

WW2 Support Materials – Contents

Below are some ideas for helping you make the most of your wartime day at STEAM. Use the background information about Railways at War to help the children put into context the locomotives they will see at STEAM and how they helped us 'win the war'. Use ideas and templates to enable the children to come dressed up and in role as evacuees. Although STEAM is a Victorian Social History Museum, there are links between our displays and WW2. The WW2 Museum Trail is a simple trail for your accompanying adults to help them encourage the children to make these links. It doesn't need the children to write anything unless you would like them to.

1. Railways and the Great Western at War – An Overview.
2. WW2 Museum Trail (This is NOT used during our We'll Meet Again*)
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(*We'll Meet Again is our biannual WW2 School Event held in March and October)

Railways and the Great Western at War – An Overview

Evacuation

The most important task for railways in the weeks after the declaration of war was the evacuation of children from urban areas. Over the course of four days, 1st – 4th September 1939, the Great Western and other railways moved 1,334,358 children, parents and teachers from industrial to rural areas in an operation planned over a year previously. The GWR itself ran 163 special evacuation trains from the London area alone over the four days and carried 112,994 evacuees into the West Country! The bulk of evacuees were moved from Paddington and Ealing Broadway, but the GWR also ran similar operations in Bristol, Liverpool and Birkenhead and Birmingham. On the 1st and 2nd September, a total of 22,379 passengers were moved from Birmingham by 64 special trains south into Gloucestershire and Wales. Many parents organised for their evacuated children to be returned during the period of the 'phoney war' but as the bombs started to drop and the London Blitz intensified and then spread to other areas, further evacuations took place in 1940 and 1941.

Railway Travel in Wartime

From the earliest days of the war travel became much more difficult for the public. The government wanted to keep railways clear for the movement of troops and others on war work. The Railway Executive issued a series of posters which asked travellers 'Is Your Journey really Necessary?' 'The time has come', one wartime poster advised 'for every person to search his conscience before making a railway journey.' The railways were a weapon of war and civilian passengers were reminded that 'food, shells and fuel must come first.' By 1944 the number of miles covered by passenger trains had fallen to a third of the pre-war figure, but every train still in service was carrying twice as many people as in 1939.

As well as the number of trains being reduced, timetables were also slowed down dramatically making journeys not only slow but also uncomfortable. Many travellers of the time remember long train journeys sitting or lying in corridors and goods vans for many hours. Despite the fact that travelling by train had never been so uncomfortable, it had also never been so expensive - fares almost tripled over the war years!

The creation of a blackout made railway travel problematic for travellers. At first carriages were fitted with very dim blue bulbs and windows blacked out, but after complaints from the public that light levels were so low they could not even read their newspapers, these restrictions were relaxed, and better blinds were fitted to black out carriages. There were many minor and major accidents because of the blackout even though precautions were taken such as painting pillars, lampposts and platform edges white. In the blackout it was difficult to tell where you were at night. Most trackside and station lamps were blacked out. Bridge parapets were particularly easy to mistake for station platforms. One person even drowned near Bath Station by stepping by mistake into the River Avon. In the dark, travellers tripped over obstructions, fell off trains and in-between platforms at railway stations and often got out at the wrong station entirely.

Matters were not helped either by the removal or painting out of station names at the beginning of the war as a precaution against spies and potential invaders. All main station signs were removed in June 1940 and subsequently other place names were obliterated. This caused chaos and later, station name boards were replaced but under awnings so that they could not be seen from above by aeroplane or parachute.

Theft from trains became a serious problem, as rationing was introduced to even the most basic of items. The supply of towels in train lavatories was completely discontinued on 1st August 1942 when the GWR decided it could no longer bear the constant theft of these items. The General Manager reported that the GWR had lost over 8,000 towels in the year previous. Toilet rolls and soap were also discontinued on all trains except Sleeping Cars during the war years for that very same reason.

Shortages became so bad that passengers often had to take their own refreshments on trains as buffet cars and refreshment rooms ran out of food and crockery and cutlery – Swindon Refreshment Rooms were forced to serve tea in jam jars since crockery was in such short supply!

With the onset of the Blitz, railways became a prime target for enemy bombers and the fear of attack increased travel problems. At first all trains came to a standstill during air raids, but it soon became apparent that this caused as much chaos as the raids themselves, so the policy changed to trains running at a reduced speed. Drivers often had to continue driving through falling bombs. The glow from the firebox was hard to hide even with drivers' cabs blacked out and this of course presented the enemy above with an easily visible target. Fighter planes also used to chase and attack trains and follow railway lines in order to find their next target. Many were convinced that the Germans would use gas after its widespread use in the 1st World War. As a precaution, the GWR applied gas detector paint to cab windows of locomotives.

