William Morris & Citizenship

A KEY STAGES 2 & 3 WORKSHOP FROM THE WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY MUSEUM 2010

SUPPORTED BY THE ML&A LEARNING LINKS PROGRAMME
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WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY MUSEUM

CITIZENSHIP WORKSHOP KS 2&3

Aim

This workshop incorporates for the first time the Kelmscott House Museum’s socialist memorabilia related to William Morris dating from the Victorian Era. Morris was a designer in the Arts and Crafts Movement, setting up Morris & Co. on Oxford Street using co-operative style guild workshops and was a prolific writer on workers' rights and freedom of speech. Children will be encouraged to think about justice, working conditions and how their material environment affects their socio-economic situation through experiential learning, analytical exercises, reflection, and debate, enabling them to build a strong historical grounding. This will be achieved by splitting school visitors into three rotating groups where they will experience working in a production line, have the opportunity to handle Victorian objects, and develop a campaign which they can continue afterwards, leading to active citizenship. The workshop has been developed through the Learning Links programme with a Citizenship teacher and also incorporates the British Library's Campaign! Make an Impact initiative. These new workshops will also be available online as a resource pack, providing a valuable educational resource for all, which can then be adapted as necessary.

Location

Kelmscott House, Hammersmith London, where William Morris held meetings and lectures for the Hammersmith Socialist League and set up the printing workshop, Kelmscott Press in nearby premises in 1891.

What is needed:

*Items in bold are provided in the resource pack or available to download online*

- Fabric paints and brushes
- Roll of white or cream fabric with a bold floral design in black that can be coloured in
- Whistle
- 2 Victorian style aprons for team leaders
- 10 kids aprons, brown and long to be as close to Victorian work aprons as possible
- 5 laminated cards of various Morris textiles
- William Morris Costume – Beard and suit
- Soapbox to stand on
- A3 Sugar paper and poster pens
- Morris’s Socialist League Membership Card printed on A2 Foamex card
- 5 Foamex backed placards of Morris and Morris-related Socialist printed material
- Replica Hammersmith Social Democratic Federation Branch or Socialist League Banner or image of
- An object made by hand
- A machine mass-produced object
**Introduction: Upon Arrival**

*Location: Coach House*

**Who was William Morris?**

William Morris (1834 – 1896) was a successful Victorian businessman who made textiles, wallpapers, stained glass windows and furniture and had a shop on Oxford Street called *Morris & Co*. William Morris’s biggest inspiration for all his designs was *Nature* because he believed people should live in harmony with the world around them. He used wild flowers, leaves, seed heads, fruits and animals in his designs and chose natural colours produced by vegetable dyes in preference to the chemical dyes manufactured by industry. He also wrote many speeches and articles for the rights of workers to make a happier society. This included pleasant work environments that were not hazardous for worker health, shorter working hours so that people could have the time to enjoy their lives, and to produce goods that are useful and beautiful so that workers actually want to work. Eventually he became a Socialist who fought for not only workers, but also rights for women and children, and free education for all.

**Starter Activity: Worker’s Bingo**

On the following pages you will find a Bingo activity sheet to fill out. Ask the participants to walk around the room and talk to each other. They must find the other participants who match the information in the box and write down their name. They may only use someone once. The first person to complete the BINGO sheet is the winner.

Once the Bingo is completed, the introducer should make links between the personal information of the participants and the following links as answers are being read out:

*During Morris’s lifetime adults could work up to 84 hours per week, or 12 hours per day. In 1847 this was limited to 10 hours but on average adults still worked 64 hours per week in often dangerous conditions.*

*Child labour for under 10 year olds was only abolished in the 1878 Factory Act, whilst 10-14 year olds could still be forced to work for up to half a day.*

*Women could not vote until 1918 and that was only if they were over 30 years old, the main occupant of a home or married to one and/or held a university degree. It was only from 1928 that all women over 21 years old could vote.*

*The United Nations only declared free education for all children as a right in 1948.*

*Freedom of Speech was seriously under threat with violent protests fought on the streets occurring frequently to protect our right to disagree with the government, such as Bloody Sunday on Trafalgar Square, 1897.*

**Making Connections:**

**Question for the Group:** How did these changes happen?

**Socialist:** A person who believes that all property and resources should be commonly owned and shared equally within a community.

