

**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.

**C. The Beveridge Report and the Creation of the Welfare State (1941-1948)**

[Slide] We will learn about:

• the Beveridge Report and its impact

• what is meant by the welfare state and social security

• the results of the General Election in 1945

• the formation of the National Health Service (NHS)

• the introduction of National Insurance

[Slide] Recap: State Welfare before Beveridge

*This section refreshes students on previous sessions on the ‘Hungry Thirties’*

Unemployment in the 1930s

* In 1932 1 in 5 workers had no job
* Benefits were cut and a ‘Means Test’ was introduced in 1931
* Areas in northern England and cities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were badly affected
* New industries, in cars or electronics, did well and areas in the Midlands and southern England thrived
* By 1938 some cuts to benefits were reversed

Image: Report on the Means Test published by the Trade Unions Congress in 1931

The report showed startling inconsistencies in the granting and with-holding of benefits.

*You can ask students to look at information, particularly the two families living streets apart, and point out the differences in their treatment. No consistent state-run benefit system. Decisions felt arbitrary and personal.*

[Slide] Who was William Beveridge?

Photograph of William Beveridge, 1943.

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

From 1908-1912 Beveridge worked with the government, including Winston Churchill, on the first State provision for unemployed people [*Can recap to A or refresh any work on social reforms in 1900s if you want to]*

During the First World War, Beveridge assisted with organising work, particularly in munitions

From 1919-1937 Beveridge was the director of the London School of Economics (LSE)

He became more involved in public policy in the mid-1930s

[Slide] The Five Giants: Exercise

*[This slide can be printed out as a worksheet for the classroom]*

Beveridge identified ‘The Five Giants’ that were the most pressing issues facing the country:

• Want

• Squalor

• Ignorance

• Idleness

• Disease

They are personified in this drawing. [Image details]

**Look at the drawings: how are these giants depicted? What are the people saying beneath the giants? Do their comments help get rid of the giants or not?**

[New section slide] The Beveridge Report

Health and social security ‘from cradle to grave’

[Slide] The Social Insurance and Allied Services: Report, 1942

Beveridge argued for comprehensive national insurance:

• People and employers would pay in, the government would pay out

• The payment would be a flat-rate basic payment to protect people not working through sickness, unemployment or old age

• There would be no Means Test

• There was still a need for full employment

It helped give people a motivation for fighting the war.

Image: Social insurance and allied services: report – known as the Beveridge Report, 1942.

[Slide] Beveridge Plan **Evidence exercise:**

[This slide can be printed out as a classroom exercise]

*Guide to the Beveridge Plan*, poster, 1943.

*The poster sets out the main changes and provisions laid out in the Beveridge Report, including all the different benefits as well as National Insurance*.

**Look at the poster.**

**What are the three main assumptions of the Beveridge plan?**

**Who pays into the contributions? What benefits do they get?**

**What else is suggested besides contributions and benefits?**

[slide] National Insurance

National Insurance [Definition]

Everyone must pay national insurance when they get a job. It is a universal (i.e. everyone pays the same amount of their salary) system of social insurance. It is financed by the state with contributions made by employers and employees from their pay.

The Beveridge Plan proposed:

• a set family allowance & maternity grants

• increased Old Age Pensions

• benefits for people with disabilities

• unemployment benefit with a commitment to full employment

• a free health service

In some ways it was a much more enhanced continuation of the 1911 system and a joining up of different benefits.

[Slide] A Report not Law

Beveridge’s report was a collection of informed recommendations for the government. It did not mean his proposals would be acted upon by the government.

Beveridge was well known and used popular methods to talk to the public about his ideas, through radio broadcasts and writing for the popular press.

In a radio broadcast, only days after the report is published, Beveridge explains his radical plans for economic and social reform in post-war Britain. He argued we need ‘the abolition of want before the enjoyment of comfort’.

It was broadcast on 2 December 1942 by the BBC in 22 different languages.