In the event of an air raid, passengers were directed to close all windows, pull down blinds and lie on the floor where possible. There was of course not enough room on the floor for all passengers to lie down!! F. G Richens writing in the GWR Company magazine in November 1939 said, "One glance at the stalwart frames around me was sufficient to show that my chances of securing living space on the floor without suffering complete and final extinction in the process were negligible".

GWR stations and goods depots suffered badly from bomb damage, especially in places like Paddington, Bristol, Birmingham and South Wales. Air Raid shelters were provided for both staff and the travelling public, and GWR staff were trained in ARP (Air Raid Precautions) and also formed their own Fire Watching teams.

War Damage

Although less badly affected than the Southern Railway, the GWR suffered much damage in the course of the war. One of the first air raids occurred at Newton Abbot on 20th August 1940 when just before 6.45pm 3 German aircraft attacked the station. Two bomber planes dropped ten 250kilo bombs, while a fighter plane sprayed the platform with machine gun fire. 14 lives were lost, 29 people were left seriously injured and there were another 46 minor injuries.

Working for the Railway in Wartime

For railway staff, conditions were very difficult especially during air raids and the blackout. Locomotive drivers worked long hours in difficult conditions – a steam locomotive was an easy target for bombers – the glow from the fire could be seen from a long distance and as already mentioned fighter planes often followed railway lines and chased trains. Elaborate tarpaulin sheets were provided to hide the fire glow, but these also made conditions on the footplate of the engine incredibly hot and sticky – drivers remember being bathed in sweat and condensation even in the middle of winter when using these 'anti-glare' sheets!

For guards and other staff, long hours were the order of the day, especially when labour shortages caused by men being called up for military service started to bite. Shunters, porters and other goods staff who already had a dangerous job found it even more difficult working in the blackout.

Signalmen were particularly vulnerable during air raids, as signal boxes were predominantly made of glass and a bomb blast would shatter it. To avoid the danger, each signalman was issued with a small metal shelter commonly known as a 'coffin' into which they could retreat during air raids whilst remaining available to operate signals.

In 1940, the GWR converted milk vans into carriages for casualty evacuation trains. They were designed for evacuating the population of London in the event of a large-scale disaster and were kitted out with stretchers. The railways had a salvage drive throughout the war to recycle materials. The GWR Salvage Corps picked up paper, towels, coal, metal, wood and other items on a four weekly cycle. The company even reused forms and letters to save paper by typing on the back of them.

Women Workers

As the war continued, staff shortages worsened as more and more men were called up to fight, and the only option open to the railway was the employment of women. The use of female staff was slow at first, and there was considerable opposition amongst older male staff.

By August 1941 over 8000 women were employed, but it was not until the end of that year that things changed with the compulsory conscription of all women between the ages of 20 & 30 for war work. By 1943 more than 16,000 women were working on the GWR. There were so many female staff employed that the company employed a 'Women's Welfare Supervisor' Miss Brennan, who became something of a champion, fighting opposition within the railway and ensuring that the necessary facilities (toilets, rest and mess rooms) were provided. An example of the entrenched attitudes she had to deal with can be gained from a statement she made to a staff committee in 1943 when she said that there on the railway there was a 'mistaken belief that heavily built women were necessarily best suited for manual work'.

Women moved into all areas of the railways operation except locomotive driving, which continued to be an all male province. Many jobs were tackled, including signal box work, engine and carriage cleaning, goods porters, lift attendants, painters, road vehicle maintenance staff, guards, as well as many jobs in the heavy engineering shops in Swindon Works.

Swindon Works in The Second World War

Between 1939 and 1943 much of the work done at Swindon Works was war work. The Works produced all manner of items for the war effort and the versatility of the workforce meant that it was often asked to tackle unusual or difficult jobs at very short notice. Secret munitions work included the manufacture of Hurricane and Spitfire fighter parts, 171,00 different parts for aircraft during the Battle of Britain, shells and bombs of all sizes (250lb, 2000lb and 4000lb), landing craft for the D Day invasion, machine guns, tanks, midget submarines, carriages for Ambulance Trains and Casualty Evacuation Trains and the conversion of a special secret train for General Eisenhower codenamed the 'Alive Train'. The Works also assisted with the construction of Bailey Bridges for D Day and with the manufacture of many miscellaneous items such as parts for searchlights and guns, dock cranes, cables for barrage balloons, tanks and armoured car components.

As much of the work done was secret, security was increased and many parts of the Works were screened off from prying eyes using large tarpaulins. People were not as free as before to wander around the Works site.

The Works even had its own Home Guard battalion made up of GWR staff to patrol and protect the site day and night.

