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SECOND WORLD WAR

ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCE for NORTHERN IRELAND

EVACUATION



ACTIVITY PACK *for* **PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

EVACUATION

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Government notice about Billeting arrangements

BILLETING

The Chief Billeting Office for the City of Belfast is at
39, University Road

BELFAST is an evacuation area. This means that should the Government consider it necessary, certain classes of persons may as a safety precaution be sent to a reception area. The billeting of such persons is carried out by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Billeting Offices have been set up by that Ministry throughout Northern Ireland, where information and advice is available for persons desiring to be voluntarily evacuated, or to change their billets or in connection with any other relevant matters. A list of the Belfast District Billeting Offices is on page 87.

Following an air raid, homeless persons belonging to the priority classes, that is, children of school age, mothers accompanying children of school age or under, the aged, infirm or blind, and expectant mothers (who so desire)—will be evacuated forthwith from Rest Centres to country districts.



Public information leaflet issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs explaining the arrangements for the billeting of evacuees following an air raid. 1939

BILLETING

Billeting Allowances: For adults with or without accompanying children 5/- per week each. For each accompanied child under 14 years of age, 3/- per week.

These allowances cover only lodgings and reasonable access to water supply and sanitary conveniences, and are paid through the local post office to the householder.

There is a standard scale of charges for unaccompanied children according to age. Particulars may be obtained at the Billeting Office.

Parents are expected, according to their means, to contribute towards the keep of the child—such payments should be made to the Government at 108, Victoria Street, Belfast.

DISTRICT BILLETING OFFICES

Foresters' Hall	...	...	...	39, Divis Street.
Peter's Hill	...	...	...	140, Peter's Hill.
Cliftonville Road	...	...	...	26, Cliftonville Road.
Albertbridge Road	...	...	...	173, Albertbridge Road.
Woodstock Road	...	...	...	382, Woodstock Road.
Lisburn Road	...	...	...	63, Lisburn Road.

YOUR MONEY

!Are you taking risks?

Don't keep any more money in the house than necessary for day-to-day expenses.

There will be no compensation for cash or notes destroyed by enemy action.

Remember

SAVINGS and SALVAGE



Examine the government documents about the evacuation of school children and billeting before deciding whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE.

Circle the correct answer.

The evacuation of school children from Belfast began on September 7th, 1940. **TRUE** **FALSE**

Following an air raid, school children and mothers of young children had to be evacuated. **TRUE** **FALSE**

Government announcements about the evacuation of school children could be found outside churches. **TRUE** **FALSE**

The Ministry of Education was the government department that was responsible for the billeting of evacuees. **TRUE** **FALSE**

People who housed evacuees received an allowance from the government of £2 per adult and £1 per each accompanying child to help pay for their lodgings. **TRUE** **FALSE**

Parents whose children had been evacuated to the country had to pay money towards their keep. **TRUE** **FALSE**

The government told people to keep all of their money in their homes for safekeeping from the enemy. **TRUE** **FALSE**

Packing Up



Children often had to travel by train station to a reception area, where a billeting officer met them and helped them to find a family who would take them in and look after them. Families who took in evacuees received money from the government to help pay for living expenses.

With them they brought a suitcase which had clothing, some food and other personal items.

The government also required that evacuees had their identity card and gas mask with them.



In **PACKING UP** watch the video **Evacuating Belfast** then answer the questions. Muriel Harbinson remembers having to evacuate Belfast to escape the blitz.

Why did Muriel have to leave Belfast?

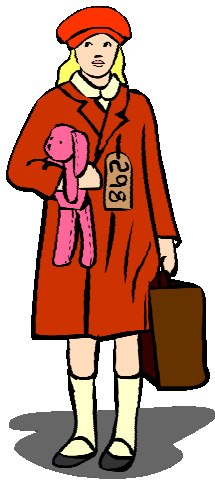
Where did she go to live?



In **PACKING UP** listen to the audio file **Sophia Findlay** then answer the questions. Sophia Findlay remembers how she travelled to the north west seeking refuge after the Belfast Blitz.

What did Sophia take with her when she was evacuated?

Do you think Sophia's evacuation experience was good or bad? Explain.



Evacuees must have felt many different emotions. They had to leave behind their homes, friends and family. Some children were separated from their brothers and sisters.

Children did not know where they were going to end up and for how long they would be away for. By the time they reached their destination, they were often tired, hungry and uncertain about what their new host family would be like.

