ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Risky Business!

Risk Assessing the dangers of life in the past.
**Overall Objective**

To help learners to develop their powers of observation, their ability to think both logically and flexibly, and anticipate problems and likely consequences.

**Specific Objectives**

Learners will be given opportunities to:
- gather information from sources;
- consider and discuss ideas & possibilities;
- draw conclusions from evidence;
- share and justify their opinions and ideas.

**Brief Description**

All teachers are familiar with the essence of Risk Assessment, but how many have thought about the potential for this process as a challenging thinking and communication-based activity for learners? In this session, we introduce learners to the basic principles of RA, using simple contemporary examples of potentially dangerous situations. Then, using historical pictures, we move on to risk assess situations from the past, encouraging learners to pick out possible hazards and consider both their potential severity and the likelihood that they could occur. Learners then carry out their own assessments in groups or pairs, the outcomes of which will be shared and discussed with the whole class. As this is an easy activity to differentiate, tasks can be set with varying levels of challenge, according to the abilities of the different groups. RA is a rich and engaging activity which really helps learners to not only focus on detail, but also to consider various possibilities and consequences.

NB This activity can be run with a focus EITHER on life in Tudor or Stuart times, OR on life in 19th century industrial towns.
**Background**

Asking children to risk assess pictures from the past is a wonderful medium for developing their powers of observation, critical thinking and communication, through a specific, targeted activity which can easily be differentiated. It is also a technique which can be applied to photographs from many other situations or subjects, and even extended to cover buildings and specific environments. Further teachers’ notes and resources are available (see below).

Teachers can choose a focus for this session of *either* life in *19th century towns*, *or* life in *Tudor or Stuart* times.

---

**Additional Resources**

Risk Assessment activities, with resources and background notes for teachers, occur in two of the Don Trueman Educational Topic Plans (for life in Tudor times and life in 19th century industrial Wales). They can also be bought as part of smaller ‘Mini Enquiry Plans’, each covering a particular key question: Mini Enquiry Plan, Key Question 2 - What was it like to live in a Tudor town? (cost £12) and Mini Enquiry Plan, Key Question 4 - Was a 19th century Welsh town a good place to live? (cost £10).
Risky Business! - Risk Assessing the dangers of life in the past

SKILLS OVERVIEW

ENQUIRY:
asking questions ➡ studying evidence to find answers ➡ developing observational powers ➡ discussing ideas & possibilities ➡ drawing conclusions & offering explanations.

Contemporary Risk Assessment
Oracy - listening; collaboration & discussion;
Thinking - asking questions; cause & effect; patterns & relationships (e.g. between hazards and potential outcomes);

Historical Risk Assessment
Oracy - listening; collaboration & discussion;
Thinking - asking questions; cause & effect; patterns & relationships (e.g. between hazards and potential outcomes);

Group Exercise & Feedback
Oracy - listening; collaboration & discussion;
Thinking - asking questions; cause & effect; patterns & relationships; forming opinions.
**Specific Links to Key Learning Skills - (e.g. Tudors version)**

Learners will have opportunities to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORACY</th>
<th>THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- from the Literacy Framework (based on Year 4)</td>
<td>- from the Skills Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* listen carefully to presentations and show understanding of main points; * after listening, respond, giving views on what the speaker has said; (e.g. by participating in class discussions); * contribute to group discussion and help everyone take part; * help a group to reach agreement, e.g. considering reasons or consequences, keeping focus on the topic; (e.g. by participating actively in group risk assessment exercise).</td>
<td>* Use some prior knowledge to explain links between cause and effect or justify inferences/predictions; (e.g. in explaining how some hazards may lead to particular outcomes); * Identify, describe and begin to explain patterns and relationships; (e.g. between hazards, risks and potential outcomes (i.e. the danger; how likely it is to happen; what could happen as a result); * Consider different interpretations and distinguish between ‘facts’, beliefs and opinions, giving reasons; (e.g by recognising that different learners may assess risks differently, or that there might be more than one possible outcome to a risk); * Form considered opinions and make informed decisions; (e.g. about hazards, risks and outcomes).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>