

TEACHERS' OVERVIEW – Our Strong Women Resource

Spark a local history legacy with your thematic study. Explore local land use.

Women and working class people are often missing from the history books. Use this resource to engage primary and secondary sources about women's roles in local history. Investigate local geography.

The Second World War changed local places and people's lives. Explore how wartime changed the roles played by women, and how local land was used. Help document and share the stories of strong women in our community today.

Outcome:

Class display board about local strong women across time

In this resource:

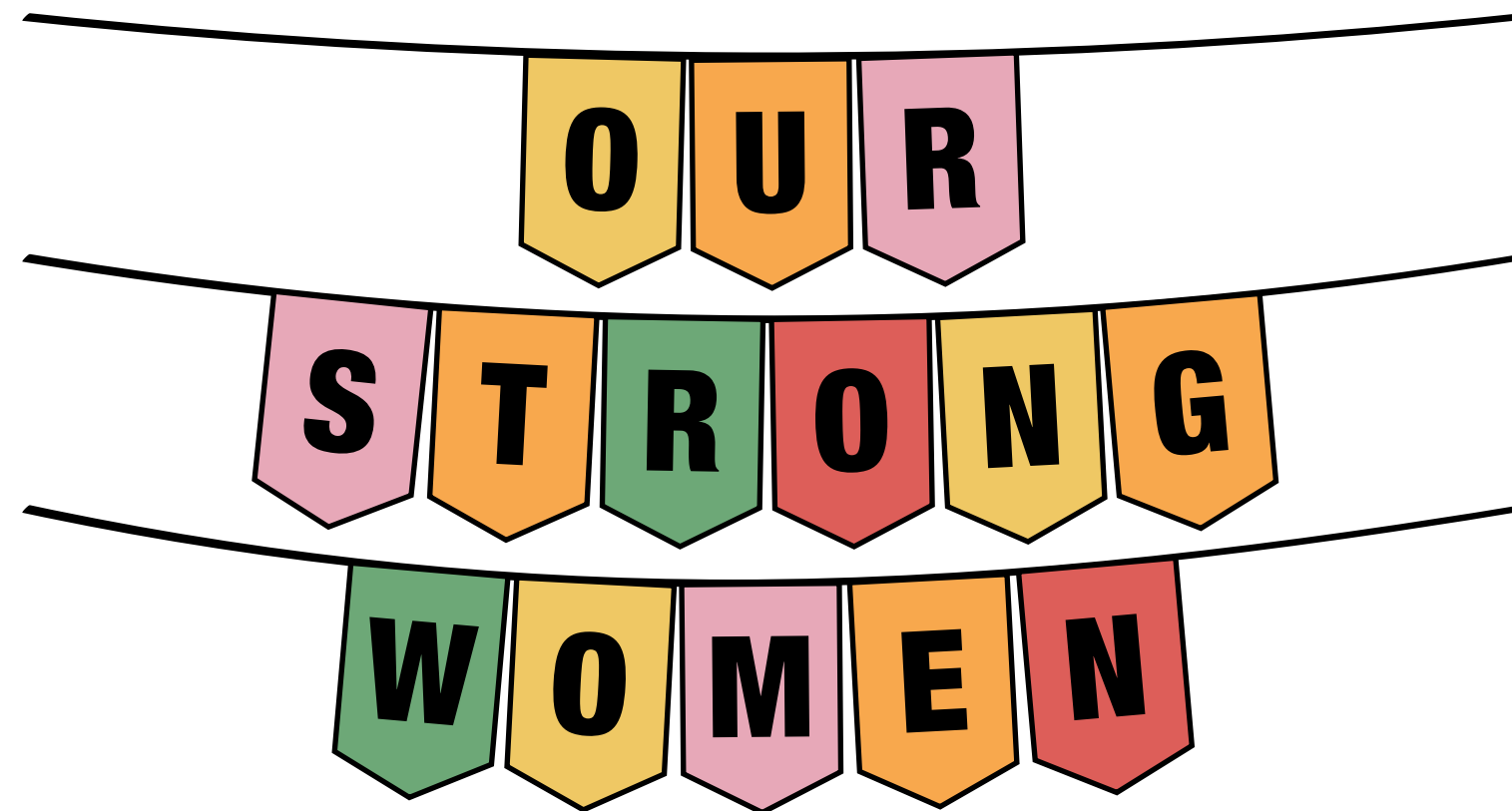
Teacher's guide with steps and prompts
Bunting template
Activity cards for pupils

Aimed at KS2:

The activities have been designed so that they can be completed within half a school day, or stretched out across a longer period and provide focus for a 'history month' or local celebration.



Photographs in this resource by interference-art and Radka Dolinska for Heart of Glass.



Knowsley

Background to this resource:

From 2023 - 2024, Heart of Glass produced public artwork highlighting the untold stories of local women. It was created by mosaic artist Carrie Reichardt, working with artist mentee Claire Eddleston, in collaboration with communities in Knowsley. Inspired by and connected to the Strong Women mural project, this resource encourages children to seek out and celebrate the histories of women in Knowsley.

Produced by:

heartofglass

Funded by:



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Created by interference-art with St Marie's Catholic Primary School, Kirkby, in collaboration with Knowsley Archives.

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TEACHER GUIDE - LEARNING JOURNEY AND OUTCOMES

1 Strong Women Mural Visit



LOCATION: next to The Coffee House, Units 10, 11, Centre Retail Park, Kirkby, Liverpool L32 8US

Can't visit in person? See photos of the mural (and read more) at: heartofglass.org.uk/strong-women

FOCUS: introduce strong women and locations of Knowsley past and present

Take a class visit to see the Strong Women of Knowsley mural to spark conversations about local history. In 2024, mosaic artist Carrie Reichardt collaborated with Knowsley residents to create this beautiful mural. It comprises 540 hearts made in celebration of Strong Women of Knowsley.

Why not start collecting research for your collaborative class display?

Could your class:

- Take rubbings from the mural?
- Make a note of some names / dates?
- Record any found facts?
- Write down any questions pupils might want to research back at school?

2 Strong Words, Strong Women Bunting Class activity



add words and display

FOCUS: communication and teamwork

Collaborate to build a wider vocabulary, and start a class display.

Make a space to map your research and share the findings of your investigation.

- **Activity 2a Strong Words** - make a collaborative class list of all the 'strong' synonyms you can think of.
- **Activity 2b** Cut out the **Strong Women Bunting** templates. Fill the letters with handwritten strong synonyms, then add the finished bunting to your class display area.
- Work in pairs to create one set of bunting, or print another template for pupils to decorate a letter each.

Extend: keep some display space for a glossary of new/challenging words.

3 Mapping Knowsley: 10 townships, local settlements and land use Group / class activity



in small groups search and mark a map

FOCUS: human geography

Locate Knowsley's historic townships on a map and identify local land use.

In 1974, the borough of Knowsley was formed, bringing together ten historic townships.

