

**Teachers Notes: Making the Welfare State KS3**

These notes and lesson presentations /plans are informed by the LSE Library exhibition on the Welfare State in 2018 that marked the 75th anniversary of the Beveridge Report.

In December 1942 the government released a report authored by Sir William Beveridge in which he wrote “A revolutionary moment in the world's history is a time for revolutions, not for patching”. His report laid the foundations for Britain’s post war welfare state while the world was still at war. The exhibition took the Beveridge Report as its starting point but looked at how welfare provision has been shaped and changed through the ages.

These notes and powerpoint presentations, including slides that can be turned into class worksheets or activities, are written to support key stage 3 History. They follow topics in the National Curriculum section:

**Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day**

They can be taught together for an in-depth topic around social reform and the ‘Creation of the Welfare State’. Or taught separately to cover (A) social reform in the 1900s, (B) the Great Depression and the impact on Britain, and (C) the creation of the Welfare State.

Images and textual evidence are mainly taken from the heritage collections in the London School of Politics and Economics (LSE). Links or image information are provided when different archival sources are used.

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The resources aim to introduce students to different forms of sources and applying analysis of evidence in preparation for GCSE specification, such as extracting data from charts or assessing at political posters.

Definitions of key historical terms or events are given in the boxes, such as 'poverty' or 'Welfare State'.

The slide content is listed below. Extra guidance information is in italics.

[Title Slide] A. Poverty and Reform 1900-1914

[Slide] A. Poverty and Reform 1900 - 1914

We will learn about:

• The reports of Charles Booth & Seebohm Rowntree

• How poverty was defined

• Growing public awareness and action around poverty

• The figures of Lloyd George and Winston Churchill in the Liberal government 1906 – 1914

• The ‘Children’s Charter’

• The formation of the Independent Labour Party.

[Slide] Awareness of the poor and poverty

The poor could clearly be seen in nineteenth-century cities and towns. A series of photographs taken at the heart of London’s Covent Garden illustrates this visibility and attempted to give some information about the poor of London in 1877.

*The photographs and quotations come from the 1877 book listed below but depicted and described scenes little changed 20-30 years later in the 1900s. This section is designed to recap on changes in society in the 19thC and greater awareness of poverty and social reform in that time.*

**[Image] An Old Clothes Shop, Seven Dials,** *Street Life in London* (1877) by John Thomson and Adolphe Smith.

"The accompanying photograph represents a second-hand clothes shop in a narrow thoroughfare of St. Giles, appropriately called Lumber Court, where. several similar tradesmen are grouped together, all dealing in old clothes and furniture of a most varied and dilapidated description. It is here that the poorest inhabitants of a district, renowned for its poverty, both buy and sell their clothes."

**[Slide] The Crawlers,***Street Life in London* (1877)

“But old age, and want of proper food and rest, reduces them to a lethargic condition which can scarcely be preferable to death itself. It will be noticed that they are constantly dozing, and yet are never really asleep. Some of them are unable to lie down for days. They sit on the hard stone step of the workhouse, their heads reclining on the door, and here by old custom they are left undisturbed. ”

*For more images see LSE Library's flickr feed:* <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lselibrary/6875418204/in/photostream/>

[Slide] Starter discussion

*Designed to get students thinking about the period they are studying, historical evidence and change.*

How can we find out about poverty at the turn of the century (1900)?

See [Streetlife in London](https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/collections/streetlifeinlondon):

What kind of evidence are photographs?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of this kind of evidence?

How could these types of images have spurred social reformers on?

[New section slide] Mapping Poverty

Finding, defining and destroying poverty: Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree

[Slide] [Who was Charles Booth](https://booth.lse.ac.uk/learn-more/who-was-charles-booth)?

*For more information on Charles Booth please explore LSE’s website on Booth and the poverty maps: booth.lse.ac.uk – also link to section on Booth above.*

Born in 1840 in Liverpool

A businessman in shipping.

Moved to London in 1874.

Commissioned a comprehensive survey of life, labour and wealth in London 1886-1903.

