**Significant People: William Beveridge**

*Or ‘Why don’t we pay to see a doctor?’*



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Key Stage One Curriculum Links

History: Significant People and Events, aspects of change in national life, events within living memory, World War II and post 1945 to the present.

Literacy: Learning new words and meanings, writing short sentences.

PSHE: healthcare, understanding society, British values

Sources

The sources used in this resource are taken from the Beveridge collection of papers and photographs in the archives of the Library at the London School of Economics, with the exception of the Pathe film footage (available for free on youtube) and photograph of the bombed house. They can be used to illustrate the person and events you are talking about but should also be used to think about chronology and cause in history.

Importantly the sources can be used to get students to think about how we know about the past through primary evidence. Questions of inquiry around the source can be used to draw out information about the photograph or document and add to the knowledge about this event or person.

For more information The National Archives give useful guidelines on using sources with KS1 classes. See <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/significant-people-collection/>

General questions around the sources used here

What type of document is it? (Photograph, illustration / cartoon, letter / telegram)

Who produced / made it?

When was it made?

Why was it made?

What is it saying?

Does it relate to a particular historic event?

Is there anything you do not understand in the source?

Slide 2: Why don’t we pay to see a doctor?

*This is an information slide. You can introduce it by asking the class if anyone has seen a doctor recently? (Explain who a doctor or GP is). Or had a vaccination? Or been to or visited people in hospital? Etc*

Before 1948, people in Britain had to pay to see a **doctor** or for medical treatment.

Some people could afford to do this, but many more could not.

Charitable hospitals did provide medical treatment free of charge or for less money than the treatment cost.

This changed when the **National Health Service (NHS)** was founded in 1948. NHS England provides **healthcare** to all legal English residents, with most services for free.

The idea of free healthcare for all was born in the destruction of the Second World War.

The social reformer William Beveridge was asked to look at ways to improve life after the war. His report in 1942 changed the way we live and improved our **welfare**.

Slide 3: Who was William Beveridge?

*Source: Photograph Portrait of William Beveridge from 1908, no information about the photographer.*

William Henry Beveridge was born on 5 March 1879 in India.

Beveridge was sent to school in England and then went to the University of Oxford to study mathematics.

Beveridge became interested in social reform, which means looking at ways to improve how people lived and worked.

In 1902 he began working at Toynbee Hall in the East End of London on ways to improve the lives of **poor** people.

From 1908 to 1916 he worked for the British government to introduce social reforms, such as an unemployment **benefit** to help people if they could not find a job.

Slide 4

*Photograph of William Beveridge in 1942 just after the report is published. In this photograph Beveridge is standing in front of a cartoon of him carrying files and files and going into a room by the cartoonist Low. The cartoon was published in a national newspaper.*

In the First World War (1914-1918) Beveridge worked on the war effort in the production of weapons.

From 1919 to 1937 he was Director of the London School of Economics (LSE), a university in London.

In the 1930s Beveridge helped other academics (experts) escape from Nazi Germany and continued to campaign for social reforms.

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, Beveridge worked for the government again.

In 1941 he was appointed to look at how things like **housing** and **health** could be improved for all people after the war.

In 1942, Beveridge produced a report, known as the Beveridge Report, which introduced the idea of free healthcare and other ways to help people with **housing** and finding work.

This report included ways for which people could pay for this support or **benefits** through their earnings from work.

Many of the ideas were put into practice by the new government after the war.

Slide 5: William Beveridge in 1908 and 1942

*The two different photographs have been put together side by side. This can be opportunity to introduce the information on them or to ask the students to look at the differences in style – 1908 more formal portrait and dress for example. Can also consider why was Beveridge photographed in front of or with a cartoon of himself from a newspaper. Does this mean he is well known or not? Famous? What does it say about him as a person? Sense of humour? Etc.*

Slide 6: The Blitz – World War Two

Photograph (Copyright September 1940. New Times Paris Bureau Collection. (USIA)

Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:WWII\_London\_Blitz\_East\_London.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AWWII_London_Blitz_East_London.jpg))

The image shows a house in East London, which had been home to these children, hit by a bomb in September 1940.