Air Raid Precautions

The 300-acre site at Swindon presented special problems for ARP measures. Just blacking out such a large number of buildings was a tall order! The large numbers of glass roof lights had to be painted out for the blackout, a process that cost over £7000. This meant that most workshops operated in artificial light for the whole of the war. This in turn speeded up the process of modernising the Works, with the removal of the Victorian gas lighting still used in many parts of the Works even at this time and the introduction of modern electric lighting.

Large numbers of air raid shelters were provided to house the 12,000 staff – some used existing subways; other new structures were built above ground. The Works hooter, used to call the men to work, was put to a different use during the war, being the air raid warning for the whole town of Swindon. Despite all the precautions, there were relatively few air raids on the town during the war, which is something of a mystery given the importance of the Works and the role it played in the war effort. The most serious raid took place in July 1942 when a lone Heinkel bomber dropped 5 bombs near the west end of the Works and then machine-gunned the gas works. The gasholder was hit, and flames leapt out of one of the bullet holes – resourceful staff plugged the holes with clay to stop gas escaping until permanent repairs could be made.

The Role of the Railways During the War

Although the main line railways undertook the massive evacuation project, they were also called upon to carry thousands of troops around the country as well as millions of tons of goods and munitions, tanks, equipment and petrol. For example, in the build up to the North African campaign in 1942 the railways moved 185,000 men, 20,000 vehicles and 220,000 tonnes of stores. British Railways posters reminded the public that ‘your children’s food depends on the Lines behind the Lines’ and that ‘over half a million railwaymen are maintaining a vital national service.’

Train carriages and railways stations were also ideal sites to display propaganda posters and posters passing on important information relating to the war issued by both the railways themselves and the Government Ministries. For example the slogan ‘Is Your Journey Really Necessary?’ was introduced in 1939 but came to real prominence in 1941 when posters with this message appeared all over the railway network; together with all manner of variations along this theme e.g. ‘Travel Only When You Must’, ‘Coal & Food & Guns Come First’, ‘Tracks Are Filled With War’. Rail passengers faced a barrage of propaganda. For example, by 1941 loudspeaker systems, which were already common at most stations were being put to a new use, that of spearheading a new campaign ‘Careless Talk’.

The editor of the GWR Company magazine noted that many travellers “still speak unguardedly of matters which greatly interest the enemy...concerning things the enemy would like to know, silence is golden.” Notices warning of the dangers of idle or careless talk were also placed in every railway compartment, restaurant and sleeping cars and station waiting rooms.

The significance of the railways was really highlighted in the run up to the D-day Invasion in 1944. In the two months after March 1944 the railways ran 24,459 special trains of troops, tanks, stores petrol and other equipment – in the three weeks before the invasion itself they ran another 10,000 trains. This process continued after the invasion, with the more sombre job of running ambulance trains of the wounded also being carried out.

World War II Museum Trail

Be on the Lookout!

In the Workshops:

Life in the GWR Factory was hard. Work was hot, smelly and tough.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Look out | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• for the different jobs that had to be done in the GWR Works. All of these jobs were taken over by women during WW2 due to labour shortages. The GWR Factory started to make munitions. |
| Look out | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• for the woman at work in the Boiler Shop. Find the display panel that tells you about Swindon Works at War and listen to the people on the video telling you about changes in factory life during the War. |

Be on the Lookout!

Around Caerphilly Castle Locomotive:

Railways were of great importance during WW2 with the evacuation of children from dangerous cities to the countryside and the movement of troops, goods, munitions, tanks, petrol and equipment.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Look out | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• for lamps on the locomotive, which would not have been allowed during the Blackout. |
|-----------------|---|

If any preparatory work has been done with the pupils using the document 'Railways and the Great Western at War – An Overview', this is a calm and quiet area where question and answer can take place.

Enemy bombers used to chase trains running on the railway lines below them. They could see the light from the firebox when it was dark. How do you think engine drivers might have blacked out their cabs?

Be on the Lookout!

In Operating the Railway:

As the War progressed, staff shortages on the Railway worsened as more men were called up to fight. For the first time, women were employed to operate the railways and were only excluded from driving the engines (which was a reserved occupation).

Look out • for jobs that had to be done outside, even during the Blackout – this caused lots of accidents!

Look out • for the Signaller's Coffin – his personal Air Raid Shelter! Sit inside, but mind your fingers. Close the door if you are brave enough. How would the signaller feel inside it? Why did signallers in particular need these?

Be on the Lookout!

On the Station Platform:

Railway Stations were a very popular place for the Government during WW2 to display propaganda posters. Lots of people would see them.

Do you know any propaganda messages that the Government used during WW2?

Look out • for the plaques and memorials tucked away right at the end of the Station Platform, honouring the GWR workers who lost their lives during the two World Wars.

Be on the Lookout!

On your way out of the Museum:

Look out

- for a big photograph of eight happy evacuees. How do you think you would feel if you had to be evacuated?

