# SECOND WORLD WAR

## ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCE for NORTHERN IRELAND

# THE BLITZ



# ACTIVITY PACK *for* PRIMARY SCHOOLS

# THE BLITZ

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# Gas Attack!

Gas had been a deadly weapon in the First World War, so civilians were issued with gas masks in the Second World War. Gas masks were allocated to each person for fear of a chemical attack. Practice sessions were held at school times, although in the end the need for gas masks never arose. Special masks were made for babies and even pets.

**WEB LINK**

Explore **Gas Masks** to see different types of gas masks and to listen to people's stories about having to wear them when practicing for a chemical attack.
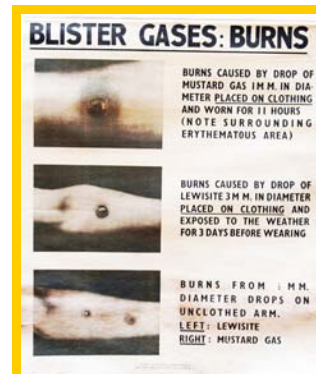
Which Disney character is this gas mask designed to look like? Mickey Mouse, Pluto or Goofey?

This picture shows gas masks being fitted in Bangor. Do you think that children would have found the gas masks scary or funny?

Who's job was it to distribute the 9,000 gas masks to the people of Castlederg?

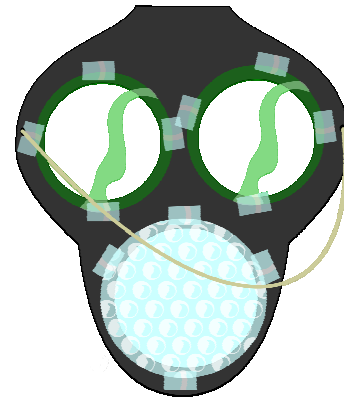What does this poster tell us about Mustard Gas?

# Make a Model Gas Mask

**Front of gas mask**

**Materials you will need:**

**Cardstock**
**Bubble wrap**
**Cellophane sheets**
**Elastic cord**
**Sticky tape**
**Scissors**

**Back of gas mask**

## Step 1

Print out the Gas Mask Outline onto cardstock and cut out the mask, eyes and nose.

## Step 2

Trace the eye holes onto a sheet of cellophane with a pencil and cut out the circles. Make the circles you cut out larger than the circle you traced. Tape the cellophane eye holes onto the back of the gas mask, so the sticky tape won't show when you are wearing the gas mask.

## Step 3

Cut out a long rectangle on cardstock for the mouthpiece. Connect the two ends and tape them together so you have a cylinder-shaped mouthpiece that is the same size as the mask's mouth. Attach the mouthpiece to the mask with sticky tape.

## Step 4

Cut out a long rectangle on cardstock for the mouthpiece. Connect the two ends and tape them together so you have a cylinder-shaped mouthpiece that is the same size as the mask's mouth. Attach the mouthpiece to the mask with sticky tape.

## Step 5

Cut out a long rectangle on cardstock for the mouthpiece. Connect the two ends and tape them together so you have a cylinder-shaped mouthpiece that is the same size as the mask's mouth.

## Step 6

Trace the mouth hole onto a piece of bubble wrap with a pencil or pen. Cut out the circle and tape it to the cylinder-shaped mouthpiece. Attach the completed mouthpiece to the mask with sticky tape.

## Step 7

Punch a hole on either side of your gas mask using a hole-punch. Cut a piece of elastic cord which needs to be long enough to use to hold the mask onto your head. Tie both ends of the elastic cord onto your gas mask by making a knot on either end.