- **Activity 3a Find our 10 historic townships** - cut out the markers and locate Knowsley's townships on a map.
- **Activity 3b Local settlements and land use:** take a township to search for on a map - identify types of settlements, facilities and types land use.

Extend: visit maps.nls.uk to view an old local map, and compare then and now.



Why not book a visit to Knowsley Archives to learn more?

Explore your local township or history theme in a 'History Detectives' session led by the Archive Team (typically up to 2 hours).

Visit heartofglass.org.uk/strong-women to view their flyer for more information.

TEACHER GUIDE - LEARNING JOURNEY AND OUTCOMES

4 Women of WW2 Knowsley: changing roles and land use
Group / class activity

FOCUS: local history



In small groups read and annotate

Use secondary sources that interpret WW2 material at Knowsley Archives.

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use?

Activity 4 Women of WW2 Knowsley: changing roles and land use:

- Cut out and read one secondary source card per group - there are nine different stories of women and local land use to discover. Write down new words and highlight favourite facts.
- Then discuss the different roles of women - and ways land was used - in Knowsley during the Second World War, and add each group's annotated source cards to your display.

6 Make 'Our Strong Women' display and share their stories

FOCUS: communicate confidently, create a local history legacy



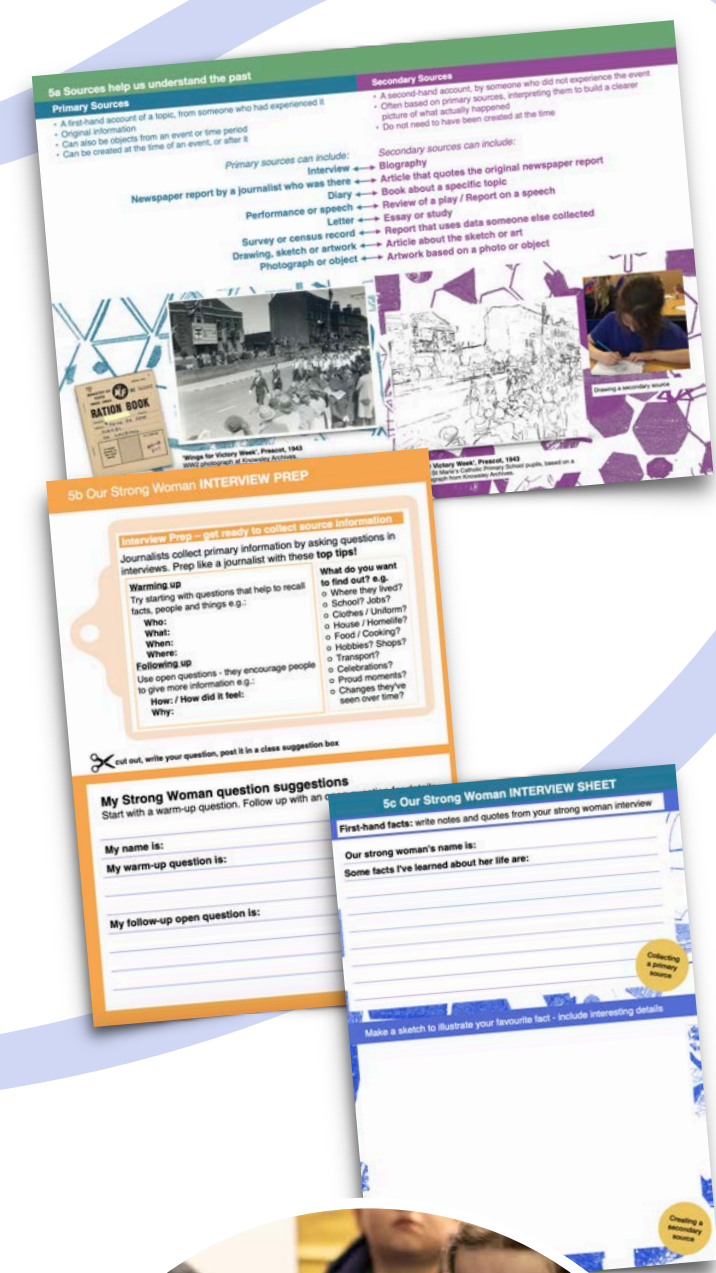
Activity 6 Share Their Stories

Next, how could your class share and keep stories of strong women past and present alive in local memory? e.g.

- Use your display to 'show and tell' other classes or families and carers?
- Do a talk / presentation in assembly?
- Exhibit in a local community space?
- Enter your interview sheets into a writing or art competition in your school / area?
- Upload photos and facts to a local history blog.

5 Sources and Living History: interview a strong woman
Pairs / individual worksheets

FOCUS: local history and oracy



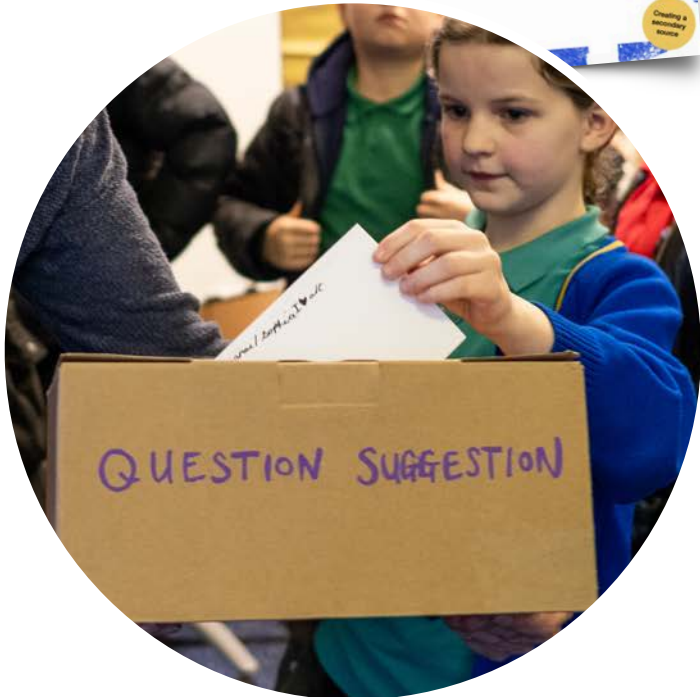
Collect and create primary and secondary historical sources.