For some children the opportunity to live somewhere different must have felt like a great adventure.



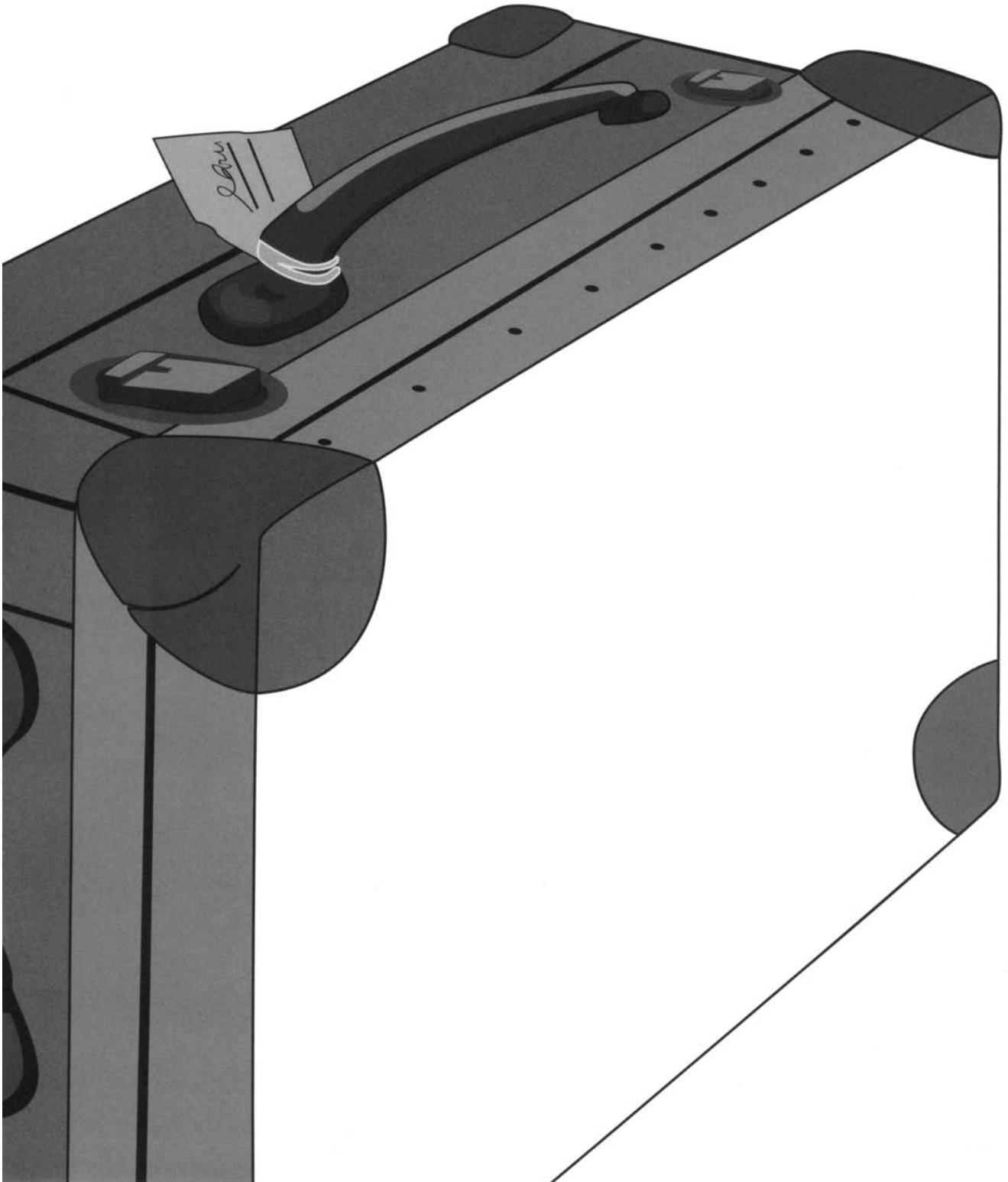
Children being evacuated from Londonderry Model Primary School

Which of these words do you think describes how the children felt?

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| sad | nervous | happy | unhappy |
| curious | adventurous | worried | confused |
| excited | glad | upset | disappointed |

An Evacuee's Suitcase

If you were an evacuee what would you take with you?
Draw the things you would take in this case.