**You have now finished making your model gas mask! Try it on!**

# Gas Mask Template

Cut out eye hole

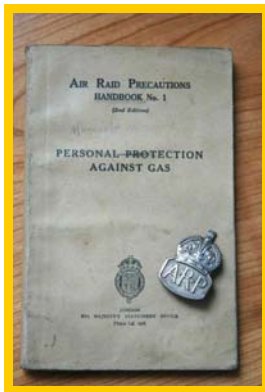Cut out eye hole

Cut out mouth and nose hole
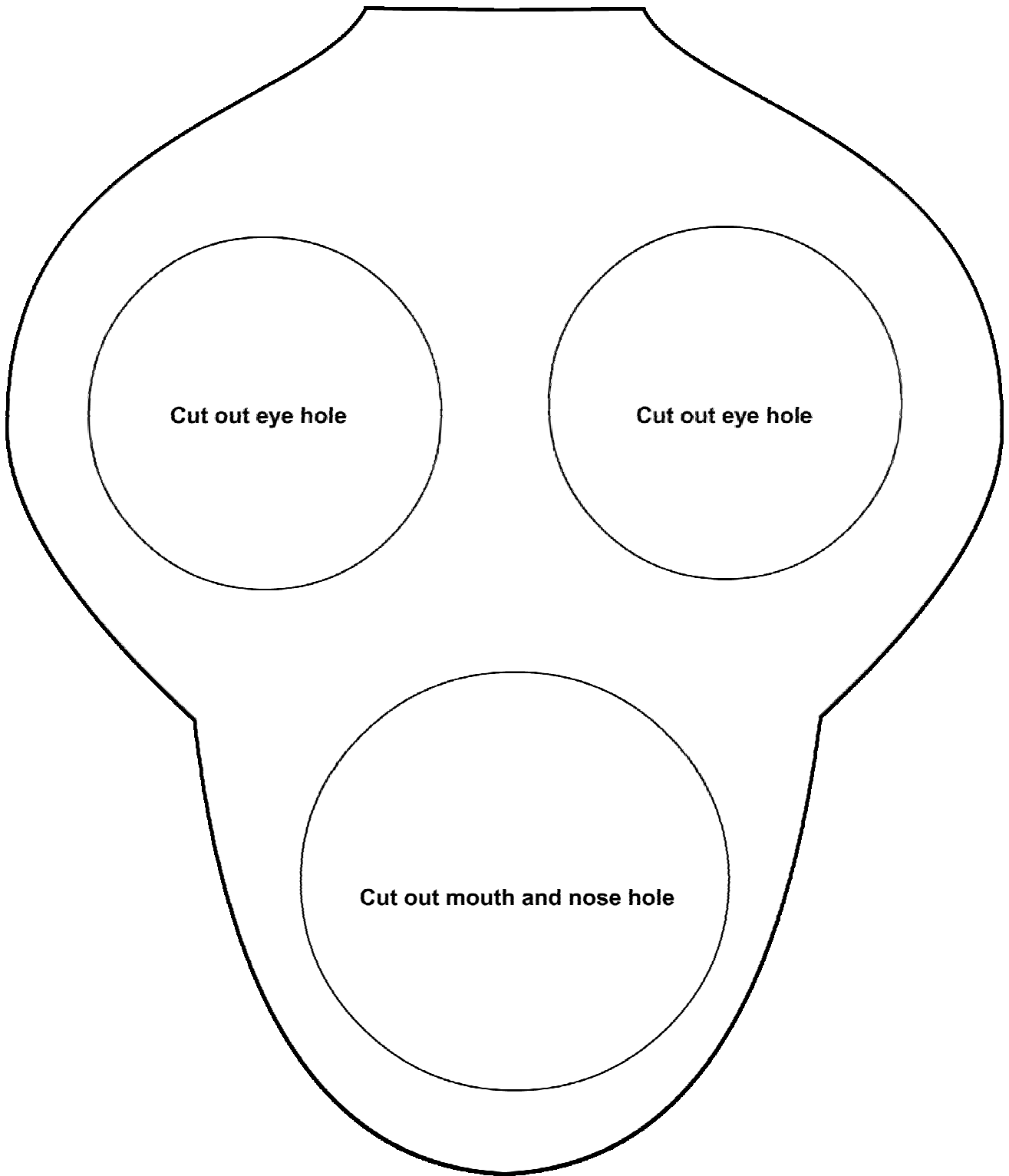
# Air Wardens

**Complete the picture descriptions by filling in the blanks.**

Air Wardens were the people who sounded the air raid alarms to warn people that enemy p_ _ _ _ s were on their way.

This is the badge which air wardens wore. ARP stands for
A _ _ R _ _ _ P _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

Air Wardens had many jobs. They reported on air raid damage to the authorities and advised people in their area how to minimise their risk of danger during an attack, for example making sure black out blinds were used and people knew how to wear a
g _ _ m _ _ _.
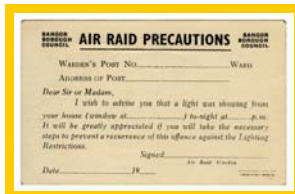
Air wardens had to make sure that people were following the rules of the b _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ . They would have left this note at a person's home if light could be seen from the outside of the house.

An air warden's first aid case which would have been used to help anyone who had become injured during an a_ _ r _ _ _ .

# Design an Air Warden's Poster

**Posters were issued for a variety of reasons from advice to general advertisements or recruiting.**

This poster contains official instructions issued by the ministry of Home Security in an effort to prepare the public in the event of a gas attack.

## Your Task

Imagine you are an air warden. It is your duty to make sure that everyone in your area knows what to do during an air raid to keep themselves safe.

Make an instructional poster to post up around your town to help people prepare for an air raid.
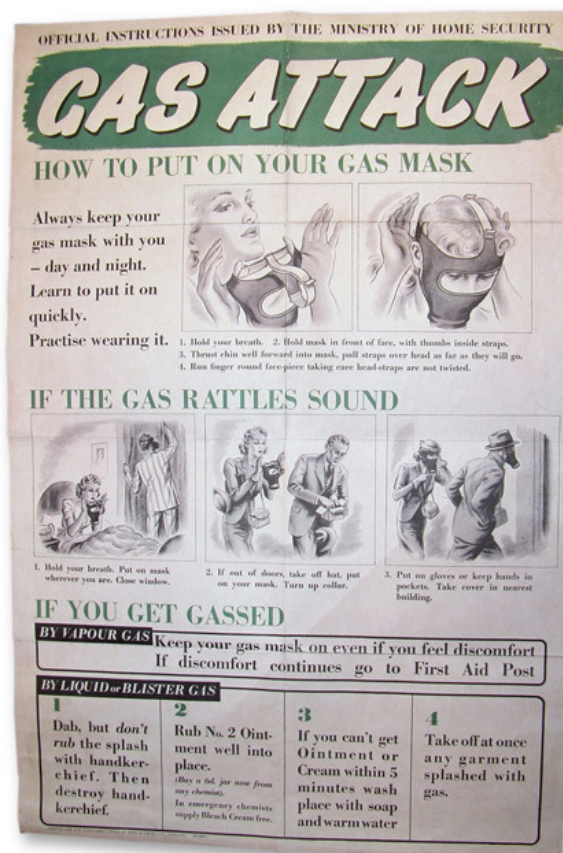