Look out

- for one of the most famous messages of the War on a poster. Why was this message so important?

Dressing Up Tips

Look in books and on the internet to get some ideas of how boys and girls dressed during WW2.

The Background

There were many shortages. Factories had closed because men working in them had gone to fight in the war or had been moved into more important war work. Factories were not allowed to make anything that was not essential for the war effort e.g. they were converted to production of armaments and weapons. Metal and wood were used for war supplies, not for toys and fancy stuff. Food shortages became a big issue by 1941 as enemy u-boats were sinking merchant vessels. Things coming from other countries weren't getting here.

Enemy bomb raids targeted docks, factories and warehouses. Clothes and food ration books were issued to everyone so that even if people had lots of money they could only buy their fair share. So clothes, toys, luxuries (like make up) and household items were increasingly unavailable in shops. The concept of 'Making do and Mending' became a government headed policy and many posters and leaflets were produced to help people re-use and repair. Nothing was to be wasted and ingenuity and creativity was encouraged.

Unlike today, people would have had many practical skills. Boys were taught woodwork and metalwork in school so they could make and repair basic household objects. Girls would be taught sewing, knitting, crocheting, darning and embroidery in school so would be undaunted at the prospect of making clothes. The average family would not have much spare money anyway and it would have been far cheaper to make clothes than buy them. There were no cheap Primark or Tesco superstores to buy clothes!

Lots of clothes would have been handknitted. Old knitted garments were unravelled and reknitted (one reason there were so many striped and fairisle garments during the War). Mothers would have been busy sewing, embroidering, lace making, crocheting and tatting; clothes would not have been thrown away, but darned and patched and finally made into something else e.g. rag rugs and dusters.

'Hand me downs' passed through the family from older to younger children, so children's clothes seldom fitted them properly.

Some Ideas

Girls

- Buckled or lace up shoes in black or brown
- White knee or ankle socks
- Knee length cotton dress – patterned or plain
- White or patterned blouse buttoned up to the neck
- Knee length skirt in grey, black, navy, flowered print or a kilt
- Cardigan (girls would not have worn jumpers)
- Beret or woolly hat
- Hair worn in two bunches or two plaits (secured with ribbon) or ribbon worn around the head 'Alice band' style or hair slides with a ribbon bow attached

Boys

- Buckled or lace up shoes in black or brown
- Grey or black knee socks
- Grey, black or brown knee length shorts with braces
- Grey, black or brown trousers with braces
- White, light grey or light blue, striped or checked long sleeved shirt buttoned up to the neck
- A tie, plain, checked or striped
- V necked long sleeve or sleeveless pullover or cardigan
- Blazer in brown, burgundy, navy, black, stripes or checked
- School or cricket style cap or flat cap

Try to avoid

- Modern fabrics and fastenings like denim, Lycra and Velcro
- Modern logos and images
- Sportswear of any kind, including trainers and baseball caps
- T shirts and sweat shirts
- Watches, jewellery including rings and earrings, scrunchies and other modern hair accessories

Make Your Own Gas Mask

As gas masks needed to be taken everywhere, ingenious solutions were found for carrying them. One designer even came up with leather handbags for the ladies, which were actually gas mask cases.

One of the most common methods for carrying gas masks was a sturdy brown cardboard box with string attached. People carried them over their shoulder.

The easiest way to make your own is to collect the boxes that have contained washing tablets or cat food pouches, then cover the box with brown paper and attach a piece of string. As well as looking appropriate, the box will also have a lid so that pupils can store e.g. ID cards inside them (which people used to do during WW2, as ID cards also needed to be carried at all times).

Gas mask boxes also had a label either inside the lid or on the bottom of the box, as follows:

Packing Of Respirator

The Respirator should be placed in box with heavy end (container) standing on bottom of box. The Transparent Eyepiece should lie evenly on the top of container and at full length without any deformation.

When Respirator is required for use

1. Hold Respirator by the straps
2. Put on first by putting chin into the Facepiece And then draw the straps over the head. Adjust Straps to obtain close but comfortable fit.
3. Take off by pulling the straps over the head from the back.