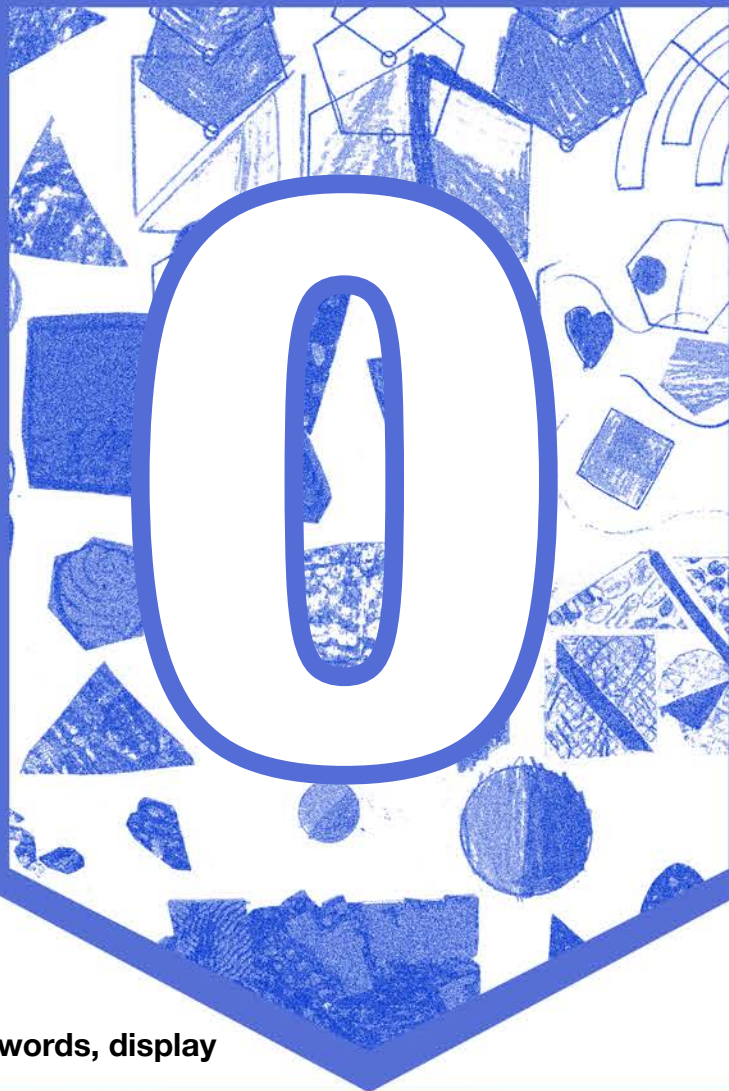
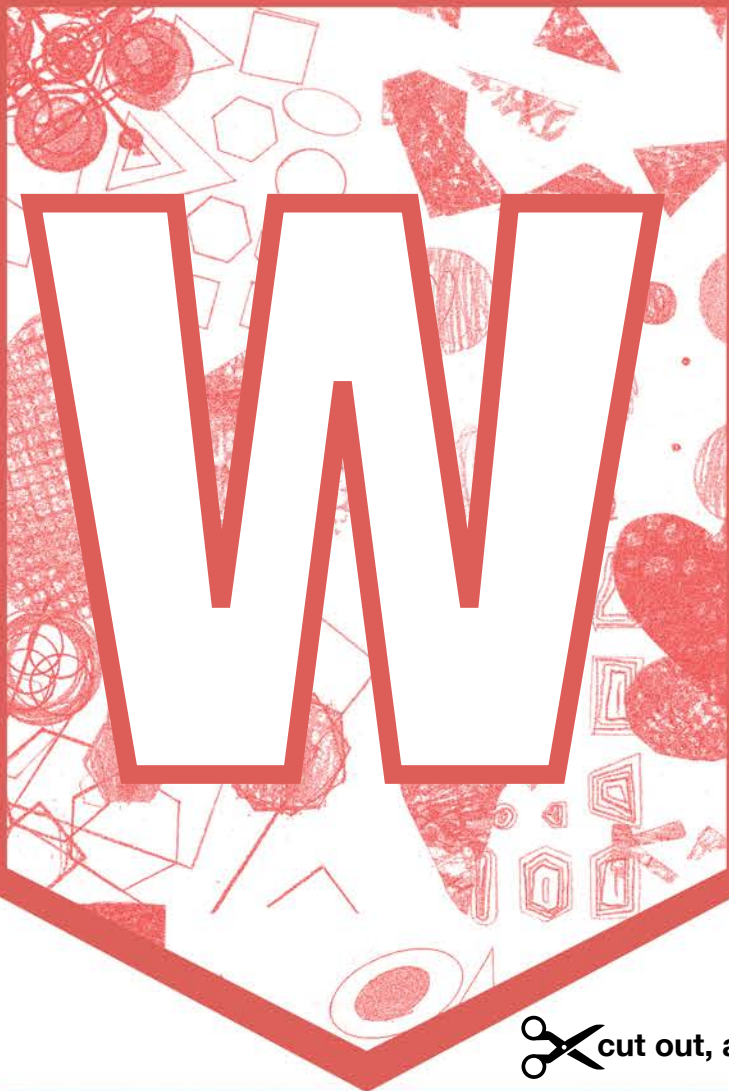
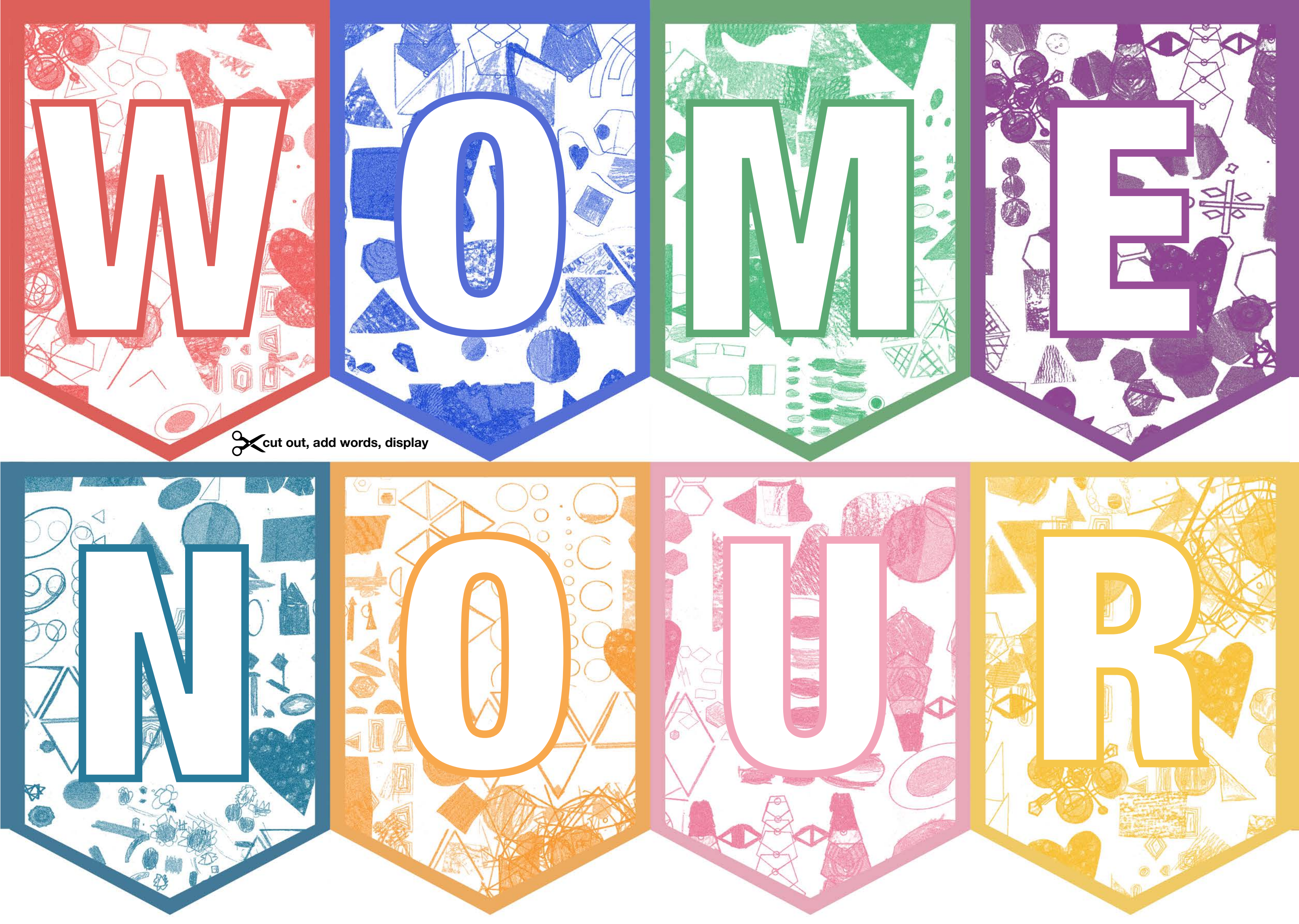
Choose a strong woman to visit your class for an interview. She could be from your school or wider community.

