950s, what games did you play?



.....

9. What events do you remember as being important or having a special meaning to you?



.....

10. Can you describe the clothes that you wore?



.....

1950s questionnaire

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Access to someone who grew up in the 1950s.

Using the worksheet

You may wish to use this as an introduction to the 1950s, or as a review. Students could search for someone who grew up in the 1950s, or you may want to bring someone in and have the students ask them questions. Students should be encouraged to think up their own questions based on what they have read or on what they would like to know. They can then write up the answers as a report, make illustrations based on the information given or make a presentation.

If each student interviews a different person, you may like students to put the information together into a class presentation. Students could be split into groups and make graphs or presentation material for different questions.

You may also like the students to answer the questions themselves, as someone growing up in the 'noughties'. They can compare answers and see how their lives are different today.

Younger students

You may want to give younger students some ideas for what questions to ask. You could arrange for a person who grew up in the 1950s to come into class and be interviewed by the students. Each student could prepare a question or questions to ask and write up their answer as a newspaper story.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the concerns felt by people growing up in the 1950s.
- Understand what it was like to grow up in the 1950s.
- Conduct an interview.

Older students

Older students may like to think up their own questions and find their own subjects to interview. They may want to write up their interview into a report or newspaper story, or to compare stories in class discussion.

Older students may also like to compare life in the 1950s with their own lives today.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the concerns felt by people growing up in the 1950s.
- Understand what it was like to grow up in the 1950s.
- Conduct an interview.
- Compare life in the 1950s with life today.

Summertime Blues

Well I'm gonna raise a fuss
And I'm gonna raise a holler
About workin' all summer
Just tryin' to earn a dollar
Well, I went to my boss
Who governs me
He said, "No, dice, bud
You gotta work late"

Sometime I wonder
What I'm gonnna do
There ain't no cure
For the summertime blues

Well, my mom and papa told me
Now you better earn some money
If one of you is gonna go
Ridin' next Sunday
Well, I didn't go to work
I told my boss I was sick
He said, "You can't use the car
'Cause you didn't work a lick"

Sometime I wonder
What I'm gonnna do
There ain't no cure
For the summertime blues

Gonna save two weeks
Gonna have a fine vacation
Gonna take my problem
To the United Nations
Well, I went to my congressman
He sent me back a note
It said, "I'd like to help you, hon
But you're too young to vote"

Sometime I wonder
What I'm gonnna do
There ain't no cure
For the summertime blues

Now there ain't no cure
For the summertime blues
Now there ain't no cure
For the summertime blues



Summertime Blues

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Recordings of the song and a way to play them.

Using the worksheet

Eddie Cochran (1938–1960), killed in a car crash in London in 1960 and propelled instantly to iconic rock-n-roll legend, was a song-writer/performer who was over-shadowed by Elvis Presley. In fact, Eddie coveted Elvis' fame and stardom saying, "I'm gonna be big. . . I can play guitar – he can't."

'*Summertime Blues*' was composed in just one-half hour in 1958 and recorded that same year. It consists of a three-chord accompaniment with over-dubbed hand-clapping performed by song-writer Sharon Sheeley. It took Cochran one hour to perfect the hand-clapping of Sheeley, who was not an instrumentalist. The spoken lyrics which cap each verse are Eddie's impression of King Fish from Amos'n-Andy, an African American radio show. '*Summertime Blues*' was Eddie's only Top 10 hit in America. It took two months to enter the charts and peaked at number 8 on the Billboard 100.

'*Summertime Blues*' encapsulates the rebelliousness of youth, the hypocrisy of the politics, and the growing generation gap of the fifties. Although it is not a protest song, it anticipates those songs of the 1960s through its defiance to authority. Eddie Cochran proves himself to be an innovator rather than a re-creator in this dynamic paean to teenage freedom versus adult responsibility.

'*Summertime Blues*' is one of rock's most covered songs with recordings made by the Beach Boys, Blue Cheer, T-Rex, Ritchie Valens, Dick Dale, The Who, Alan Jackson, Joan Jett, The Flaming Lips, The Flying Lizards, Olivia Newton-John, Buck Owens, the Ventures, and Motorhead, among others.

After playing the song for students, you may like to ask them the following questions about the song.

1. What do we mean when we say someone has 'the blues' (they are sad)
2. Do the singer's parents sound strict to you?
3. Why can't the singer use the car?
4. Do you think the singer was angry that his Congressman wouldn't help him because he was young?
5. What does the singer mean by 'summertime blues'? Why is he blue?
6. Do you think the singer is angry at adults?

Younger students

You may like to discuss with the students how in the 1950s, the idea of teenager was invented. Of course, people were in their teens before this, but it was not considered a special time of life. You may like the students to discuss the meaning of the song, rather than any specific questions, and how it applies to the 1950s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Think about how teenagers felt in the 1950s.
- Understand that in the 1950s teenagers began to feel rebellious and different from adults.
- Interpret song lyrics.

Older students

You may like students to see if they can find any other songs from the 1950s that show the rebelliousness of youth, or how teenagers felt about growing up.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Think about how teenagers felt in the 1950s.
- Understand that in the 1950s teenagers began to feel rebellious and different from adults.
- Interpret song lyrics.

The Festival of Britain

Here is some information about the Festival of Britain. Read the information and then design a poster to advertise the festival. In the poster, try to convince people that the future is bright and hopeful.

The Festival of Britain brought new life into this grey world in 1951. London was transformed by the festival. People felt a sense of pride in the country's future and that everything was new again.

Apart from giving the British new hope in their future, the Festival promoted a style in architecture and design known as 'Contemporary', which rapidly spread across the country, influencing a generation. The Festival also featured amazing buildings, such as the Skylon – a huge tower, which made people feel that a new future had begun.

One person described a 'Contemporary' living room, like this: "The walls were all painted in different pastel colours: duck egg blue, watered grass green, muted salmon rose, pale and sandy gold. The armchairs were pale beech wood with olive coloured upholstery." People painted their houses and put out window boxes, restaurants opened and towns became more cheerful places.



Festival of Britain

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Extra sheets of paper and materials to make posters with.

Using the worksheet

You may like to begin by showing students photos of the Southbank of London, including the Festival Hall and National Film Theatre. These buildings were built for the Festival in the new modernist, or contemporary, design style. Remind students that much of England had not yet been rebuilt from the war, so these buildings, with their clean lines and modern materials, would have looked amazing to most people.

Around 60 artists were commissioned to create artwork for the Festival. Among the artists commissioned were painters John Piper, Lucien Freud, John Minton, Ben Nicholson and Graham Sutherland, and sculptors Henry Moore, Jacob Epstein, Reg Butler and Barbara Hepworth. This was a new generation of artists that would come to define British style for the coming decades.

Coventry Cathedral, designed by Basil Spence and commissioned in 1951, was another lasting monument to festival style. The Council of Industrial Design (now The Design Council), which had played an important part in the Festival, became a powerful arbiter of taste in the fifties and sixties.

Younger students

The students can work in groups or on their own to design a poster. You may want to point out the colours described as 'contemporary' and the themes of future, hope, newness, etc, that would have been used in festival art.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that the Festival of Britain was designed to give people new hope in the future.
- Design a poster using design styles and colours from contemporary art.

Older students

The students could work on their own to make a poster, or they may like to make a multimedia presentation.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that the Festival of Britain was designed to give people new hope in the future.
- Design a poster using design styles and colours from contemporary art.

Festival of Britain memories

Here are memories of the Festival of Britain from four different people.

“My parents took me to the Festival of Britain soon after its opening. We were living in Greenford, Middlesex, and I have clear memories of that visit, seeing the Skylon and the Dome of Discovery. Whilst there my father bought me a George VI Crown which we watched being minted on the South Bank site by the Royal Mint. I still have that coin, still in its original claret coloured box.”

“I visited the FOB on a school visit from South Wales. The steam train journey to London was full of excited anticipation of a New World Order and I remember being most impressed by the Skylon, with the Dome of Discovery and the Festival Hall, all of which fuelled that impression. The trip was highlighted by a visit to Battersea Funfair and I felt immensely proud of our country and convinced that we were world leaders in so many fields.”

“I remember all the excitement. The 50s for those of my age, just entering the adult world, were the most exhilarating times, and far from the drab 1950s which have been portrayed. As one of your contributors recalled, everything was optimistic, with our National Health Service, housing and schools programmes, and plentiful jobs. The world was our oyster, our world expanding limitlessly, after the grim battened-down war years.

One thing I particularly remember from the Festival was the bowl where you were spun by centrifugal force, being pinned to the sides of the bowl at a great height from the base of the bowl.”

“I visited the Festival four times that I can remember, each time with my friend ‘Gibby’. It was far too expensive for a young lad so we ‘found’ our own way in each time. We were fascinated with all around us, my most vivid memories talking on a ‘television telephone’, the face of the girl on the other end smiling at me. Then there was the ‘Shot Tower’, how on earth did they keep those balls of shot up there? Finally I was proved wrong when the Skylon didn’t fall down before the exhibition ended. All in all it was a time of wonderful memories, especially the Battersea Funfair, but that’s another story.”

Questions

1. How did these people feel when they went to the Festival of Britain?

.....

2. Why do you think the second writer felt proud of Britain?

.....

.....

Festival of Britain memories

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

The Festival of Britain was more than just a fair, it was, for many people, a sign that Britain was on its way back up after the austerity of the war years. Although rationing was still going on and people were still poor, the Festival showed a bright future and gave people hope that things were about to get better.

In addition to the fair and rides, the Festival showcased some amazing science of the future, new materials, new products, many interesting designs and design styles. Some of the buildings on London's South Bank were inspired by the Festival, although only The Royal Festival Hall remains from the original buildings, and this was the first glimpse people had of modernist, or contemporary, architecture. It looks a bit bleak to us today, but would have seemed very futuristic at the time.

Most of all, the Festival was about giving people hope and a feeling that they had something to look forward to – and this is reflected in the quotes on the worksheet. These quotes are taken from the BBC history website.

You may like to begin by reviewing with students how people felt at the start of the 1950s, and why the government might have thought the Festival would cheer people up. You can ask the students how they would go about cheering the country up if they were in charge, and how they might feel to go to a fair that showcased modern and futuristic items. Would they feel hopeful of the future?

Younger students

You may like the students to answer the questions as part of a class discussion.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that the Festival of Britain gave people hope for a brighter future.
- Understand that as Britain began the 1950s people were still living in difficult circumstances.
- Learn about some of the events and displays at the Festival of Britain.
- Learn about how people felt when they visited the Festival of Britain.

Older students

Students may like to research the Festival of Britain to find out more about what types of exhibits were shown and what events took place.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that the Festival of Britain gave people hope for a brighter future.
- Understand that as Britain began the 1950s people were still living in difficult circumstances.
- Learn about some of the events and displays at the Festival of Britain.
- Learn about how people felt when they visited the Festival of Britain.

Compare the 1950s and today

Here are some facts about the 1950s.

- ▶ Many people had outside lavatories, central heating was rare and many houses were without televisions and some still did not have running water.
- ▶ Food rations until 1954. Fruit was a luxury, chicken or sweets a rarity. Queues outside butchers lined the streets. Petrol was rationed in 1956–57.
- ▶ Smog, or ‘peasoupers’, were thick and yellow, largely the result of coal fires. Some have described the fog as a ‘yellow wall’ outside the front door. Parents gave children scarves to wear over their noses and mouths. Some street lamps were still gas.
- ▶ Some bomb sites still remained in British towns, while air-raid shelters, unexploded bombs, gas masks and seaside defences provided a reminder of the horror that had gone before.
- ▶ Smoking among UK men aged 35 to 59 was 80% in 1950.

Compare these facts with today.

1. What are houses like? Do most people have an inside bathroom?

.....

.....

2. What types of food are eaten by most people – are fruit, chicken and sweets easily available?

.....

.....

3. Is there a lot of smog? 

4. What are the streets in your town or city like? Are they clean?

.....

.....

.....

5. Do many people smoke today? 

Compare the 1950s and today

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

Today we tend to think of the 1950s as a very good period, when there was little crime, full employment and most families were together. But the reality was very different, at least in the early years of the decade. This activity gives students a chance to think about some of the other aspects of the 1950s and compare them to today. The idea is not to suggest that the 1950s were horrible, but the hard aspects of life may help to explain why people felt the way they did.

Compared to today, with all of our problems, life was hard for a lot of people in the 1950s. Food rationing did not end until 1954, meaning that most people had been living with food shortages for more than 10 years. Clothing and petrol rationing continued even after food was more widely available.

Many of Britain's inner cities had been severely bombed during the war, and many of these areas were still not rebuilt in the 1950s. People had to live in temporary accommodation and in buildings that had been hastily thrown up. Coal was still the main source of fuel, since it was cheap and plentiful, but this resulted in horrible smog, especially in industrial areas, and many people became sick from the pollution.