Do not take respirator off by pulling the container upwards over the face

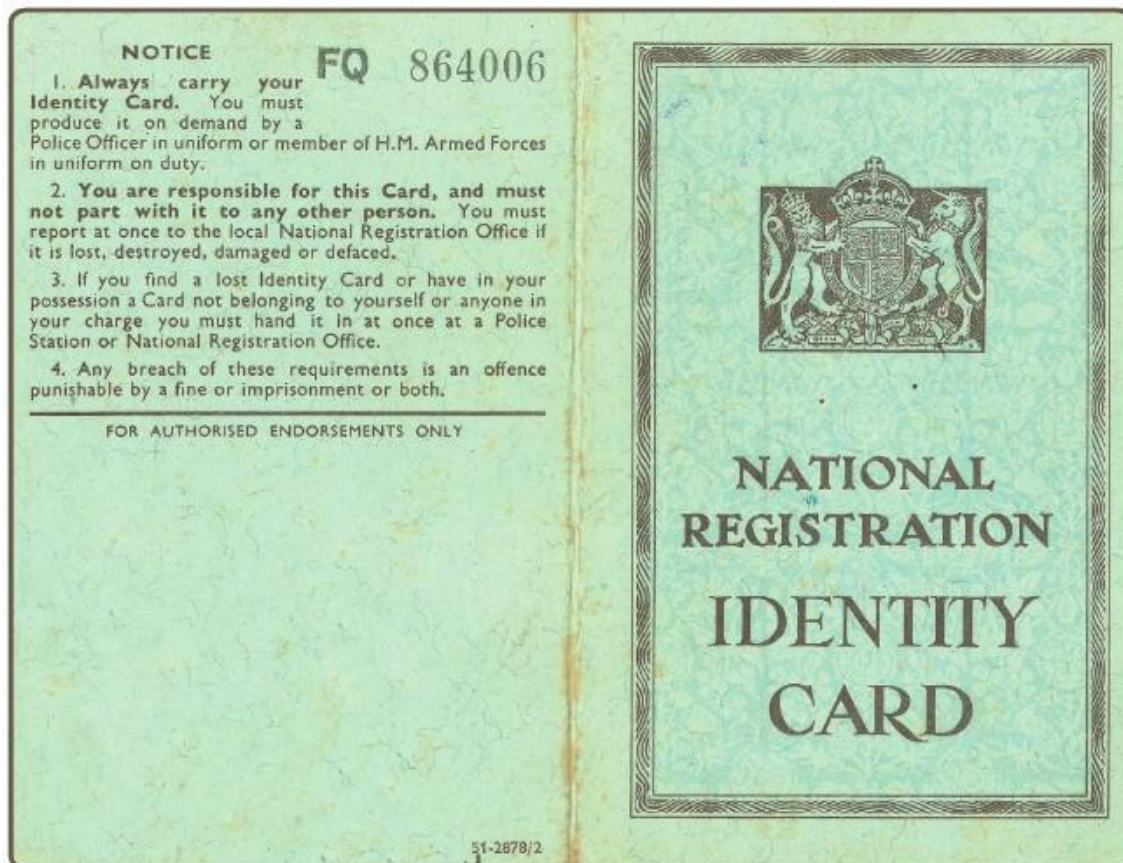
Make Your Own National Registration Identity Card

By October 1939, a National Register of all citizens had been completed. Adults received green Identity Cards and under 16 year olds received buff coloured ones. From late 1939 until 1952 it was obligatory for civilians to carry their Identity Card at all times as proof of their ID and home address. Each card had a personal number of 6 or 7 digits and no photograph was needed.

The National Registration Identity Card below is reproduced from an original held by STEAM, Museum of the Great Western Railway, Education Department. Use it as a template for your class to make their own ID cards to bring along on the day of your visit. Don't forget that you will all be expected to produce your ID cards on demand!!

Copy the outside and the inside of the ID Card, stick them together and fold.

Outside of ID Card



Inside of ID Card

SURNAME	
CHRISTIAN NAMES (First only in full)	
CLASS CODE	
FULL POSTAL ADDRESS	
HOLDER'S SIGNATURE	
CHANGES OF ADDRESS. No entry except by National Registration Officer, to whom removal must be notified.	
REMOVED TO (Full Postal Address)	
REMOVED TO (Full Postal Address)	
REMOVED TO (Full Postal Address)	
REMOVED TO (Full Postal Address)	
REMOVED TO (Full Postal Address)	



FOR OFFICIAL ENTRY ONLY (apart from Holder's Signature). ANY OTHER ENTRY OR ALTERATION, MARKING OR ERASURE, IS PUNISHABLE BY A FINE OR IMPRISONMENT OR BOTH.

Make Your Own Food Ration Book

Below are some pages from a Ration Book.

It is reproduced from an original held by STEAM, Museum of the Great Western Railway, Education Department.

The cover would originally have been printed onto green card.

You might also like to do some research into rationing and shortages before your visit and encourage the children to plan together what a 1940s lunchbox may have looked like. Lots of schools bring a rationed lunch.

Front cover of ration book

R.B.2 16		SERIAL NO. CF 060980 (CHILD'S)
MINISTRY OF FOOD 1940-1941		
RATION BOOK		
Surname.....		Initials.....
Address.....		
Date of Birth (Day)..... (Month)..... 19.....		
IF FOUND RETURN TO ANY FOOD OFFICE		F.O. CODE No.

