



ST HELENS COMMUNITY ARCHIVE

Our People. Our Place. Our Heritage

ST HELENS 150TH ANNIVERSARY EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE PACK

In 1868, Queen Victoria granted a Charter of Incorporation that defined St Helens as a municipal borough. 2018 marks the official 150th anniversary of the incorporation. This education pack has been created to help schools celebrate the heritage of St Helens by exploring events in the timeline of St Helens; examining the reasons why the borough was formed; considers the changes to people's lives as a result of the formation of the borough and asks pupils to reflect on the future of St Helens.

The pack has been created for KS2 but could also be suitable for SEN, KS1 and KS3. It was created in May 2018 by Jane Davies and St Helens Library Service, using examples of St Helens Local History & Archives extensive historical collections.

The pack was created as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund supported 'St Helens Community Archive' project. St Helens Community Archive aims to celebrate and preserve the heritage of St Helens past and present through community engagement. The project includes an interactive online archive that documents the heritage and culture of the borough, the digitisation of historic oral history collections as well as education and outreach activities with schools and the local community.

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Accompanying Appendices

Appendix 1 – Activity Sheets

Appendix 2 – Timeline Documents

Appendix 3 – Neville Family Documents

1. Introduction to the resource pack

1.1. How to use the pack

- The pack contains activity ideas and instructions for teachers and focusses on the use of historical evidence from St Helens Local History & Archives.
- Teachers should download and print pupil activity sheets using 'Appendix 1 – Activity Sheets' that accompanies this pack.
- Teachers should download and print a set of archive images using the 'Appendix 2 – Timeline Documents' (1 set per class) and 'Appendix 3 – Neville Family Documents' (1 set per group) that accompany this pack. Alternatively a full set of printed images can be borrowed from St Helens Schools Library Service (libraryserviceschools@sthelens.gov.uk)
- The activities are designed for pupils to work in groups, pairs or as individuals.
- The pack has been designed to be used over a series of lessons. It can be used as a whole or in parts.
- This pack is linked to the 'St Helens Community Archive' project. Schools are invited to upload photographs of their lessons or the materials they produce to the new interactive website: www.sthelenscommunityarchive.org.uk
- For any questions about how to use this pack please contact info@sthelenscommunityarchive.org.uk

1.2. Curriculum links

This resource has been developed for Key Stage 2. The main focus of the resource is the History curriculum with links to English and elements of Drama and Art.

History

Curriculum Skills:

- Understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.
- Develop chronological knowledge and understanding.
- Address and devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance.
- Construction of informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information.

Curriculum Topics

- A study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality

- A study over time tracing how several aspects of national history are reflected in the locality (this can go beyond 1066)

English:

- Use discussion in order to learn: they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating their ideas and participating in debate
- Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates.
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.

1.3. A background on life in Victorian St Helens

This section is intended to give the teacher brief background knowledge on the development of living conditions in the area.

St Helens began to develop quickly during the 1800s because of its abundant supplies of coal, the fuel which powered the Industrial Revolution. The area played a significant role in this period of industrial and social change.

Innovative modern canal and rail networks promoted further industrial growth. Entrepreneurs such as Michael Hughes, the Greenalls and the Pilkingtons established major industries including copper refining, foundries, chemicals, glass, and brewing. Close by, Newton-le-Willows was another industrial settlement, specialising in railway engineering, sugar, and printing.

Workers from all over the British Isles were coming to St Helens to find work in the burgeoning factories. Basic terraced cottages were built in areas next to industrial sites as at Greenbank, Gerard's Bridge, and Parr. As can be expected, being close to smoky factories and chemical works were not ideal environments in which to live and bring up families.

At this time, the majority of homes had outdoor privies (non-flushing toilets), with poorer areas having to share between several houses. Privies were wooden or brick buildings, far from the house to keep the smell away. The seat of the privy was made from wood and there was no water to flush, instead ash (from the fire), sawdust or soil was sprinkled into the privy. People who emptied the privies were called 'night soil men' or 'scavengers' and they came at night by horse and cart.

Forming a borough

Despite the growing town, the forms of local government in St Helens remained that of the old rural townships. A lack of coordination meant that there was poor sanitation, health and infrastructure. In 1845, individuals such as Peter Greenall and David Gamble campaigned for a unified authority to administer the area, which led to the setting up of the St Helens Improvement Commission, effectively the forerunner of a borough council.

Sanitation of the area was so poor that local newspapers were printing complaints from local residents. On 12th July 1856, a reader of the St Helens Intelligencer questioned whether St Helens was 'licenced to make smells' and that smell was so bad that 'if you are going to have your tea, you will detest eating it!'