## Choose ONE of the following posters to design:

- A poster giving instructions on the correct way to wear a gas mask. If you have made a model gas mask, why not use a digital camera to take photos for your poster?

- A poster explaining what people should do when they hear an air raid siren.

- A poster reminding people to follow the rules of the blackout.

# Making Your Poster

1. Decide whether you want to draw your poster or use computer software Comic Life or Microsoft Word.

2. Decide what pictures you will need for your poster. You can download them from the website, take photos using a digital camera, or draw and scan your own illustrations.

3. If you are using the computer to put together your poster, follow these basic steps:

   • Make a new page
   • Import your pictures into your page and make them the size you want.
   • Add text to your poster. Remember - the more details you add, the better prepared people will be for an air raid!
   • Try out different text styles and effects.
   • Experiment with picture effects and picture borders.
   • Put your name on it!
   • Print your poster and pin it up!
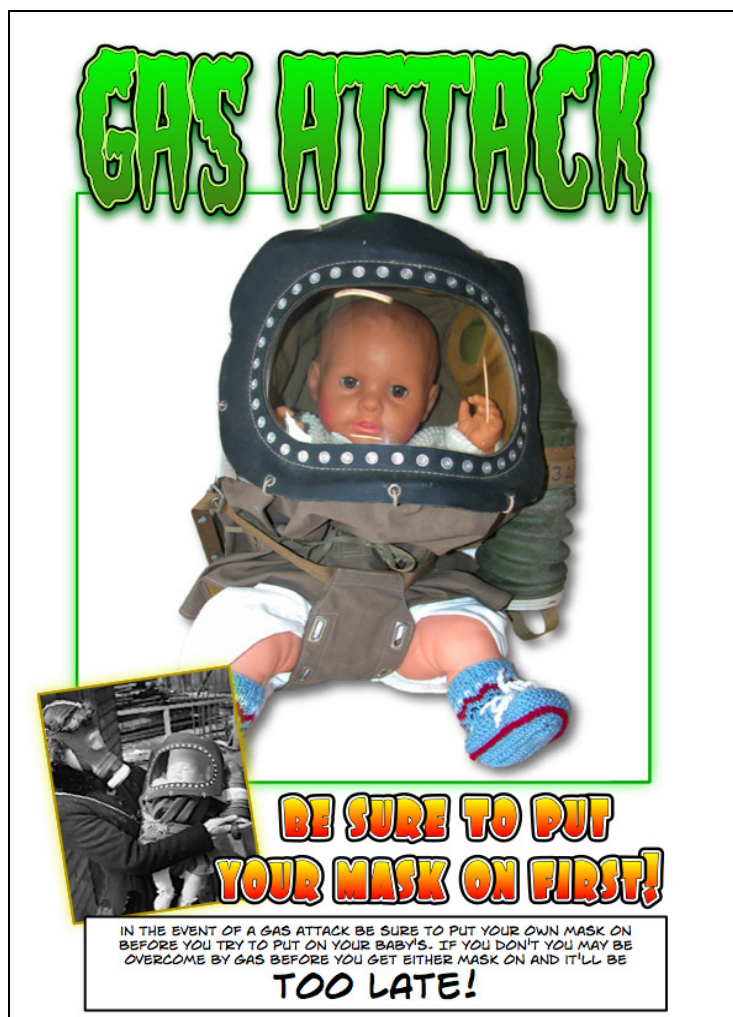
# Build a Model Anderson Shelter
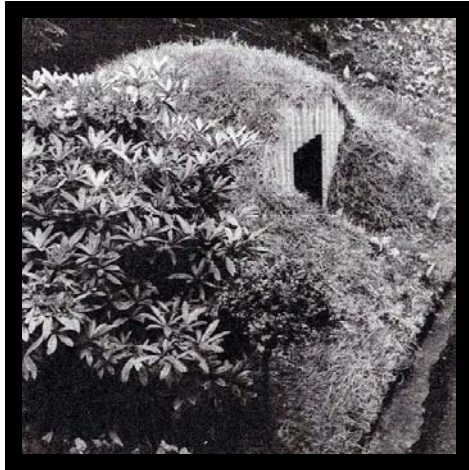


Anderson shelters were a type of shelter people went into during an air raid to keep safe. The government gave people an Anderson Shelter kit to families who lived in areas that were expected to be bombed by German planes.

Anderson shelters were built into people's gardens. They would have been made from six corrugated iron sheets which were bolted together at the top. They were half dug into the ground and dirt was shovelled to cover the top of it. It had an opening for people to climb into it.