While we often think of racial tension as being common today, in the 1950s white Britons were confronted for the first time with immigrants and some of them did not react very well. Life could be very hard indeed for a black or Jamaican in Britain in the 1950s – especially as they were not yet protected by anti-discrimination laws. People were legally allowed to refuse to serve or rent accommodation to a person because of their colour.

While the NHS had already begun, many people still had very unhealthy habits, such as smoking. Of course, smoking was not banned in

public places, as it is today, and many children grew up inhaling smoke from their parents' cigarettes.

You may like to begin by asking students if they think that life was better in the 1950s and why. You can then ask them if they can think of any things about the 1950s that may have made life hard for people. You can then hand out the worksheet and go over some of the points on the sheet.

Younger students

Younger students may need some help in answering the questions. Students could answer the questions based on their own experience.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that some aspects of life in the 1950s were very hard.
- Think about what life was like in the 1950s.
- Compare some aspects of life in the 1950s with today.

Older students

The students could use secondary sources to find answers to questions, such as how many people smoke today (about 20% of adults and falling), and how many people eat fruit each day, etc.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand that some aspects of life in the 1950s were very hard.
- Think about what life was like in the 1950s.
- Compare some aspects of life in the 1950s with today.

1950s prices

Here are some prices from the 1950s and today.

	In 1950	In 2000
Average price of a house:	£2,170	£101,000
Average weekly salary for a man:	£11	£462 (for men)
Average family had:	2.2 children	1.7 children
Percentage of families owning a car:	30%	70%
500g beef sirloin:	12p	£3.21
250g cheddar cheese:	3p	£1.28
800g white bread:	2p	51p
1 pint milk:	2p	37p
1 kg potatoes:	1p	89p
1 kg sugar:	5p	57p

Questions

1. How much more did a man earn in 2000, each week, than in 1950?

.....

2. Next time your family is shopping, go along and look at the prices for a loaf of white bread, 1 kg of potatoes and 1 kg of sugar. What are the prices today? Are they more or less than in 2000?

.....

.....

.....

1950s prices

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

Comparing prices is always tricky, because of course the value of the money changes as well, but this will give students some idea of how much both costs and salaries have gone up since 1950.

Students can see that some things have gone up, relatively, much more than others.

Younger students

You may like to begin by pointing out that salaries (for men) today are about 50 times higher than they were in the 1950s, and so is the average price of a house. However, the price of food has not risen as much. Students should be able to see that both prices and income have risen a good deal in the last 50+ years. You may like to use this to discuss with the students the general cost of things and how much money people have to spend on non-essential items.

Outcomes

Students can:

- Extract information from a chart.
- Understand that prices and incomes have risen a great deal since the 1950s
- Learn what some things cost in the 1950s.
- Compare 1950s salaries and prices with today's salaries and prices.

Older students

Students may be curious why we only give data for a man's salary. This is because in the 1950s, men tended to be the breadwinners. Many women did work outside the home, although far fewer than during the war, but their salaries were a fraction of the men's, even for doing the same job. Sadly, this has not changed completely today and women's salaries are still not equal to men's. Students may like to discuss this, as well as whether or not people spend more money today on basics.

Outcomes

Students can:

- Extract information from a chart.
- Understand that prices and incomes have risen a great deal since the 1950s.
- Learn what some things cost in the 1950s.
- Compare 1950s salaries and prices with today's salaries and prices.

Answers

1. £451.
2. Answers will vary, but the prices will, of course, be much higher than in the 1950s.

TV in Britain

Here is some information about the number of households with television sets in Britain.

Year	Households (million)	Households with TV (million)
1956	15.6 m	5.7 m
1959	16.1	9.4
1960	16.3	11.0
1961	16.5	12.3
1962	16.6	12.8
1964	17.0	14.2
1966	17.8	15.4
1968	18.2	16.4
1970	18.4	16.9
1980	20.4	19.9
1990	22.6	21.9
2000	24.9	24.1
2007	25.9	25.3

Questions

1. Make a graph showing the number of households who had a television each year.
2. Can you make a graph that shows the total number of households, the year and the number of households that had a television?
3. In what decade did the number of television sets increase the most.



.....

TV in Britain

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, graph paper.

Using the worksheet

This data shows very clearly how the percentage of people with television sets increased from around 30% in 1956 to almost 100% today. In terms of total numbers, more people bought TV sets in the 1950s than in any other decade, although a large number of sets were also bought in the 1960s, which was a time of greater prosperity.

In the 1960s, Britain's population increased by about 2 million, while the number of households with television sets increased by around 5 million. This means that by the end of the 1960s, a large majority of people had a television.

Although the range of programmes shown on TV was still small (very small compared to today), many people began watching TV regularly by the end of the 1950s. As more people owned television sets, they began to watch the same programmes and a culture of television watching grew up, where people had the shared experience of watching the same shows.

If you have done percentages with students in maths lessons, you may like to begin by converting the viewing figures into percentages (simply divide households with TV by the total number of households and move the decimal in the answer two places to the right to get the percent). You may also like to work these out before class.

Younger students

You may need to give examples of different types of graphs the students could use to graph this data. They might like to use a standard graph, on graph paper, using the year on the Y axis and plot the total number of households as one line on the X axis and the number of households with a TV as a second line on the X axis, using two different colours, perhaps.

They could also plot the data as a bar graph, again using two bars for each year. The Y axis in this case would be the number of households, while the X axis would be the years.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Plot data on a graph.
- Understand that the number of households with TV sets increased dramatically in the 1950s and 1960s.
- Use the appropriate type of graph for the data.

Older students

Older students may like to experiment with different graphs on their own, or may need some direction as to the type of graph to use. Students may also like to work out the percentages and add them to the graph. You may like to follow up by asking students some questions about the percentage of households that have had TV sets each year.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Plot data on a graph.
- Understand that the number of households with TV sets increased dramatically in the 1950s and 1960s.
- Use the appropriate type of graph for the data.
- Plot percentages on a graph.

TV watching in the 1950s

Here are some of the TV shows that people watched in 1955.

‘In the News’ A current affairs show, every other week.

‘Panorama’ A topical magazine show, every other week.

‘Animal, Vegetable, Mineral?’ A quiz programme for archaeological experts.

‘Leisure and Pleasure’, ‘Family Affairs’, ‘About the Home’ A series of programmes for women, shown during the day, one show would be on each day.

‘War in the air’ The development of air warfare up to, and including the Second World War. A series, every other week.

There were also plays on several nights a week.

And here are some sports events that were on TV:

The University Boat Race

The World Table Tennis Championships

The FA Cup Final

Tennis from Wimbledon

Test Match Cricket

A display of surfing and life-saving from Cornwall

Amateur Wrestling

Activity

1. Look at a television guide or look online and find some of the shows that are on terrestrial TV today. Choose one channel – How many news shows are on each day? How many quiz programmes? How many sports programmes? Are there any shows just for women? Are sports like table tennis, surfing and amateur wrestling shown on terrestrial TV today?



.....

.....

2. What types of shows do we have today that were not on TV in the 1950s?
What types of shows were on TV in the 1950s that we do not have today?



.....

.....

TV watching in the 1950s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

In the 50s, the hours people watched television were tightly controlled – the 24 hour broadcasting of today was unheard of. The Postmaster General stipulated how many hours of television could be shown each week. In 1956, for example, the BBC was allowed to broadcast television on weekdays between 9am and 11pm, with not more than 2 hours before 1pm. There was also a period between 6pm and 7pm when no television was broadcast. This period was used by parents to trick young children into thinking that the evening's television had finished so they would go to bed without complaint – it was known as the 'toddlers' truce'.

At the weekends, the rules were no more relaxed. A maximum of eight hours' broadcasting was allowed on Saturdays and 7 ³/₄ hours on Sunday. On Sunday another anachronism reigned – television shown between 2pm and 4pm was intended for adults – children were meant to be at Sunday School! Gradually the rules on broadcasting hours were made less strict. The 'toddlers' truce', for example, was dropped in 1957.

You might like to bring in a TV Guide or look at an online guide and discuss the types of shows that are on now, compared to the 1950s. Today, there are a lot more hours of TV, but we also have things like reality TV and home makeover shows, that were not around in the 1950s.

The 1950s also had more sports on terrestrial TV, and a greater variety of sports. There are more hours of news now, because there is more TV, but in the 1950s a greater percentage of TV viewing hours were taken up by news and current events shows, as well as variety shows and shows intended to help housewives to keep house.

Younger students

Students may need help in figuring out what some shows are – whether they are dramas, comedy, reality, DIY, etc.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Know some of the shows on TV in the 1950s.
- Compare television today and in the 1950s.
- Appreciate that people watch more TV today than in the 1950s.

Older students

The students could use secondary sources to research other shows that were on TV in the 1950s and draw comparisons between TV viewing then and now.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Know some of the shows on TV in the 1950s.
- Compare television today and in the 1950s.
- Appreciate that people watch more TV today than in the 1950s.

1950s kitchen

Here is some information about a 1950s kitchen. Use this information to design a 1950s kitchen. Think about the materials and colours you would use and what appliances you would have and where you would put them.

Flooring

Stoneware tiles, or as a cheaper choice, square polyvinyl plastic flooring tiles. These might be white, cream or a bolder colour.

Walls

Tile or artificial tile, glued on to the wall.

Cabinets

The fitted kitchen became popular and included floor level and wall cupboards for storing tinned food and kitchen equipment out of sight, with larger units such as a washing machine or refrigerator under the work-top. Cabinets might be painted in bold colours.

Work surfaces

These were often made of a hard plastic called melamine, which could be a solid colour or made to look like marble. A cheaper option were adhesive-backed plastic fabrics that could be stuck on to table-tops, shelves and draining boards.

Colours

The 1950s kitchen used new and bold colours such as blue, red, yellow and brown.

Clock

Many kitchens now had an electric clock on the wall.

Pressure cooker

The modern-looking pressure cooker was a relative newcomer in the kitchen. Its use increased as people gradually became more familiar with the benefits of steaming.

Windows

Venetian blinds replaced the nets and towelling curtains of the 1930s and 1940s kitchen, giving a less fussy and cleaner look. Extractor fans were fitted to remove unwanted cooking smells and excess condensation.

Food mixer

The Kenwood Chef food mixer took some of the chore out of food preparation as well as being something of a status symbol.

Appliances

As prosperity grew for many in the 1950s more families could afford to buy new kitchen appliances for the first time. Refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, coffee makers, food mixers and stainless steel sinks were popular choices. Food mixers and pressure cookers also became popular.



1950s kitchen

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, extra paper, pens and other drawing materials.

Using the worksheet

In the 50s, especially in the second half of the decade, people began to update their kitchens. More people began to buy washing machines and other appliances that were finally available again. Modern appliances such as food mixers and pressure cookers also became more widely available.

One big change in kitchen design was the advent of the fitted kitchen. Appliances and shelves were no longer freestanding, but were integrated into counters and cabinets that reached the floor and had skirting around them. This also made the kitchen easier to clean, since it was no longer necessary to clean under things.

New plastic materials also began to be used, along with bolder, brighter colours. This was in contrast to the kitchens of the 1940s, which were usually white. The patterns and colours also hid the dirt better.

It's hard to believe, but it was only in the 1950s that refrigerators could be found in every house. Much of this innovation came about because a huge number of new houses were still being built to replace the housing lost during the war. These houses were built with modern conveniences, such as fitted kitchens and built-in appliances. Materials such as fabric, cork and melamine were used to keep the costs down.

You may like to use this activity in conjunction with the activity on the 1930s kitchen and house design in the 1960s. You could have the students work in groups, each group could design a kitchen from a different era and compare it to a modern kitchen.

Younger students

Students may need help in starting their design. You may like to draw a sample kitchen outline on the board and ask students to draw or write in words what they would put in the kitchen.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the differences and similarities between a 1950s kitchen and today's kitchens.
- Appreciate that the relative prosperity of the 1950s led to new materials and appliances being used in kitchens.
- Draw a plan of a kitchen from the 1950s.

Older students

The students could use secondary sources to research more about 1950s kitchens. They could also make a 3D kitchen from card or foam.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the differences and similarities between a 1950s kitchen and today's kitchens.
- Appreciate that the relative prosperity of the 1950s led to new materials and appliances being used in kitchens.
- Draw a plan of a kitchen from the 1950s.

Food in the 1950s

Here are some descriptions of food from the 1950s.

The diet was home cooked and limited in range to what the local shops stocked. We always seemed to have a meat meal every day – to eat veggie was unheard of. There was a local butcher, baker, greengrocer and fishmonger, there was an ‘International’ store – part deli and part dry and tinned goods – they called it a supermarket because they had trolleys only a little bigger than the size of the normal handbasket. There were no takeaways other than the fish and chip shop and a pie, eel and shellfish stall outside the local pub on a Friday & Saturday night.

