History Reporters: The Interwar Peace Movement

This cross-curricular, three-part lesson introduces students to a hands-on approach to source-based historical research as they investigate the interwar peace movement through archival documents found within the Institute of Education’s archive collections.

Using the collection of the National Union of Women Teachers (the NUWT), students investigate photographs, correspondence and campaign material. The NUWT formed to campaign for equal pay for women teachers, but also campaigned on a range of other issues—including the peace movement.

Part One reviews primary and secondary sources as students explore how to decide whether a source is reliable or not.

Part Two introduces students to archives, the interwar peace movement, and three organisations active in the movement’s cause.

Part Three has students take on the role of newspaper reporters in the 1930s, reporting on an upcoming disarmament demonstration at Royal Albert Hall.

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Throughout the activities, students are encouraged to question, wonder, and investigate.
Citizenship
- Critical thinking and enquiry
- Advocacy and representation; active citizenship
- Taking informed and responsible action

History
- Chronological understanding
- Cause and significance
- Historical enquiry and interpretation
- Using evidence
- British History; European and World history

English
- Understanding texts
- Reading for information and meaning
- Breadth of study including non-literary texts
- Writing with a range of forms
- Adapt writing style and language

Prior Learning
- Students will be somewhat familiar with the First and Second World War; perhaps the Interwar Period; and Britain during the 1930s.
- Students will be familiar with the basic features of newspaper articles and bias.

Lesson Goals and Objectives
- To know how to decide whether a source is reliable or not.
- To recognise the similarities between the responsibilities of a historian and news reporter.
- To use archives to investigate the interwar peace movement

Key Terms
- Archives, Disarmament, Demonstration, Primary Sources, Secondary Sources

Materials
- Chart paper & markers; IWB
- Images or objects of primary and secondary sources relating to the First or Second World War
- Appendix 1: Archive images displayed in class
- Appendix 2: ‘Who’s Who’ handout (1 copy per group)
- Appendix 3: Peace movement archives (2 copies per group)
- Appendix 4: ‘Investigating’ handout (1 A3 copy per group)
- Appendix 5: ‘History Reporters Research’ handout (1 copy per student)

Year 6 students work in a group as they investigate an archival letter from the League of Nations (found in Appendix 3).

London, 2014
Institute of Education Archives
PART ONE: SOURCE-BASED HISTORY

‘Only to say, how it really was’
- Leopold von Ranke

Materials:
Images or objects of primary and secondary sources related to the First and Second World War.

Examples:
- a letter from a soldier to his wife (primary);
- a British Army Uniform from 1940 (primary);
- a nonfiction book on World Heroes of World War II (secondary);
- a textbook on the Second World War (secondary).

What are Sources?
Encourage students to consider the term ‘source-based history’. Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886), a German historian, is known as the founder of modern source-based history. Display his quote and encourage students to discuss what he meant mean when he said, ‘Only to say, how it really was’.

Review the two main types of sources: primary and secondary.
Primary Sources: come from the time the historian is studying.
Secondary Sources: do not come directly from the events that the historian is studying. They are based on other sources.

Display sources a researcher may use to study the First or Second World War. Students vote on whether the source is primary or secondary. To challenge student’s thinking, re-present a source which could be either primary or secondary, depending on the area of study.

Take, for example, the textbook on the Second World War: if you are researching how the war has been taught to school children from 1950-present day, would this source be primary or secondary? Secondary because it comes from the time you are studying...

Historiographers & Reporters...
Introduce students to the term historiography (noun) and its definition:
The writing of history, especially:
- critically examining sources
- the selection of details in those sources
- the arrangement of those details into a narrative that stands the test of critical examination

Discuss each point. What is a narrative? Can a narrative be nonfiction? How might one examine historical writing to see if it ‘stands up to the test’?

Consider the similarities between a historical researcher and a journalist or news reporter...

How is historiography similar to journalism? How is it different?