**Objective:** To introduce the importance of William Morris for Citizenship studies. Raise awareness of the working conditions during Victorian England and make links with modern conditions.
Answer: One way was that people came to Kelmscott House to discuss social change and organise protests. William Morris moved here in 1878 when Hammersmith was considered poor and run down to bring art and community to the area. In 1883 he joined the Social Democratic Federation, which fought for equality among men and set up the Hammersmith group. Unsatisfied with their progress two years later Morris convinced the group to become a branch of the Socialist League. Some of the speakers who came to the meetings and spoke here included:

Peter Kropotkin (1842 – 1921) An important anarchist from Russia that did not believe in government and wanted equality for all

Lucy Parsons (Died 1942) An African-American freed slave whose husband was hanged for being an anarchist in Chicago

Annie Besant (1847 – 1933) She fought for women’s rights and helped organise the Matchgirls Strike of 1888

Walter Crane (1845 – 1915) An important socialist illustrator who helped start the Art Worker’s Guild in 1884 and Royal College of Art in 1896

If carrying out the workshop off site and wish to present the images above, a Powerpoint presentation is included in the CD-Rom or available online.

End Speech

Today you will experience working in a Victorian factory, understand how Morris’s friends promoted their ideas by becoming a community, and get to design your own campaign.

The group can now be split into three and rotated around the stations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Links to Citizenship National Curriculum (QCA)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Stage 2 Relevance:</strong> 4.3 &amp; Cross Reference with History 2.A</td>
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| Key Stage 3 Relevance: 3.I, 4.B,D,F,G,J |
| Key Words: Community-based citizenship activities, Community partners, Historical contexts, Political rights, Changing nature of UK society |
**WORKER BINGO!**

Walk around the room and talk to each other. Find someone who matches the information in a box and write down their name. You may only use someone once. The first person to complete the BINGO sheet is the winner.

| Find someone who knows how many hours a day their parents work | Find a classmate who knows someone that started working at the age of 16 |
| Find someone whose Mother or older sister voted in the 2010 General Elections | Find a classmate who knows someone that receives free education |
| Find someone whose parents both work and has a nanny or after school club | Find a classmate who has been or knows someone that was part of a protest |

GOOD LUCK!
Morris tried to revive medieval craft techniques and organised workshops using the medieval guild model to stand up against the industrial processes and mass-producing factories that relied on wage labour to maximize profit. Morris favoured handmade objects over the mass-produced versions made by machine.

You can show photos of Merton Abbey workshop and a modern day factory with a handmade object such as a bowl alongside a machine made version. The idea is to make connections between production and product in the mind through a short group discussion.

If carrying out this workshop off site, please find these images on the CD-Rom included in your resource pack or available to download separately online.

Objective: To understand that choices we make as consumers affect the lives of producers and vice versa. Understanding the difference between small scale and mass production, and the consequences of both on a global scale.

**Which is machine made? Which is handmade? Why?**
**Activity: Production and its Consequences**

The group will be split into two and each will be assigned a Supervisor (adult).

**Group 1**
Craft co-operative

**Group 2**
Modern wage labour factory adopting the assembly line model.

**Group 1**
Each person is given the supplies needed to paint a design on blank white/cream fabric. They will be given a laminated example of a Morris textile for inspiration but may paint what they wish. The group leader will partake in the production.

Possible examples are: Golden Lily, Iris, Blackthorn, Compton and Daisy

**Group 2**
Each person is given the materials to complete an assigned role on the assembly line to create as many copies of the same fabric design. Using a black outline on white floral fabric, each person will be asked to colour a part of the design as shown in the prototype they are given. They have 2 minutes to complete their assigned task on each fabric that arrives on their workstation. The 2 minutes will be marked by blowing a whistle. Quality will be monitored by an observing Supervisor.

**After 20 minutes…..**
Group 1 should have each made one unique design.
Group 2 should have at least 10 finished products of the same design

Each group will then be paid in play money. Group 2 will be paid first but less to reflect wage labour. Group 1 will be paid second and more to reflect that their wages depend more on sales but they have a greater stake in the company.

**Discussion: Benefits and Disadvantages**
The Supervisors can then make a flipchart that divides the benefits and disadvantages of both Group 1 and 2. If the participants get stuck here are some prompts and suggestions.

**Group 1:**
- Creativity
- Better wages
- Equal share of power
- Higher quality
- Expensive product
- Work is harder
- More skill required
- Less technology
- Less produced

**Group 2:**
- Repetitive work
- Follow orders
- Less wages
- Lower quality product
- More use of technology
- Cheap product that is affordable
- More produced
- Work is easier
- Non-specialised labour

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**Links to Citizenship National Curriculum (QCA)**

**Key Stage 2 Relevance:** 2.10, 5.6 & Cross Reference with English 3.A

**Key Stage 3 Relevance:** 2.1, 3.E,H, 4.C,G

**Key Words:** Analyse and evaluate, Address Issues
STATION 2: How Communities for Change are Organised/Object Handling

Location: Study and Print Room

Activity: Perception Studies
The group will be presented with A3 replicas of Socialist pamphlet front covers and asked to work in pairs. On the activity sheet provided, the participants are asked to analyse the images.