A special meeting of the Improvement Commission was organised. As the population of St Helens was increasing, districts such as Thatto Heath, Sutton and Parr remained without effective sanitary and water supplies. A crisis relating to the water supply in Sutton arose following an outbreak of cholera in Peasley Cross began a chain of events that led to the joining up of the four townships of Sutton, Eccleston, Windle and Parr.

After seeing the benefits to the incorporation of Warrington and Southport as municipal boroughs, and at the request of 89 ratepayers, a petition for incorporation of St Helens borough was compiled at a meeting on 7th February 1865 and sent to London. The Charter of Incorporation that created the borough of St Helens was ultimately granted by Her Majesty Queen Victoria and formally completed on 5th March 1868.

Ongoing developments

Providing good sanitation was an ongoing issue, and not just in St Helens. The national Public Health Act of 1875 brought together a range of Acts covering sewerage and drains, water supply, housing and disease. Local authorities now had to appoint Medical Officers in charge of public health. Local authorities were ordered to cover sewers, keep them in good condition, supply fresh water to their citizens, collect rubbish and provide street lighting.

During the Boer War (1899-1902) it was found that a large proportion of the population were unfit for service, resulting in a drive for increasing public health. The Balfour Act (1902) outlined the responsibility of Local Education Authorities to provide education for children up to the age of fourteen. In 1906 local councils were told to provide free school meals for poor children. School Medical Inspection (1907) was followed by the Children's Act (1908) to convene children's health and welfare. In 1908 old-age pensions were introduced. In 1911 National Insurance (free medical treatment for workers who fell ill) was introduced. The National Health Service came into existence on 5th July 1948 and health and welfare services were reformed under the St Helens Health Committee.

2. Introducing historic evidence and archives

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources
- Develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas

2.1. Activity: Train to be a History Detective

This activity uses a worksheet that can be found in the accompanying 'Appendix 1 – Activity Sheets'.

Teacher information

This activity introduces pupils to the concept of using evidence, looking for clues and developing conclusions.

Activities

Explain that finding out about the past is a bit like being a police detective; they look for clues to find out about people and what happened at the time. Historians find out about the past by investigating a range of evidence: documents, artefacts, buildings, maps, photographs, living people, and archaeological sites.

Ask the pupils to investigate the photographs of the objects on the worksheet (or preferably give them a selection of real objects and documents similar to those in the worksheet). If using a selection of real objects, place the objects in a bag or perhaps the pockets of a jacket.

Suggested items:

- *Bus or train ticket*
- *Receipt from a shop*
- *Membership of library or sports club*
- *Takeaway menu*
- *Car keys*
- *Football scarf*
- *Family Photo*
- *School report*

3. Timelines

Learning Objectives:

- Develop chronological knowledge and understanding
- Become aware of key local historical events
- Address and devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance
- Understanding how several aspects of national history are reflected in the locality.
- Use technical vocabulary e.g. the use of “19th century” to describe 1845
- Using historical evidence to find out about the past

3.1. Activity: Create a Timeline

This activity uses archive images from the accompanying ‘Appendix 2 – Timeline Documents’

Teacher information

This activity encourages pupils to sequence events and understand chronology. Pupils will use the archive images to look for clues about time periods and dates.

Activities

Use a roll of paper or wallpaper to create a large timeline for the classroom, pin it to a wall or lay on a table, marking a line with the years 1850 to 2020 on it in blocks of 10 years. Alternatively use 18 x A4 sheets of paper, labelling each sheet with one decade (1850, 1860, 1870 onwards). Peg the sheets onto a washing line in the classroom or lay on tables

To warm up the class, create a human timeline. Ask the class to arrange 5-6 individuals in age order (you could include pupils and adults).

St Helens Events

- Print off the individual archive images and clue cards in the ‘Appendix – Archive Documents’ that accompanies this pack.
- Ask pupils to work in pairs or groups of three, giving each group an image from the timeline (at this point do not give out the clue cards). Ask them to study the images, looking for clues for dates or time periods such as dates, the clothes or the technology in the photograph.
- Pupils can then place the images where they think they should go on the timeline.

- Now hand out the individual archive clue cards for each image. Ask the pupils to match the archive clue card with the images and then check their timeline is in the correct order.

World Events

- Ask pupils to think about what other things might be happening around that world which could be added into the timeline.
- Pupils could do their own research on the internet (including looking at www.sthelenscommunityarchive.org.uk) to investigate their ideas and add images or facts to the time line.

Suggestions: The invention of the phone / television / internet, the dates of world wars, the coronation of Queen Elizabeth or other events you have previously looked at as a class.

