

Contents and information for teachers



WW2 Home front



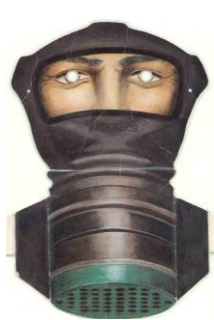
WW2 Home front Collection

This collection helps you explore aspects of life on the home front in wartime Britain

What sort of dangers would people on the homefront face and how did they deal with them?

There was a belief that Germany would launch **gas attacks** on Britain, so everyone was issued with gas masks.

Cardboard gas mask and gas-mask drill photo

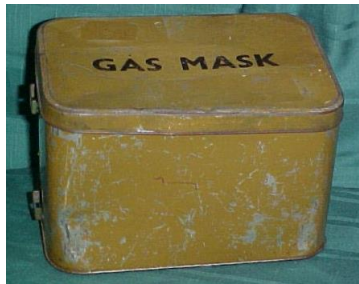


School children being drilled in putting on their masks

We can no longer include a real gas mask due to the asbestos content. If a child brings one in from home no-one should be allowed to wear it.

Gas Mask tin

Gas masks had to be carried at all times, various containers were used for this, tins such as this, canvas bags, leather cases and even cardboard boxes.



Air raids were frequent, particularly in industrial cities and ports, so much effort was put into preventing enemy aircraft identifying built-up areas to bomb, protecting people and dealing with the aftermath of any attacks.

Protective helmet - 'tin hat'

This helmet may be a soldier's helmet or could be for someone (male or female) working in civil defence on the home front e.g. an ARP Warden, member of Dad's Army etc.



Door sign - Air Raid Warden's Post



Pupils could research the Air Raid Warden's job

Air Raid Warden's lamp

This lamp was used by ARP Wardens on their nightly rounds checking blackout regulations were being followed. Its cover hid its light from above. It was needed as street lighting was turned off.



Stirrump pump - packed separately, not in suitcase

Used for putting out fires caused by incendiary and other bombs. The brass pipe was dipped into a source of water with the operator holding the circular stand down with his/her foot. Water was pumped up and out using the handle and directed at the flames by a rubber tube fitted onto the small protrusion opposite the top of the black stand.



Can be used as a **Mystery Object** to play Call My Bluff. Four confident children make-up feasible descriptions of what the item is (give one child the real description, see sheet below). Rest of class have two minutes to question each and then decide which is the true version.

Cigarette Cards sheet



This sheet is provided to help children understand the dangers that people on the home front faced, and how all encompassing support for the war effort was – even cigarette companies did their bit.

It can also be used to show how a stirrup pump was used.

Headlight cover

This was designed to deflect the light from vehicle headlamps downwards to make them comply with blackout restrictions (to ensure they were not seen by enemy aircraft).



Another item that can be used as a **Mystery Object**.

Air Raid Precautions First Aid Case



If special First Aid Cases just for Air Raid injuries were in use, then such injuries must have been common.

Can pupils decide what type of injuries the contents of the box suggest?

Where were the men?

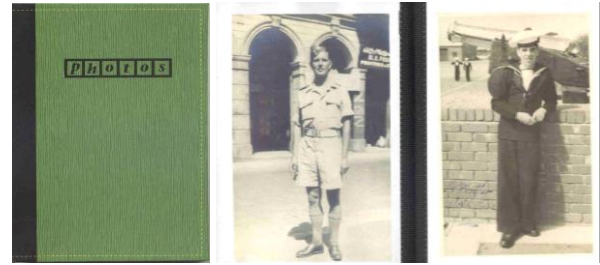
Gent's travelling shaving case



Most men were 'called up' to the services. This item would have belonged to a fairly wealthy man. The fact his shaving equipment is in a travelling case suggests he is not staying or living at home.

Some men were not called up, or were called up but did not serve - can children find out who was not called up and why others did not serve?

Photograph album



Contains snaps of uniformed service men (and women) from the various services and sometimes in other parts of the world.

Second World War General Service medal



These were issued after the war to everyone that served in the British forces during WW2.