Both rely on research, facts; tell non-fictional accounts; historiographers and journalists are prone to bias in themselves and their sources...

Historiography is reports on events of the past, while journalists report on current events.

How do we know what we know?
Have students share with a partner:

... What they know about a relevant historical period you have studied in class (First World War, Britain in the 1930s, Second World War).
... How they discovered this information.

Create a class list of possible sources of information that historians could use. Discuss the reliability, advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Textbooks, newspapers
- Libraries, archives, museums
- Teachers, parents, grandparents
- The Internet

Why do we have to be careful when using the internet?
Anyone can post and contribute.

Is BBC Archives the same as joeshistoryonwar.blogspot.com?
Lesson: What is an Archive?

Ask whether students have heard the term ‘archive’ before. Display Appendix 1, Figure 1: Archive boxes. Archives hold items created by people or organisations in their everyday activities. Ask: What’s an everyday activity? What sort of documents might be found at your house or school that are created on an everyday basis? Display examples of the types of sources and documents archives can contain Appendix 1, Figures 2-5 for examples of documents found within the IOE Archive.

What people might have an archive collection? What might it contain? Roald Dahl contributed a great deal to literature and is often studied. His archive is held at the Roald Dahl Museum & Story Centre. It could contain letters to and from fans; drafts of his stories; correspondence with his publisher...

What organisations might have an archive collection? What might it contain? Your school could have an archive. It might contain student records; copies of newsletters; student artwork and writing; photographs...

Lesson: The Interwar Period and Disarmament

Have groups discuss the 1920s and 1930s. Why was this a particularly unique time in history? What preceded these decades? What followed?

Introduce the interwar global peace movement. Why would citizens around the world feel so strongly about creating peace at this time?

- Huge loss of life during the War, which many began to see as unnecessary
- This led to a change in public attitude toward the military
- Peace-keeping organisations formed during this period... The No More War Movement; Peace Pledge Union (PPU); The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
- The League of Nations helped organize several disarmament (see key terms) conferences in the interwar period, such as the Geneva Conference

Activity: Investigating The Interwar Peace Movement... Who’s Who?

In groups, students investigate the document Appendix 2: ‘The Interwar Peace Movement... Who’s Who?’. Groups can be assigned one organisation to become ‘experts’ on and then report back to the class. A strong understanding of these three organisations will support students’ research for their newspaper article, and deciding what is a reliable source.

Students consider two significant questions:

- What are these organisation’s potential biases? They are focused on peace, so they might not consider reasons that war may be needed... WILPF and NUWT are mainly women’s organisations, so may not include men’s viewpoints...

- Can we trust them? I would trust WILPF’s documents because their president won the Nobel Prize for Peace, and the organisation is still running today – it wasn’t just in existence for a month or two... The League of Nations included over 48 countries... the NUWT ran for nearly 60 years...
PART THREE: HISTORY REPORTERS

Materials:
- Appendix 3: Archive Documents (2 copies of each of the 6 archive documents)
- Appendix 4: Investigating Primary Sources Handout (6 in total; 1 copy per group)
- Appendix 5: History Reporters Research Handout (1 per student)

Task: History Reporters

Set the scene for your students to go back in history and take on the role of a news reporter: Imagine it is Monday 6 July 1931... You are a reporter for The Guardian newspaper. As you are walking through Hyde Park, you notice a leaflet advertising an upcoming disarmament demonstration. You show it to your Editor-in-Chief, who asks you to write an unbiased news article informing readers of this disarmament demonstration taking place at Royal Albert Hall this Saturday 11 July 1931.

Before you can write your article, you have some research to do. Today, you will need to...
- Gather your 5 W's (and How) for writing a news article.
- Apply the main rule of historiography: only say how it really was!
- Use the archives to gather reliable sources and details for your article.
- Remember to be unbiased – it is not your job to persuade readers to go to the demonstration or not... It is your job to inform them.