- Discuss with the pupils how these world events might have affected St Helens.

Our Events

- Add more facts to the timeline such as when pupils were born, when the school was built.
- Pupils could do some research at home to add dates further back in time that relates to their lives or the memories of people they know e.g. local events their parents, carers or grandparents can remember.
- Continue the timeline into the future. Ask the pupils to think about what things might happen in the future and how that might influence their lives.

Extension Activity: What is similar and what is different to life in St Helens today?

Give each pupil two different colours of *post it* notes and ask them to mark on the time line using a green *post it* something which they think is the same or similar to life in St Helens today (e.g. they may choose the formation of the St Helens Rugby Club which still exists today). With a different coloured post it, ask them to mark something which is different from life today (e.g. they may choose the introduction of trams that are no longer seen today).

Ask why they think that something is still the same or is different. They may have personal stories to share for example a family member who still works at Pilkingtons or that they have been to a rugby match.

4. Life in St Helens in 1861

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources
- Understanding the effects of the Industrial Revolution on people living in St Helens and why changes were needed.
- Construction of informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. Consider and evaluate different viewpoints
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates

4.1. Activity: Investigate the life of the Neville family

This activity uses archive images from the accompanying 'Appendix 3 – Neville Family Documents' and a worksheet that can be found in 'Appendix 1 – Activity Sheets'.

Teacher information

This activity allows pupils to investigate the archive material and explore the life of a family living in the area before St Helens became a borough. This will give pupils an insight into what the area was like and ideas why the decision was taken to form the borough.

Activities

Print off a copy of the 'Appendix – Neville Family Documents' for each group.

Tell the pupils that they are going to be investigating what life was like for a real family in 1861 before St Helens borough was formed.

Ask pupils to suggest questions for the family. What kind of things would they like to find out? (Such as: Where do you go to school? Do you have any pets?)

Split the class into small groups and ask each group to investigate their set of archives to find out as much as they can about the family.

They must use the archive sources to find evidence which tells them about the lives of the people living in the family.

Give each pupil a Neville Family Activity Sheet and ask them to choose a family member to write about.

Give the class some hints and tips for what clues they might find:

- The census will reveal lots of facts about who was living in the house.
- The street photograph reveals evidence of games.
- The photograph of the house will show the size of the house and might suggest how many rooms were in the house.
- The image of the miners will give clues about who was working and what they wore.
- The images of people may tell us about thoughts and feelings
- The poster about privies tells us about toilets and some health issues.

4.2 Activity: Neville Family Freeze Frame

This activity uses freeze frame cards that can be found in 'Appendix 1 – Activity Sheets'.



Teacher information

The pupils will carry out a drama activity called a 'freeze frame' to bring their characters to life. This will help to deepen their understanding of what life was like for individuals in the past.

Activities

Spilt the class into small groups, each pupil will play the character that they have created a Neville Family Investigation sheet about. First ask them to close their eyes and imagine they are the person they investigated. Think about what their life was like in 1861. What would they see, hear or smell? How might they feel: happy, sad, tired.

Now give out one freeze frame card to each group. Ask the groups to create a scene whereby each pupil poses as their character. They should work as a group to decide what their scene will be like.

The freeze frame cards contain the following scenes:

- Playing in the street
- Shopping in the market
- A day at school or work
- At home in the evening

Each group in turn stands still to present their Freeze Frame to the rest of the class.

The scene could then be brought to life by the teacher shouting “Action!”

The teacher could also tap each character on the shoulder to ask them who they are, where they work, what they can see or smell and how they feel.

Other pupils could also ask the characters questions.

4.3 Activity: Create a Victorian peg doll

Teacher information

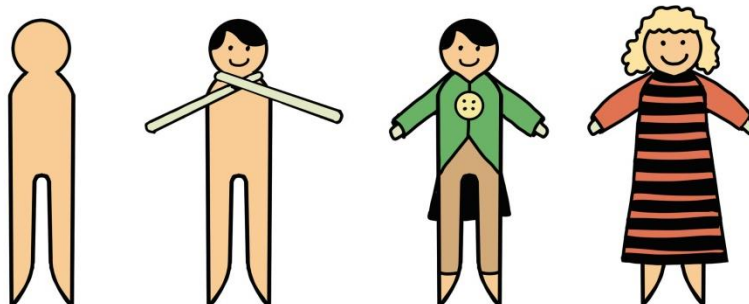
To help the pupils bring their characters to life they can create a peg doll of a member of the Neville family. This is the type of toy the children of the Neville family might have made and played with.