Chris Weedon

There were no supermarkets just shops... a cake and bread shop, the butchers, the milliners, the haberdashers... all with beautiful ornate gold leaf and glass fascias. In the Co-op shop they sliced bacon from sides of pigs, cut cheese from huge roundels, weighed pounds of sugar from hundred weight sacks. Nothing was prepped, wrapped or labelled. All staff had the ubiquitous pencil stub stuck behind their ear and yes, some of them did add up on their starched cuffs! No computerised tills, just an amazing set of cables on the ceiling along which travelled a small metal canister holding the customer’s tendered money along with the bill. This canister was ‘fired’ by the counter assistant along the cable to the cashier who sat aloft at a little illuminated window. The bill, stamped ‘PAID’, together with any change was then ‘fired’ back down to the assistant to give to the customer.

Roger Bray

Questions

1. Where does your family buy most of its food – from a supermarket, a corner shop or from many different small shops, such as baker, grocer, fishmonger and butcher?

.....

2. What types of takeaways are there in your neighbourhood?

.....

3. Do you think there was more or less variety of food in the 1950s than today?

.....

Food in the 1950s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

Once food rationing ended in 1954, a wider variety of food became available. Many people reacted by eating a lot more meat and butter and a lot less vegetables than during rationing. However, even though more food was available, there were still no supermarkets as we know them today. There were some larger shops, but most people still went shopping in many different shops and they shopped more often. Even people who had refrigerators were still in the habit of shopping frequently.

This activity is a chance for students to compare the convenience of today with the more labour intensive shopping of the 1950s (although many people today might also say that today's supermarkets are too impersonal and corporate).

You may like to begin by asking students to describe their last food shopping trip – where did they go and what was bought? Does their family buy all of their food once a week or do they shop in local shops several times each week? You may like the students to do a class survey of food shopping habits and compare them to the 1950s.

Younger students

The students may need some help in answering the questions. You may like to do this activity as a class exercise and take a survey of students' family food shopping habits, then have the students draw conclusions about shopping today compared to shopping in the 1950s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about some of the differences in food shopping today from in the 1950s.
- Appreciate that people in the 1950s had different food shopping habits.

Older students

The students might want to survey other classes in the school to get a wider sample of people's shopping habits today.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about some of the differences in food shopping today from in the 1950s.
- Appreciate that people in the 1950s had different food shopping habits.

What people ate in the 1950s

Here are some of the amounts of foods people ate in the 1950s.

What people, on average, ate each week in the 1950s

2.7 litres milk

3.5 eggs

1,600 grams bread (about 2 loaves)

200 grams flour

330 grams fruit (about 3 apples, oranges or bananas, or a handful of strawberries)

190 grams cakes/pastries (about 2 biscuits)

330 grams cooking fat/oil (this would all be used to cook food, such as fish and chips or a 'fry up')

Activity

1. Keep a diary of what foods you eat for a week. You may need to look on packages for amounts, or use a scale to weigh food out.
2. Write down the differences between what you eat and what a person in the 1950s ate.



.....

.....

Here is what people, on average, ate each week in the 1960s



3. Does your diet today look more like the 1950s diet or the 1960s diet?



.....

.....

What people ate in the 1950s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Scissors.

Using the worksheet

You may like to use this in conjunction with a study of nutrition. In general, people ate more food in the 1950s than in the 1940s, and a somewhat larger variety. When rationing ended, adults probably ate the foods they remembered from before the war, such as fruits and vegetables. However, children who were used to a bland diet continued to eat bland food and fewer fruits and vegetables.

Of course, many things people eat are not on this list, such as pizza, meat, etc. Pizza uses flour and one pizza probably uses a week's worth of flour. You may like to remind students that most people would not have eaten pizza or pasta, which were almost unheard of in the 1950s. This was also before immigrant numbers rose significantly, so there would have been few, if any, Chinese or Indian restaurants or shops, and people would not have heard of many of these foods (curry was known from Britain's Empire, but it was cooked at home and not by very many people).

Students may be surprised by how much more pastries and foods with fat in them they eat in a week – urge them to keep track of the grams of fat in the packets of crisps and sweets they eat (it should be listed on the wrapper).

Younger students

Students may need some assistance in determining how many grams of each item they eat. You can do this activity in conjunction with maths lessons in scales and weighing.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Keep track of how much of certain foods they eat.
- Compare what they eat with what people in the 1950s ate.
- Determine how much, by weight, of an ingredient is in a particular food.

Older students

Students may like to keep track of other items they eat and use secondary sources to find out what else people ate in the 1950s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Keep track of how much of certain foods they eat.
- Compare what they eat with what people in the 1950s ate.
- Determine how much, by weight, of an ingredient is in a particular food.

Inventions of the 1950s

Here are some important scientific inventions and social changes that happened during the 1950s.

1951	Super glue invented.
	Power steering invented by Francis W Davis.
	Charles Ginsburg invented the first videotape recorder (VTR).
1952	Mr Potato Head patented.
	The first patent for the bar code issued to inventors Joseph Woodland and Bernard Silver.
	The first diet soft drink sold.
	Edward Teller and team build the hydrogen bomb.
1953	Radial tyres invented.
	The first musical synthesizer invented by RCA.
	David Warren invented the black box flight recorder.
	Transistor radio invented by Texas Instruments.
1954	The first nonstick pan produced.
	The solar cell invented by Chaplin, Fuller and Pearson.
	Ray Kroc started McDonalds.
1955	Tetracycline, a powerful antibiotic, invented.
	Optic fibre invented.
1956	The first computer hard disk used.
	The hovercraft invented by Christopher Cockerell.
	Bette Nesmith Graham invented 'Mistake Out', later renamed Liquid Paper, or White Out, to paint over mistakes.
1958	The modem invented.
	Gordon Gould invents the laser.
	The Hula Hoop invented by Richard Knerr and Arthur 'Spud' Melin.
	The integrated circuit invented by Jack Kilby and Robert Noyce.
1959	The internal heart pacemaker invented by Wilson Greatbatch.
	Barbie Doll invented.
	Jack Kilby and Robert Noyce both invent the microchip.

Inventions of the 1950s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

You may like to use this on its own or in conjunction with the activity on 1960s inventions on page 92. Some students may be surprised to see when some of these things were invented. For example, the first computer hard disk was used in 1956. Before this, computer data was stored on reels of tape and computers were the size of a room. The hard disk allowed more data to be stored in a smaller space so that computers could be made smaller (although they still required a small room to house).

Similarly, the modem was invented in 1958, although it was only used to connect two computers together – the internet was still a long way off. The invention of the microchip in 1959 could be said to be the start of the computer revolution. After this, computers began to shrink in size.

Students may also wonder what people did before the invention of the nonstick pan (used cast iron), McDonalds and the transistor radio (before this radios used tubes and were very large – the size of a small cabinet). You may like to ask students what they would do today without some of these things – do they think there would be computers at school if they were still as big as a room, for example? You can also point out that some inventions, such as solar cells, are still not in really widespread use.

Younger students

Students may like to list some of the other things that they use every day and research when they were invented. They may also like to compare this list to the list of things invented in the 1960s to see which inventions they feel are more important to their lives. They can also see that some of the inventions having to do with computers, allowed the later inventions to happen.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Find out what items they use everyday were invented in the 1950s.
- Think about what everyday life was like before the transistor radios and nonstick pans were invented.
- Think about how these inventions have changed people's lives.

Older students

Students may like to use secondary sources to find out more about the history of the computer and internet, and may like to draw a timeline of computer and internet history. Students may also like to research other items invented in the 1950s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Find out what items they use everyday were invented in the 1950s.
- Think about what everyday life was like before the transistor radios and nonstick pans were invented.
- Think about how these inventions have changed people's lives.

School in the 1950s

Here are some actual memories of people's school experiences in the 1950s.

The teaching was more strict. The teachers stood at the front of the class with all the desks in rows, facing them. Each year remained in their own classroom and at their own desks, the teachers moving from room to room at each subject change.

When we were punished, we were smacked. That was the main punishment: it made us scared to do it again ...

The school dinners were appalling – they were that bad! I remember a lot of liver, kippers and spam. Mostly they were cold or had no flavour at all. There were no crisps or soda and not many sweets.

We did PE all year round. The games included hopscotch, skipping, rounders. The girls played netball and the boys played cricket in the summer.


Our hair had to be cut a certain way – short for the boys, and girls' hair had to be tied out of the face. We wore uniforms.

We had to do a lot of long division and long multiplication and your head had to be really tuned for mental arithmetic. We learned our tables out loud and recited them daily.

In History there were just loads of dates to remember.

Question

1. What differences do you think there are between school in the 1950s and school today?



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

School in the 1950s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

The school system in the 1950s was organised differently from today. In the 1950s, there was the 11-plus exam. If pupils passed the 11-plus exam, they went to grammar school, where they had an academic education. They first studied for their O-levels – exams in eight or nine different subjects. Then they entered the sixth form to study for A-level exams on two to four subjects that were studied intensely for two years. If pupils do well, a university education – with fees paid and a maintenance allowance given – was available.

For pupils not selected for grammar school, the good technical colleges and secondary modern schools offered plenty of opportunities, but high academic achievement was not expected. However, many of these schools were less than satisfactory.

The basic education in the 1950s was very thorough and the technical colleges allowed students an opportunity to learn a trade – many of which were very well paid.

There are many differences between 1950s school and modern schooling. Teachers were very well respected in the community and had a lot of power to enforce behavioural rules in the classroom.

Food was blander and more stodgy, although it was in many cases healthier than the chip and crisp diet many students have today. While much of learning was by rote, it did provide a solid and uniform base to build on, but there was not much opportunity to exercise creativity and initiative. Physical education was also much more widespread.

Younger students

Younger students might like to discuss how school is different today from in the 1950s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Extract information from a text to make comparisons.
- Know something about school in the 1950s.
- Learn what people thought of school in the 1950s compared to today.

Older students

The students may like to research more about school and an average school day in the 1950s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Extract information from a text to make comparisons.
- Know something about school in the 1950s.
- Learn what people thought of school in the 1950s compared to today.

School bags then and now

Here are some things that you might have found in a 1950s school bag and in a modern school bag.



Questions

1, Which items might you find in a 1950s school bag?

.....

.....

2. Which items might you find in a school bag today?

.....

.....

3. What other things might you find in a school bag today that you would not find in a school bag from the 1950s?

.....

.....

School bags then and now

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

This activity gives students a chance to see, graphically, the difference between what a student might bring to school in the 1950s and today. This is not meant to be a factual account of exactly what could be found in a school bag, but more of a point of departure for discussion.

The 1950s bag would have had pens with nibs and ink, as well as pencils, because ballpoint pens were expensive and rarely used. Of course, a slingshot would probably not be allowed in school, much as a phone might not be today, but it gives students the idea of what kids in the 1950s would have had access to. A yo-yo might have been allowed in school. They were a popular toy, and kids today rarely play with them.

'The Eagle' was the most popular comic in the 1950s. There were no magazines about pop music.

Younger students

You may want students to make a survey of what things everyone in the class has in their bag or backpacks. You may also like to explain that school rules in the 1950s were often more strict about what could and couldn't be brought into school.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Identify items that a student might use in the 1950s.
- Compare items used at school in the 1950s with items used today.
- Understand that students in the 1950s had access to different learning materials than students today.

Older students

Students might like to take a survey of what things students have in their bags or backpacks.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Identify items that a student might use in the 1950s.
- Compare items used at school in the 1950s with items used today.
- Understand that students in the 1950s had access to different learning materials than students today.

Chapter 4: The 1960s

(pages 28–45)

Britain in the 1960s



1960s childhood memories



TV then and now –1960s



Children's games in the 1960s



Inventions



Baby buggy



1960s slang



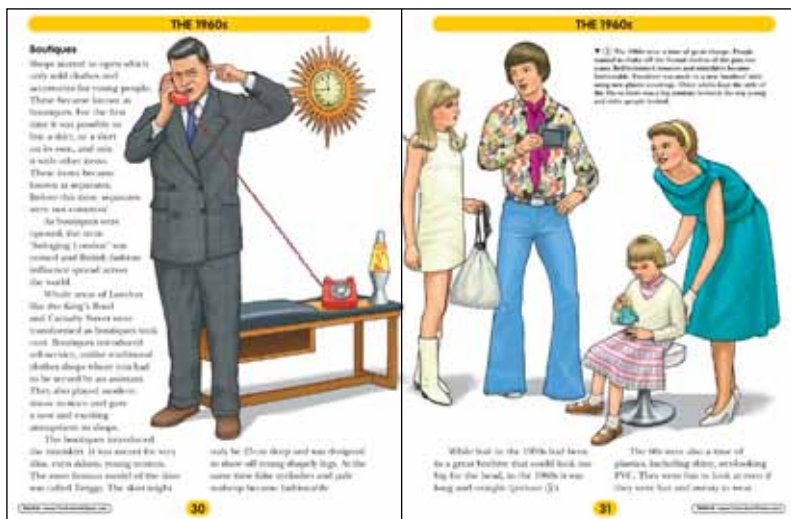
1960s food



The really important feature of the 1960s was that the war had finally been forgotten by adults. Most of the baby boomers of the 1946 era did not remember the war or the really strict rationing that followed it. This group began the 1960s as aged 14 and within a year or two many were going to leave (secondary modern) school and look for a job. They were going to be the first large group who would have money to spend.