The images are DIFFERENTIATED below with 1 being the most difficult, for highly developed visual learners, and 5 the least difficult, for learners with visual perception difficulties. Also included are key points to help Supervisors and answers in bold.

If carrying out the workshop off site you can print off the images from the CD-Rom included with the pack or download them separately if using the online resource.

Objective: To make links between how groups use different forms of media to organise themselves and their campaigns. Looking at images critically and making connections between Victorian and Modern forms of media.

- The newspaper formed a central messageboard for the community to exchange ideas and share news from their events and activities. What sort of media do activists and campaigners use now? Is the newspaper still effective or are websites more important?
- William Morris helped fund the Commonweal newspaper. The title literally means “common well-being” and refers to a political community founded for the common good.
- Notice the leaves interlacing with the title. They are related to Morris’s design ‘Willow’ used in textiles and wallpapers, designed in 1874. Willows were believed to represent renewal and growth in English mythology. Why would Morris choose to use this plant in the title design?
- What sort of content is this newspaper displaying?

2. Flyer for a Mass Meeting on Free Speech August 29th at 4pm on Trafalgar Square, Social Democratic Federation, Modern Press, London, 1886
- William Morris was invited to speak
- What makes this eye catching?
- Why was Trafalgar Square chosen?
- The meeting was itself an exercise in free speech. On 13th November, 1887, Trafalgar Square would be the site of where Free Speech was taken away as police fought activists to stop them speaking out against British domination over Ireland, including Morris. This was called Bloody Sunday.
- Today we might use messageboards and social networking sites like Facebook.

Links to Citizenship National Curriculum (QCA)
Key Stage 2 Relevance: 2.8 & Cross Reference with English 3.B, F
Key Stage 3 Relevance: 2.1.C, 3.E, F
Key Words: The Commonwealth, Critical Thinking and Enquiry
- Walter Crane, a speaker at Kelmscott, drew the central cartoon: 'Vive La Commune' as a mark of solidarity with the French Commune and workers in both countries.
- On the left is a French worker with a fire representing the main source of power to operate machinery from coal fuel and to make light after dark.
- In the centre is the figure of Victory.
- On the right is an English coal miner with an axe.
- Below the figures there are brushes and a palette marking the artists' support of the worker and how art should be present in all work.
- This pamphlet was printed to spread ideas.
- Is it eye-catching?
- Freedom Press became Freedom bookshop and is still in operation in London.

- The image is a design by Walter Crane, a speaker at Kelmscott and one of many headers used for The Socialist League.
- The Hammersmith Socialist Society was a separatist unit from the Socialist League and became independent in 1890 due to Anarchists taking over the Socialist League.
- This is the printed version of a lecture given at Kelmscott House in the Coach House as a reminder and to spread ideas. Today we can make YouTube videos.
- On the left is the figure of Labour and on the right the figure of Justice. Why?

- Walter Crane design, speaker at Kelmscott and artist.
- Educate/Organise/Agitate was originally used by the Social Democratic Federation.
- The two workers on either side of the angel are holding up fire. Fire represented industry as the main source of power and light.
- Oak leaves are a common symbol of strength and endurance and the oak tree was once the national tree of England.
- Chanting was a way of unifying Socialist protesters when marching and creating the appearance of strength through the loudness of voices. Chanting is still used in protests today but we can also make music videos.
Hello! My name is William Morris and I lived between 1834 and 1896 during the Victorian era. I was a successful artist and businessman who made textiles, wallpapers, stained glass windows and furniture, and had a shop on Oxford Street called Morris & Co. However, I also wrote many speeches and articles about the rights of workers and how useful work that is creative will make our society more happy and healthy. Eventually, I became a radical Socialist who spoke for free speech, the rights of workers, women and children and free education for all.

What kinds of printed materials cause change in a democratic society?

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<th>What is it?</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Why was it made?</th>
<th>What can we use today instead?</th>
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Objective: To understand how one can organise a campaign and make your voice heard. Change sometimes has to be achieved through struggle and relies on creating a community and being able to voice coherent arguments.