You will need:

- Wooden pegs
- Pipe cleaners
- Felt tips
- Fabric, ribbon or felt scraps
- Decorations e.g. beads, buttons
- Wool
- Glue
- Rubber band
- Scissors

How to make:

1. Use the felt tips to draw a face on the peg
2. Folder a pipe cleaner around the “neck” of the peg to make arms.
3. Cut out and glue the scraps of material to dress the peg doll.
4. Colour in the head or glue lengths of wool to it for hair.
5. Add beads or buttons for decoration



5. The creation of St Helens borough

Learning Objectives

- Understand why the borough of St Helens was formed and the consequences of a new local government structure.
- Understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.
- Understanding the effects of the Industrial Revolution on people living in St Helens
- Construction of informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. Consider and evaluate different viewpoints.
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates.

5.1. Activity: Why was St Helens borough formed?

This activity uses archive images from the accompanying 'Appendix 3 – Neville Family Documents'.

Teacher information

Although the area that we live in has a very long history, the borough of St Helens was formed 150 years ago.

A 'Charter of Incorporation' was signed by Queen Victoria in 1868 that joined the four districts of Parr, Eccleston, Windle and Sutton so they could work together to solve some of the problems that were created by the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution had meant there was a massive growth in the numbers of people living in the area, in cramped conditions and with poor sanitation.

This activity asks pupils to think about what life was like for families living in St Helens around the time of the Charter and what changes were needed to improve the quality of people's lives.

Activities

Ask pupils to look at the archive material 'Appendix – Neville Family Documents' to find out what issues families were facing before 1868.

Ask the class what they think about...

A. What was it like to live in some of the houses in the area?

- Were the houses overcrowded with people? (HINT: Look at the photos of Albert Street and count the names of the census to see how many people lived in one house)
- Were there televisions in the houses? What did children do for fun? Were there nice places to play out? (HINT: Look at the photograph of children outside)

B. What was it like at school?

- Did everyone have access to education? (HINT: Look at the census – how old was Peter and was he at school?)

C. What was it like at work?

- Was work in the mines dangerous for children? (HINT: Look at the photo of miners and their tools)
- Did the women have jobs? (HINT: Look at the census and also at the photo of miners)

D. Do you think it was a healthy and clean place to live in 1861?

- Did all the houses have clean running water? (HINT: Look at the leaflet about privies (toilets), did they cause disease?)

5.2. Activity: Making life better in 1868

This activity uses Issue Cards that can be found in 'Appendix 1 – Activity Sheets'.

Teacher information

When the borough of St Helens was formed a new stronger local government system was created which had the powers to make changes and improvements for the people.

Sir David Gamble was a local business owner and one of the people who campaigned for the borough to be created. He was the chairman of a decision making group for the borough of St Helens and later became the first Mayor of St Helens once the borough was formed. He was very well respected in St Helens because of the improvements he made to the area.

This activity encourages the class to consider the decisions that Sir David Gamble had to make to bring about change.

Activities

Ask the class to work in pairs or small groups and give each group an 'issue card'. Ask them to look at the problems and to think about how they might solve some of the issues on the cards and make St Helens a better place to live.

The pupils will now carry out a role play activity to persuade Sir David Gamble what changes he make now he is Mayor.

Ask the class to form two lines, all facing each other. One person (the teacher or a participant) takes on the role of Sir David Gamble and walks down the line between the pupils. As Sir Gamble walks between the pupils, they should all whisper their advice about what they feel the priorities are for the new borough. When he gets to the end of the line, Sir Gamble has to make his decision about what his top priorities are for the new borough and report back to the class.

In 1868, with Sir David Gamble's help, the Charter brought about the following changes:

- A new water and sewage system
- More schools were built
- The first library in St Helens was built
- New rules about children not having to work
- There were more parks and open spaces
- Improvements to housing
- Improved transport and roads
- More hospitals were built

Compare this list to the answers and decisions the class made.

6. St Helens today

Learning Objectives:

- Use discussion in order to learn: they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating their ideas and participating in debate
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates.
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others

6.1. Activity: The future of St Helens

This activity uses a worksheet that can be found in the accompanying 'Appendix 1 – Activity Sheets'.

Teacher information

The creation of the borough of St Helens led to changes which improved the lives of people living in the area.

Activities

Ask the pupils to think about what things could be done to make the lives of children living in St Helens today even better.

The pupils should work individually or in pairs to discuss and develop their ideas. They could also draw what their ideas would look like.

The class can then vote on which are their favourite ideas, and perhaps add them to the St Helens Community Archive (www.sthelenscommunityarchive.org.uk).

Extension activity: pitch your idea

Ask the pupils to create a pitch to their Head Teacher or a local MP about their favourite idea, why it is needed and what changes it will bring.