- As a class, display and discuss 5a Sources help us understand the past.
- Use 5b Our Strong Woman Interview Prep to invent open questions. Cut out a card per pupil or pair, write and post questions in a 'question suggestion' box.
- The 'question suggestion' box allows teachers to preview questions.

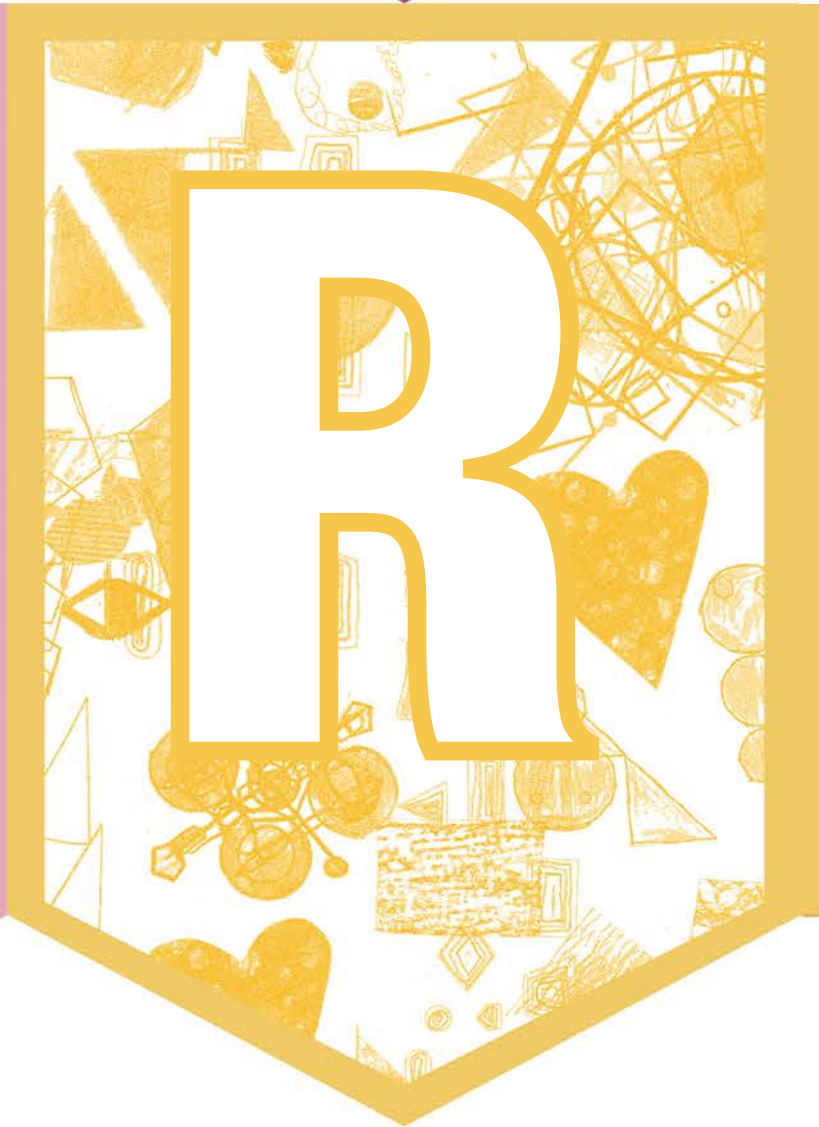
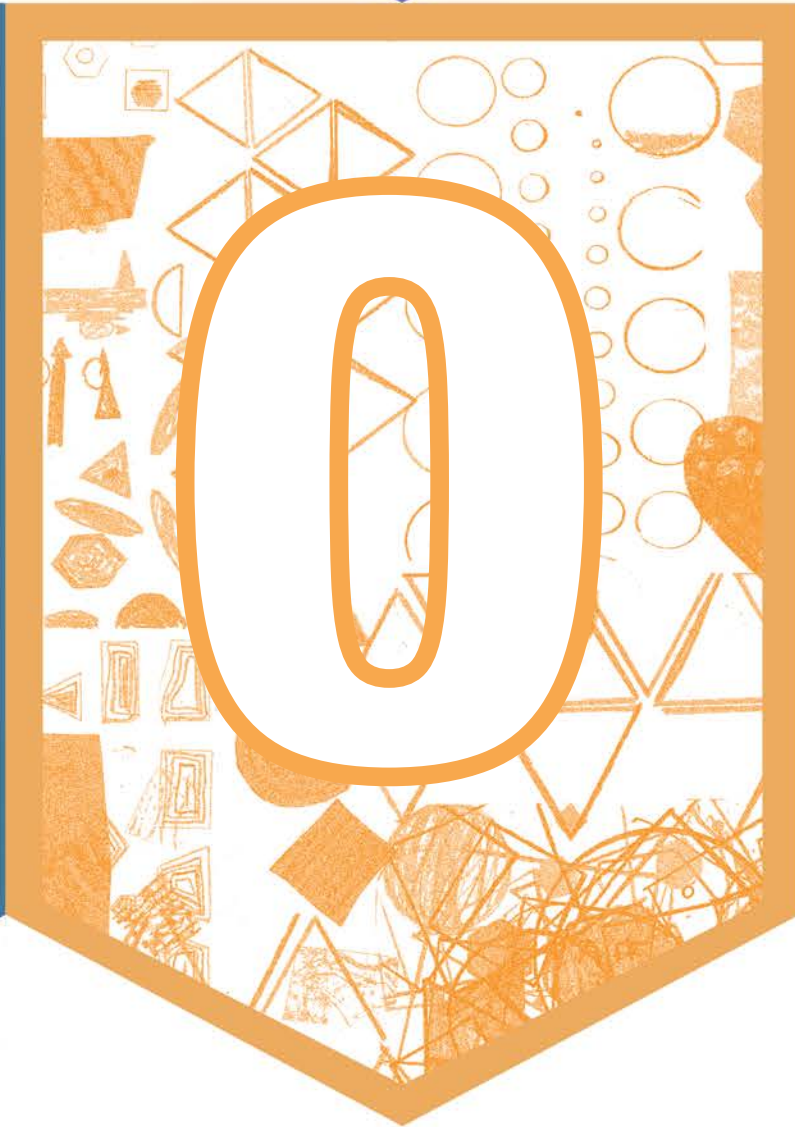
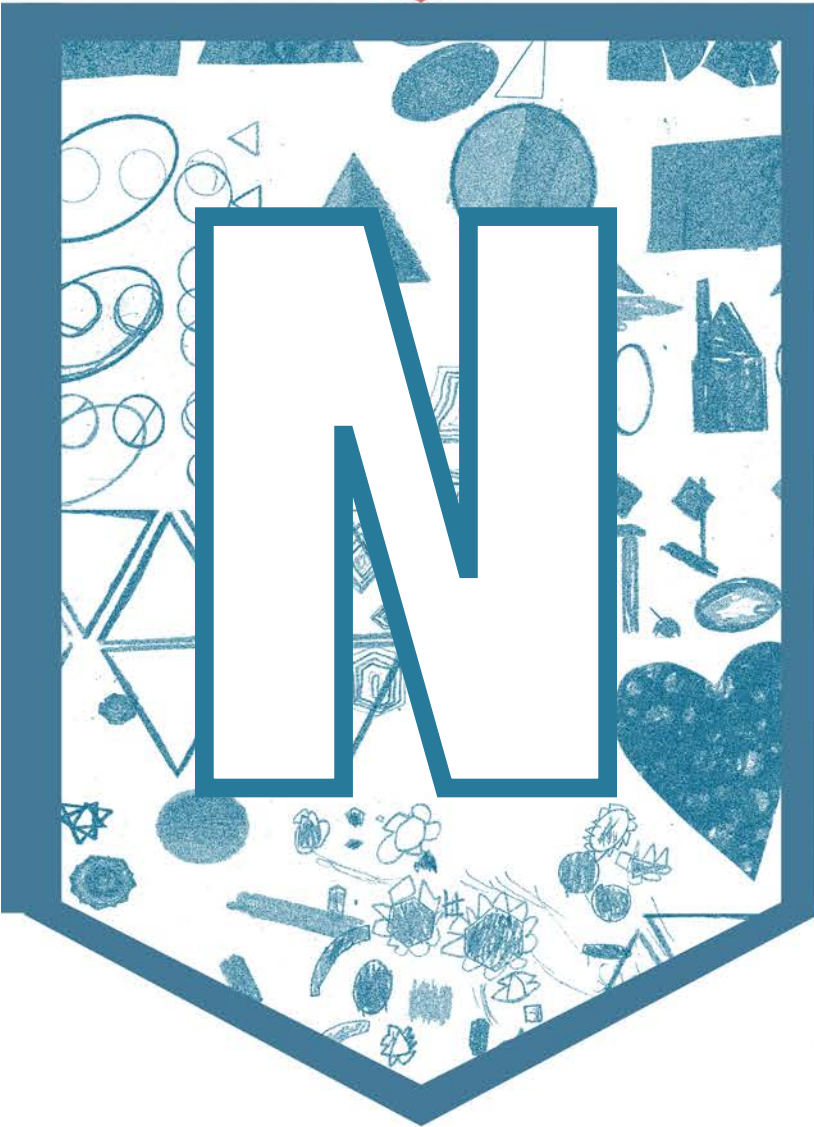
On interview day, your invited strong woman will visit class to answer pupil questions. Pupils can use your selected 5b question cards to interview her.