Back cover of ration book

32 PANEL 3					PANEL 4				
1	2	1	3	4	1	2	1	3	4
5	6	2	7	8	5	6	2	7	8
9	10	3	11	12	9	10	3	11	12
13	14	4	15	16	13	14	4	15	16
17	18	5	19	20	17	18	5	19	20
21	22	6	23	24	21	22	6	23	24
25	26	7	27	28	25	26	7	27	28
29	30	8	31	32	29	30	8	31	32
33	34	9	35	36	33	34	9	35	36
37	38	10	39	40	37	38	10	39	40
41	42	11	43	44	41	42	11	43	44
45	46	12	47	48	45	46	12	47	48
49	50	13	51	52	49	50	13	51	52

Make Your Own Evacuee Label

Below is a template, which can be used for your class to make their own evacuee labels. Photocopy this label onto thin card and fill in the relevant details. Punch a hole in one end of the label and make a loop out of string to go through the hole. Children can then arrive at the Museum with the labels attached to their clothes, as real evacuees would have done.

London Evacuation Scheme

Label And Travelling Warrant

Name: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

Assembly Centre: _____

Train: GWR Caerphilly Castle, 4073

Day: 1st September 1939

Time: 10am

Clothes Rationing – Men And Boys

Each man, woman and child has 66 clothing coupons to last one year.

Item	Adult	Child
Unlined mackintosh or cape	9	7
Other mackintoshes, or raincoat, or overcoat	16	11
Coat, or jacket, or blazer, or like garment	13	8
Waistcoat, or pull-over, or cardigan, or jersey	5	3
Trousers (other than fustian or corduroy)	8	6
Fustian or corduroy trousers	5	5
Overalls, or dungarees or like garment	6	4
Shorts	5	3
Dressing gown or bathing gown	8	6
Nightshirt or pair of pyjamas	8	6
Shirt, or combinations – woollen	8	6
Shirt, or combinations – other material	5	4
Pants, or vest, or bathing costume, or child's blouse	4	2
Pair of socks or stockings	3	1
Collar, or tie, or pair of cuffs	1	1
Two handkerchiefs	1	1
Scarf, or pair of gloves or mittens	2	2
Pair of slippers or goloshes	4	2
Pair of boots or shoes	7	3
Pair of leggings, gaiters or spats	3	2

Cloth

Coupons needed per yard depended on the width.

Government Evacuation Scheme

To: Parents of School children

The Government have decided that parents of schoolchildren in this area are to have the opportunity of sending their children away to a safer district while present enemy activity continues. If you wish your child to go with the organised scheme, please fill in the form attached to this notice and get your child to bring it to school.

Arrangements to be made

Clothing

Your child should take the following in addition to what he is she is wearing and all articles must be darned and mended. If any of these articles cannot be provided please notify the teacher at once.

Boy

2 vests
2 under pants
2 shirts
2 pyjamas or nightshirts
2 pair socks
2 pairs boots or shoes
1 wellingtons (if possible)
1 warm coat and/or mackintosh
(if not being worn)
1 pair knickers or trousers
1 pullover
6 handkerchiefs
1 toothbrush
1 face flannel
1 comb
2 towels

Girl

2 vests
2 liberty bodices (if worn)
2 knickers
2 nightdresses or pyjamas
2 pairs socks or stockings
2 pairs shoes
1 wellingtons (if possible)
1 warm coat and/or mackintosh
1 warm dress or tunic and jersey
1 cardigan
2 cotton frocks
6 handkerchiefs
1 toothbrush
1 face flannel
1 comb
2 towels

Gas mask
Identity Card
Ration Book
Clothing and personal coupons

You will wish to do everything possible to ensure that your child goes away with clean clothes, clean hair and a clean body.

Luggage. The child should wear his warmest and thickest footwear. The inventory above is to be taken as minimum requirements, but do remember that your child should not take more than he can carry comfortably.

Food. Each child should take sufficient food for one day: sandwiches (egg or cheese), packets of nuts and seedless raisins, dry biscuits, barley sugar (not chocolate), apple/orange, no bottles. Be sure your child has his ration book and if pages of coupons out of his book have been deposited with retailers, ask for their return and pin the loose pages in the ration book.

Your child's ration book, identity card and personal coupons should be packed inside the gas mask case.

Please keep this notice for reference and return the form to your child's school immediately if you want him or her to take part in the evacuation scheme.

Practice Your Own Morale Boosting WW2 Song

Songs were very important during the period 1939-1945. There was no television and radio was still a growing medium. Songs were widely used to boost the morale of both soldiers and civilians. Some songs focused on the feelings of those involved, while others simply aimed to put a smile on their faces during difficult times.