This decade is also the first where people are not focused on a major event of national importance. There had been depressions, war and rebuilding from the war. But the teenagers of this era were not troubled by any of that. So they needed to look for a different focus – and they chose design and eventually this was to lead to a whole new way of living.

Equally important is that this was the decade where the planners at last got the opportunity to rebuild. They looked at all the little sturdy Victorian houses of the inner cities and saw them, not as family homes as we might today, but as a sorry reminder of the past that needed to be eradicated and replaced with new, high-rise, modern apartments. If only that had proved to be a prediction that came true. Instead the 1960s were a time when the planners succeeded largely in ripping inner city society apart, cutting families and neighbours from one another and leading to large



1960s fashion



The 1960s home



1960s fads – tie dye



Design a 1960s dress or shirt



Beatles lyrics



Growing up in the 1960s



The CND



Which decade is the best?





Section 2: Background and photocopyable worksheets

areas of public open wasteland (that the planners chose to call community space) that no-one dared go near. It took the whole of the 1960s before this process was brought to a halt, but in the 1960s, there rose, from the best of intentions, but with the worst of results, cities of towers.

The point was that high-rise blocks were more expensive to build than ordinary 2 story houses, so builders needed financial support from the government just to build them. Then they used materials and designs that soon leaked and caused condensation. The people who designed them simply did not understand the needs and abilities of those that were to occupy them. It was, however, a reflection of the sweeping change that was the 1960s.

Back to design, which was the most successful of the changes, and the design flair of young British designers produced Carnaby Street, the King's Road Chelsea and the whole idea of the 'Swinging Sixties'. It enabled the Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, to coin the term, "You've never had it so good" – and to many people in that isolated carefree decade, that is just how it seemed. It was something to be made the most of, for it would not carry through to the 1970s, and it is very difficult to imagine today.

The change in design was quite remarkable. It began as young office workers and young factory workers chose to take different design routes and so produce the mods and rockers. It is important to notice that most young people were neither, but the gangs that developed caused havoc for a while on bank holiday weekends, when they rampaged around the seaside resorts. The 'Battle of Hastings' was the most famous.

It is an interesting event, if only to show children today they every generation has its own minority way of expressing itself, often to the discomfort of the majority.

This is also the period when some of the famous films that children now may see on television were first produced for the cinema. You might care to discuss if any children have seen the James Bond films, for example. If you can get a DVD of an early one, you can



show excerpts and get children to comment on dress style and also the quality of the film (the colours are poor and the films are quite grainy). Indeed, as you go through the decades, one of the best ways of relating back to these eras is through DVDs (or VHS tapes if you have them) of the early programmes. It is quite surprising how many of these old programmes have been re-released by the BBC. You will, of course, need to have a specific task to do so that children do not get carried away watching some of these excellent programmes and forget they are learning about history.

Perhaps the saddest part of this decade was the way that traditional industries really began to decline in the face of changing technology and overseas competition. Great swathes of traditional docklands became empty as the container revolution took hold. Not only that,

but the new docks moved to deeper water locations, so that the dockers and others had no local jobs.

One of the most poignant episodes at this time was the death of Winston Churchill, when the cranes of the Pool of London dipped as his coffin went past on a carriage. The loss of Churchill marked the end of an era just as did the cranes. Within a few years there would be no cranes and no Pool of London.

This was the decade of the TV, and of pop idols. Many would say it was the decade of the Beatles, although by the end of it the Beatles would be no more. Everyone started to crowd around the black and white TVs showing 'Top of the Pops', a programme that would last until recently, but which really was the hottest programme to watch in the 1960s as band after famous band used it to showcase their latest productions.

On the bright side there were technological achievements galore. There was the rise of Concorde, the world's only supersonic aircraft. It was the time of the Space Race to the Moon and although this did not involve Britain directly, it was a world event that everyone followed with great interest.

Curiously, it was the end of another era, although no one would notice for the next 40 years. That is, 1968 was the last time a London routemaster bus was built. They still go around the streets of London (increasingly as tourist buses) and have become an icon of Britain.

You may wish to get children to look carefully at the drawing on pages 30 and 31. Curiously, mum and dad have not changed all that much from the 1950s, and the smallest child is still sensibly dressed. But the teenage children have changed in their dress dramatically.

Most noticeable on the high street was the rise of the boutiques, strange shops where you could help yourself and browse around with background music playing. This was quite unknown before in an industry that had the "Are you being served?" mentality. It gave the chance for small designers to get their items shown in the new boutiques. Children may find



this strange, as boutiques and their successors are so much a part of everyday life now.

The miniskirt was the most famous change to clothing style. Miniskirts have not really survived, but at the time they were unbelievably shocking, yet people had changed so that they felt they were acceptable and even endearing.

At the same time boys left off the jackets and ties, took to wearing patterned shirts and wore jeans, especially those worn off the hips (as opposed to previously around the waist) and flares became all the rage. Most boys had trousers that were easily wide enough to hide their shoes.

The drawing also shows a piece of the new 1960s furniture design. It was meant to look like a piece of construction. People were moving away from curves and sought angular

modern features. Most of these items were not well built because people still had limited amounts of money and so items had to be cheap. It was the era of Formica top and screw-in leg tables.

As the 1960s progressed, so the suits of the Beatles *'It's Been a Hard Day's Night'* changed to the hippy gear of *'Sergeant Pepper'*. You can show this if you can lay hands on LP record covers (or in miniature form their DVD equivalents).

This was indeed, the time of flower power, hippies and the growth of the California cult. Why did this happen, children might ask?

Hippies were one of the dissenting groups of the 1960s. They found the materialist world of their parents stifling, and at the same time had enough wealth (for a simple lifestyle) to be able to opt out for most of the time. They had a wide variety of causes such as opposing nuclear armaments, and (in America where it started and was strongest) opposed the Vietnam War. They were early people to be eco-friendly, often promiscuous and vegetarian and promoted the use of psychedelic drugs. To go with all of this they lived in communes. The Beatles' song *'All You Need is Love'* is of this time, but the cult involved a wide range of famous singers and artists. Its icon was, perhaps, the VW campervan dressed up in flower decoration.

It faded away in the more material world of the 1970s, but it had an important legacy in terms of changes in sexual norms and rights, gave rise to the now common festivals and so on.

The 1960s was the first decade where the TV was a mainstream influence on life. It was the time when soap operas were mainly founded, representing everyday life of usually 'working class' people. *'Coronation Street'* is the longest running of these. You might, however, remind children that the radio soap, *'The Archers'*, had been founded two decades earlier for a different purpose. At that time it was to convey a message of better farming practice (something it still does), whereas the new TV soaps were simple two-dimensional creations to be vehicles for washing powder



advertising (hence the term soap opera).

The TV did open up a wider world perspective through groundbreaking documentary programmes and at the same time the new less conformist culture was developed through programmes such as *'That was the week that was'*.

It was also the first time that live news programmes were run, a creation of ITN in 1964. They have since become some of the most watched programmes on all TV.

It is also interesting to note the children's programmes of this era included *'The Flowerpot Men'* and *'Andy Pandy'*, whose innocence was later criticised and meaning attached to it that simply was not in the minds of the creators. *'Dr Who'* was the programme for older children. Back episodes on DVD



are available.

The 1960s was still an era where Britain was leading the world in engineering innovation. The Mini and the Range Rover both belong to that era. The Mini, and Ford's equivalent, the slant-backed (and slightly up-market, but less trendy) Anglia, were the first cars to be priced so low they could be afforded by far more people. They began the great change from using public to private transport that also belongs to this decade.

It is worth looking for some time at the main picture on pages 36–37 because it shows a market town of the 1960s. There is one Beetle car to be seen, but all the rest are British makes. Look around the square (noticing that, like so many colour pictures of this age, the quality of the colour film is not what we are used to today) and you will see a rural world that has largely been left behind. It is still a self-contained world of little shops. This will not last beyond the 1960s.

And what of toys and games and younger children's clothes? The centre picture on pages 38–39 shows this, and two of the dolls that were icons of the 1960s, especially Barbie. The idea of dolls and dressing them was taken to a new level with children being encouraged to think in terms of fashion dresses for their dolls. As a result they were far more fashion-conscious in general than their elder brothers and sisters had been.

Of long-lasting significance in the 1960s was the change from the education system of 11+ brought in with the 1944 Education Act and the new Comprehensive Education scheme. It

is still hard to be objective about the benefits and disadvantages of this scheme. It came in in 1964, followed by GCEs and GCSEs. The Labour government tried to help their plan for new education by building lots of new modern schools. However, they really didn't have the money to carry this through and the building quality was poor and constant repairs are a legacy that many of us now have to live with.

As was mentioned earlier, the Space Race was the great technological event of the 1960s. If you ever visit a space museum and look at the craft they used, the enormity of the success is even more amazing, as the technology looks more like something out of steamship-making than you might expect. Key words and so on are in the Science (Space) part of the Professional Zone as mentioned earlier.

All of these changes in society were a reflection of steadily increasing wealth. Technology had made aircraft travel more affordable. People were taking some holidays abroad, and so there was a new interchange of ideas and tastes that had not happened before.

In part, this was reflected in the changing tastes for foods, while technology gave more opportunities in the way the food was stored and eaten. This was the age of the frozen food, and in particular the fish fingers and frozen peas.

It was all still experimental, but the whole idea of frozen food began to change the way people shopped, too. Better storage of food meant that a daily shop could be transformed to a weekly shop. This was to the advantage of those who could provide a bigger range of goods and to the disadvantage of the local stores that had survived from Victorian times. It was also to the advantage of middle classes who had enough money to be able to buy more goods at once (and who could often reach the new shops by car) and the disadvantage of those on low incomes who could not take advantage of the lower prices that resulted from bulk buying.

Children should be told that food prices were falling relative to income all through this

decade and that transport was an increasingly important cost, especially as competition hotted up. Bulk buying cost the seller less in transport costs and so that could be passed on to the customer.

The whole idea of eating changed in the 1960s. The economy eating style of the 1950s disappeared. Meat became a more popular choice. More processed foods began to appear and people used more sugar and salt. But the meals they wanted to try included those from Italy and Spain as well as oriental food.

You might emphasise and discuss the statement on page 42 in this regard, "The range of goods in Sainsbury's, for example, doubled from 2,000 lines to 4,000 lines during the 1960s."

Children might not have realised there were 2,000 different food types anyway, and for it to double in a decade meant a phenomenal increase in choice. However, you may point out that the increase in lines is primarily due to competition between brands (so 1 line of tomato ketchup might have become 5 lines made by different manufacturers and so on) as well as broccoli being added to cabbage on the vegetable shelves.

The pressure on keeping prices down, the huge range which could not possibly have been provided to you by an assistant, and the fact that people wanted to shop faster and get on to do other things, resulted in the introduction of the supermarket in the 1960s, along with incentives such as Green Shield stamps.

Summarising it all

One of the most important things at the end of this course is to try to provide children with a summary. The change during two decades had been remarkable. Really quite extreme cult movement had come and gone and all been assimilated into the general culture. Huge advances in technology had been taken



in everyone's stride and at the same time the majority of people became wealthier.

Finally, the divide between North and South was far less marked than it had been decades earlier. House prices were rising in the South and soaking up money of those who lived there and wanted to buy their own homes. As a result, people in the North, although their total income may have been a bit lower, often had a greater disposable income. It's a difficult idea to get over, but it is important to know that it is disposable income and lifestyle that is important rather than absolute wages.

And what of the future? That is dealt with in a second book, but children might be left with some pointers to change.

The Preston bypass was opened in 1958. This was the first motorway-standard road and became the first part of Britain's longest motorway, the M6. The M1 was opened between 1959 and 1965. Journey times that had taken many hours were more than halved. The M4 was built in the mid 1960s, including the controversial elevated section. It opened up the towns to the West to rapid development.

At first people even used to drive up and down these motorways simply to have a day out!

The numbers of immigrants had grown and the Notting Hill carnival was first run in 1965, to celebrate facets of a new culture. Others would follow. Britain was yet to join the Common Market. A lot more change was to follow in the decade ahead.

1960s childhood memories

Here are some memories of life in the 1960s.

“In 1963, I remember moving home from a Glasgow tenement (slum flat) to a post-war pre-fab. The tenement was an old, scrupulously clean, room and kitchen. There was a shared toilet on the half landing below the flat. I still remember bathing in a tin bath in front of the fire. The pre-fab was incredibly modern. It had two bedrooms, a living/ dining room, a fitted ‘metal’ kitchen with gas fridge and a bathroom with a hot-air linen cupboard. We also had a garden for the first time. I am the middle of three children and moving to a house at ground level gave us incredible freedom to roam and play in surrounding fields.”