Activity: Investigating Primary Sources

Arrange students into 6 groups. Each group is given a document from the IOE archives. See Appendix 3: Archive Documents. Students use Appendix 4: Investigating Primary Sources Handout, as they identify the source and work toward understanding it.

Remind students their archive document may not have all of the information for the Investigating Primary Sources Handout, such as the exact date a document was created. Complete as much as possible. Some documents (the leaflets) will provide a lot of practical information (the what, where, when), while other documents (the letter from the League of Nations) will give more details about the organisations and their goals.

Students then present their documents to the class. Hand out Appendix 5: Reporter Research Handout to each student. Together, fill in relevant information (5 W's + How) as students share their research.

Lesson Extensions:

Literacy: This research can now be used as the basis for a Literacy lesson on writing newspaper reports.

Citizenship: The campaigning techniques and strategies of the NUWT and WILPF can be used as a basis for students to become active citizens in society. Students create a 21st century campaign on what they most want changed about their world. Possible campaigns include: environmental; anti-bullying; rising tuition fees; etc.

Review previous lesson:
- Historiography and importance of sources in researching and writing history
- What an archive is, what it contains, why you might use it
- Questioning reliability of sources
- Organisations in the Interwar Peace Movement (Appendix 2)
Figure 1: The Archive Stacks

The archives are kept safe in these strong cardboard boxes. Chemicals in regular cardboard can harm documents, which are often very old, so archive boxes are made from special acid-free cardboard.

Each of the documents you will investigate today comes from the National Union of Women Teachers’ archive collection. Members of the NUWT campaigned for equal pay for women teachers, but were very active in other campaigns… including the interwar peace movement.
Archive collections may contain diaries and letters...

Figure 2: Copy of speech delivered by a member of the National Union of Women Teachers (NUWT)

... tickets, invitations, leaflets...

Figure 3: Leaflet advertising an Equal Pay mass meeting
Archives can also contain plans, notes from meetings, computer records...

**Figure 4:** Lobbying results from meetings between Members of Parliament and members of the NUWT

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... or photographs, films and artwork.

**Figure 5:** Photograph of National Union of Women Teacher members at an Equal Pay Demonstration
## APPENDIX 2:
THE INTERWAR PEACE MOVEMENT... WHO’S WHO?

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<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Their Members</th>
<th>Their Goals</th>
<th>When</th>
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| The League of Nations                              | • First international organisation to attempt to create world peace          | • Prevent future wars through security and disarmament (reducing a country’s weapons and arms)  
By 1920, 48 countries had joined the League                  | • Organised following the First World War  
• The League of Nations was replaced by the United Nations after the Second World War |
| The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) | • Women around the world working for peace and freedom  
• Jane Addams, WILPF’s first President, was American and won the 1931 Nobel Peace Prize | • Study, raise awareness, and get rid of the causes of war  
• For women to help make decisions about peace and security | • Formed in 1915  
• WILPF is still an international organisation |
| The National Union of Women Teachers (NUWT)        | • Mainly women teachers  
• Concerned about equality and issues that were important to women, children and education | • Equal pay for women and men teachers  
• Campaigned for other issues: women’s suffrage (women’s fight for the right to vote), interwar peace campaigns, etc | • Formed in 1904  
• Ended in 1961 when women teachers were given equal pay |
APPENDIX 3:
ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS: INTERWAR PEACE MOVEMENT

Leaflet issued by the Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom
Reference: UWT/D/20/85
Campaigning organisations have many methods for raising awareness. Before Facebook and Twitter, leaflets were an inexpensive and popular method for organisations to advertise their events, meetings, or demonstrations.
Leaflet issued by the Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom
Reference: UWT/D/20/85
Campaigning organisations have many methods for raising awareness. Before Facebook and Twitter, leaflets were an inexpensive and popular method for organisations to advertise their events, meetings, or demonstrations.
Disarmament

The Women’s International League is organising a procession to the Albert Hall on Saturday, July 11th.

from

The Embankment,

where all those taking part will line up at 12.30 p.m.