You might like to prepare a morale boosting WW2 song with your class before your visit. If you are doing Air Raid Experience with your class, you can then sing it to 'keep up your spirits' while you and your class are inside the Air Raid Shelter.

There are two suggestions that you may like to use below.

'We'll Meet Again'

Words Ross Parker and Hughie Charles
Music Ross Parker and Hughie Charles
Sung by Dame Vera Lynn
Copyright Unknown (apologies to holder)

We'll meet again,
Don't know where,
Don't know when,
But I know we'll meet again some sunny day.
Keep smiling through,
Just like you always do,
'Til the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away.

So will you please say 'hello',
To the folks that I know.
Tell them I won't be long.
They'll be happy to know,
That as you saw me go,
I was singing this song.

We'll meet again,
Don't know where,
Don't know when,
But I know we'll meet again some sunny day.

(Repeat)

'White Cliffs of Dover'

Words Nat Burton
Music Walter Kent
Sung by Dame Vera Lynn
Copyright © 1941, Shapiro, Bernstein and
Company Inc. New York and Walter Kent Music
(Copyright Renewed)

I'll never forget the people I met, braving those angry
skies,
I remember well as the shadows fell, the light of hope
in their eyes.
And though I'm far away, I still can hear them say
'Thumbs Up!' For when the dawn comes up....
There'll be bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover
Tomorrow, just you wait and see.
There'll be love and laughter and peace ever- after,
Tomorrow when the world is free.

The shepherd will tend his sheep,
The valley will bloom again,
And Jimmy will go to sleep
In his own little room again.

There'll be bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover
Tomorrow, just you wait and see.

The shepherd will tend his sheep,
The valley will bloom again,
And Jimmy will go to sleep
In his own little room again.

There'll be bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover
Tomorrow, just you wait and see.

Please feel free to prepare a different song.
E.g. 'Goodnight Wherever You Are' (Vera Lynn),
'Wish Me Luck' (Gracie Fields), 'The Thing-Ummy-
Bob (That's Going To Win The War)' (Gracie Fields),
'Coming In On A Wing And A Prayer', 'When They
Sound The Last All Clear', Run Rabbit, Run'.

You might even want to write your own!

A Chronology of War

As early as 1938	1 Air Raid Precautions (A.R.P.) and evacuation plans made. Gas masks issued to everyone.
September 1939	Germany invades Poland using 'Blitzkrieg' (lightening war). Blackout begins. Treasures are taken from London's museums to places of safety. Evacuation begins (lasts until 4th September).
3 September 1939	Britain and France declare war on Germany. Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announces the outbreak of war on the radio. Anderson air raid shelters delivered to homes. Theatres and cinemas close. Ration books issued (not used until January 1940). 80,000 hospital patients sent home ready to receive the air raid casualties that were dreaded. Thousands of papier-mache coffins stacked in Government buildings.
16 September 1939	Petrol rationing begins.
29 September 1939	National Registration Day. Everyone registers for I.D. cards.
30 September 1939	Leaflets sent out telling people not to waste food.
1 October 1939	250, 000 men are called up for military service.
3 October 1939	The government starts to censor the news.
December 1939	Many evacuees return to cities. Cinemas and theatres reopen. This period (September 1939-mid 1940) was called the 'Phoney War', as contrary to expectations, there were no air raids.
1 January 1940	Two million men aged 19 to 27 are called up for military service.
8 January 1940	'Coupon Monday': food rationing begins for butter, bacon and sugar. (This was gradually extended to include more and more food stuffs (except bread and potatoes) and basic materials like petrol and soap. Beer and tobacco were never rationed as they were considered aids to morale, but were subject to shortages and rising prices).
6 February 1940	Public told that: 'Careless talk costs lives' and 'Be like Dad keep Mum'.
11 March 1940	Meat rationing begins.
9 April 1940	Germany invades Denmark and Norway.
10 May 1940	Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister. Germany invades Holland and Belgium.
14 May 1940	Germany invades France.