“Being proficient with a hula hoop, dancing a pretty mean ‘Twist’ on holiday at Butlins, building an igloo in our garden during the ‘Big Freeze’ of winter 1963/64, living in a cold house with ice patterns on the inside of windows during winter, a complete lack of need for home security, playing footy in the street and rarely having to stop for passing cars, travelling by car being a rare treat – instead usually walking everywhere, coal fires being replaced by gas ones, shopping at our local corner shop where women would go for a ‘chinwag’, pre-ordering hot cross buns and ONLY eating them on Good Friday, Birds Eye fish fingers, Spangles, Rowntree’s Fruit Gums, Fry’s Chocolate Creme bars, kali and jubblees from the local sweet shop.”

“Holidays were spent under canvas with picnics on the beach, we eventually progressed to rented caravans. Our picnic would consist of pork pie, Smiths crisps with the blue bag of salt and tomatoes, by the end of the holiday my brother announced he didn’t want to see another pork pie ever! Our poshest holiday was at Butlins in Pwllheli in North Wales being serenaded each night to the tune of ‘We all live in a yellow submarine’.”

1960s childhood memories

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

These are actual memories. You may choose to read through these with the students, or have them read on their own.

One thing that stands out from these memories is what is missing – TV, mobile phones, cars, meals in restaurants, trips abroad. As children, these people spent more time at home and making their own games or playing outside.

Holidays were spent in the UK, at Butlins or on the beach. In the 1960s some people had started taking holidays abroad (in Europe) but it was still very expensive so most holidays would have been close to home.

The other thing that stands out is that the lives of these people seem simpler – simpler pleasures, simpler holidays, etc. This is partly because the people writing here are writing their memories of childhood, so they may be looking through rose-coloured glasses, but for young children in the 1960s there were fewer complications – no mobile phones, no computers, etc. Of course, as these children grew older, life would get a lot more complicated as the 1960s were a time of generation gap, with hippies, mods, flower children, etc.

Younger students

You may want students to read the selections out loud and discuss them. Students can answer the questions on their own.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Compare life in the 1960s with life today.
- Extract information from a text.
- Learn about what children in the 1960s did for fun and how they felt about their lives.

Answers

1. Tenement was old, clean, shared toilet, bath was a tin bath, fireplace, only two rooms. Prefab had two bedrooms plus a living/dining room, fitted kitchen, gas fridge and its own bathroom and cupboard and a garden.
2. The writer travelled by foot and rarely by car. He played footy in the street.
3. It was usually spent at the beach and sometimes at Butlins.

Older students

The students can work on their own to answer the questions. You may also like them to write in more detail how they think aspects of their lives are different from in the 1950s. Some ways might include: more holidays, holidays abroad, more TV, different games and different things to do, bigger houses (for some) and more modern appliances.

Outcomes

The students can:


- Compare life in the 1960s with life today.
- Extract information from a text.
- Learn about what children in the 1960s did for fun and how they felt about their lives.

Answers

1. Tenement was old but clean, had a shared toilet and only two rooms. The prefab was bigger, with two bedrooms plus a living/dining room and a bathroom of its own. There was also a fitted kitchen and a garden. Most students will probably say that the pre-fab sounds better because it is bigger and has its own bath and garden.
2. Played hula hoop, danced the twist, played footy, built an igloo (some students may also say ate sweets).
3. All three writers spent holidays at Butlins. One also had regular holidays at the beach. All the holidays were spent in the UK.
4. Answers will vary.

Questions (i)

1. List some differences between the 1950s tenement and the 1960s prefab.



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2. In the second memory, how did the writer usually travel? Where did he and his friends play footy?




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3. In the third memory, how did they usually spend their holiday?
Were holidays spent in England or abroad?




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Questions (ii)

1. List some differences between the 1950s tenement and the 1960s prefab.
Which one sounds better?




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2. In the second memory, what different things did the writer do for fun?



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3. How did these people usually spend their holidays? Where did they go?
Were holidays spent in England or abroad?



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4. How do you think these people's lives compare to yours? Do their lives seem easier, harder or about the same as yours? What things do you do for fun?
Where do you go on holiday?



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TV then and now – 1960s

The top 10 most watched shows 1963–1966				
	Title	Channel	Date	Audience (millions)
1	The World Cup Final	BBC I	30/07/1966	32.30
2	The Royal Family	BBC I & ITV	21/06/1969 (BBC I), 28/06/1969 (ITV)	30.69
3	Royal Variety Performance 1965	ITV	14/11/1965	24.20
4	News [John F Kennedy Assassination]	BBC & ITV	22/11/1963	24.15
5	Miss World	BBC I	19/11/1967	23.76
6	Apollo 8 Splashdown	BBC I & ITV	27/12/1968	22.55
7	The London Palladium Show	ITV	03/12/1967	21.89
8	Steptoe and Son	BBC	18/02/1964	21.54
9	Coronation Street	ITV	02/12/1964	21.36
10	Mrs Thursday	ITV	22/03/1966 & 29/03/1966	21.01
nb. Prior to 21/4/1964 there was a single BBC channel. Population in 1961 was 51 million				
The top 10 most watched shows 2000–2004				
1	Only Fools and Horses	BBC I	25/12/2001	21.34
2	Euro 2004: England vs. Portugal	BBC I	24/06/2004	20.66
3	EastEnders	BBC I	05/04/2001	20.05
4	Coronation Street	ITV	24/02/2003	19.40
5	Tonight with Trevor McDonald – Millionaire a Major Fraud	ITV	21/04/2003	16.10
6	Who Wants to be a Millionaire?	ITV	19/01/2000	15.90
7	Tonight with Trevor McDonald – Living with Michael Jackson	ITV	03/02/2003	15.32
8	Heartbeat	ITV	23/01/2000	15.20
9	I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!	ITV	09/02/2004	14.99
10	A Touch of Frost	ITV	14/01/2001	14.69
Population in 2001 was 59 million				

Questions (write your answers on the back of this sheet)

1. What types of shows were most popular in the 1960s? In the 2000s?
2. What types of shows were popular in the 1960s, but not in the 2000s?
3. Which show is on both lists? Which sport is on both lists?
4. Why do you think that fewer people watched the most popular shows in the 2000s than in the 1960s?

TV then and now – 1960s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

This data actually contains some interesting information about what people watched. You may like to start by pointing out that this data only covers the years 1963–1969 and 2000–2004, so it is not comprehensive.

One thing that some students may notice is that more people watched the top 10 shows in the 1960s than in the 2000s, even though there were fewer people and fewer TV sets. This is because there were far fewer channels. When people only had a choice of two or three channels, each channel gained a huge audience share. Today, terrestrial TV competes with cable, satellite, TiVo and DVDs.

You may also like to point out that three of the top 10 in the 1960s were world events – the Apollo splashdown (the Moon landing in 1969 would also be among the most watched shows of all time), the World Cup final and the assassination of JF Kennedy. By contrast, the Euro final is the only international event to make it into the top 10 of 2000–2004.

The 2000 list also includes game shows, which were around in the 1960s and a reality show, which were not around in the 1960s. The two 'Tonight' shows in the 2000 top ten could also be thought of as reality shows, as they covered sensational events, rather than hard news.

The other interesting thing is that there are three soap operas in the 2000–2004 top ten, while there is only one in the 1960s list. More people watched soaps in the 1960s, in terms of numbers, but they are surprisingly popular now.

Younger students

You may want to use the questions as discussion points and have the students discuss the types of shows that are on TV now, as compared to the 1960s, and what types of shows they watch at home.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Extract information from a chart.
- Compare what types of shows people watched in the 1960s with the types of shows people watch today.
- Understand some differences between TV in the 1960s and TV today.

Older students

The students might like to take a survey of the types of shows watched by students in the school, or by adults. They could also reasearch Nielson ratings and how they are taken as part of a maths lesson.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Extract information from a chart.
- Compare what types of shows people watched in the 1960s with the types of shows people watch today.
- Understand some differences between TV in the 1960s and TV today.

Answers

1. 1960s: news, music. 2000s: soaps, reality TV, current affairs shows.
2. Royal Family interviews and music/variety shows.
3. Coronation Street. Football.
4. Answers will vary, but may include: there were fewer TV channels in the 1960s; there were no DVDs or videos; people did not go out as much; there was less to watch; people were busier in the 2000s.

Children's games in the 1960s

In the 1960s, there were no electronic games or computers, iPods or DVDs to occupy children. Instead, they played more games in the street and the park. Here is a game that became popular in the 1960s (you may play it today), especially among girls.

Elastics, Chinese skipping or Chinese jump rope

What you need

A hard, flat ground surface.

A rope made from a piece of elastic or stretchy rope tied together to form a loop about 3 metres long.

Rules

Two people are the 'enders' and stand inside the loop of elastic. They stretch the elastic into a rectangle shape by standing with their feet slightly apart. To start with the elastic should be at ankle height.

A third person is the jumper. The jumper then has to jump in and around and on the elastic.

These jumps can be done whilst chanting skipping rhymes or songs.

If the jumper is successful in completing the rhyme (and the jumps) the height of the elastic is raised to the knees, then the thighs, then the waist!

Here is one jumping rhyme. The jumper jumps in time to the rhyme. The jumper and the 'enders' holding the rope chant the rhyme.

I had a little puppy
His name was Tiny Tim
I put him in the bathtub, to see if he could swim
He drank all the water, he ate a bar of soap
The next thing you know he had a bubble in his throat.
In came the doctor, (person jumps in)
In came the nurse, (person jumps in)
In came the lady with the alligator purse (person jumps in)
Out went the doctor (person jumps out)
Out went the nurse (person jumps out)
Out went the lady with the alligator purse (person jumps out)

Children's games in the 1960s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

In the 1960s, children had few electronic toys and computers to play with, so they spent more of their time playing games like this.

Elastics is different from jump rope in that it is played with a stretchy rope (although it doesn't have to be) and the rope stays still while the jumper jumps around and on it. The jumper is out if they get tangled in the rope.

This game is thought to have first been played in China or Japan in the 1920s and 30s. It might have been brought to Britain during the Second World War by the American air force families who came here. It was very popular in the 1950s and 60s.

It is still played all over the world. In Spain it is called Las Gomas. There are lots of different rhymes and types of jumps. See www.playgroundfun.org.uk/GameFacts.aspx?gameVersionID=38 for more information.

Skippping games like this may still be popular at your school, but they had their heyday in the 1960s and 1970s. You may like to point out to the students that one reason games like this were popular was because they could be played anywhere and needed few materials.

You may like your students to try this out on the playground. If they already play it they can discuss different ways to play it and whether they would play it more often if they did not have computers and iPods, etc. You may also like to point out that this game requires physical energy, while indoor playing is more sedentary.

Younger students

You may want the students to discuss other games that they play and to use secondary sources to research other games from the 1960s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Play a game that was popular in the 1960s.
- Understand the rules for a skipping game from the 1960s.
- Think about some reasons why children in the 1960s played more outdoor games.

Older students

The students can use secondary sources to research other games that were popular in the 1960s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Play a game that was popular in the 1960s.
- Understand the rules for a skipping game from the 1960s.
- Think about some reasons why children in the 1960s played more outdoor games.

Inventions

Here are some things that were invented in the 1960s.

1960	The halogen lamp.
1961	The nondairy creamer.
1962	The audio cassette.
	The fibre-tip pen by Yukio Horie.
	Spacewar, the first computer video game.
1963	The first videodisc.
1964	Acrylic paint.
	Permanent-press fabric.
	BASIC (an early computer language) by John George Kemeny and Tom Kurtz.
1965	Astroturf.
	Soft contact lenses.
	NutraSweet.
	The compact disk by James Russell.
	Kevlar by Stephanie Louise Kwolek.
1966	Electronic fuel injection for cars.
1967	The first handheld calculator.
1968	The computer mouse by Douglas Engelbart.
	The first computer with integrated circuits made.
1969	The arpanet (first internet).
	The artificial heart.
	The ATM.
	The bar-code scanner.

Questions

1. Which of these things do you use today?



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Inventions

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

Some students may be surprised to see that the CD and the internet were actually invented in the 1960s. There were computers in the 1960s, but this was well before the PC – in the 1960s computers were huge and used for businesses and governments. The arpanet was designed to be used by the military, but was mostly used to share information between universities in the US and was nothing like we have now.

You may like to encourage students to think of what their lives would be like without these things. Students may have no experience of people with artificial hearts, but you could point out that they have saved a lot of lives. Students would not remember life before the internet and personal computers, but you may like to describe to them how information was acquired and how research was conducted.

Even seemingly unimportant things, like acrylic paint and contact lenses are everywhere now and we can hardly imagine life without them (acrylic paint dries faster than oil, is cheaper, and is much easier to clean up, requiring only water and not toxic chemicals).