Anderson shelters did not have a floor and so were quite damp, especially if it had been raining. As there were no lights in the shelter they were also dark and people had to use candles or lamps.

## Materials Needed:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Large piece cardboard | Two pieces of grey A4 sized card | A ruler |
| scissors | pencil | Glue |
| Celotape | Optional: Decorations and props such as people, trees | |

## Building Your Model

1. Get one of the sheets of card and hold it landscape style. Measure 8 cm from the left hand side and draw a line at this point down the page. Cut down this line and put the smaller piece to one side.

2. Take hold of the larger piece, hold it landscape again, fold it in half and cut down the fold.

3. Take one of the halves you have just cut and bend it, don't crease it, just make an arch shape.

4. Fold the bottom edges in at about 1cm. This makes a flap that will be used to stick onto the base of the shelter.

5. Put a bit of glue on the bottom of the two flaps and stick it onto other half of the spare card. Cut off any spare bits of card.

6. Get a piece of the card (you may need to use a new sheet of card) and cover one end of the shelter. Stick this in place. You may find it is easier to use sticky tape for this. Cut off any spare card.

7. Do the same again to the other end of the shelter but cut a little doorway to make the entrance to the shelter and you have finished!

8. Glue your finished shelter onto a large piece of sturdy cardboard.

9. Paint and decorate the cardboard to look like a garden. You can paint the top of the Anderson shelter to look like grass is growing over it, or use bits of green tissue paper for grass.

10. Add any props such as people, small beds or lamps which might have been inside for people to use.



*These pictures show the type of lamps or candles which would have been used in an Anderson shelter. Children's card games would have been easy to carry into a shelter during an air raid.*
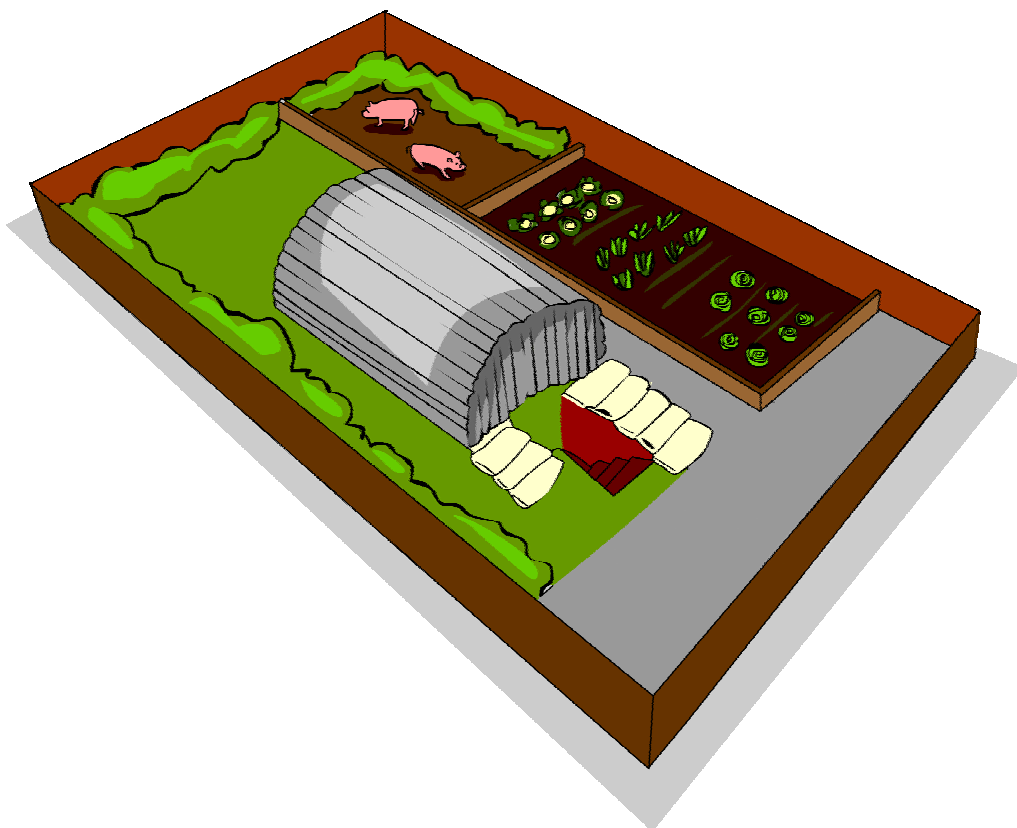
# Parachutes in the Sky

## Bernard McCormack tells a story about the night when his family experienced an air raid in Derry

It was late in the evening when the sirens sounded. My younger brother and I were already asleep upstairs. My father woke us and told us to come to the kitchen. "You'll be safer under the table," he said.

My parents were kneeling on the floor and had started to pray. The plane was rapidly approaching from upriver. The sound of the engines was a surprise to me. It was more like and uneven throb than anything else. By this time it was directly overhead. The noise was tremendous and truly terrifying to a child. I was convinced it was at a level with the rooftops. Then it swung in the direction of Pennyburn and the American base. For a brief moment there was silence as the plane's lethal cargo of landmines drifted towards us on its parachutes. There was a tremendous explosion, so much so that the very earth shook as the shock waves travelled under ground.