Evacuee Label & Identity Card

Fill in your name and address

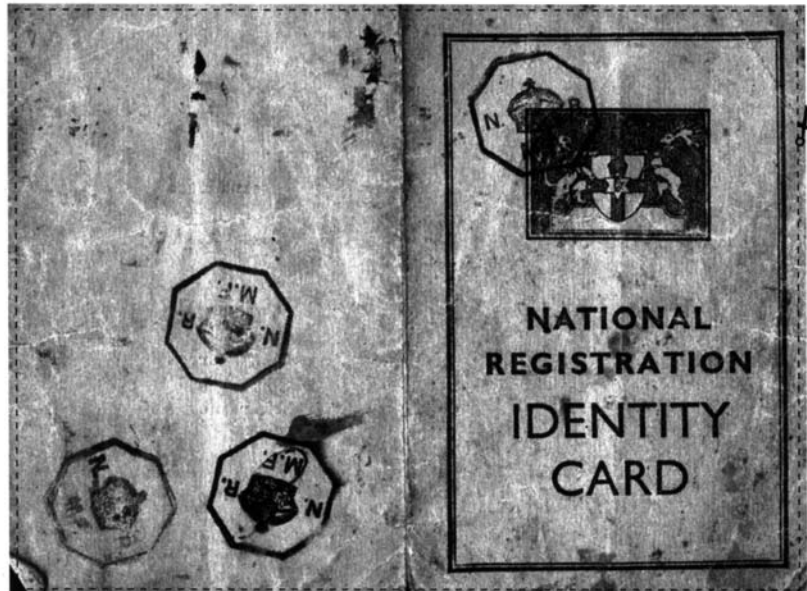
OFFICIAL PAID

EVACUATION

NAME

ADDRESS

Thread a piece of string through the label to Attach it to your clothes or use a safety pin.



NATIONAL REGISTRATION		
YUPA	35394	----

1. This Identity Card must be carefully preserved. You may need it under conditions of national emergency for important purposes. You must not lose it or allow it to be stolen. If, nevertheless, it is stolen or completely lost, you must report the fact in person at any local National Registration Office.

2. You may have to show your Identity Card to persons who are authorised by law to ask you to produce it.

3. You must not allow your Identity Card to pass into the hands of unauthorised persons or strangers. Every grown up person should be responsible for the keeping of his or her Identity Card. The Identity Card of a child should be kept by the parent or guardian or person in charge of the child for the time being.

4. Anyone finding this Card must hand it in at a Police Station or National Registration Office.

NATIONAL REGISTRATION		
YUPA	35394	----

Registered Address of Above Person

.....

.....

OFFICIAL STAMP

REGISTRATION OFFICE - NATIONAL

51-441

S.J. & CO. LTD. N.R. 101

(Signed).....

Date: 25th November 1941

APP G3306 W:1731/31 1.400w 339 3010 W514

Cut out the Identity Card's outside & inside pages, glue it together and fold.



War News Wartime Edition

Since the outbreak of war some parents have already been following Government advice by moving their children to the country as a safety measure.

Numbers have rapidly increased following the devastation of the German air raids. More beds are needed so if you can provide lodgings for evacuees then contact the appropriate authorities.

Evacuees will still be able to continue with their education, albeit in new surroundings and perhaps they may find the homework a little less boring with so many new activities to experience.



In **HOMWORK IN THE COUNTRY** watch the video **Homework in the Country**. People talk about their school days in the country after being evacuated. Clip includes video inside a wartime classroom.

In the clip you can see what a 1940's classroom looks like. Do you notice any similarities or differences between the 1940's classroom and your classroom today?

How do you think country schools might have been different to city schools? Think about the number of pupils, playtime activities, the surroundings...

What would some of the difficulties have been for young people having to leave their school and start afresh in a new school in a different town?

Travel back in time & visit these old schools...



The Causeway School operated between 1915 and 1962 and is located near the Giant's Causeway. The school operates as a museum and an education centre for visiting schools.



This National School at The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in Omagh was built in 1845.



I was brought up in Albert Bridge fire station. Dad was out at a bomb in a margarine factory and when he came in the next morning, his uniform was all stinking with margarine. It was so stiff with margarine that it stood up on its own. He informed my two brothers and I that we were being evacuated that day.

I was evacuated to my aunt's in Ballymoney and my two brothers were evacuated to Dunmurray, which was very rural then, not like now. I couldn't get used to the quietness in Ballymoney, after being used to all the noise in a fire station, but eventually before I returned to Belfast, I had got used to it and came home with a Ballymoney accent.