Younger students

Students may like to list some of the other things that they use everyday and research when they were invented. They may also like to compare this list to the list of things invented in the 1950s to see which inventions they feel are more important to their lives.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Find out what items they use everyday were invented in the 1960s.
- Think about what everyday life was like before the computer and the internet were invented.

Older students

Students may like to use secondary sources to find out more about the history of the computer and internet, and may like to draw a timeline of computer and internet history. Students may also like to research other items invented in the 1960s.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Find out which items they use everyday were invented in the 1960s.
- Think about what everyday life was like before the computer and the internet were invented.

Baby buggy

Here is the story of one 1960s invention – the baby buggy.

In 1965 Owen Maclaren designed and patented his prototype baby buggy. Owen had been a designer of spitfires during the Second World War so he knew about how important lightness and strength were to those flying machines.

One year, Owen's daughter and her baby came to the UK on a quick visit from the United States, where they lived. Owen's daughter had a very large, heavy pram and it was a lot of work to carry it on the aeroplane and up and down stairs. So Owen put on his thinking cap and designed a new invention – the baby buggy.

He wanted to develop something that was strong and safe for baby yet light and compact for mum.

The first baby buggy born in the village of Barby, Northamptonshire, weighed 3kg.

Today, Maclaren 'buggies' (umbrella strollers) are sold in over 50 countries and are still being improved today.

Questions

1. What did people use for their babies before the baby buggy?

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2. Why did Maclaren invent the buggy?

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3. What are the advantages of the buggy?

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4. What did Maclaren do in the Second World War that helped him to design the buggy?

.....

Baby buggy

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

Most babies born in the 1950s would have first seen the outdoor world from a luxurious pram built like a coach. This was fine if you lived on the ground floor and didn't want to go far, but as houses were converted into flats and travel became easier, hefty prams were a problem. Even taking the bus was a problem with a pram and women could find themselves effectively trapped in their neighbourhood, especially if they didn't own a car.

In 1965, Owen Maclaren, grandparent and retired test pilot, applied his engineering knowledge to this issue. He'd worked on the undercarriage of the Spitfire and was used to managing ultra-light materials with the right amount of inbuilt strength. At 3kg, his first buggy weighed in less than the average baby, could fold in half and be carried in one hand – babe in other – just like an umbrella. Mums could jump on the bus, stick it in an aeroplane hold – at this time the package holiday was beginning to take off – and easily climb stairs with baby and pram. It was a worldwide success story and is now ubiquitous on our streets, parks and luggage racks.

Today, the buggy you buy is as much a fashion statement as the car you drive, saying everything about the parent and not much about the baby. As celebrities are caught on camera pushing their offspring around in the latest models, the pressure to buy the right buggy is so overwhelming that many parents end up with not one but three buggies, each for a different occasion.

Ironically, today the old Victorian perambulator is back in fashion. Learn more on

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/science/indispensables.shtml>

Younger students

Students can answer the questions on their own. Students may like to research different types of buggies (strollers) and also ways that are used to carry children in other cultures. Recently, the practice of carrying babies in a sling held close to the body, has caught on in the UK. This is common in many countries, but new high-tech slings make it easier on the back.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about how an invention in the 1960s changed people's lives for the better.
- Extract information from a text.
- Learn how and why the baby buggy (stroller) was invented.
- Understand that some of the most useful inventions were made by ordinary people.

Older students

Students could investigate what types of buggies people use, how much they spend on buggies and whether they would use a pram or prefer buggies. They could also investigate the origins of other everyday objects, such as Post it notes and the CD.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about how an invention in the 1960s changed people's lives for the better.
- Extract information from a text.
- Learn how and why the baby buggy (stroller) was invented.
- Understand that some of the most useful inventions were made by ordinary people.

1960s slang

Here are some slang words that were used in everyday speech in the 1960s. Compare them to some of the slang words you use today.

Boss:	In the early 60s 'boss' was an adjective. It meant something was really cool, really in style.
Cool:	Great, in style. When something was really, really, cool, it was hot. If it was really hot it was outta' sight!
Fab:	Great, cool
Groovy:	Hip, in style
Fink:	A loser
Hip:	Meaning 'in', in fashion or in style
Far out:	Amazing, weird, great
Square:	Someone who just doesn't understand young people. Parents and teachers were called square.
Swell:	When something was really good, it was swell.

Activity

1. What are some words you use today to mean 'great', 'wonderful', 'in fashion'?

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2. Ask an adult what words they used to mean 'great' and 'in style' when they were teenagers.

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1960s slang

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

This is just a selection of slang from the 1960s and, of course, these are the non-objectionable words. Students will probably know what slang is, and may snigger a bit when discussing it, thinking of the 'dirty' words. But you can explain that slang is simply any word that is used by a particular group of people (such as young people) or that has a nonstandard meaning. One example would be 'boss' from the 1960s. Its standard meaning is a person who is in charge, but in the 1960s it was used as an adjective to mean 'great'.

You will need to be careful when doing the activity that students do not suggest objectionable words. You may like to explain that you are looking specifically for words that mean 'great', 'fantastic', 'wonderful', 'in fashion', etc, and you are not looking for 'dirty' words.

Slang changes fairly rapidly, and students may be surprised at some of the words here. This is also a chance for you to find out what some of the current slang words are!

Younger students

You may like to discuss the activity questions as a class exercise. You may like the students to take a survey of some adults to find the slang words they used when they were teenagers.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn some slang words from the 1960s.
- Understand how slang changes over time.
- Understand what slang words they use today that have the same meanings as words from the 1960s.

Older students

You may like students to do a larger survey of slang words used in previous decades.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn some slang words from the 1960s.
- Understand how slang changes over time.
- Understand what slang words they use today that have the same meanings as words from the 1960s.

1960s food

Here are two popular recipes from the 1960s.

Classic avocados with prawns

3 ripe avocados
 1 ½ oz (45g) small cooked & peeled prawns/white crab meat
 Lemon juice
 Salt & pepper

For the sauce:

1 tsp lemon juice
 2 tbsp olive oil
 1/4 tsp Dijon mustard
 Pinch of salt
 Pinch of pepper
 3 tbsp red tomato chutney
 1 tsp Tabasco sauce

Halve the avocados and place on six individual serving plates. Squeeze a dash of lemon juice over each one and sprinkle with freshly ground salt & pepper. Set aside.

For the sauce: Put the lemon juice, Dijon mustard and salt into a bowl and beat together until the salt has dissolved. Slowly pour in the olive oil, continually beating. Add the pepper. Add the red tomato chutney. Add the Tabasco sauce. Beat a little more until thoroughly mixed.

To this mixture now add the prawns or crab. Combine well. Adjust seasoning if necessary. Spoon a serving of this mixture into each avocado. Serve with bread. Serves 6 as a starter.

Ramequins

12oz puff pastry
 2 eggs
 1 cup heavy cream
 2 cups grated Emmenthal cheese
 (a slightly sweet, nutty Swiss cheese)
 ¼ tsp salt
 pinch nutmeg
 ¼ tsp dry mustard
 ⅛ tsp cayenne
 2 tbsp chives, chopped parsley


Line 2 inch ramequins (or muffin cups) with squares or circles of rolled out puff pastry (comes frozen – see package directions. You can, of course, make it – if you have a spare 4 hours today).

Beat eggs, cream, and dry ingredients together. Fold in grated cheese. Sprinkle chives into bottoms of tarts, and pour egg mixture in each tart to top.

Bake for 15 minutes in 200°C oven, and sprinkle with parsley. Serve hot.


Questions

1. Which of the ingredients used in these recipes do you think came from outside the UK?



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2. Which foods do you eat regularly that originally came from outside the UK?



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1960s food

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

The 1960s were a time of greater adventure in food. People began to eat different types of foods, and foods were imported from Europe and other areas. It was also a time when people threw off the old austerity – recipes used large quantities of cream, butter and cheese.

The first recipe on the activity sheet uses avocado, which were just introduced into the UK in the 1960s (and usually called avocado pears). This dish was a popular food at dinner parties, although many people did not realise that the avocados were only ripe when they were soft – most of the time people ate them rock hard (see the movie and play ‘Abigail’s Party’).

You may like to begin by reviewing with students the foods that were rationed in the 1940s and 1950s. You may also like to discuss how foods like bananas, avocados, European cheese, etc, were only widely available in Britain beginning in the 1960s. You can also discuss how, in the 1960s, Britains began travelling abroad and so they would come into contact, for the first time, with new foods and new ways of cooking, especially French and Italian.

Julia Child became popular on TV, as did Graham Kerr, and both of them introduced people to classic French cooking. This was also a time before health consciousness really sunk in and loading food with cream and butter was not yet considered unhealthy.

You may like to cook these dishes for the students.

Younger students

You may wish to use this as part of a larger discussion on imported foods and the origin of foods. Many students may not know where foods came from originally, even foods like pasta and pizza. You may like to help the students investigate the origins of some common foods eaten today.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about some of the foods eaten in the UK for the first time in the 1960s.
- Find the origin of some foods they eat today.
- Understand that the 1960s were a time when more European foods were becoming available and popular in the UK.

Older students

The students may like to use secondary sources to find out some other popular party foods of the 1960s. They may also like to ask adults what foods they remember from the 1960s. Students may like to use secondary sources to find the origin of foods commonly eaten today.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about some of the foods eaten in the UK for the first time in the 1960s.
- Find the origin of some foods they eat today.
- Understand that the 1960s were a time when more European foods were becoming available and popular in the UK.

Answers

1. Avocado (the Americas), puff pastry, Dijon mustard and Emmenthal cheese.
2. Answers will vary but may include pizza, pasta, pineapple and banana.

1960s fashion

Here is the story of what one person thought of the 1960s London fashions.

In 1966 my wife and I were both in our mid 20s, born and raised in the US Mid-west. Because I was in our family retail fashion business, one of my priorities while taking our first European trip was to visit England (London) to see Carnaby Street. I had read all about it in Women's Wear Daily magazine.

The miniskirt was just a fashion look I had read about. I learned that morning, 'one look is worth a thousand words'. As our taxi came into the centre of London, we saw thousands of English girls scurrying to work. Thousands of miniskirts. I knew then and there that the world of fashion was changing (had changed). I knew I was witnessing a fashion revolution.

After a short rest, that afternoon we headed for Carnaby Street. The boutiques were incredible. The colours and styles were unlike anything I had seen previously. I was somewhat disappointed because it was only a block long and very touristy.

We then headed to Harrods. We were told that we must see 'The Way In Shop' on the 6th floor. The elevator's (lift) doors opened. For me the impact was life changing. Everything I saw was new and different. Everything was dark except the lights on the racks of clothing. Rock music (Beatles) was pounding loudly. Our store was brightly lit and had only very quiet music.

The sales girls were all wearing miniskirts or jeans. The smell of incense was in the air. If a scent was in the air in our stores it was from a perfume we carried in our cosmetic department.

I knew immediately when that elevator door opened, when all of those sights and sounds hit me all at once, that from that moment on when fashion was mentioned, it was going to be Paris, Milan, New York and for the first time also London.

1960s fashion

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheets.

Using the worksheet

The 1960s was a decade of sweeping change throughout the fashion world generating ideas and images which still appear modern today. Whereas fashion had previously been aimed at a wealthy, mature elite, the tastes and preferences of young people now became important. At the beginning of the decade, the market was dominated by Parisian designers of expensive haute couture garments.

Yet the shape of clothes was soon transformed by new ideas emerging from the London pop scene.

In Britain, musical taste and styles of dress were closely linked and it was the 'mod' look which first popularised the simple geometric shapes typical of the 1960s. Slim fitting, brightly coloured garments were sold cheaply in boutiques all over 'Swinging London' and had tremendous influence throughout Europe and the US.

Later in the decade the 'hippy' look, which originated on the West Coast of America, crossed the Atlantic. This was a time when designers of dress and textiles experimented with colours, patterns and textures borrowed from non-Western cultures.

Young people's income was at its highest since the end of the Second World War, creating the desire for a wardrobe which did more than simply copy adult dress.

Carnaby Street became synonymous with the idea of Swinging London. Using the skills of the established Soho 'rag trade', it sold relatively inexpensive, trend-driven merchandise that mirrored contemporary changes in society and culture.

Younger students

Students can answer the questions on their own. More able students may like to answer the second group of questions.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about what it was like in the clothes shops of 1960s London.
- Learn about the fashions of 1960s London.
- Understand how clothing and retail sales had changed between the 1950s and 1960s.
- Extract information from a text.

Answers

1. The US.
2. The miniskirt.
3. The colours and styles.
4. Everything was dark except the lights on the racks of clothing. Rock music (Beatles) was playing loudly.
5. Miniskirts or jeans; incense.

Older students

The students can answer the questions on their own. They may like to research more about 1960s clothing and Carnaby Street.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about what it was like in the clothes shops of 1960s London.
- Learn about the fashions of 1960s London.
- Understand how clothing and retail sales had changed between the 1950s and 1960s.
- Extract information from a text.

