

Unit 13 How has life in Britain changed since 1948?

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit children learn about the reasons for and results of the changes in British life since 1948. Children investigate in depth one aspect of change in British life, *eg population structure, popular culture, work*.

They will develop their historical understanding of the period, including the characteristic features and diversity of popular culture, make links between changes both within and across the period, and apply their skills of historical enquiry to a study of the recent past.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit builds on others that have focused on population movement and settlement (Units 6A, 6B, 6C) and units dealing specifically with change and causation (Units 7, 11, 12). Units 8 and 11 complement this unit as they also focus on the way of life of people living in the past.

ADAPTING THE UNIT FOR A DIFFERENT AGE GROUP

Year 3 and 4 children could:

- focus on change, similarity and difference, rather than on the reasons for the changes
- focus on change between two decades, *eg the 1950s and 1990s*
- use fewer sources of information to identify changes between the two decades in one topic area

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if the children have:

- studied aspects of the way of life of people from the past
- identified similarities and differences between aspects of life today and in the past
- asked and answered questions on a variety of sources of information
- carried out a variety of structured and extended writing tasks

VOCABULARY

In this unit, children will have opportunities to use:

- words associated with settlement, *eg population, emigration, immigration*
- words associated with aspects of society, *eg industry, work, leisure, transport, media, fashion, diet*
- words associated with change, *eg different, same as, because, cause, effect, reasons, results*

RESOURCES

- a time line showing decades since 1948
- a range of information sources about different aspects of life since the war
- information sources about different aspects of life before the Second World War
- a visitor willing to be interviewed, and old enough to talk about changes in Britain since 1948
- resources about population movement, immigration, emigration and consequent changes to life in Britain, [available from a number of organisations, including the Museum of London and The Commission for Racial Equality]
- a range of resources, including videos, on changes in British life since 1948

EXPECTATIONS

at the end of this unit

most children will:

demonstrate factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of British life since 1948; use knowledge and understanding to identify changes within and across the period; give reasons for the changes they have identified; select and combine information from more than one source of information to find out about aspects of British life since 1948

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

demonstrate factual knowledge and understanding of some aspects of British life since 1948; use knowledge and understanding to identify some similarities and differences between life in 1948 and today

some children will have progressed further and will:

make links between the changes and the causes of the changes, and describe these links in some detail; use sources critically within the enquiry to reach and support their conclusions about changes in British life since 1948

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

- about changes that have occurred in Britain since 1948 and some of the reasons for these changes
- to place events precisely in time

- to identify a range of appropriate sources of information
- to compare sources of information available for the study of different times in the past
- that the type of information available depends on the period of time studied

- what changes have occurred to the way of life of people since 1948

- to carry out their own enquiry

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

How can we begin to find out about change since the Second World War?

Explain some of the main changes in Britain since 1948, *eg change in population structure, more cars, increased consumerism.*

Ask the children to identify their piece of evidence (see 'points to note'), describe it and place it on a time line in the correct decade.

Ask the children to look at all the evidence for one decade. *What does it tell us about the decade? Compare one decade with today. What has changed? What has stayed the same?*

Discuss with the children some of the causes of the changes, *eg impact of new technologies, changes in transport, immigration.*

What types of evidence can we use to find out about life in Britain since the Second World War?

Refer to the sources of information used in the first activity and to children's prior learning in history to talk about the different types of sources of information available in different periods that the children have studied, *eg What type did we use to find out about ancient Greece? The Victorians? What was similar? What was different?*

Discuss with them the similarities and differences between this evidence and that for other periods. *What types of evidence have we used to find out about change since 1948? What other types of evidence could we use to find out about this period that is not available for different periods they have studied?*

THE ENQUIRY**What are the changes in work, home life, popular culture, population and technology in Britain since 1948? When did these changes happen?**

Using a range of sources of information discuss some of the characteristic features of British society before WWII, *eg listening to the radio, unemployment during the Depression, fashion, range of foods available, movement of people including refugees, emigrants and immigrants pre-1942.*

Talk about what it means to do an enquiry. Introduce the two main questions and the topic areas. Explain that the enquiry is carefully structured in five stages. They will work in groups to research a topic and will present their findings using a time line.

Stage one

Divide the children into groups. Allocate a topic and relevant sources to each group. Ask them to focus on: *What are the most important changes in your topic area since 1948? When did they happen?* Children familiarise themselves with one or more sources and collect information. They record their findings in two columns, headed 'What do I know?' and 'What would I like to know?'

LEARNING OUTCOMES

CHILDREN

- select information from the object to decide which decade it dates from
- place the object in the correct decade on the time line
- identify some similarities within one decade and some differences between now and then
- suggest some reasons for the changes

- identify similarities and differences between types of sources of information available in different periods in the past

- identify some characteristic features of British life before 1948

- select and record information that is relevant to their topic
- use sources to infer information about change since 1948

POINTS TO NOTE

Before starting this activity, children will need to be asked to bring in one piece of evidence about life from 1948 onwards, *eg photos, comics, objects, music.*

The time line does not have to be on paper. It could be a clothes line or a series of display tables around the room. The time line will need to:

- be at child height
- have the decades clearly marked
- be wide enough to have 'layers' (for each topic area) so that the children can plot change in each topic in parallel, *eg work, home life, popular culture, population, technology*
- have each topic area, *eg WORK*, clearly labelled. The topics could be distinguished from each other by using different colours.