You'd worry about how your father was getting on because he was in such a dangerous job in the fire service. We saw them occasionally, maybe once every six months. In those days there wasn't much transport. They had to wait to get transport to Ballymoney, which to me seemed like thousands of miles away.

1. Why do you think Mildred and her brothers were evacuated from Belfast on that particular day? What was happening in Belfast at the time?
2. How do you think Mildred felt about living with her Aunt?
3. What struck Mildred as being the main difference between Ballymoney and Belfast?
4. What do you think life was like for Mildred's father back in Belfast?

STORY: Bert Slader's Farm Journey



In July 1940 I was evacuated to a farm in north Antrim, just before my tenth birthday. The son of my school's principal teacher was meant to go with me but he, like most of the others who were supposed to be evacuated on that day, stayed at home.

I arrived at Ballymoney railway station with a crowd of other evacuees but knowing no one. A woman from the reception committee checked me in and expressed surprise that I was on my own. I was given a lift to my billet by a farmer and had to share the back seat of his little car with a sheep.

The Hodges family treated me like a son of the house. Mr. Hodges was a hard working north Antrim farmer who expected his family and his evacuee to help when necessary. His younger son was called Billy, a year or so older than I, and we became fast friends.

I learned to milk a cow, to tread flax in a dam, to catch eels, to drive cattle, to stack turf, to find the eggs the hens and ducks laid and to bud potatoes. Although some of the farm work was hard, for a ten year old it was a wonderful time.

The only hated chore was budding the potatoes. We did this job inside the shed on a wet day, rubbing the buds off potatoes which had been stored over the winter in mounds called clamps. They were damp, sticky, sprouting white shoots through a coating of mud. The potatoes were crawling with insects, beetles, centipedes, bugs of every description. They crawled all over us, on our clothes, in our hair, up our arms and legs.

In the autumn I came back home, to strict rationing, shortages, soldiers in the streets, the blackout, air raid sirens, the war news on the wireless and the spectacular sight of immense barrage balloons floating above the city.



Reading Comprehension Activity

Read Bert's story about being evacuated to a farm then answer the questions.

1. When was Bert evacuated?
2. How old was he?
3. How do you think Bert felt when he arrived at Ballymoney railway station?
4. Bert was driven to his billet by a farmer. Who else was in the car?
5. What do you think the word 'billet' means?
6. Name 3 new things Bert learned how to do on the farm.
7. Which farm job did Bert not enjoy and why?
8. In the autumn, Bert returned home to the city. What was life like in the city at the time?
9. Do you think Bert preferred life on a farm or life in the city in 1940? Why do you think this?

City & Country Match

Evacuees from cities experienced a very different life when they went to stay in the country. Based on the stories you have heard or read, which of these do you think best describes life in the wartime city and country?

Draw a line connecting the descriptions to the best matching place.

Air Raid Sirens

Strict Rationing

Milking a Cow

The Blackout

Stacking Turf

Shortages

Gathering Hen's Eggs

Quiet

Noisy

Catching Eels

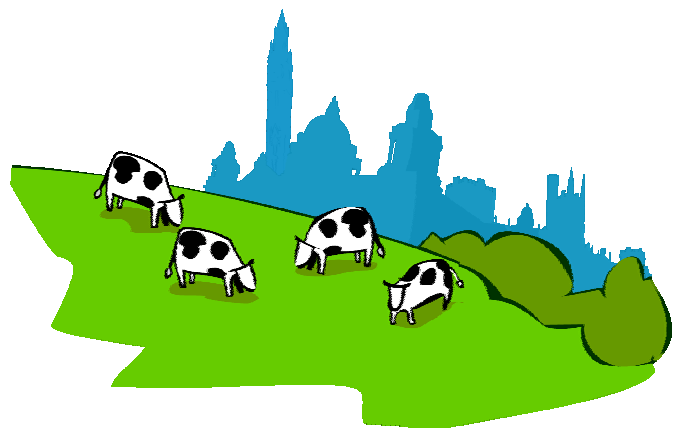
Bombed Buildings

Driving Cattle

City



Country



Digital Storytelling Letters Home



Boys and girls who were evacuated would have written letters to their parents to keep them informed about where they were staying. Remember there were no mobile phones or Internet at the time. Many children rarely saw their parents while they were evacuated so writing letters was very important to keep in touch.