Answers

1. The fashion world was changing, there was a fashion revolution
2. (a) The colours and styles.
(b) It was only a block long and touristy.
3. 'The Way In Shop' was dark and had spotlights, the writer's store was brightly lit. 'The Way In shop' had rock music playing loudly, the writer's store had very quiet music. 'The Way In Shop' had incense, the writer's store had perfume aromas.
4. That London was now a fashion capital.



Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 28 to 45** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

Questions (i)

1. Where is the writer from?



2. What item of clothing did the writer see that made him think he was witnessing a 'fashion revolution'?



3. On Carnaby Street, what was unlike anything the writer had seen previously?



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4. Describe 'The Way In Shop' at Harrods.



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5. What were the sales girls wearing? What smell was in the air?



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Questions (ii)

1. What did the writer know when he saw all the girls in miniskirts?




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2. (a) What did the writer like about Carnaby Street?



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(b) Why was the writer disappointed at Carnaby Street?




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3. How is the writer's store different from 'The Way In Shop' at Harrods?




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4. What did the writer know when the elevator (lift) doors opened?



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The 1960s home

Here are some instructions by a designer on how to make a home look like the 1960s. Use this information and design your own home. Make a sketch or use words to describe your 1960s home.

Open plan – make your house as open plan as possible. Use sliding doors and moveable screens to partition off rooms; one room should flow into another.

Wood – is not used for furniture but pine is used to panel walls and ceilings. Leave it unpainted for a sauna room feel.

Floors – you’ve got to have a shag pile rug – the bigger the better.

Colours – use bright colours such as bright red, purple. Deliberately clash colours, for example, team tangerine orange with fuchsia pink. Black-and-white is also a typical colour scheme.

Furniture – go for plastic or transparent blow-up furniture. Choose ‘S’ and egg shapes, and anything that looks futuristic and space age. Pick up junk shop furniture, especially bamboo and wicker items, from any period, and paint it in bright colours.

Wallpaper – sometimes psychedelic – look for vinyls in reds, purples, oranges with swirls and paisley patterns.

Bean bags – create a laid-back chill-out room with mattresses on the floor, bean bags and loads of scatter cushions to make a conversation pit.

Bedroom – tent your bedroom with drapes made from saris. Lay an Indian cotton bedspread over your bed, cover the lampshades with beaded fabric.

Fabrics – look for fabrics with huge repeat patterns or with the graphic images of pop art.

Lighting – use lava lamps, neon-fibre optic lamps which change colour, Moroccan-inspired lamps or the paper lampshade.

Symbols – pick up a paintbrush and paint your own psychedelic mural. Use paints that glow in the dark, or a black and white pop art mural. Or try giant target ‘Mod’ symbols, or your own Warhol-inspired poster.

The 1960s home

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, extra paper, pens, pictures of 1960s design.

Using the worksheet

You may like to use this activity on its own, or together with the earlier activities on designing a 1930s kitchen and designing a 1950s kitchen. You may like some students to design a 1930s kitchen, some a 1950s kitchen and some a 1960s house. Then students can compare styles and designs.

The majority of homes in the 1960s were furnished with an eclectic mixture of furniture from a variety of periods, but the increase in the number of young people setting up home in their own flats and bedsits bred a new 'young' environment.

This style often featured large, bold images, such as posters and brightly decorated bedspreads and window blinds set against brightly coloured walls. Finishing touches included old advertising signs, the obligatory record player blaring out pop music, and incense (or 'joss sticks') scented the air.

Primary colours, bold designs and undiluted geometric shapes began to be applied to furniture and furnishing fabrics, although it was not until the end of the decade that such items of furniture were available from less-exclusive outlets, and at an affordable price.

Knock-down (flat pack) furniture, stimulated by the growth in popularity of DIY (Do It Yourself), was widely available from 1965 onwards and became a cheap way for people to buy new designs.

Any home that had pretensions to being 'design conscious' contained ergonomic Scandinavian chairs and stainless steel cutlery, Italian lighting and glass.

Open-plan interior design was widely accepted and many property developers used it for their new homes, especially for combining living rooms and dining rooms.

Furniture began to break the rules – plastic chairs, blow-up furniture and bean bags were introduced, and in extreme cases living room furniture was abandoned altogether to be replaced

by giant cushions on the floor.

You may like to start by bringing in some pictures of 1960s patterns and furniture for students to look at. You may also need to describe what 'open plan' is. Although it is very popular today, most students will probably not have heard of it, you may want to bring in some photos from magazines to illustrate open plan.

Younger students

The students may need some help in getting started. You may want to draw the outline of a house on the board and ask the students how they would make each room look like it was the 1960s.

If you have done the earlier activity on designing a 1950s kitchen, you could have students describe how they think the kitchen in the 1960s house would be different – how would they change the furniture, the colours, the appliances, etc.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about 1960s interior design.
- Appreciate that the changing attitudes of the 1960s led to new colours, materials and appliances being used in houses.
- Design the interior of a 1960s house.

Older students

The students could use secondary sources to research more about 1960s architecture and design. They could also make a 3D house from card or foam.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the differences and similarities between 1960s interior design and today's interior design.
- Appreciate that the changing attitudes of the 1960s led to new colours, materials and appliances being used in houses.
- Design the interior of a 1960s house.



Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 28 to 45** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

1960s fads – tie dye

Tie dye was very popular in the 1960s. Here are instructions for one way to make tie dye T-shirts.

You will need:

various colours of fabric dye (available in the housewares department)

rubber bands

rubber gloves

tap water

white cotton T-shirt or other cotton cloth

What you do:

Begin by placing rubber bands around the T-shirt so that the shirt is bunched up into regular bunches of material.

Prepare dye according to package directions. Be sure to wear rubber gloves to protect your hands! Dye can damage your unprotected skin. Please take the proper safety precautions recommended. Make up the dye in a plastic bucket and place the bucket on plenty of newspapers to catch the drips.

Once the T-shirt is ready, place it in the dye for at least 15–20 minutes. The longer the garment remains in the dye, the darker and deeper the colour will become. Remove from the dye and rinse according to package directions, usually in cold running water. Rinse out garment until water runs clear.

Carefully remove rubber bands to reveal your new design! No design will be the same as another and different effects can be made by placing half the shirt in one colour and half in another colour.

1960s fads – tie dye

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, plastic bucket, paper or plastic sheets, rubber gloves, dye, water, cotton T-shirts, thick rubber bands, clothes line or place for drying.

Using the worksheet

Before starting this activity, make sure you conduct a safety assessment. You can have the students bring in T-shirts, or you can use inexpensive tea towels or even plain pieces of cloth – but make sure any cloth you use is cotton or it will not take the dye.

Most dyes also need to be fixed or they will run in the wash. The fixer is usually another chemical that the material soaks in after dying. If you are not using a fixer, warn students not to wash their tie dye clothing with any other clothing.

You should make up the dye in buckets before starting and you may want to be the one who dunks each cloth or shirt in the dye – to prevent students from getting dye on themselves. They can place the rubber bands around the cloth, then bring it to you for dyeing. For more detailed information on how to tie dye, and how to place the rubber bands, try: http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/tiedye/a/041601a_3.htm.

Tie dye was very popular in the 1960s, as a way for people to add their own personal expression to clothing. The colourful, chaotic patterns made by the dye also symbolised the ethos and style of the 1960s hippies. But it is still a good way to add colour and personal style to otherwise dull white clothing and cloth. You can explain to the students that this is their chance to 'express themselves' through their clothing – like people did in the 1960s.

Once the shirts are dry and washed, students could wear them to school for a 1960s day.

You may like to prepare a few already tied and dyed pieces of cloth as examples.

Younger students

Students may need help in tying their cloth. You should do all of the dyeing yourself, either during class or afterwards. Students may wish to experiment with tying different designs, so you may wish to use some inexpensive cotton cloth instead of T-shirts.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn how to tie dye.
- Follow instructions.
- Understand why people wanted to wear colourful self-designed clothes during the 1960s.

Older students

The students may like to experiment with using different colours of dye to create multi-coloured patterns. They may like to use secondary sources to research other ways that people personalised their clothing in the 1960s and other popular styles of clothing.

Outcomes

The students can:

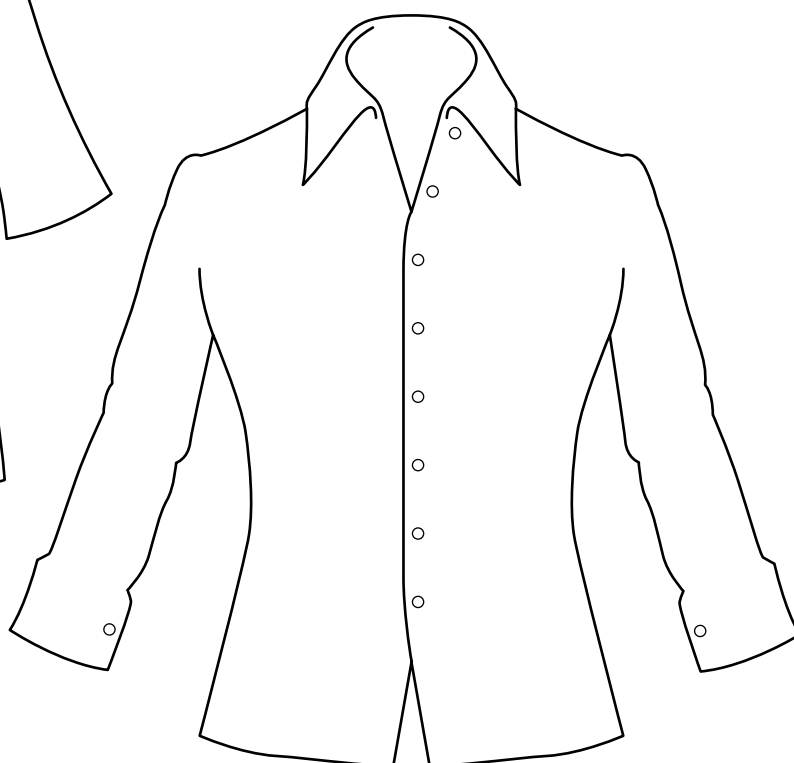
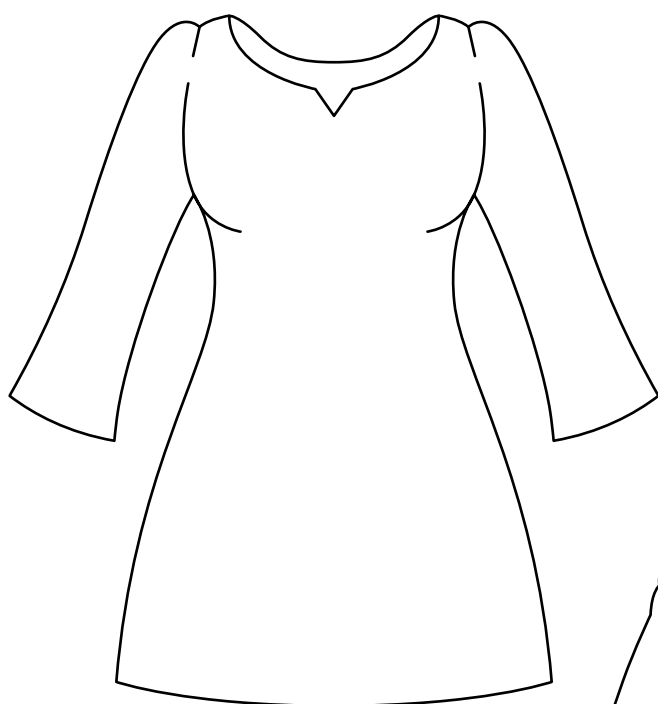
- Learn how to tie dye.
- Follow instructions.
- Understand why people wanted to wear colourful self-designed clothes during the 1960s.

Design a 1960s dress or shirt

Here are patterns for a dress and a shirt. Use your knowledge of 1960s designs, and the information below, to design a pattern on the dress and shirt that might have been popular in the 1960s.

In the 1960s, the miniskirt and minidress became popular for women. For a while, paper dresses were also popular. For men, clothes were made in new colours and patterns as a way to be different from the mostly black and white coloured men's clothes of the 1950s. Clothing designs also used bold patterns, such as the British flag, swirls of colour, the paisley shape and blocks of colour in red, blue, yellow and other bright colours.

Below are the outlines of a dress and a man's shirt. Using pens or crayons, draw on some patterns and designs that people might have used in the 1960s. Would you wear these designs today?



Design a 1960s dress or shirt

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, pens, pencils or crayons.

Using the worksheet

During the late 1960s, there was a reaction against the mass production of 'mod' clothing and pop products. Some people became disillusioned by this materialistic mood and turned to Eastern cultures and mythologies which appeared more in tune with the 'natural' world.

Perhaps the most remarkable development in 1960s dress was the dramatic change in menswear. For the past 150 years, clothing for men had been tailor-made and plain and dark in appearance. In the 1960s, men's clothing became brightly coloured and patterned.