STATION 3: Campaigning for Change

Location: Library

This station utilizes the British Library’s Campaign! Make an Impact initiative. More information about this programme, including extended resources, can be found at:

http://www.bl.uk/campaign

*The workshop officer will be dressed as William Morris and stand on a ‘soapbox’ adorned with a placard of Morris’s Socialist League membership card and replica of the Hammersmith Socialist League banner.

*They will then make the following one-minute speech to the group. The speech is fictional and based on reports of what William Morris may have shouted from a cart in Clerkenwell Green on November 13th in front of 1,000s of fellow artists and artisans.

*This was only one of many meeting points that organised up to 10,000 people to march on Trafalgar Square in response to the declaration from the Chief of Police in London banning political meetings in public places.

*Ask the participants to listen out for a repeated phrase

“Working people of England!

Freedom of Speech is the mark of a Free People!

Wherever it is threatened we must defend it by any means necessary. On November 8th 1887 Charles Warren, Commissioner of the Police of London, with the support of the government, declared that until further notice no public meetings will be allowed to assemble in Trafalgar Square and no speeches shall be made. We will not tolerate this!

Freedom of Speech is the mark of a Free People!

Today we march to Trafalgar Square with order and like good citizens to demand our rights. Do not let intimidation from those with power weaken your determination. Do not let them separate you and weaken our group. Stand together, march together with one voice. Only when you stand as one can victory be certain, for none can withstand you, so united! Make your voice heard across the streets and squares! Let our government know that you will not tolerate your freedom to speak to be silenced!

Freedom of Speech is the mark of a Free People!”

If using the online resource, click on the video of our William Morris delivering this speech, also included in the CD-Rom attached to the resource pack.
Activity: Make Your Voice Heard with Campaign! Make an Impact (British Library Initiative)

The group will be split into pairs and invited to decide on a campaign relevant to themselves, design a campaign logo and make a short speech to the group. William Morris will be on hand to help!

If a pair experience trouble deciding on a campaign here are some suggestions that can show students how problems surrounding Free Speech and the 1887 Bloody Sunday are still relevant today:

1. The Right to Protest

The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 restricts the right to demonstrate within a kilometre of Parliament Square. This is to protect our Parliament from terrorism and other criminal activity. People who wish to protest must give the police 24 hours notice in writing and if possible up to 6 days notice. Failure to do this can result in protests being forbidden. The police can also impose limits on the demonstration and since there is no definition of “demonstration” in the eyes of the law, it is entirely at the police’s discretion. Some people think this is wrong. What do you think?

On the day the Act became law, Stop the War Coalition members stood silently in Parliament Square with their mouths bandaged so that they could not speak. They were arrested.

2. The Right to Public Assembly

The Public Order Act 1986 gave the police power to break up a group of people in a public place, or “public assembly”, of 20 or more people if they suspected they were going to cause “serious public disorder, serious damage to property or serious disruption to the life of the community”. The Government, however, thought that 20 was a dangerously high number and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 lowered this number to two. The police can now interfere with meetings of just two people.

Like William Morris, some people think the right to public assembly is a vital freedom, and freedom of assembly is protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. Do you think the law in the United Kingdom needs to change?

What follows is a double-sided worksheet for the activity

Links to Citizenship National Curriculum (QCA)
Key Stage 2 Relevance: 1.1, 2.2, 5.7
Key Stage 3 Relevance: 1.3.D, 4.A
Key Words: Advocacy and representation, Democracy and justice, Rights and responsibilities
CAMPAIGN! MAKE AN IMPACT WORKSHEET

Our Campaign is about:

William Morris used repetition in his speeches to make people listen. What key word or phrase can sum up your big idea?

Now think of THREE points to support your idea. You can use real life examples to highlight this

1._________________________________________________________
2._________________________________________________________
3. _________________________________________________

Why do we need to act now?

Why not try and repeat your phrase after every point?

Who do we want to listen to us?
Teachers?  Parents?  Local Council?  Government?

Make your campaign happen!

• Where can you get more information?
• How will you communicate your idea?
• Who can help?  Who wants to be in your team?
DESIGN YOUR LOGO

Logos are the symbol of a community
Effective logos are simple and eye-catching
They can be many shapes and sizes
Pick a shape and design your own!
Summary
The participants, after completing the three stations will receive an A4 workbook to take home of images and reminders of what they have learnt during the day. As a closing activity, a Supervisor can refresh and summarise the day by asking the group:

What was your favourite part of the day and why?
Will you continue with your campaigns at school or at home?
What should we think about when buying things like toys?

‘Bloody Sunday’ riot in Trafalgar Square as illustrated in the London Press, 1887

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