After the raid many people refused to sleep in their own beds and for several nights after. They preferred to take to the hills armed with a bin lid for protection. The German aircraft returned safely to its base in northern France and we children were perfectly happy the following morning to comb the back lanes of the Waterside for bits of shrapnel.
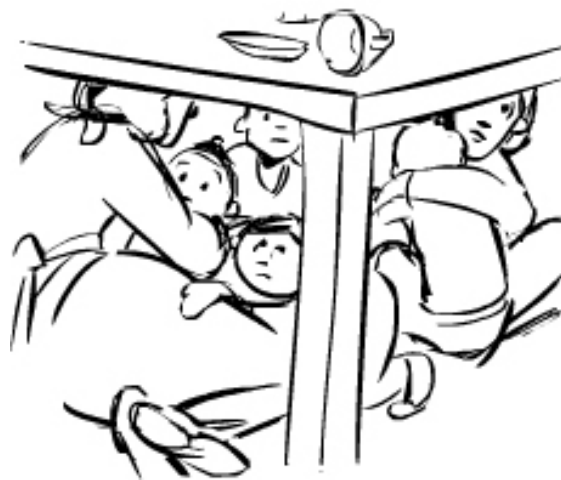
# Parachutes in the Sky

**Read the story 'Parachutes in the Sky' then answer the questions.**

1. What did it mean when a loud siren was heard during the war?

2. Where did Bernard's family hide during the air raid?

3. Do you think people were afraid of the parachutes which fell from the sky? Why or why not?

4. What do you think the German plane was trying to bomb?

5. What types of sounds were heard during an air raid?

6. How did people try to protect themselves from air raids the next few nights?

7. What do you think the 'shrapnel' was which Bernard and his friends went looking for the next day?

# Blitz Comics

In this activity, you are going to bring to life someone's memory of an air raid by turning it into a comic strip. You can draw your comic or use a computer to make it. You can use your own drawings plus photographs from the Second World War website in your comic.

**Choose ONE of the following blitz stories for your comic.**

## Betty Leathem's Story

The night of the big blitz in Belfast we were under the stairs and my little baby brother was in one of these great big gas masks that the baby actually sat in. Someone had to pump the air into it so that was my job. We'd been there for quite a while when my dad came to the door and said, "Come quickly to the door to see something," and we went out to the front door and saw the sky completely red where they had dropped bombs on Belfast. It was just such an amazing sight. We couldn't believe what we were seeing.

## David Kerr's Story

I was eight at the time. Halfway through the night the sirens sounded and we didn't have any air raid shelters to go to nearby so my mother and my sister and I went under the dining room table. My father who was an ARP Warden went out into the streets to make sure that people's blackout curtains were working and also to help in any way, putting out any incendiary bombs that might have been dropped.

It wasn't long before the bombs started falling and it was a very frightening experience because you didn't  know what sort of effect they were going to have, what damage they were going to do, what was going to happen to us. It went over eventually and we went over into the garden and looked up towards Belfast and the whole sky was lit up. It was as if the sun had risen in the west.

## Hugh Giffin's Story

The German bombers flew over. You would have seen them on the various raids passing over there and of course you could see Belfast was burning away. I was coming up the Station Road and there was a plane coming down.

This plane was very low and I looked up at this German plane. And it was so low that they were looking down at me and I was looking up at them. And it flew right down the river. Obviously he had been out at the Atlantic somewhere and was trying to find his way home so he followed the river down. And about half an hour later when he was gone the air raid sirens went.

## Ruby Jordan's Story

The first time the siren went off my father was gone. It was just Hugh and me and my mother and my mother was out in the yard. She said, "There's the fire engine," and Hugh shouted, "No, it's the air raid sirens!". So where did we go? Over to a neighbour's and we all went under her table. But after that when the siren went we never bothered, you know.

## Nell Traynor's Story

The wardens had a practice night and we'd all have to go up to the air raid shelter in the bowling green where the car park is now and and wear our gas masks and bring wee plastic cups and bring rocks and all, pretending it was the real thing. But then when the real thing came and all the bombers were coming over the town, and oh the noise was terrible. Nobody grabbed masks. Nobody ran to the air raid shelters. Nobody ran anywhere.

All the people in the bridge end rushed up to the bridge to watch the planes going over. Standing there with our mouths open waiting on the bombs to come down on top of them. They weren't racing to air raid shelters. They were standing in awe 'cause they never seen such a sight in their lives.

## Chris Wiltshire's Story

It was Easter Tuesday night. We were all going to our beds. The siren went as usual as it did nearly every night. My mother put us all into the front bedroom. My father he was in the ARP and he put on his big heavy black coat and his ARP tin hat and away he went. There was a British Legion Hall on O'Connell Lane and that's where everybody went for a cup of tea and that afterwards and he was there in charge that night.

We were in the bedroom anyway and my brother Dan he was 16 at the time and you could hear this plane, an unusual plane. You could always hear the planes going over but you recognised them. He just came into the bedroom and said, "I'm sure that's a German plane. And just then there was an unmerciful bang.