All members of the N.U.W.T. will recognise the need of co-operation in this important campaign for peace, and the officers of the London and District Committees urge every member who can possibly walk in the procession to come. We are anxious that the N.U.W.T. shall be well represented. If you can come please ask your school collector to send us your name on the enclosed postcard.

Details in future ‘Woman Teacher’.

Annie Goldberg,
President L.U.

25.6.31.

National Union of Women Teachers (London Unit),
39, Gordon Square, W.C.1.

‘Disarmament’ Document Description

Memorandum from the NUWT
Reference: UWT/D/20/85

In the first half of the Twentieth Century, many organisations were working toward the same goals. For instance, the National Union of Women Teachers would often send its members information about events and organisations which had similar goals to their own.

Memorandum: a short written report prepared for a person or group, which contains information about a particular matter.
‘Did you ever see such a thing in your life?’ Document Description

Postcard created by the Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom
Reference: UWT/D/18/38
Campaigning organisations have many methods for raising awareness. Before Facebook and Twitter, organisations often sent postcards and used art or catchy phrases to spread their message. Here, a woman chases three mice with a knife which reads ‘KNOWLEDGE’. Each mouse has a word attached to its tail: *Ignorance*, *Militarism* and *Narrow Nationalism*.

*Ignorance*: lack of knowledge, understanding, or information about something.  
*Militarism*: the belief that it is necessary to have strong armed forces and that they should be used to win political or economic advantages.  
*Narrow Nationalism*: a nation’s focus on themselves, without considering the rest of the world.
Dear Miss Proud,

The League of Nations Union is this year doing all in its power to quicken and extend the movement for international disarmament.

There is, I am sure, no need to remind you that within a year from now the first World Disarmament Conference is to meet in Geneva. If it succeeds it will bring about a reduction and limitation of armaments by international agreement, but if it fails to secure a genuine reduction in the fighting forces of the world it is possible that the League of Nations may not be able to retain the co-operation of Germany and, indeed, that the usefulness and very existence of the League may be endangered. Faced with a position of such gravity I venture to ask whether the National Union of Women Teachers will call upon its branches and its members to study the problems involved and to join us in a national movement for the education of public opinion.

Arrangements have already been made to hold a great demonstration in the Albert Hall on Saturday, July 11th, at 3.30 p.m., at which the speakers will be the Prime

Letter from the League of Nations to the National Union of Women Teachers
Reference: UWT/D/20/85
The League of Nations was formed as an international organisation following the First World War with the mission to maintain world peace. One of their main goals was to encourage countries to give up their weapons and arms (disarmament). The League required the support of other people, countries and organisations. In this document, The League writes to England’s National Union of Women Teachers, asking for their help to educate the public on the peace movement.
Petition from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom  
Reference: UWT/D/18/38  
Peace-making organisations like the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) distribute petitions to gather signatures in support of their cause. The petitions may then be delivered to politicians in Parliament, or other international governments. Common petitions during the interwar period focused on disarmament – encouraging countries to reduce their arms and weapons.  
**Petition:** a document signed by a large number of people demanding or asking for some action from the government or another authority.
### Identifying the Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What type of document is it?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Who produced it?  What do you know about the author/creator?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>When was it written/produced?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why was it written/produced?</td>
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### Understanding the Source

<p>| List the key words and their meaning in the source. |  |
| What points or arguments are made in the source? |  |
| What values or attitudes does the source reflect? |  |
| How does the source relate to other historical events? |  |
| Are there any clues about the intended audience? |  |
| How reliable is the source? |  |
| How does it relate to other sources from the period (ideas, attitudes, arguments)? |  |</p>
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**What**

**Your Task:**

Imagine it's 6 July, 1931...

As a reporter for *The Guardian* newspaper, your Editor-in-Chief hands you an assignment: write an unbiased article about the upcoming disarmament demonstration at Royal Albert Hall on July 11th.

Time to do your research!

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