Women's Wartime roles

These items can be used to demonstrate the sort of roles women undertook while most of the men were away fighting. Note that some were undertaken *voluntarily*, many women entered paid employment to replace the men but some employment was *compulsory* (see Miss Emmett's documents)

Miss Emmett's documents



WVS badge and membership card



Rationing

These items could prompt an enquiry into the whole issue of rationing, why it was necessary, what was rationed and how long it continued.

Ration books



Food and clothing ration books were required to purchase rationed items.

Did you know? Turn-ups on men's trousers were banned and boys under 12 were not allowed to wear long trousers, in an effort to save cloth.

Dried milk and dried egg tins and Ministry of Food dried egg recipe leaflet



You could try out some of the recipes using traditional custard powder, which is essentially dried egg powder (not instant custard as it includes milk powder too).

Purse containing 8 coins:

1 x half-crown (2 shillings and sixpence) 1 x shilling, 1 x thre'pence, 1 x sixpence, 2x pennies, 1 x ha'penny, 1 x farthing.



Research how much things cost in the 1940s (if you could get them). What could you buy for thre'pence ha'penny? How did you pay using coupons and cash?

Wartime posters



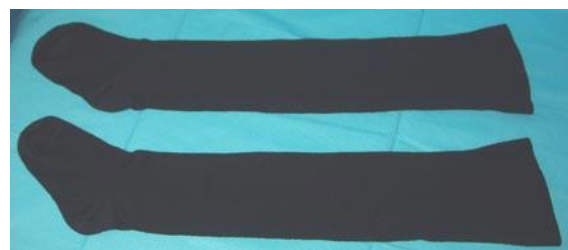
Such posters were everywhere, reminding people on the homefront of how they could support the war effort by being frugal in every way, by volunteering and by keeping schtum. Comprises: 3 x A3 laminated posters and 7 x A5 laminated posters

Wraparound pinny and child's nightie



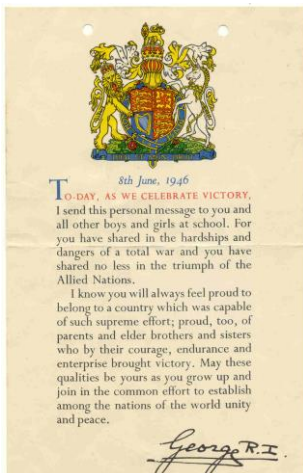
Use for teacher/adult in role e.g. as a 1940s woman telling children about the difficulties food rationing created and how inventive they needed to be to create more interesting meals or pupils role-play a child expressing night-time fears as an evacuee or during the Blitz

Utility knickers and stockings



The end of the war

Victory Announcement for schoolchildren



Children could assemble these and other paper items e.g. ration books etc to make a timeline of WW2

Union Jack bunting (approx 18-20' long with 15 flags)



Bunting and flags would have been much in evidence at the VE Day and VJ Day celebrations.

You may wish to round off your topic with a street party like those thrown to celebrate VE and VJ Day with flags and bunting and pupils/teachers in wartime dress with wartime food - using ration book recipes perhaps.

Additional Items

Bakelite bedwarmer



This electric bedwarmer replaced earthenware bedwarmers in some more affluent homes. It is made of bakelite, the first plastic.

Another item that can be used as a Mystery Object.

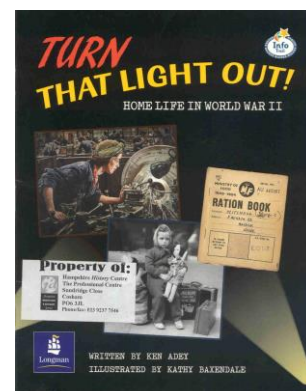
Morse code sender



Morse code senders like this were used extensively during WW2 to send messages. Official and military messages were sent in code. The British capture of a German 'Enigma' encoding machine enabling them to read secret German communications is believed to have shortened the war considerably. Since both sides used spies to get information to help them win the war, ordinary people were encouraged to be careful about inadvertently letting useful information out.

Pupils could research Morse code or make up secret codes and, in pairs, make up suitable wartime messages for each other to decode.

Book *Turn that light out!*



Contains lots of information on aspects covered by this artefact collection.