*This broadcast is still available if you can get adobe flash to work the BBC Archive Website. It is 15 minutes long – in the section from 1.10 to 2 minutes Beveridge outlines the main 3 proposals:* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/nhs/5139.shtml>

[New section slide] ‘A Time for Revolutions’

The reaction and reception of the Beveridge Report

[Slide] The Report is Published

Over 650,000 copies of the report were sold – a very high number for a government document.

Copies of it were given to men and women serving in the armed forces.

Beveridge also received letters, even poems, of support from members of the public.

Many were grateful that the report argued that the ‘hungry thirties’ of mass unemployment, the Means Test and divisions of wealth and poverty should not happen again.

*The telegram illustrates interest in the report, even from the royal family who, arguably, would not personally benefit from the welfare state. Arguably illustrates interest in nation’s welfare.*

Image: Telegram from Buckingham Palace (King George VI) to Sir William Beveridge, 1942.

[Slide] Public Reaction – Opinion

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

Beveridge’s recommendations for free medical treatment of every kind for everybody as well as social security benefits and state pension provision would ensure the ‘hungry thirties’ could not happen again.

Recap notes:

The ‘total war’ of the Second World War meant that people at home were affected by the conflict through bombs, food rationing and war work. Different social groups of people mixed together more than previously.

*The chart shows 86% public support for the report from a British Institute of Public Opinion survey carried out in early 1943.*

**Look at the chart**

**What is the public reaction to the Beveridge Report? Why do you think that is?**

**What would your reaction be?**

[Slide] Public Reception – Evidence

[This slide can be printed out as a classroom exercise]

At last, there is A Saint on Earth. An angel he would be if only he could have his Will and make the Commons pass the Bill.

[. . .]

And to the Boys that’s gone to fight, that they should see a shining light, when Poverty and Want no more shall ever reign on Britain’s Shores.

From a poem ‘Memories of Sir William Beveridge’ by Albert E. Opie

LSE Beveridge Collection

This poem was sent to William Beveridge by an ‘Old Age Pensioner’ to wish him success.

N.B. The ‘Commons’ refers to MPs making the recommendations in the report law.

**Read the poem:**

•**Why do you think Albert E. Opie would write this poem?**

•**Who is Opie referring to by the ‘Boys’? Why is it important for them that ‘Poverty’ and ‘Want’ should not reign?**

•**Want is one of the ‘Five Giants’. What does it mean?**

[Slide] Social Security from ‘Cradle to Grave’

In March 1943 Prime Minister Winston Churchill gave a radio broadcast on the Beveridge Report. He said he accepted a system of:

‘social insurance and security   from the “cradle to the grave” for every class of citizen.’

There were, however, political divisions in the wartime government about how this should happen.

[Definition] Welfare State

The term ‘Welfare State’ describes a system of state support with contributions from people that work to look after the welfare of a nation and its people.

This system is sometimes called social security.

‘Cradle to grave’ means from birth (even before) to death.

[New section slide] Aftermath: The National Health Service

[Slide] The 1945 General Election

The Labour Party agreed with the main recommendations of the Beveridge Report. Labour also thought the State should provide full benefits and free healthcare forall.

The Conservative Party agreed that parts of the system should change.

An election was held after the Second World War in July 1945.

This image of an election manifesto for Labour candidate H. T. Langdon shows him using his support for the Beveridge Report to win votes.

Labour won a huge victory in the election and formed a government.

[Slide] The National Health Service

Even before the election, parts of the Beveridge Report were being put in place by the wartime government. The Labour Government introduced the laws and infrastructure needed for social security and the National Health Service (NHS):

1944 Education Act (wartime coalition)

1945 Family Allowances Act

1946 National Insurance Act and National Health Services Act

5 July 1948 National Health Service begins

*The graph shows an increase in government spending from 1900 to 1950 with a jump to 2000 to compare. There are no figures for 1940 due to the country being at war.*

There was increase in government spending on social welfare. The figures are taken from the Central Statistics Office.