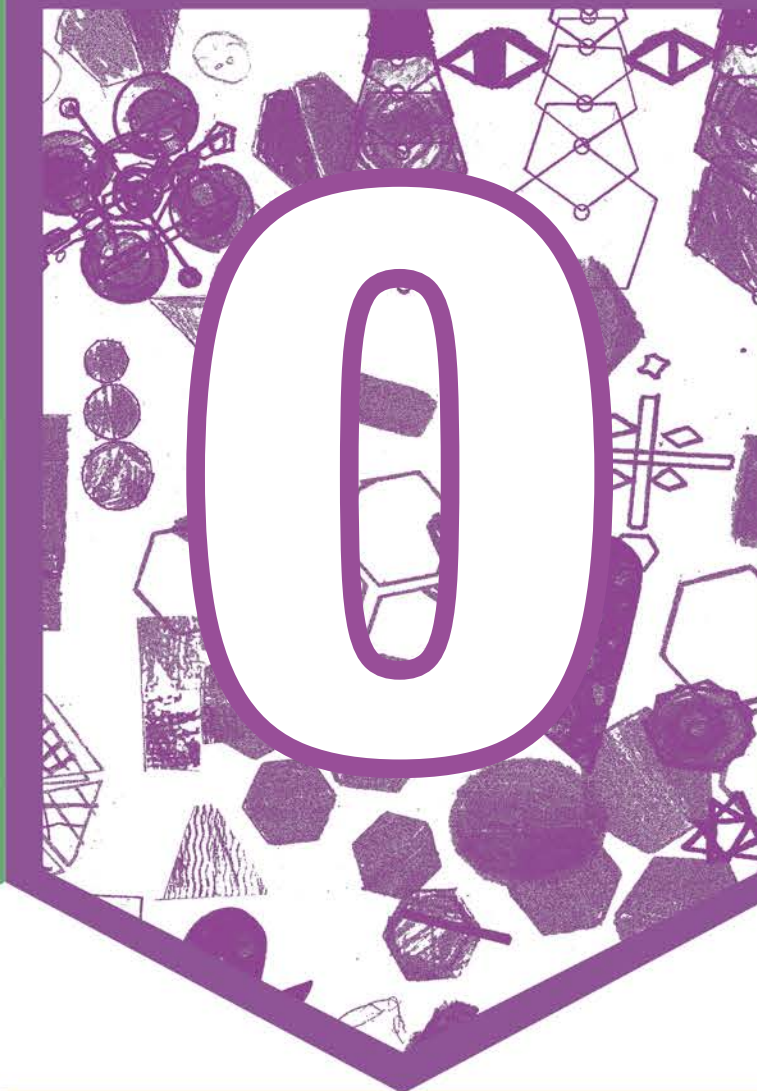
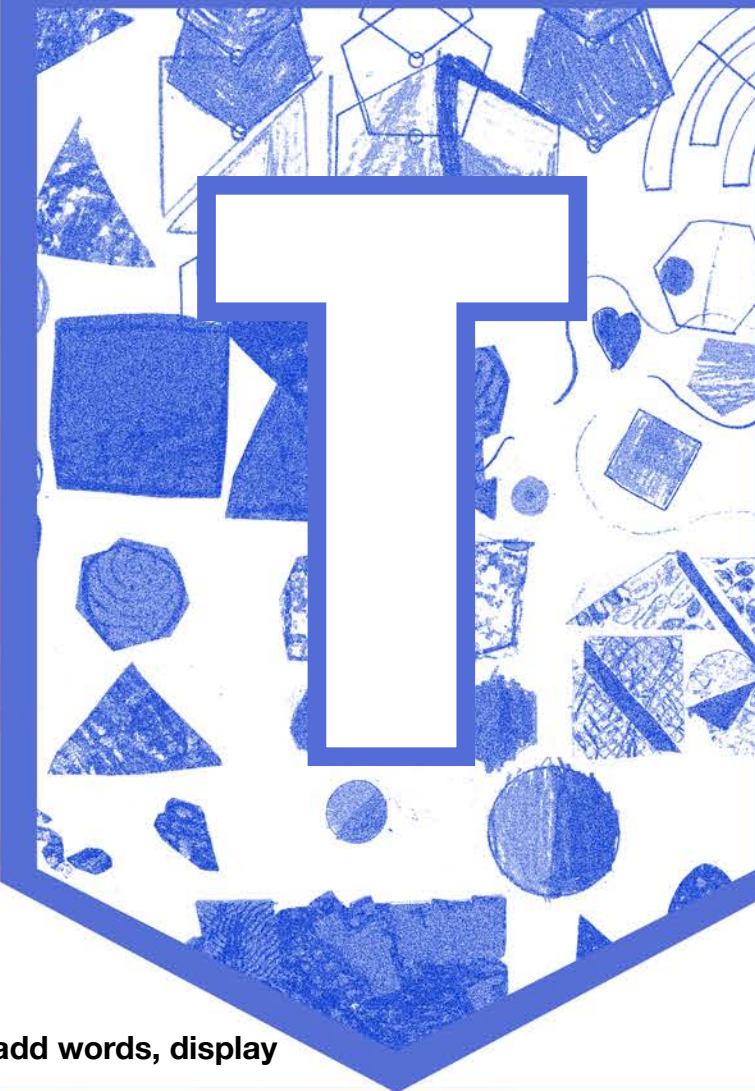
- Use 5c Our Strong Woman Interview Sheet for pupils to record first hand facts during the interview. They can then create secondary source sketches to interpret the facts.
- Finally, pupils' 5c Our Strong Woman Interview Sheets are added to the display board. Gather round and discuss e.g.
 - What have we learned from WW2 secondary source cards, and our own interview?
 - What changes have happened over time: in Knowsley and in the lives of local women?
 - Has anything stayed the same?