Imagine that you have been evacuated from your town and sent to live in a small village far away from your parents. Write a letter home to your parents telling them all about your experiences in your new home. This letter will then be turned into a digital story using software such as Photo Story or Movie Maker.

Step 1 Writing Your Letter

Your letter should be no longer than 1 page when it is written out. Think about these questions when you are writing your letter:

- What was your journey like?
- In which village or town did you end up?
- Who are you staying with?
- Are there other children staying with you?
- Do you have any sisters & brothers – if so, did they come with you?
- What were your first impressions of your new home?
- What new experiences are you having?
- How are you feeling – are you having fun or are you homesick?
- Are you going to school? What is it like?
- Are you missing anything about your old home?

Step 2 Planning your Digital Story

Use the **Storyboard Worksheet** to plan what pictures and/or video you will need to illustrate your story.

Step 3 Gather your pictures, drawings and video

Collect the pictures and/or you will need to illustrate your story. You can make your own drawings, download pictures from the Internet or re-enact a scene from your story and capture it with a video camera.

Step 4 Using the Computer to Assemble Your Digital Story

1. Open the digital storytelling computer package you are going to use. PhotoStory is good for stories that will not contain video. Windows Movie Maker can be used if you have video to add to your story.
2. Add a title at the start of your digital story.
3. Import your pictures and video into the programme and put in the order they should play.
4. Record your narration. You will need a microphone to do this.
5. Add credits to the end of your digital story.
6. Add music to your story.
7. Experiment with transitions and special effects on your pictures.
8. Save your work & play your finished movie to your classmates!

Storyboard

Write your script into the **Text** column. You may need more than one Storyboard Worksheet to do this. In the **Pictures** column, list what pictures would best illustrate your text and how you are going to get them, for example draw a picture or download a picture from the Internet. If you are using video, you can list that as well.

Text	Pictures



After the air raids on Belfast over 200,000 people escaped from the city to stay in the country where they thought it would be safer. Families in the country helped the evacuees by giving them shelter, food and clothes.

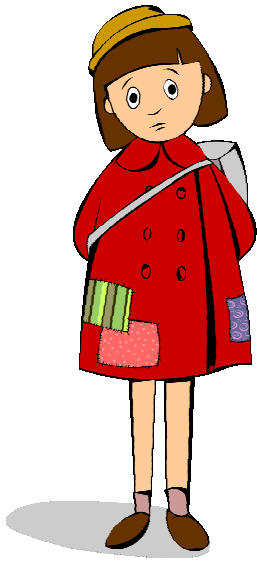
The people who were left behind in Belfast did not sleep in their own beds at night. They fled the city at around 10pm each night to open spaces such as the Falls Park.

20,000 SLEEPING IN THE FIELDS NIGHTLY ORDEAL OF BELFAST FAMILIES

THE nightly evacuation of Belfast by women and children, who sought shelter in the fields and hillsides, was raised in the Northern House of Commons yesterday, following an announcement by the Premier (Mr. J. M. Andrews) to the effect that the Government had decided not to hold a secret session of Parliament.

It was stated during the debate that in one district 20,000 people were sleeping out at night, and the fear was expressed that if 40,000 family huts were not provided around the city before the winter there might be an unspeakable calamity.

1. Describe what it must have been like for families to have to stay the night in the fields with thousands of other people.
2. Why does the article's author say that if family huts were not provided before the winter there would be an 'unspeakable calamity'?



The Woodside Diary

Families in the country who provided shelter for the evacuees from the city were horrified to find so many children from Belfast infested with lice and wasting away from tuberculosis.

Moya Woodside made an invaluable record of the Belfast blitz and its aftermath, noting the level of damage, the panic evacuation that followed, the state of the refugees and their physical condition. The levels of poverty and deprivation, especially in housing, are recorded faithfully.

This extract from the Woodside Diary describes the horrific conditions which refugees and evacuees endured.

My mother telephones to say that she took 8 evacuees last night, 2 mothers and 6 children. Says one mother is about to have another baby any minute, but they are all filthy, the smell in the room is terrible, they refuse all food except bread and tea, the children have made puddles all over the floor, etc. She is terribly sorry for them but finds this revelation of how the other half live rather overpowering.

I feel so restless and can't settle down to anything. Cooking is a problem, one doesn't know what to plan or arrange when the gas may be on this evening or perhaps at half-strength.

