Life on the Home Front: A WW2 Sketchbook

Learning objective: To understand the daily experiences of people in Britain during the Second World War by creating a labelled historical illustration.

Use your knowledge of life on the Home Front to complete the drawing below. Think about how families prepared for air raids and how they managed with food rationing. You may use the word bank to label the key features of your scene.

Draw: Create a detailed scene of a 1940s British garden and house exterior. In the style of a historical sketchbook, draw a corrugated iron Anderson shelter half-buried in the grass. Include a small vegetable patch with rows of carrots and potatoes. On the house, show heavy, dark fabric covering the windows. In the foreground, draw a child wearing a coat and carrying a cardboard gas mask box with a string strap. Use clear, neat lines and add labels from the word bank to point to each historical feature.

Label words: Anderson shelter · Gas mask box · Ration book · Blackout curtains · Dig for Victory plot · Evacuee suitcase

Steps:

1. Step 1: Draw an Anderson shelter in the garden of your scene. Explain why these were used during the war.

2. Step 2: Label the 'Blackout curtains' on your house. Why was it important that no light escaped from windows at night?

3. Step 3: Draw a 'Dig for Victory' vegetable patch. Why did the government encourage families to grow their own food?

4. Step 4: Draw a child holding a gas mask box. Where did children have to carry these at all times?

5. Step 5: Write a short sentence about why a 'Ration book' was necessary for families in the 1940s.