## Air Warden Michael Murray's Story

We all cam down to the posts and the next thing there was this tremendous "BANG!" "Oh my god", says I, "this is it starting." The next thing then there was silence and then about five or six minutes later – "BANG!" again, another bang. Silence again. So after a good hour or half and hour the phone rang and it was to ask for volunteers to go to Messines Park and that there was casualties and a lot of damage. I remember there were relations of my own down there, Murray, and when I went to their house on Bridge's Terrace, oh my god, the landing window was down at the front door. The house was wrecked. And I enquired and asked a few people where are the Murrays and are they safe enough? Eddie's out with a pot of tea going around houses giving people drinks.

The first mine came down. It came down on a parachute. There wasn't direct bombs coming down. They could have landed anywhere, they were drifting in the wind. It come down a big green parachute and landed in his back garden and they were wrecked. The other one came down where Pennyburn Chapel is now, just across there, and didn't the second mine land in a sandpit and blew a big crater about forty foot wide and I don't know how much deep.

# Making a Comic Book

## Drawing A Comic

1. Use the 'Drawing A Comic' worksheet to draw your comic.
2. In the first square, write in the title and your name.
3. In the rest of the boxes, write one sentence at the bottom of each box. You may need to use several worksheets.
4. Draw a picture for each sentence. See sample comic for an example.
5. Staple your comic pages together along the left side.
6. Read your comic then share it with friends!

## Making a Comic on the Computer

1. Gather the images to be used in your comic. These can be your own drawings or photographs taken from the Internet, or a combination of both.
2. Any drawings will need to be scanned or take a picture of them with a digital camera and then download the pictures to the computer.
3. Open the computer software you will use, for example Microsoft Word or Comic Life.
4. Make a new page and type in a title at the start of the first page.
5. Add in your picture boxes and import the pictures in the correct order.
6. Use text boxes or speech bubbles to add the narration of your story.
7. Add as many pages as needed until your story is completed.
8. Format your text's font, size and colour.
9. Add more details or decoration to your comic. This might include changing picture frames or adding special effects to pictures.
10. Save your work.
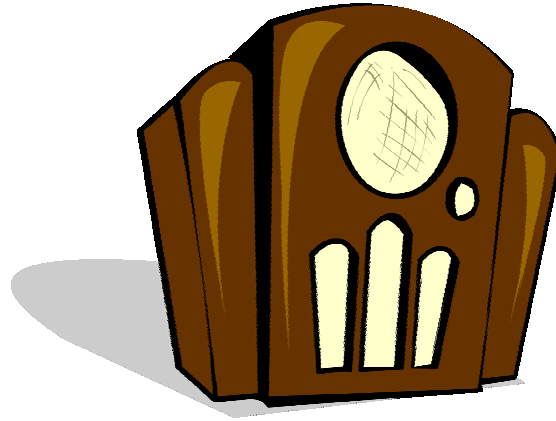11. Print your completed comic and staple the pages down the left side.