Went up to see my mother who is now discovered to her horror that several of the evacuee children have Tuberculosis and 2 have skin diseases on their heads.

Evacuation is taking on panic proportions. Roads out of town are still one stream of cars with mattresses and bedding tied on top. Everything on wheels is being pressed into service. People are leaving from all parts of town and not only from the bombed areas. Where they are going, or what they will find even when they get there, nobody knows. This business presents a problem of a first proportion to Stormont. Belfast is the only large town in Ulster, most of the country towns have also been bombed, and there is absolutely no provision for the reception of and feeding of those vast numbers.

What does this extract tell you about the health of many evacuees?

Why do you think Moya is worried about the large numbers of people who are evacuating Belfast?



Millisle Farm's Jewish Evacuees

Jewish children stayed with families and on farms across Britain. One such farm was based in Millisle, Co Down.

Millisle farm becomes 'the far away home' for Jewish children

The seaside village of Millisle in Co Down played its own small part in holocaust history.

A small group of Jewish children came to live at a Millisle farm during the Second World War. Refugees from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia they had been rescued from their homes after their parents were lifted by the Nazis. This transportation of children, some as young as a few months old, to safe havens in Britain and Ireland was known as the Kindertransport.

Bobby Hackworth was 11 years old when the Jewish children first arrived at the farm in Millisle. He remembers them looking lost and bewildered, with nothing more than the clothes they stood up in. Most of the children couldn't speak English and it must have been strange for them at first. However, they were sent to Millisle School, where each Jewish child was paired up with a Millisle child to help them pick up the language, as well as the local dialect!

The farm was owned by a Dublin man, who had been using it for bleaching linen. When the Jewish Association took it over the aim was for it to be as self-sufficient as possible, rather like a kibbutz. The children had chores to do around the farm and even the youngest ones aged six or seven were expected to do their bit. Local farmers gave help and advice on how to make the farm as productive as possible.

The Jewish children integrated well into the local community and Bobby remembers the great fun they had playing football matches every week. Invitations were extended to each other's concerts. Even if you didn't understand the words you could always appreciate a good tune. Bobby also recalls seeing the children in a horse and cart on their way to Donaghadee railway station to pick up goods. They would also have been taken to the pictures in Donaghadee or the travelling concert shows which were held in Millisle during the summer.

In 1945 the children started to return to Europe and by the end of 1946/beginning of 1947 they had all gone. Bobby knows of only one boy who found his parents. One girl, Edith, remained in Northern Ireland and her family set up a clothing factory in Belfast. Bobby would still be in contact with a number of the children and some have been back to see the farm.



In **JEWISH EVACUEES** watch the videos '**A Kinder Place, A Different World**': **Parts 1 to 6**.

'A Kinder Place, A Different World' is a film by the 2004-05 Primary 5 class of Millisle Primary School. The children of Primary 5 at Millisle Primary School set out to explore this story. Using interviews and on location shots they recreated some of the stories of the children at the Millisle farm.

After watching 'A Kinder Place, A Different World' complete these descriptions about life on Millisle Farm.

Part 1

When the Jewish children first arrived at Millisle Farm they were feeling...

The Jewish children came from many different countries including...

Part 2

The living conditions for the Jews in Millisle Farm were...

Part 3

Jewish families staying at Millisle learned new skills in ...

By October 1940 if you visited the farm you would see ...

Part 4

The Jewish children enjoyed playing ...

