



Double Crossed Project

## Vanished – A Blitz Mystery

### Teachers' Notes

This activity is set in World War Two. There is a mystery to solve, and students will need to use both science and history skills to get to the bottom of it.

### Pupil Resources

Vanished - stimulus sheet

Mystery - task sheet

Evidence sheets x5

Report sheet

Smart Grid

### Objectives

#### Personal Capability:

Creativity and problem solving - to think creatively when interpreting evidence, asking questions such as Why? How? and What if?

#### Science and history:

- To use skills and knowledge from science and history to interpret evidence and draw conclusions.
- To recognise that the range of evidence available can affect the conclusion reached.

### Success Criteria

To be successful the students will:

- Ask questions in relation to evidence such as Why? How? and What if?
- Use science and history knowledge when interpreting evidence
- Reach conclusions based on consideration of more than one piece of evidence.
- Understand that additional evidence may have an effect on the conclusion reached.

## Introducing the Overall Task

Introduce and discuss the learning objectives for the task. Emphasise that the task is about thinking creatively when interpreting evidence, both historical and scientific, asking questions such as Why?, How? and What if?

Use the stimulus sheet to introduce the context for the task. Second World War siren “soundtrack” can be found on [www.tradebit.com/filedetail.php/1817902-air-raid-siren-sound-effect-wav](http://www.tradebit.com/filedetail.php/1817902-air-raid-siren-sound-effect-wav)

Tell students they must use the evidence from various sources to help the air raid warden solve the mystery.

## Running the Main Tasks

Organise the students to work in teams of 4 or 5.

Use **page 2** – Mystery! to introduce the situation after the air raid. Ask the group to discuss and feed back possible explanations for what has happened.

- Evidence from **page 3** - The next day..., which indicates that Number 37 was not damaged in the air raid.
- Evidence from **page 4** - More Evidence, about the damage at Number 37 being caused by a Molotov cocktail which didn't catch fire.
- Evidence from **page 5** – Liquid Evidence, which suggests that the liquid used in the Molotov cocktail was ethanol (an alcohol). A Molotov cocktail is a crude incendiary device consisting of a bottle filled with a flammable liquid and a means of ignition. See possible practical activities.
- Evidence from **page 6** – Family Evidence, which suggests that the family are immigrants to Britain from Germany or Austria.

Use **page 7** – One Week Later . . ., to round up the discussion about the different sources of evidence and to consolidate the idea that anti-German feeling could have been a factor in the situation at Number 37.

Ask the students to summarise their interpretations based on the evidence by completing the Air Raid Protection Warden Report on **page 8**. This could be completed either individually or as a group task.

## Reviewing the Task

Discuss with the students the range and types of evidence they used. What science based evidence and what historical evidence was available? Which evidence had most value and why? What questions was it useful to ask when interpreting evidence?

Involve the students in reviewing the task using the assessment for learning Smart Grid on **page 9**.

## Possible practical activities

In relation to the evidence about the liquid used in the Molotov cocktail (Page 5) students could be involved in testing “the liquid found at Number 37” i.e. ethanol by:

1. Igniting a few drops of ethanol placed on a suitable container e.g. metal lid or small foil tray. For primary aged students it is recommended that this is carried out as a demonstration.
2. Mixing a few drops of ethanol with water in a test tube or other suitable container to show that the ethanol is completely miscible.

**Safety Note:** Students should wear suitable eye protection and tie back long hair and avoid loose garments. When burning ethanol stand the container on sand in a larger metal tray. Ethanol is highly flammable; it burns with a blue flame which is often difficult to see. It's important to ensure that the ethanol cannot be ignited accidentally and has burnt away completely before touching the containers. Only a few drops of ethanol should be ignited. Petrol should not be used for practical work. Cooking oil should not be burnt but could be used to compare miscibility.

For guidance on practical work with primary aged students see Be Safe published by ASE.

## Historical note

At the start of the Battle of Britain the German Luftwaffe concentrated its efforts on destroying the British air force both in the sky and by attacking aerodromes. From September 1940 however the Luftwaffe changed its focus to attacking British cities, a phase in the war that was to become known as The Blitz. At the start of The Blitz London was the main target but soon other major industrially important cities were attacked including the raid on Coventry on the night of 14 November 1940 when 568 people were killed and the entire city centre was destroyed.

Many different kinds of bombs were dropped on Britain during The Blitz including high explosive bombs and incendiaries. Incendiaries were fire bombs which were only 9 inches long but they could burn for up to 10 minutes at very high temperatures. Although they were not used there was a constant fear of attack using poison gas bombs.

Air raid warden posts in cities were staffed by 6 air raid wardens, both men and women. They were responsible for about 500 members of the public. During a raid the warden was expected to know the whereabouts of the people in their area. If a bomb dropped the warden was responsible for reporting the incident and helping at the scene. After raids wardens patrolled to check for damage and look for unexploded bombs.

At the outbreak of the Second World War about 80,000 potential “enemy aliens” were identified in Britain. All Germans and Austrians over the age of 16 were called before special tribunals and categorised according to their potential security risk. During 1940 there was an outbreak of spy fever and agitation against enemy aliens although many were Jewish refugees with no Nazi sympathies. Thousands of Germans, Austrians and Italians were sent to internment camps. Many were held on the Isle of Man.