# Drawing a Comic
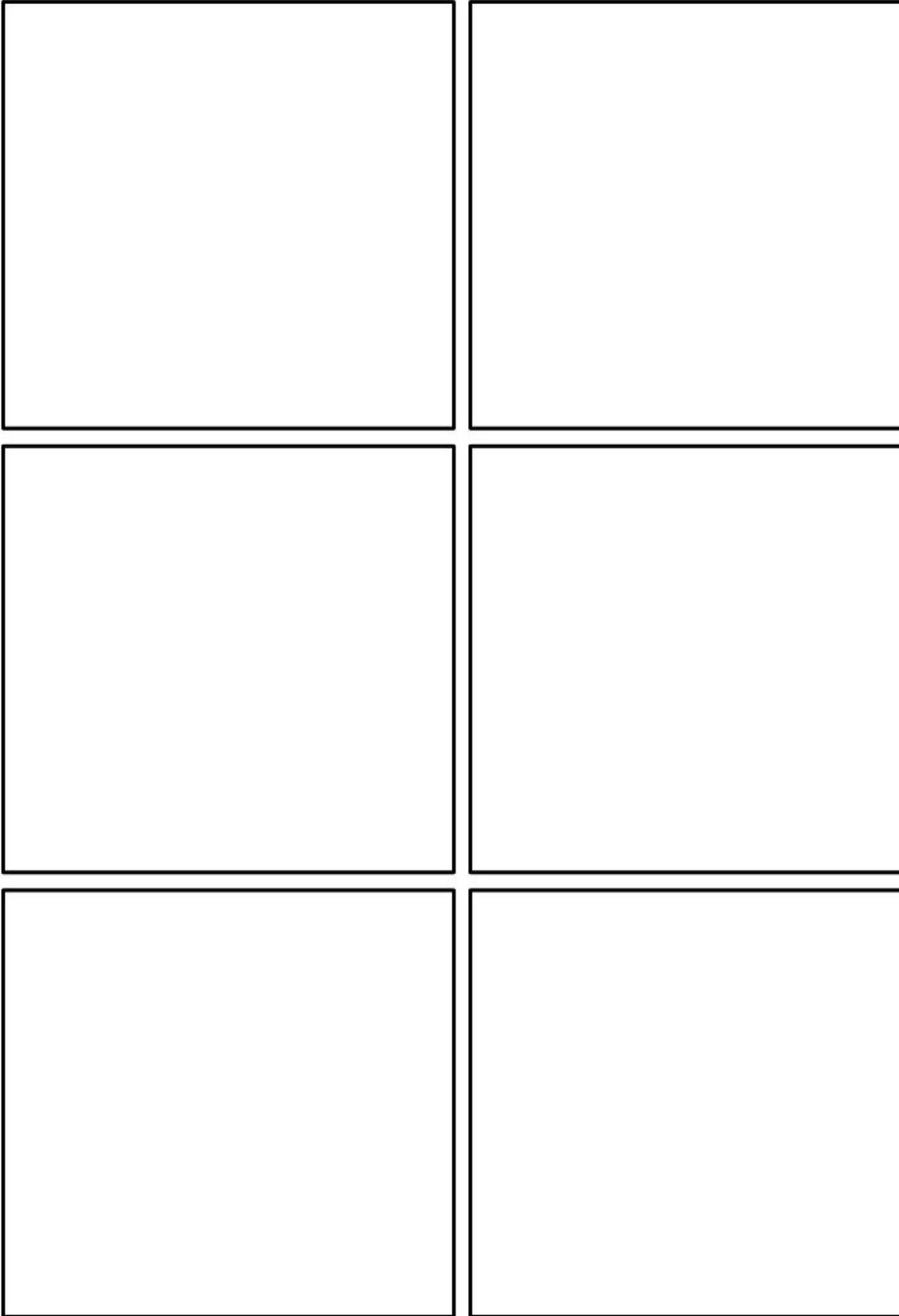
# Radio News Alert!

## ICT Activity: Working with Sound, Podcasting

**People listened daily to the radio to keep informed about what was going on in the war. In this task you are going to write and record a News Report Podcast about the bombings at Messines Park or the Belfast Blitz.**

Imagine you are a news reporter reporting on either the bombing of Messines Park in Derry or the Belfast Blitz. Research information about one of the topics and write a short news report about what happened.

When you have written your news report you will then record the report into the computer. Music and sound effects can be used to make your news report sound more powerful.

## Getting Started – Writing your News Report

- First collect your facts. Ask the classic questions: Who, What, Why, When, Where and How.

- Start with a strong lead. Hook your viewers or readers with the most intriguing aspect of a story up front, otherwise they won't bother listening to the rest of it.

- Try out different language effects in your opening sentence, for example the use of puns, play on words, or rhyme. Study good examples of catchy newspaper headlines of big events.

- Write simply and actively as if you're trying to tell your best friend the latest that happened today. Take out words that aren't needed.

- Try to include as many important details as you can.

# Radio News Alert!
## Teacher Notes

Podcasting is a great way to support language and communication. A podcast is like a radio show. However, instead of being broadcast live, a podcast is recorded and then distributed over the Internet, so that you can listen to it whenever you please. There are thousands of podcasts available, ranging from general interest entertainment shows to those focusing on specific topics (e.g. music, education).

The basic equipment you need is a computer with some kind of recording ability (an internal or external microphone) and some recording software. Audacity is free and allows you to record your show and then export it as an mp3 file. Music can be downloaded from the Audio Network PLC website which can be accessed through Learning NI. You can then upload the recorded podcast to your school website.

## Easy steps to making a simple podcast

1.  Determine the nature and content of your podcast. Write the material to be included in the podcast.

2.  Record the audio for your podcast. Free audio software is Audacity. Other good software includes Mixcraft or GarageBand (Mac only).

3.  Tag it, give it ID information (Artist, Album) and give it album art. Either make it yourself or find some free, non-copyrighted images online.

4.  Save the audio file in MP3 format to your computer desktop. Open it up into your sound editor and edit out extra background noise or long periods of silence. Put in introduction and ending music if you want.

5.  Upload your MP3 file onto your school's website or LearningNI to share it with others.

## Useful links

**http://audacity.sourceforge.net/**
FREE Audacity music software can be downloaded here along with user tutorials.

**Learning NI**
Search for Audio Network PLC to access music and sound effects to use in sound projects.

# War Art

## Henry Moore's War Drawings



The Artist and Sculptor Henry Moore was an eyewitness to the night-time bombing of London by the German Air Force in 1941 (known as 'The Blitz'). In this work, entitled 'Eighteen Ideas for War Drawings', the artist used coloured crayons, watercolour wash, pen and ink to sketch out a series of dramatic images of airplanes, explosions, bomb craters, burning buildings and searchlights illuminating the night sky. By using the bright colours (red & yellow) against a dark background, the artist has captured a frightening vision of a city and countryside in flames.

*Can you figure out what is happening in each picture?*

# Studying Henry Moore's Images

### Haystack & Airplane

This image shows a German bomber lodged against a haystack. The Artist pictures both objects from a high angle. He has adopted the perspective of a bomber pilot as he looks down from above at the buildings and fields that his bombs will destroy.

### Flashes from the Ground

The bombing raids took place under cover of darkness. Searchlights were used to light up the night sky so that anti-aircraft guns could target the German airplanes. In this image, we can also see the flames of burning houses and two figures in the foreground, staring at the destruction.