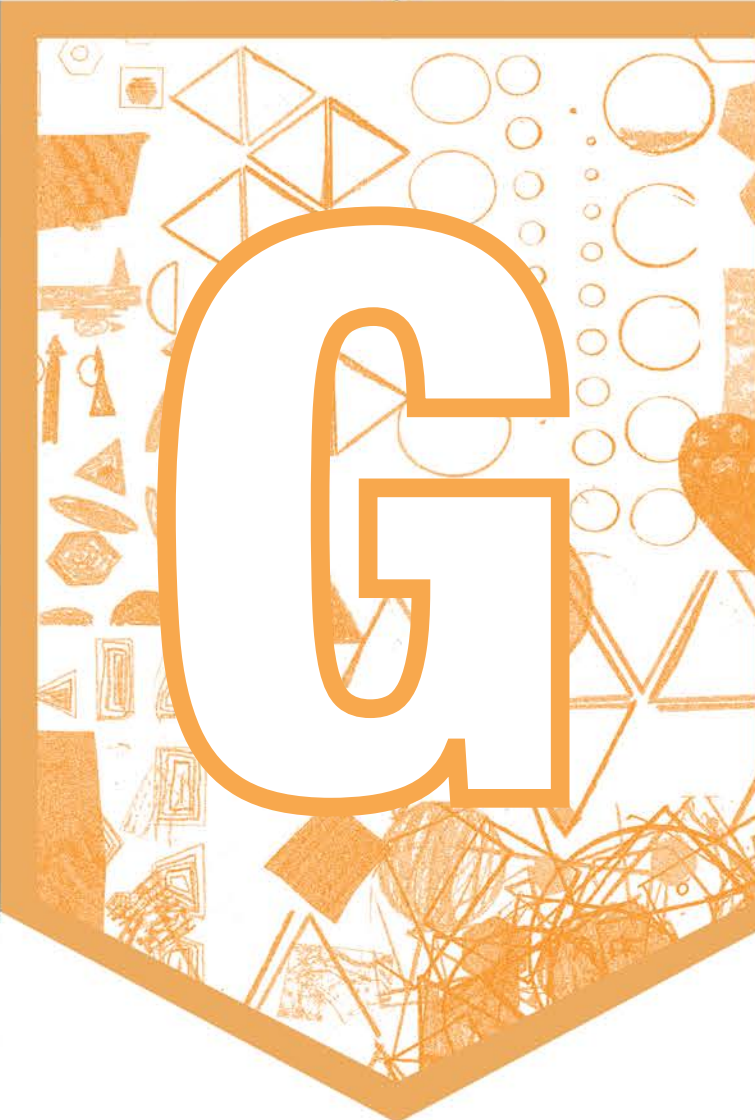


 cut out, add words, display





✂ cut out, add words, display



Mapping Knowsley - find our 10 historic townships



In 1974, the borough of Knowsley was formed. It brought 10 historic townships together. Can you find all ten townships? Use the labels to mark them on a map.

pre scot

Halewood

Roby

Whiston

Tarboeck

Stockbridge village

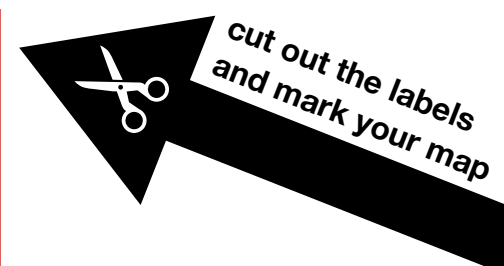
Cronston

Knowsley village

Huyton

Kirkby

Knowsley



Mapping Knowsley - local settlements and land use



How is land used in Knowsley today? Pick a township to search on a local map. Tick off all the types of land use that you find.

Settlements are places where people live and sometimes work. They can be small or large depending on how many people live there and how many facilities there are.

Facilities are places where certain things happen e.g.: schools for education, parks for playing or shops for buying.

Name of township:

It is: ☐ town ☐ village
☐ rural ☐ urban

What types of land use can you see?

- ☐ Agricultural (farms)
- ☐ Industrial (factories, storage)
- ☐ Commercial (shops, malls)
- ☐ Residential (houses, flats)
- ☐ Transportation (roads, railways)
- ☐ Other (make a note below e.g. park, forest, hospital, school)

Ordnance Survey maps use symbols to show facilities. Draw your own map symbol to represent a facility. Label your symbol.