Heal's, Hull Traders and Conran Fabrics all bought patterns from young freelance designers who took their inspiration from contemporary art and graphics like Andy Warhol's pop images.

You might like to start by bringing in some photographs of clothing from the 1960s and the 1950s and discussing how the patterns and colours on the clothing changed. In the 1960s, designs became bolder and more colourful, and also more fanciful, with pop art images on shirts, images of the British flag, paisley designs, suede shirts with fringes – pretty much anything goes. Then ask the students to draw a pattern that would appeal to people in the 1960s.

Younger students

You may want to bring in some examples of 1960s clothing – photographs or other images from magazines or art shows and discuss with the students what makes them 1960s style.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the ways that 1960s clothing designs were different from 1950s clothing.
- Create their own 1960s-style patterns.
- Learn about some of the styles of clothing people wore in the 1960s and why.

Older students

Students might want to use secondary sources to find out more about 1960s clothing.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand some of the ways that 1960s clothing designs were different from 1950s clothing.
- Create their own 1960s-style patterns.
- Learn about some of the styles of clothing people wore in the 1960s and why.

Beatles lyrics

Here are lyrics from two Beatles songs from the 1960s.

Good day sunshine (from 1966 album 'Revolver')

Good day sunshine, good day sunshine,
Good day sunshine.

I need to laugh, and when the sun
is out,
I've got something I can laugh about.
I feel good in a special way,
I'm in love, and it's sunny day.

Good day sunshine, good day sunshine,
Good day sunshine.

We take a walk, the sun is shining down,
Burns my feet as they touch the ground,

Good day sunshine, good day sunshine,
Good day sunshine.

And then we lie beneath a shady tree,
I love her and she's loving me.
She feels good, she knows she's
looking fine,
I'm so proud to know that she is mine.

Good day sunshine, good day sunshine,
Good day sunshine.
Good day sunshine, good day sunshine.

Taxman (from 1966 album 'Revolver')

Let me tell you how it will be,
There's one for you, nineteen for me,
'Cos I'm the Taxman,
Yeah, I'm the Taxman.

Should five per cent appear too small,
Be thankful I don't take it all,
'Cos I'm the Taxman,
Yeah, I'm the Taxman.

If you drive a car, I'll tax the street,
If you try to sit, I'll tax your seat,
If you get too cold, I'll tax the heat,
If you take a walk, I'll tax your feet.
Taxman.
'Cos I'm the Taxman,
Yeah, I'm the Taxman.

Don't ask me what I want it for
(Taxman Mister Wilson)
If you don't want to pay some more
(Taxman Mister Heath),
'Cos I'm the Taxman,
Yeah, I'm the Taxman.

Now my advice for those who die,
Declare the pennies on your eyes,
'Cos I'm the Taxman,
Yeah, I'm the Taxman.
And you're working for no-one but me,
Taxman.

Beatles lyrics

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

You may like to bring in some Beatles songs from the 1960s, so students can hear the tunes. It may be especially interesting to compare these two songs with some from the 'Sergeant Pepper' album. The songs on 'Sergeant Pepper' are decidedly more 'hippy' sounding.

'Good day sunshine' is a happy song that demonstrates the positive, happy feeling many young people had in the mid-1960s. Although there were some unpleasant world events going on (Vietnam war beginning, etc), most young people felt that there was a new feeling of freedom and positive feeling about.

'Taxman' shows the rebellious side of the 1960s. In this song, the Beatles are echoing the feeling of many young people that work and life in general was too regimented and restrictive and it was time to throw off the old ideas and create new ways of living.

Younger students

You may want to listen to the songs, or read through the lyrics with the students, and then place the following questions on the board for students to answer or discuss. You might like to start the discussion by asking students how each song makes them feel.

Questions and answers

1. In the 1960s, many young people thought that everyday life should be more carefree. Which song is an example of this? ('Good day sunshine').
2. Why is the singer in 'Good day sunshine' happy? (He's in love)
3. What is the singer in taxman angry about? (paying tax)
4. Who do you think are Mr Wilson and Mr Heath? (Prime Ministers)
5. Which song is an example of rebellion against people in charge? (Taxman)

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn two popular songs from the mid-1960s
- Understand that in the 1960s people were optimistic, but also felt rebellious towards authority.
- Learn about the role of music in the 1960s.

Older students

Students can answer the questions on their own.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn two popular songs from the mid-1960s
- Understand that in the 1960s people were optimistic, but also felt rebellious towards authority.
- Learn about the role of music in the 1960s.



Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 28 to 45** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

Growing up in the 1960s

Here is one person's story of being a teenage hippy in the 1960s.

Growing up in the 1960s

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheets.

Using the worksheet

Not many people in the 1960s were hippies, although many of the styles became popular among young people, such as this writer. What is particularly interesting here is her description of the feeling of excitement on hearing about the Beatles, and the way the student ran through the halls of school because it was so thrilling to hear the new type of music for the first time. This is typical of the feeling of many people in the 1960s – there was so much that was new and many people felt it was a brave new world where anything could happen – especially young people.

Younger students

Students can work on their own to answer the questions.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about how some teenagers felt in the 1960s.
- Understand why some people thought the 1960s were a very exciting time to be young.
- Learn more about what hippies wore and the music young people listened to.
- Extract information from a text.

Answers

1. Girls could develop as individuals, think for themselves, dress how they liked and do as they pleased. Everything seemed new, fresh and possible.
2. The Beatles.
3. Going barefoot.
4. Floppy hat with long chiffon scarf tied to it, bell bottoms, see-through blouses, miniskirts.
5. 'Love thy neighbour' and 'On the buses'.

Older students

Students can work on their own to answer the questions.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about how some teenagers felt in the 1960s.
- Understand why some people thought the 1960s were a very exciting time to be young.
- Learn more about what hippies wore and the music young people listened to.
- Extract information from a text.

Answers

1. Girls could develop as individuals, think for themselves, dress how they liked and do as they pleased. Everything seemed new, fresh and possible.
2. At school, another student ran down the corridor shouting that there was a new group.
3. Floppy hat with long chiffon scarf tied to it, bell bottoms, see-through blouses, miniskirts.
4. Motown, ska, bluebeat, Atlantic soul, Otis reading.
5. Answers will vary.

Questions (i)

1. List some reasons why the writer feels the 1960s were a good decade to be a teenager.



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2. What was the great new group the writer heard about at school?



3. What drove the writer's parents mad?



4. What were some of the clothes hippies wore?



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5. What shows did the writer watch on TV?




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Questions (ii)

1. List some reasons why the writer feels the 1960s were a good decade to be a teenager.




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2. How did the writer find out about the Beatles?



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3. What are some of the hippy clothes the writer wore in the 1960s?



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4. What are some different kinds of music the writer listened to in the 1960s?



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5. From this writer's description, do you think the 1960s sounds like fun?



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The CND

In the 1960s, people were very worried about nuclear weapons. The CND protested against nuclear weapons and tried to make people more aware of the dangers associated with them.

February 1960:	France conducts its first nuclear device test in Algeria.
February 1961:	First big anti-nuclear weapons rally by CND at the Ministry of Defence.
March 1961:	First US nuclear submarine arrives in the UK at Holy Loch Scotland.
September 1961:	15,000 take part in CND protest at Trafalgar Square.
Easter 1962:	100,000 people rally against nuclear weapons in the UK.
July 1962:	Large CND demonstration against nuclear weapons in Moscow.
October 1962:	Cuban missile crisis – America and the USSR almost go to war because the USSR has placed nuclear weapons in Cuba, just 60 miles from the US.
December 1962:	British government announces purchase of Polaris nuclear missiles from the US.
July 1963:	US and USSR sign a partial test ban treaty – they will both stop testing some types of nuclear weapons.
October 1964:	China conducts its first atomic bomb test.
January 1967:	The Outer Space Treaty is signed to prohibit placement of nuclear weapons in orbit around Earth or on the Moon.
February 1967:	Treaty of Tlatelolco is signed prohibiting nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.
July 1968:	The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is signed – an international treaty to limit the spread of nuclear weapons.

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

During the 1960s, the Cold War between the US and USSR began to get hotter as both sides played with brinksmanship. This was also an era of nuclear proliferation, as other nations began to develop their own nuclear weapons. The most dangerous event was probably the Cuban Missile Crisis, when the US and USSR were, according to recent memoirs, extremely close to going to war before the USSR backed down and removed their missiles from Cuba.

But the 1960s were also a period when people began to protest against nuclear weapons and to place pressure on governments to limit their development. Eventually, the public pressure and the shock of how close the world came to nuclear war over Cuba encouraged politicians to sign the non-proliferation treaty.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, also Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT or NNPT) is an international treaty to limit the spread of nuclear weapons, opened for signature on 1 July, 1968. There are currently 189 countries party to the treaty, five of which have nuclear weapons: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and the People's Republic of China. The treaty signatories pledge not to help other nations obtain nuclear technology or weapons, to work towards total disarmament and to use nuclear power only for safe uses.

Only four nations are not signatories: India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea, although today many other nations (Syria, Iran, China, France) violate either the terms or the spirit of the treaty regularly.

The treaty was proposed by Ireland, and Finland was the first to sign. The signing parties decided by consensus to extend the treaty indefinitely and without conditions upon meeting in New York City, May, 1995.

Younger students

You may want to go through some of the events listed here in more detail with the students. Students may also need to be reminded of what the USSR

was and how the USSR and US were the two world powers in the 1960s. You may also like to review what the Cold War was (the US and USSR fought each other by using spies, by economics and by getting their allies to fight each other, rather than going to war themselves). You may also like to explain the meaning of words such as prohibit, disarmament, and proliferation. Students can then answer the questions.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about some of the events that led up to the nuclear disarmament treaty.
- Understand the role of public demonstrations in urging governments to stop developing nuclear weapons.
- Understand that the 1960s were a time when nuclear weapons were at risk of being used.
- Extract information from a text.

Answers

1. France conducted a nuclear test in Algeria.
2. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is signed.
3. Feb 1961, Sept 1961 and July 1962.
4. July 1963.
5. October 1964.
6. Answers will vary.

Older students

The students may like to use secondary sources to research events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn about some of the events that led up to the nuclear disarmament treaty.
- Understand the role of public demonstrations in urging governments to stop developing nuclear weapons.
- Understand that the 1960s were a time when nuclear weapons were at risk of being used.
- Extract information from a text.

Answers

1. Four.
2. Cuban Missile Crisis.
3. Stop testing some types of nuclear weapons.
4. Placement of nuclear weapons in orbit around the Earth or on the Moon.
5. Treaty of Tlatelolco.
6. Answers will vary.




Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 28 to 45** of Changing Britain vol 1: 1948–1969

Questions (i)

1. What event involving nuclear weapons started the decade?




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2. What event involving nuclear weapons happened in 1968?



3. When were the three big rallies against nuclear weapons?



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4. When did the US and USSR sign a partial test ban treaty?



5. When did China first test a nuclear weapon?



6. Do you think the demonstrations helped to convince governments to sign non-proliferation treaties?



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Questions (ii)

1. How many big anti-nuclear demonstrations happened in 1961 and 1962?



2. What happened in 1962 that may have made people more scared of nuclear weapons?



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3. What did the US and USSR agree to do in 1963?



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4. What did the Outer Space Treaty prohibit?



.....

5. What treaty prohibited nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean?



6. Do you think the demonstrations helped to convince governments to sign non-proliferation treaties? Why or why not?



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Which decade is the best?

Compare your opinions about each decade with what some other people think.

Which decade would you most like to have lived in?	
Decade	% of votes (30,845 votes cast)
1950s	11.45%
1960s	31.10%
1970s	19.09%
1980s	18.67%
1990s	19.70%

Questions



Which decade is the best?

Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

Using the worksheet

This activity could be used as a review activity when you have finished studying the entire book. The survey was done recently on the BBC's magazine website, so all of the respondents are looking back from today's perspective.

You might like to start by asking students if they think people sometimes only remember the good things, or the bad things, about a particular time. You might like to discuss whether people in the 1950s might remember mostly the poverty and hardship, while people in the 1960s mostly remember the optimism and newness. You may also like to discuss the expression "rose coloured glasses".

Younger students

Let the students read through the chart and answer the questions. You may want students to discuss their answers afterwards or you may want them to answer the questions as a group discussion.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand why many people liked the 1960s best.
- Compare percentages.
- Think about and review the different decades they have studied.

Older students

Students could take a survey in class of which decade they would rather live in – the 1940s, 1950s or 1960s, and why. Students could also take a survey of adults about which decade they liked the best.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Understand why many people liked the 1960s best.
- Compare percentages.
- Think about and review the different decade they have studied.

Answers

1. 1960s. Answers to the second part will vary but may include: it was fun; it was a happy decade; it was the most interesting, etc.
2. Answers will vary.
3. The 1980s.
4. Answers will vary, but may include: rationing, shortages of housing, people were poor; there was not a lot of fun.