14 May 1940	Local Defence Volunteers (LDV or Home Guard) formed.
22 May 1940	Government takes control over most aspects of British life.
27 May - 4 June 1940	Dunkirk evacuation. 338,226 British, French and Belgian troops rescued. Winston Churchill says 'We will never surrender'.
22 June 1940	France surrenders to Germany.
24 June 1940	Britain's biggest air raid shelter is opened in London for 11,000 people.
25 June 1940	German troops given English phrase books in readiness for the invasion of Britain.
July – late September 1940	Battle of Britain – Germans launch unsuccessful. Air offensive against Britain to destroy the RAF and gain control of the skies over the English Channel as a prelude to invasion.
1 July 1940	Germany invades the Channel Islands.
10 July 1940	First large-scale bombing of Britain on docks in South Wales.
11 July 1940	People asked to give aluminium pots and pans to be made into aircraft parts.
23 August 1940	First bombs fall on central London.
26 August 1940	RAF bombs Berlin, the German capital.
27 August 1940	Towns and cities across Britain bombed in night-time air raids.
7 September 1940	The Blitz on London begins. Unable to launch an invasion, Germany try instead to bomb Britain into submission. The first raid lasts from 4.36pm in the late afternoon until 5am the next morning. Blitz on London continues every night for 57 consecutive nights until 2 November 1940 and then intermittently continues to 16 May 1941. During October and November, the Blitz reaches its peak and 15 other cities become regular targets too.
15 September 1940	185 German planes shot down over London. London, Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, Liverpool and Manchester bombed.
10 October 1940	A bomb lands on St Paul's Cathedral, London.
15 October 1940	BBC Broadcasting House bombed. Heard 'live' by radio listeners.
14 November 1940	Coventry is devastated by German bombing.
12 December 1940	Sheffield is bombed.
1941	Battle of the Atlantic begins – German submarines pose a threat to supply routes and imports by sea. U boats inflict losses averaging 96 ships a month. Now even more difficult to get supplies to Britain. Shortages increase.
17 March 1941	Women are urged to volunteer for jobs in factories.
9 April 1941	Birmingham is bombed.

1 May 1941	Liverpool is bombed.
11 May 1941	London heavily bombed – Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and Buckingham Palace are damaged.
2 June 1941	Ration coupons are introduced for clothing.
4 July 1941	Coal rationing begins. During July some men are recalled from the armed forces to work in coalmines. Food queues lengthen. The 'black market' increases.
2 December 1941	Unmarried women between 20 and 30 are called up for military service.
1942	Many more shortages. Clothing coupons are reduced.
18 February 1942	People urged to take fewer baths in less water and to share bath water.
3 March 1942	Utility clothing introduced to save cloth. (Clothes were simplified with shorter skirts for women, no turn-ups for men and plainer material. Collar widths and number of pockets were controlled. The Utility scheme also applied to furniture and household goods).
15 April 1942	Embroidery is banned on women's underwear.
23 April 1942	German air force told to destroy British towns listed in a guidebook because of their beauty or history. Exeter is hit first; also York and Bath.
27 July 1942	Sweet rationing introduced (which continued until 1954).
31 July 1942	All non-essential driving banned.
25 October 1942	Icing banned on cakes. Milk ration reduced.
1943	No unemployment in Britain during this year. 90% of single and 80% of married women aged 18-40 are working in the armed forces, industry or the Land Army. Petrol, coal, blankets and food very scarce indeed. Midway through year, Battle of Atlantic swings in favour of Allies.
13 January 1943	School uniforms must be grey or blue to save on dye.
3 May 1943	Part-time war work made compulsory for women aged 18 to 45.
23 May 1943	RAF bomb German city of Dortmund.
30 June 1943	Road signs taken down at the start of the war are put back.
27 July 1943	RAF bomb German city of Hamburg.
17 August 1943	RAF bomb German factory making V weapons.
4 October 1943	RAF bomb German city of Frankfurt.

18 November 1940	RAF bomb German capital, Berlin.
22 December 1943	Only enough Christmas turkeys for one family in ten.
1 February 1944	Clothes rationing ends.
22 February 1944	Lemons are available again for pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.
27 April 1944	All foreign travel banned.
6 June 1944	D Day (Operation Overlord) begins. Allied invasion of Normandy, France opens the campaign for the liberation of Europe.
14 June 1944	First German flying bomb, the V1 'doodlebug', lands on Britain. 2419 were dropped in June alone.
3 July 1944	Any children still in London are evacuated because of flying bombs.
25 August 1944	Paris is liberated by the Allies.
9 September 1944	First German V2 rocket lands on London.
17 September 1944	Blackout is partially lifted.
20 November 1944	Streetlights are switched on again in London.
3 December 1944	Home Guard disbanded.
27 January 1945	Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland is captured from the Germans.
14 February 1945	The German city of Dresden is destroyed by the RAF and American bombers.
March 1945	Anne Frank dies in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.
1 April 1945	Plans made for evacuees to return to their homes.
15 April 1945	Allied troops capture the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen.
30 April 1945	Allied troops march into Berlin, the German capital. Hitler takes his own life.
7 May 1945	Germany surrenders.
8 May 1945	Victory in Europe Day (VE Day). The war in Europe ends.
12 July 1945	54,317 evacuees returned to London.
31 July 1945	Blackout is completely lifted.
6 August 1945	The first atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima, Japan.
9 August 1945	Nagasaki, Japan is destroyed by an atomic bomb.
14 August 1945	Japan surrenders.
15 August 1945	Victory in Japan Day (VJ Day). The war in the east ends.