Compare then and now – take a look at an old map of your locality: What was the land being used for? What's changed? Is anything the same? Why might that be? [Search historic maps at: maps.nls.uk]



Farmer's wife feeds the pigs, c. 1950s.

Glossary

- ration: fixed amount of a thing (e.g. food) officially allowed to each person during wartime (time of shortage)

New words - or - A question I have:

Rationing and Food

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use?
Read then highlight your favourite fact.

During the Second World War there were food shortages in Britain. Food rationing was introduced in January 1940.

Butter, ham, bacon and sugar were restricted - people could only buy a limited amount to ensure there was enough to go around. By 1942, most other foods were added to the ration list (including chocolate and sweets!).

Even in towns, groups of families would keep a pig and share the meat from it. Many women and children helped to farm animals for food.

Food rationing continued until 1954.



Harvesting the potato crop at an unidentified Kirkby farm, c. 1930s.

Glossary

- harvest time: the time of year when crops are ripe and ready to be gathered
- munitions: weapons and ammunition

New words - or - A question I have:

Farming

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use?
Read then highlight your favourite fact.

Kirkby women were active in harvesting the local potato crop before, during and after the Second World War.

Kirkby was a rural place with many farms, until the war. Everybody would work in the fields at harvest time. Children were given time off school to help harvest the crops.

In 1939 over 250 residents and workers of twelve farms in Kirkby were told to leave. Their farmland was cleared to build a wartime munitions factory.

After the war the land did not return to being farms. Today it is an industrial site.

Dig For Victory

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use?
Read then highlight your favourite fact.

Before the Second World War Britain used to import about 2/3 of the food people ate. Supply ships transported food from other countries, across the sea to the UK.

During wartime German submarines and bombers stopped many of these ships from bringing food to the UK. Very little food made it safely to Britain, so supplies of essentials ran low.

The UK government started the Dig For Victory campaign in 1940. The campaign encouraged people to use gardens and allotments to grow food. Here in our local area, land was given to people by the council to be used as allotments. Many women locally - and across the country - took on volunteer roles growing food.



Woman digging an allotment, c. 1942.

By 1943 over 1.4 million people in Britain had allotments and were producing over a million tons of vegetables a year. Growing food was still important after the war ended in 1945, as food rationing continued until 1954.

Glossary

- import: to bring (goods or services) into a country from abroad for sale
- allotment: a plot of land rented for growing vegetables or flowers
- volunteer: someone who offers their time and skills to an organisation or cause without being paid

New words I've learned - or - A question I have:



Huyton Youth Fellowship Keep Fit Class, c. 1944.

Being Active

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use?
Read then highlight your favourite fact.

People on the Home Front had to adapt to new challenges during the Second World War. Many women took on jobs - such as factory and farm work - which were physically demanding.

Keep Fit classes - like the one in the picture - became part of many women's regular routine. As well as keeping physically fit, doing an activity together helped women's wellbeing.

Keep Fit classes were often held in community halls and schools. This was so that lots of women could take part.

Glossary

- Home Front: the civilian population and activities carried out in their home country to support the war effort

New words - or - A question I have:



St John Ambulance Nursing Reserve, Huyton, 1944.

Health

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use?
Read then highlight your favourite fact.

During the Second World War extra nurses were needed to care for people on the Home Front. Women were called on to join the Civil Nursing Reserve.

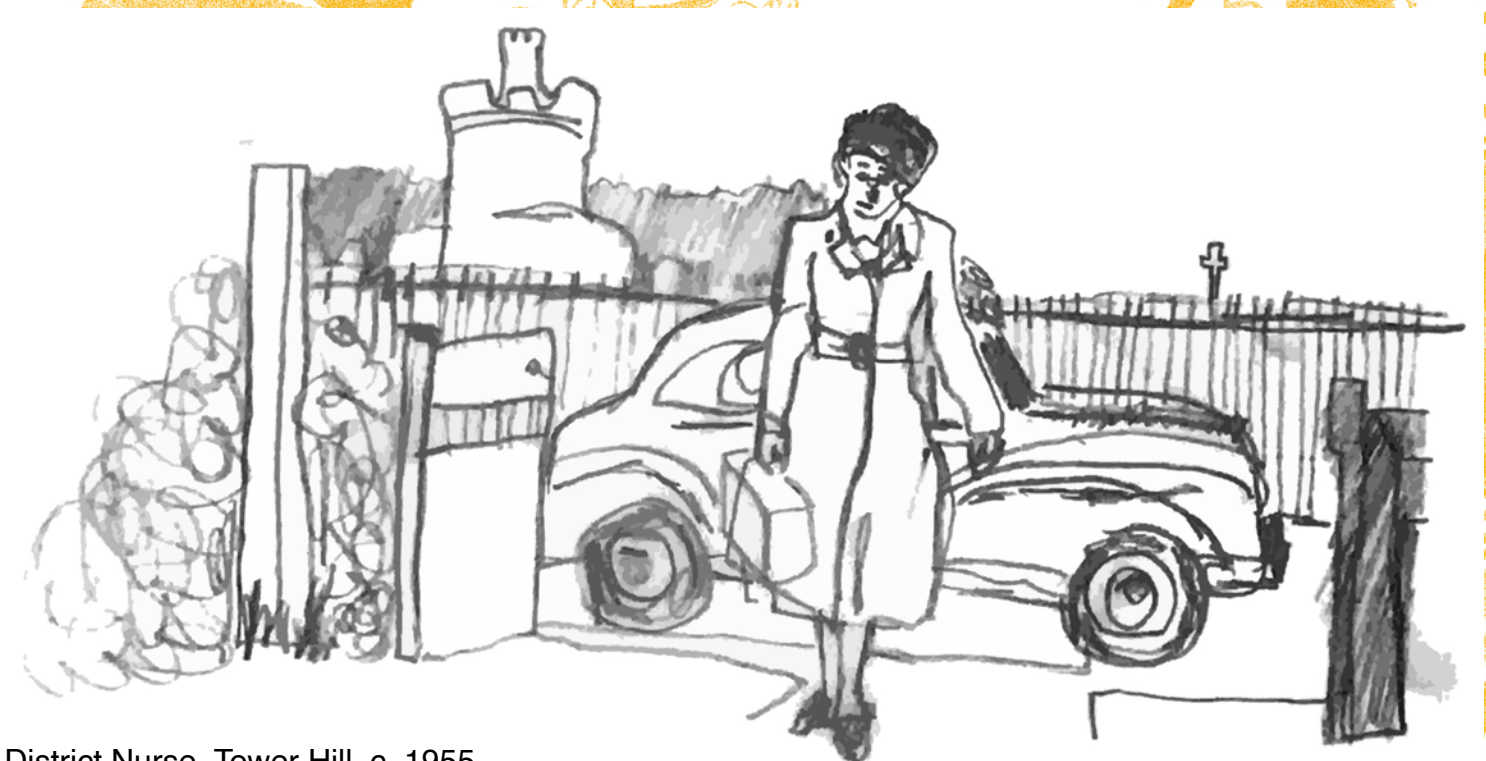
Nursing Auxiliaries (NAs) were women aged 18 to 55 who volunteered through the Civil Nursing Reserve. They had two weeks' training at a hospital in: first aid, home nursing and practical hospital work.