This activity might show that certain children are interested in particular aspects of life since 1948 and could help when allocating topics for the enquiry.

At this point, it is important that the children are told that they will be carrying out their own enquiry into life in Britain since 1948 so they can start thinking about what types of sources of information they can use.

This activity provides a context for the enquiry, *eg immigration did not begin before the war.* Reference could be made to Units 6A, 6B and 6C and, in particular, to what the children know about population movement and settlement.

This part of the unit could be used as a context to establish or reinforce a routine approach or procedure to undertaking research. Highlight the importance of preparing for research by reviewing what is known, identifying the main aim of the investigation and where the information is likely to be found.

Schools may want to vary their approach to the enquiry depending on the resources they have and any opportunities provided by the locality of the school. Other topics could be introduced or one topic looked at in greater depth.

Sources of information will need to be relevant, show a variety of media and be appropriate to the age and attainment of the children.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

- to reflect on their progress
- about the changes in one aspect of British life since 1948, in depth
- the causes of these changes
- how personal memories can be used to find out about the past
- about one person's experiences, values and attitudes since 1948
- to identify links and connections between different aspects of British life since 1948
- that change in one area can lead to change in another area
- to communicate, through extended writing, their knowledge and understanding of changes, and their causes, in British life since 1948
- to make links between the changes

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Stage two

Discuss with each group the progress of their enquiry, eg *What have they found out so far? What else do they want to know? What are they finding difficult? How could they solve their problems?*

Stage three

Introduce specific questions for each topic, eg *on population of Britain: What was Windrush? When did it happen? Why were African Caribbeans invited to Britain? What contributions have they, and other groups, made to life in Britain? How have they changed it? Why were people leaving England at the same time? Where did they go? Can you find out how one person or family felt about moving?* Allocate these questions to individual children within a group.

Stage four

As a class, discuss each group's findings. The children select the most important changes found in their topic and place them on the class time line.

Stage five

Ask the children *What else do we want to find out? How can we do it?* Each group identifies four or five questions that they have been unable to answer so far.

Arrange a visit from a person who is old enough to talk about change in Britain since 1948.

Each group asks the visitor four or five questions about their topic and the children note the main points.

Discuss the interview with the children, eg *Which of the experiences of the person surprised them? How did the experiences match what they had found out? What did they find out from the person that they were not able to find out from their other sources of information?*

What links and connections can we make between the changes in British life since 1948?

Use the time line to stimulate the children to identify the links and connections across all topics, eg *What changes in work led to changes in the population? How did changes in technology lead to changes in food?*

Place arrows on the time line to show where changes in different areas can be linked to each other.

What have been the most important changes since 1948? How are these changes linked?

Ask the children to use all the information the class has found out to write an extended response to the questions. Discuss with them how they could organise their answer, eg *How will you start it? What could you say at the end? How will you back up your ideas? Will you include quotes/pictures from sources?*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

CHILDREN

- identify questions they still need to answer and how they will find answers
- answer specific questions about their topic area
- identify important changes since 1948
- place changes accurately on a time line
- listen to, and record memories about Britain since 1948
- extract information from the interview to supplement, and compare with, their own conclusions about life in Britain since 1948
- identify similarities between changes and between causes in different topics
- suggest links between different topics eg *arrival of Bangladeshi community meant that different foods became available*
- select relevant information to answer questions
- reach conclusions about the most important changes and support these conclusions with evidence
- produce a piece of extended writing

POINTS TO NOTE

ICT could be used as a source of information within the enquiry, eg *CD-ROMs*.

At stage 3, the teacher will need to be flexible in identifying questions. Care should be taken to incorporate what the children think is interesting and important. As children put their changes on the time line, they should be encouraged to begin to identify links between changes in different topic areas.

It is important to prepare the interviewee in the following ways:

- share the learning objectives and outcomes with them
- ensure that they will not express values and attitudes that could upset or offend
- encourage them to illustrate their talk with personal mementos, eg *photos, letters, clothes etc*

Encourage the children to listen carefully to the visitor, eg *ask them to identify important factual information or find evidence of the speaker's point of view*.

Children will need opportunities to make their own individual records of the important changes and how they are linked as a source for their extended writing. This could be done in a three-column grid, with the headings 'Description of change' in one topic area, 'How this led to change' in another topic area and 'When did this change happen?'

This activity provides an appropriate context to encourage children to reflect upon their note making, eg *how are their notes on the presentation different from those made earlier about the causes of change?* Encourage the children to consider the effectiveness of the grid as a device for guiding their listening and note making.

This activity could be adapted or extended by asking the children to make an oral presentation or class display about what they found out.



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