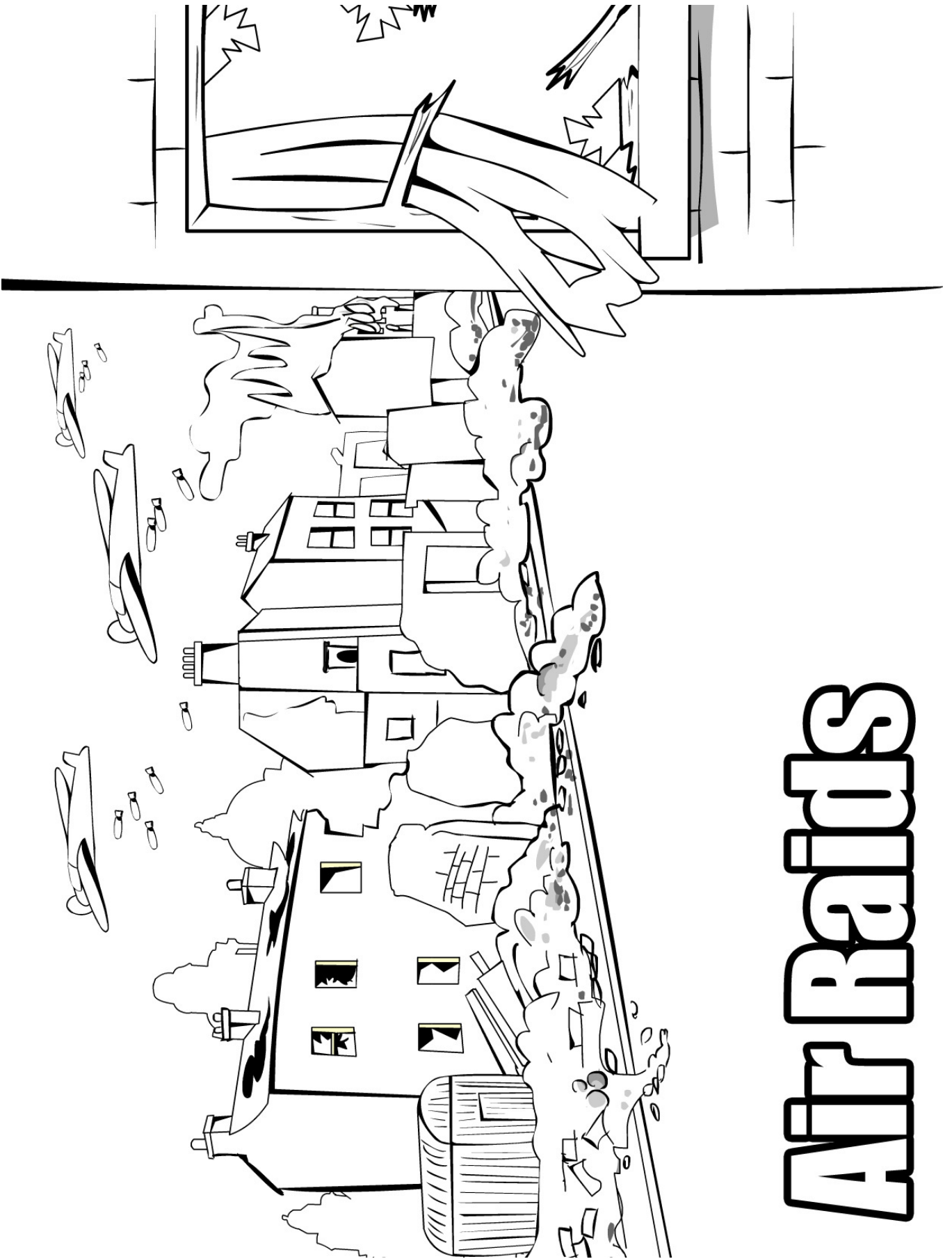
Part 5

The Jewish children didn't talk much about their homes because ...