*The image can be used to ask the class about whether this is a record of the war? How the children might have felt? What else do they know about the Second World War? Evacuation etc. Can draw out why healthcare and housing would be a particular issue.*

*NB. If you have refugees in your class that may have fled a warzone, extra sensitivity is required around this image.*

During World War Two towns and cities across Europe were bombed.

The intense period of bombing of Britain by Germany in 1940 to 1941 is known as the **Blitz.**

The government encouraged bomb shelters to be built in gardens and built large communal ones.

Bombing affected all people, rich or poor, though people living in poorer areas near factories, like in the East End of London, had a greater number of air raids and destruction.

Wartime defences, like the evacuation of children and community bomb shelters, encouraged people to work together.

Slide 7: William Beveridge explaining his plan

Pathe link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2DhvTCuK_s>

*Can introduce how people watched news, particularly in the 1940s, in cinemas and that this is a ‘news reel’. The language is quite hard but you can break down Beveridge’s 3 points into 1. Benefits (employment, housing, pension), 2. Children’s allowances (child benefit) and 3. National Health Service. The idea is people pay in, get a minimum benefit from the State to live when they need it but can spend as they want otherwise.*

When the Beveridge Report was published in December 1942, thousands of people queued to read it.

Beveridge appeared on radio and in cinemas on news reels like this one to explain his proposals.

Beveridge identified ‘Five Giants’ that affected people’s lives in bad ways.

He suggested ideas to get rid of these giants.

The ideas included free healthcare ‘from cradle to grave’ for all people that everyone would pay into via taxes on their wages.

This led to the creation of the **National Health Service (NHS)** and **Welfare State** in 1948.

Slide 8: Beveridge’s Five Giants

*This cartoon was published to explain the Five Giants in the Beveridge report in 1942 and reflected many of the attitudes and issues of the 1930s – poor housing, mass unemployment etc. Can draw out that people were worried about going back to the 1930s and the poor living conditions for many people after the war.*

**Idleness:**

caused by lack of jobs or unemployment

**Want:**

caused by **poverty** or being **poor**

**Ignorance:**

caused by lack of education

**Squalor:**

caused by crowded and unhealthy **housing**

**Disease**:

caused by not being able to afford **healthcare**

Slide 9: Activity

*An activity idea. You could also ask them to visualise something else that is abstract, like sickness or happiness if this is too complex.*

How would you draw the ‘Five Giants’? Choose one and draw it.

Slide 10: Telegram from the King

*This is a telegram, which was an urgent form of communication – a bit like a text on a mobile phone but using post offices and delivery people to make sure they arrived. They could be sent and arrive within an hour. The sentences on it are short as every letter used cost money. Not everyone had a phone and they were used for official notices or if something was very important.*

*You could ask the class why Beveridge kept this telegram, why the King wanted to see him and what they would do if they had a telegram from the Queen (check they know who she is) requesting a meeting?*

In 1942 even King George VI, the Queen’s father, wanted to read the report and speak to Beveridge. This is a telegram from the King inviting Beveridge to Buckingham Palace for a private conversation just after the report is published.

Slide 11: Activity: Write a telegram

*Telegram Template*

*Use the template to write a short message accepting the King’s invitation.*

Slide 12: Activity: Flash Cards – what do they mean?

*All the words have been introduced in the presentation and are highlighted in bold.*

*You can cut them out and give them out to then get people to read them out and others to answer what they mean. Or use them at the end to check what they’ve learnt / embed their learning.*

Further Ideas for tasks in the classroom or homework

Ask the students to talk to a neighbour or relative over 75 who may remember what healthcare was like before the NHS and report back to the class on what they said.

Ask the students to ask people around them if they have ever heard of William Beveridge or the Beveridge Report and record the answers.

Class outing – could arrange a visit to a GP surgery to explain what happens and the NHS. Or do this lesson around the flu vaccination time to explain how / why vaccines for children are free.

Ask them to think about five things they would change today – could still be things like housing or homelessness, but also issues like the environment, protecting nature, climate change etc.

They could research William Beveridge online and find out what else he did, like helping academic refugees, or compare him to another person from the Victorian period who brought in reforms and change the way we live, such as Edward Jenner, Florence Nightingale, Elizabeth Fry, Lord Shaftesbury . . .