He started with a pilot study of Tower Hamlets in 1886.

Produced colour coded maps to show an overview of his research.

17 volumes of material published.

Died in November 1916.

[slide] What did Charles Booth do?

Charles Booth devised one of the most comprehensive inquiry into London’s poverty there has ever been: *Inquiry into Life and Labour in London*

He drew attention to the role of low-paid casual work and number of dependents (i.e. non-wage earners) in creating poverty.

The *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty* are the most distinctive product of Charles Booth's work.

The maps are an early example of social cartography (or mapping), each street is coloured to indicate the income and social class of its inhabitants.

https://booth.lse.ac.uk/

[Definition] Poverty

Poverty means being extremely poor; extremely poor means some one cannot live properly.

Booth defined being extremely poor in the 1900s as not having ‘reasonable human subsistence’, that is not being fed, housed or clothed adequately. Booth thought that ‘freedom from want’ for the poorest should be a goal of society.

[Slide] Activity: Search the [Maps](https://booth.lse.ac.uk/map/14/-0.1174/51.5064/100/0)

*This can be used on a whiteboard or with tablets, phones etc (if allowed) in the classroom.*

If you go to the [www.lse.ac.uk/booth](http://www.lse.ac.uk/booth) website and click on the map [link](https://booth.lse.ac.uk/map/14/-0.1174/51.5064/100/0), you can see Booth’s London.

Using the slide rule at the bottom of the page (i.e. sliding it to the left) will take you to a map of London today.

The legend gives you Booth’s description of the types of people his researchers found, i.e. Middle Class. Well to do.

1**. Use the search tool to find locations in London, e.g. Drury Lane as pictured, and write down what classes live there.**

**2. Look at London overall; is it divided i.e. do particular live in the classes in the East, what in the West (mainly).**

**3. If there is a division, why do you think the above may be?** (For a longer classroom exercise you could ask the students to use Booth's notebooks of information – also available on the website – for evidence)

[Slide] Evidence and outcomes from Booth’s enquiry

Maps

Colour coded maps

[Colours](http://booth.lse.ac.uk/cgi-bin/do.pl?sub=view_booth_and_barth&args=531000,180400,6,large,5) *A link to* w*hat the colours mean – different terms*

Evidence taken from the data collected in the police notebooks

A visual record so changes could be easily tracked over time

Covering London (mainly Central and East)

Notebooks

Details of people’s lives and experiences

First hand evidence, detailed through the judgement of the interviewer

Transcripts of interviews

Data – wages, rents, statistics relating to housing conditions, factory conditions etc

[Slide] Why did Charles Booth do it? – Opinion

Portrait of Booth by George Frederic Watts (1901)  [National Portrait Gallery 4131](https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw00672/Charles-Booth)

What do you think? *[Suggestions]*

Sympathy

Interest

Wanting to improve conditions

Harnessing change in society

Influencing law making

[Slide] Booth's Analysis of Poverty

Booth used data from 4,076 East London Families in his first report to explore the reasons for poverty (1886).

Employment issues were casual, low paid or short term work.

Circumstance referred to illness or a large number of dependents (children, older people) in one household.

Habit meant drunkenness, addiction or other behavioural factors.

Loafers referred to people Booth termed lazy or idle.

[Slide] Activity: Booth's Analysis of Poverty:

[*This slide can be printed out separately as a classroom activity]*

In groups, look at the chart:

**What is the biggest reason for poverty?**

**Discuss why you think that is?**

**What is meant by ‘circumstance’? Why would illness or the number children or elderly unable to work make a difference?**

**Why would personal habits – e.g. drinking – affect how poor a family might be?**

[Slide] Seebohm Rowntree (1871 – 1954)

Photograph of Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree by Elliott & Fry (1949) National Portrait Gallery [x93198](https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw104766/Benjamin-Seebohm-Rowntree?LinkID=mp75500&search=sas&sText=Seebohm+Rowntree&role=sit&rNo=0)

Poverty: A Study of Town Life

Seebohm Rowntree (part of the sweet making family) spent 1897-98 comparing York to Booth’s researches on London.