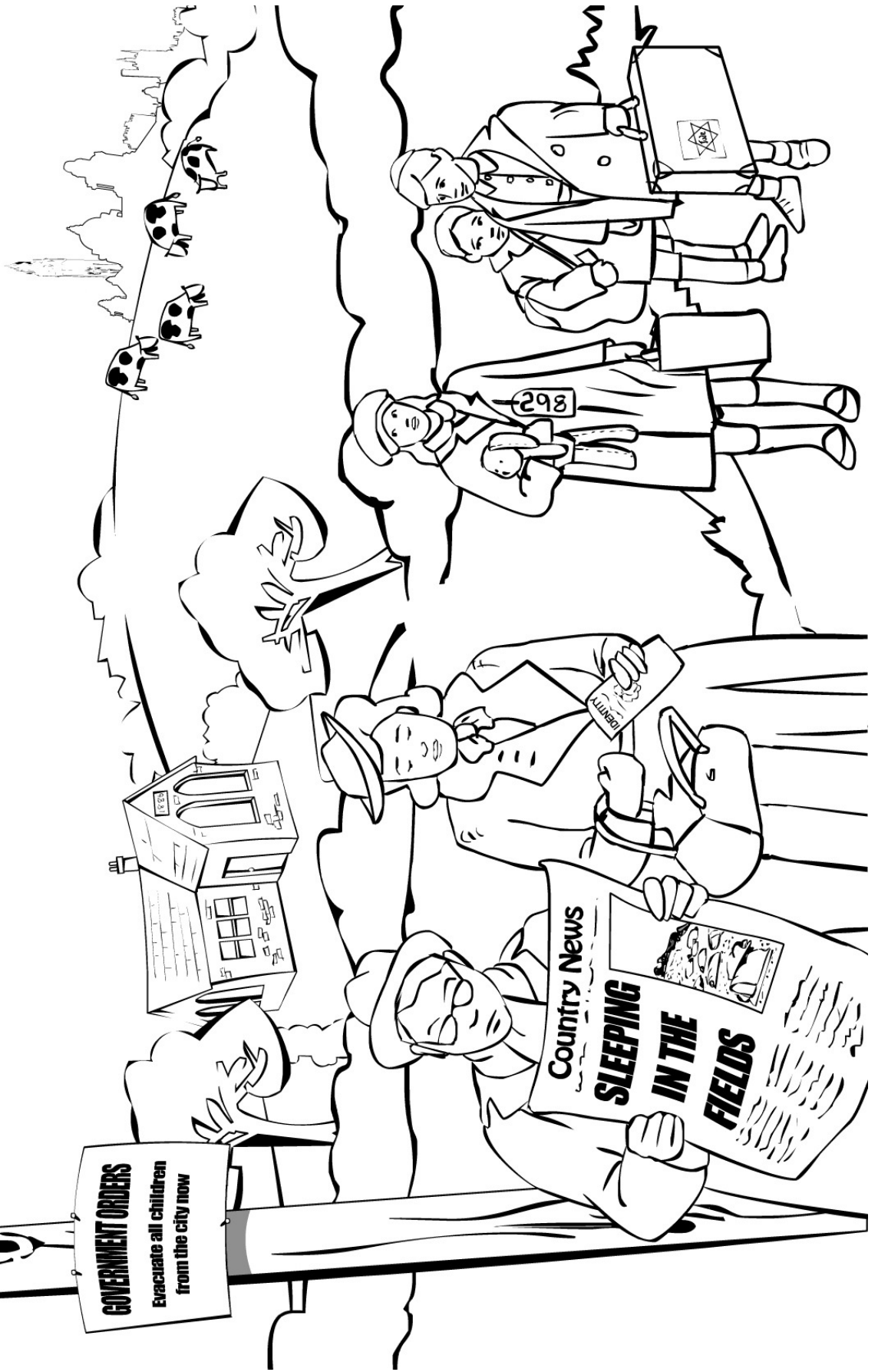
Part 6

Many Jewish refugees remained in Millisle until the end of the war. Unfortunately most refugees never found their...

Air Raids



Evacuation



Evacuation Word Search

I	A	E	S	D	F	U	S	Y	C
D	L	V	O	I	L	T	U	H	P
E	V	A	C	U	A	T	I	O	N
N	B	C	B	F	D	L	T	S	S
T	J	U	E	E	D	R	C	T	S
I	O	E	U	R	L	O	A	F	T
T	U	E	E	I	U	I	S	A	A
Y	R	N	E	N	R	O	E	M	T
C	N	A	T	R	S	A	C	I	I
A	E	R	A	N	B	N	V	L	O
R	Y	I	B	C	X	S	A	Y	N
D	D	F	Q	B	I	L	L	E	T

IDENTITY CARD
EVACUATION
EVACUEE
BILLET

STATION
SUITCASE
HOST FAMILY
LABEL

JOURNEY
CHILDREN
COUNTRY
AIR RAID

Glossary

Billet	Person who houses an evacuee. Householders in the country who housed children were given money by the government.
Billeting Officer	Person responsible for helping to find homes for evacuees
Evacuation	Leaving a place
Evacuee	A person who leaves a place
Host Family	Family who takes care of an evacuee
Identity Card	Identity cards were issued to all persons and included details of holders name, address and signature. They were to be carried at all times and shown when asked for by the authorities.
Kindertransport	A rescue operation initiated by the British Jews for Jewish children in Nazi-occupied countries. Ten-thousand unaccompanied children travelled to the United Kingdom from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland, in sealed trains.
Reception Area	Place where evacuees went to meet a billeting officer who would find them a family to look after them during their evacuation
Refugee	A person who flees from home or country to seek refuge elsewhere, as in a time of war or of political or religious persecution
Transport	To carry from one place to another
Tuberculosis	An infectious disease of humans and animals characterized by the coughing up of mucus, fever, weight loss, and chest pain