Once they had passed training, NAs might be required to work at hospitals, first aid posts or on casualty evacuation trains. Many NAs worked in areas far from home.

Glossary

- Civil Nursing Reserve: organisation which provided nurses for civilian wartime hospitals and first aid posts

New words - or - A question I have:



District Nurse, Tower Hill, c. 1955.

The National Health Service (NHS)

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use?
Read then highlight your favourite fact.

Before the NHS, access to health care was unaffordable for most people. People who could afford to paid a subscription (regular fee) for nursing care.

In Knowsley, Kirkby, Lydiate and Melling Nursing Association provided care in exchange for a subscription, collected each week. The subscription covered health care costs for the whole family, except married sons and daughters. They had to apply and pay for their own memberships.

The Second World War made people want to rebuild a better society. Important to this was making sure everyone's health was cared for. The National Health Service (NHS) was started on 5th July 1948, providing mostly free healthcare for all.

The illustration shows a real NHS district nurse paying a home visit to a resident of Tower Hill. In the background is Kirkby's waterworks tower, a local landmark (now demolished).

Glossary

- subscription: an amount of money a person pays regularly to receive a service

New words - or - A question I have:



Munitions workers, ROF Kirkby, c. 1945.

Glossary

- munitions: weapons and ammunition
- TNT: trinitrotoluene was one of the main explosives made to fill munitions shells

New words - or - A question I have:

War Work

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use? **Read then highlight your favourite fact.**

Most of the 20,000 workers at the Royal Ordnance Factory (ROF) in Kirkby were women. Filling munitions (bombs, shells) was dangerous work. Sadly, many workers were killed or suffered injuries. Workers at Kirkby received 37 awards for acts of bravery.

Regular contact with chemicals in TNT turned workers' skin yellow - and led to them being called "Canary Girls".

Around 10% of all ammunition used in the Second World War by Britain was produced at the ROF in Kirkby.

'British Restaurants'

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use? **Read then highlight your favourite fact.**

'British Restaurants' were community kitchens set up across the country during the Second World War. Schools and churches were often used because they had dining halls and kitchens. In around 1941 the British Restaurant in Huyton was renamed the Derby Restaurant.

Food rations did not go very far or offer much variety. From 1940, British Restaurants provided affordable, nutritious meals for people who:

- had been bombed out of their homes
- had run out of ration coupons
- were too busy working to cook
- needed help for other reasons

One reason that meals could be offered so cheaply was because the cooking, serving and washing up was done by volunteers. The Women's Voluntary Service ran these community kitchens, unpaid.

By 1943 there were 2,160 British Restaurants across the country. To give an idea of how common they were: there are around 1,400 McDonald's restaurants in the UK today.

Though food rationing continued until 1954, the government ended the British Restaurants scheme in 1947.



"British Restaurant", c. 1941.

Glossary

- community kitchens: places where people come together to cook, eat, and build relationships
- ration: fixed amount of a thing officially allowed to each person during wartime
- volunteer: someone who offers their time and skills to an organisation or cause without being paid

New words I've learned - or - A question I have:



Telephone exchange switchboard, Royal Ordnance Factory, Kirkby, 1945.

Glossary

- telephone exchange: where a 'switchboard' operator uses switches to connect each call to the right person
- Royal Ordnance Factory: government factory making weapons and ammunition

New words - or - A question I have:

War Work and Land Use

How did the Second World War change the roles of women and local land use? **Read then highlight your favourite fact.**

During the war: the Royal Ordnance Factory (ROF) was built in rural Kirkby - away from the city - to minimise danger from any explosions.

Over 20,000 people - mostly women - came to work at the ROF. Most travelled in from Liverpool, Birkenhead and St Helens. Getting to and from the remotely located factory was a problem - so a train station was built to help!

After the war: the ROF closed. Kirkby Industrial Estate was created on the site. New housing was built, attracting lots of people to move from Liverpool to Kirkby.

5a Sources help us understand the past

Primary Sources

- A first-hand account of a topic, from someone who had experienced it
- Original information
- Can also be objects from an event or time period
- Can be created at the time of an event, or after it

Primary sources can include:

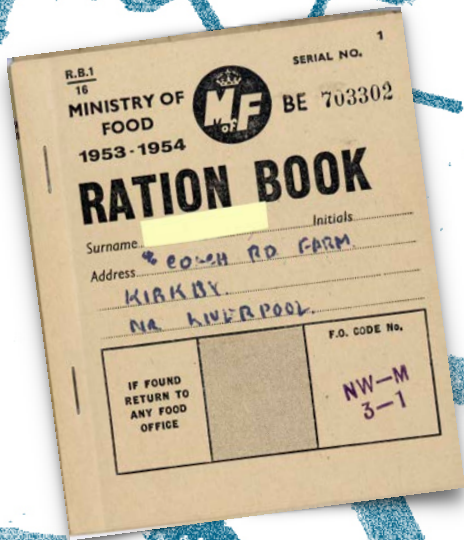
- Interview
- Newspaper report by a journalist who was there
- Diary
- Performance or speech
- Letter
- Survey or census record
- Drawing, sketch or artwork
- Photograph or object

Secondary Sources

- A second-hand account, by someone who did not experience the event
- Often based on primary sources, interpreting them to build a clearer picture of what actually happened
- Do not need to have been created at the time

Secondary sources can include:

- Biography
- Article that quotes the original newspaper report
- Book about a specific topic
- Review of a play / Report on a speech
- Essay or study
- Report that uses data someone else collected
- Article about the sketch or art
- Artwork based on a photo or object



Ration Book, 1953.
Knowsley Archives.



'Wings for Victory Week', Prescott, 1943.
WW2 photograph at Knowsley Archives.



'Wings for Victory Week', Prescott, 1943.
Drawing by St Marie's Catholic Primary School pupils, based on a
WW2 photograph from Knowsley Archives.



Drawing a secondary source.

Interview Prep – get ready to collect source information

Journalists collect primary information by asking questions in interviews. Prep like a journalist with these **top tips!**

Warming up

Try starting with questions that help to recall facts, people and things e.g.:

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Following up

Use open questions - they encourage people to give more information e.g.:

How: / How did it feel:

Why:

What do you want to find out? e.g.

- Where they lived?
- School? Jobs?
- Clothes / Uniform?
- House / Homelife?
- Food / Cooking?
- Hobbies? Shops?
- Transport?
- Celebrations?
- Proud moments?
- Changes they've seen over time?

 cut out, write your question, post it in a class suggestion box

My Strong Woman question suggestions

Start with a warm-up question. Follow up with an open question for details.

My name is:

My warm-up question is:

My follow-up open question is:

First-hand facts: write notes and quotes from your strong woman interview

Our strong woman's name is:

Some facts I've learned about her life are:

Collecting a primary source

Make a sketch to illustrate your favourite fact - include interesting details

Creating a secondary source