



KS2 History – Women and World War II

Understanding how WW2 affected the everyday lives of women.

This lesson will highlight to children all the different roles women had during WW2. They will learn how the government at the time used posters to recruit women to the war effort. They will use their critical thinking skills to analyse whether the posters would have been effective at attracting the attention of women.

Learning Objectives:

- To understand how WW2 affected women.
- To know that posters aimed at women were used in WW2.
- To determine what makes an effective poster.

Success Criteria:

- Children should be able to:
 - Describe the roles women had during WW2.
 - Investigate the language and imagery used in posters aimed at women in WW2.
 - Understand the features of good posters.

KS2 National Curriculum Links:

History – 2c: to identify and describe reasons for, and results of, historical events, situations, and changes in the periods studied, 4a: how to find out about the past from a range of sources of information [for example, stories, eye-witness accounts, pictures and photographs, artefacts, historic buildings and visits to museums, galleries and sites, the use of ICT-based sources], 11b: a study of the impact of the Second World War or social and technological changes that have taken place since 1930, on the lives of men, women and children from different sections of society.

Literacy - 6a: how language changes according to context and purpose.

Resources:

- Images of modern WW2 posters
- Worksheets for analysing posters

Introduction:

Ask the children to look at a selection of modern posters advertising government jobs or notices. Ask them to guess what the message is in each poster. In pairs, the children choose the poster they think is the best, and explain the reasons why.

Ask the children to think of all the things posters should have in them in order to be effective at getting their message across to a large audience. Create a class list of ideas.

Explain to the children that posters were used during WW2, including those aimed specifically at women. Ask the children to look at a small selection of WW2 government posters. Ask the children to identify any unknown words and together work out their meanings.

Then ask the children to identify the imperative verbs (e.g. join, dig, offer) on the posters and ask them why they think they were used.

Finally, create a table on the whiteboard with the headings: 'Feel' 'Hear' and 'Happening'. Ask the children to look at each poster and add any words that come to them that could fit under those headings.

Development:

Paired work:

Ask the children to look at a selection of WW2 posters aimed at women. Ask them to identify any unknown words and look up their meanings. Then ask them to identify all the imperative words. Also, ask them to fill in a 'Feel, Hear and Happening' table.

Once the children have completed their paired work, briefly explain to them why the government at the time used each poster.

Independent work:

Ask the children to look at each poster in more detail. Ask them to look at all the features of the poster, including: font size, body language of figures, look in eyes of figures, colour etc. and write down what each feature is trying to convey to the onlooker. Also, ask the children to mark each poster out of 5 for how good they think it is.

Differentiation:

G&T – Ask the children to re-write the wording for one of the posters they gave a low score. Can they make the poster more persuasive?

SEN – Ask the children to only focus on two or three posters.

Plenary:

Ask the children to make a list of the roles women were asked to do during WW2. Create two lists in front of the children; one showing all the roles women had in the home, and those outside the home. Can they guess what the difference is?

Ask the children to think what role they would have done. Would the poster have attracted them to the role?

Invite the children to highlight all the WW2 posters they gave the highest and lowest scores. Can they add more ideas to their list of what makes a good poster?

End the lesson by showing children a slideshow of all the things women did in WW2 and ask them if they have any questions.

Homework / Extension:

Ask the children to investigate all the posters that were aimed at men during WW2 or ask them to find examples of American WW2 posters. Do they think these posters were better in any way?

Possible Follow-Up Lesson:

Ask the children to design their own WW2 poster for children using the computer.

Copyright 2011 © womenshistorymonth.org.uk. All rights reserved.

www.womenshistorymonth.org.uk