He found that:

* almost 10% of the population were in ‘primary poverty’ i.e. their income was not enough for their basic existence
* 28% did not have enough to eat healthily
* 40% of children had stunted growth due to lack of food

Like Booth, Rowntree found that the role of dependants (children, the elderly and ill) as well as casual employment were major contributions to poverty.

Booth and Rowntree’s reports raised public awareness of poverty

[Slide] One last map activity

**Use** [**Google earth**](https://earth.google.com/web) **to compare late 19th London to the present**

[New section slide] Reform and Politics

Pressure for change and how change happened.

[Slide] Eradicating poverty

War!

The impact of poor nutrition was seen in the health of soldiers volunteering for The Boer War (1899-1902). Around 30% of the volunteers failed their medical examination due to poor diets & ill health.

The above raised serious questions about the ability to fight a war.

Improving the health of the poor became allied with national interest.

[Definition] Reform

Increased public awareness about poverty and the factors behind poverty led to calls for reform.

Reform is the idea to make changes in order to improve something, usually an institution or state of affairs.

[Slide] The Fabian Society

The Fabian Society was founded in 1884 to develop ideas in social policy. It is allied to but independent of the Labour Party.

The society led a number of research projects on poverty, following Booth’s maps and surveys.

In 1905 they published a tract After Bread, Education arguing for free or cheap school meals to be available for children.

*The full tract is available on LSE Digital Library: https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/objects/lse:bax367law*

[Slide] The Fabian Society: Evidence

*This slide can be printed out as a classroom activity*

The chart is based on data in the 1905 pamphlet *After Bread, Education,* whichargues for free & cheap school meals to be available for the poorest children.

The graph shows the effects of feeding on the height of boys from the ‘artisan class – town population’ (working class) and the ‘most favored classes’ (upper classes).

**What do you notice?**

**Why would people be concerned? (think about soldiers called up to fight).**

**What reforms are the Fabian Society asking for?**

[Slide] Politics in the 1900s

The two main political parties were the Conservatives and Liberals:

The Conservative Party was in government 1895 - 1905

The Liberal Party won the General Election in January 1906

In 1900 the Labour Representation Committee was formed, it became the Labour Party in 1906.

There were also a number of independent Reform or Pressure Groups

[Fact] By 1900 just over 50% of all men in the UK had the vote in national (or general) elections = 18% of the population.

No women could vote in national elections

[Slide] 1906 General Election: Liberal Party in Government

The Liberals wanted to try to get rid of poverty in Britain.

One of the first things they did after winning the election was to introduce free school meals for the poorest children.

This was one of a series of measures known as the Children’s Charter made up of three Acts – see graphic.

[Slide] The Children's Act 1908 – *Graphic illustrating main measures brought in.*

[Slide] Beveridge and Unemployment in the 1900s

Photograph of William Beveridge, 1909

• William Beveridge believed in state intervention to ease social and economic issues, such as unemployment.

• In 1908 Beveridge was brought in by Winston Churchill, then a young reforming politician in the Liberal government, to join a committee reporting on unemployment.

• Beveridge assisted with drawing up the Labour Exchange Act (1909) and National Insurance Act (1911).

• These established the first State assistance with unemployment and a network of Labour Exchanges to assist with finding work.

[Slide] Other Reforms and Discussion

After the Children’s Act, the Liberal government introduced measures designed to help other vulnerable people.

• Old Age Pensions Act (1908)

• Labour Exchanges Act (1909)

• National Insurance (1911)

The above Acts brought in old age pensions, unemployment and sickness benefits, and job centres.

*The image shows a Liberal Party Election Poster.*

**Recap Discussion:**

**Who did these new measures benefit?**

**Why was there a focus on dependents?**

**Why was unemployment targeted?**

**Look at the poster showing the Liberal Prime Minister H. H. Asquith. Who is he appealing to?**