### Devastated Houses

The impact of the bombs falling from the sky on to streets and houses set off loud explosions. Other sounds included the machine gun fire of anti-aircraft batteries, the droning of the planes overhead and the high-pitched wail of air-raid sirens.

# Animate the Blitz!

## Your task is to become a war artist and make a short animated sequence which represents the Blitz.



This work by Henry Moore resembles a film strip or storyboard for a movie. The artist has drawn out eighteen separate images that combine together to tell a story about the horror and devastation of war.



These photographs show the devastation caused by the Blitz

## STEP 1 Getting Started

Study the artist Henry Moore's 'Eighteen Ideas for War Drawings' to see how he used drawings to show what the war was like

You can explore the work of other war artists using the internet.

## STEP 2 What Will You Animate?

Answer these questions to help you think of an idea…

What images come to mind when you think of the Blitz?
*Hint: Look at Henry Moore's artwork or photographs taken of cities after the Blitz for ideas. Example: German Bomber Plane*

What simple movement could you create with this image?
*Example: German Bomber Plane dropping a bomb*

## STEP 3 Make A Storyboard

Use the *Animation Storyboard Worksheet* to plan what pictures & sound effects you will use to make your animation.

# Animation Storyboard

**Make 5 simple drawings to plan what will happen in your animation**

**1**

What sound would match this picture?

**2**

What sound would match this picture?

**3**

What sound would match this picture?

**4**

What sound would match this picture?

**5**

What sound would match this picture?

## STEP 4 Make Your Pictures

There are 3 ways to make your pictures: You can make 5 separate drawings, make paper cut-outs, or use real objects!

### Drawings

- Draw 5 pictures to show the different stages of the animation. You will need five A4-sized sheets of paper.
- These pictures need to be scanned or captured with a digital camera and saved into your folder on the computer.

### Paper Cut-Outs

- Draw a background for your animation on a large sheet of paper. This could be a city, country, or just a sky! Your background should not include any objects that you want to move.
- On a separate piece of paper, draw the objects that will move in your animation, for example a plane, bombs, and flames. Cut them out with scissors.
- Place the paper cut-outs onto the background as to how they should look at the start of the animation. Take a picture with a digital camera. Repeat moving the paper cut-outs and taking pictures until you have taken 5 pictures.
- Save the pictures into your folder on the computer.

### Real Objects

- Draw a background for your animation on a large sheet of paper. This could be a city, country, or just a sky! Your background should not include any objects that you want to move.
- Gather the objects that you are going to use, for example a toy plane. Objects can also be made out of plasticine.
- Place the objects onto the background as to how they should look at the start of the animation. Take a picture with a digital camera. Repeat moving the objects and taking pictures until you have taken 5 pictures.
- Save the pictures into your folder on the computer.

## STEP 5 Sound Effects

Use the internet to find sound effects. Here are some good sites to look at. You will need to save the ones you want to use into your folder on the computer.

## STEP 6 Putting It All Together

You can use Movie Maker or PhotoStory to put together your animation. Import your pictures and sound effects and place them in the correct order. Don't forget to add a title and your name at the start! Why not try out some transitions and special effects. You can record Narration and Sound Effects with a microphone. *Finally, play your finished animation!*

# Blitz Picture Match

Match the picture descriptions with the correct picture.
Write the letter of the description in the matching picture's box.

a. Belfast's High Street after Belfast Blitz
b. Mickey Mouse Gas Mask
c. Air Raid Wardens at Work
d. Blackout Blind

e. Blackout Lamp
f. Air Raid Shelters in Belfast
g. An Anderson Shelter
h. Gas Masks Being Fitted

# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| **Air Raid** | An attack by military aircraft, especially when armed with bombs and rockets. |
| **Air Raid Shelter** | Structures for the protection of the civil population as well as military personnel against enemy attacks from the air. |
| **Air Raid Siren** | A device for generating sound to provide warning of approaching danger and to indicate when the danger has passed. |
| **Air Raid Warden** | A person whose responsibility was to defend a particular building during an air raid, ensure the blackout was complete, and to assist civilians to an air-raid shelter |
| **Aircraft** | Any man-made vehicle that can fly through the air, such as an airplane, helicopter, glider, or balloon. |
| **Anderson Shelter** | A small prefabricated air-raid shelter of World War II consisting of an arch of corrugated metal and designed to be partly buried in people's gardens and covered with earth for protection |
| **Blitz** | The bombing of British cities in WW II: the intensive bombing of British cities by the German Air Force between 1940 and 1941. |
| **Blackout** | The extinguishing or concealment of all visible lights in a city, military post, etc., usually as a precaution against air raids. |
| **Bomber** | A military aircraft that drops bombs during flight |
| **Evacuation** | Temporary but rapid removal of people from a building or disaster (or threatened) area as a rescue or precautionary measure |
| **Gas Mask** | A respirator that contains a chemical air filter and is worn over the face as protection against toxic gases |
| **Mustard Gas** | Mustard gas is a chemical weapon that was first used in World War I and causes blistering of the skin. |
| **Parachute** | A cloth item usually shaped like an umbrella when expanded, and used to slow the falling speed of a person or thing dropping from an airplane |
| **Shrapnel** | Pieces from an exploded artillery shell, mine, or bomb |