

History:

First World War - Lesson 3 (The struggle of ex-servicemen to earn a living)

Overview

The story of the ex-servicemen's market stalls in Salford.

Purpose

To reflect on the hardship faced by ex-servicemen at the end of the First World War.

Objectives

To weigh up the arguments for and against the idea of ex-servicemen running illegal market stalls.

Lesson plan

Activity	Time	Resources	Outcomes
Look at letter from council and letter from resident to complain about illegal markets. Give three objections they have, or seem to have, about the markets.	 15 min	Letter from council, Letter from resident.	Three objections, including at least one drawn by inference about competition for other official.
Look at the letter from an ex-serviceman and the account of the ex-servicemen's deputation to the council. What can we learn from these about the position of ex-servicemen in the years after the First World War?	 15 min	Letter from ex-serviceman, account of the ex-servicemen's deputation to the council.	Inferences drawn that many ex-servicemen were struggling to earn a living.
Prepare and give the case for the defence in a trial – an ex-serviceman trader who is taken to court for trading at an illegal market.	 30 min	Use all previous resources for guidance.	A carefully argued case for the defence is written and/or presented orally.
Class to act as jury and decide on the case.	 5 min		A verdict given with reasons.

Additional Activities

For lessons longer than an hour or for extension activities to continue the theme into another lesson or homework, the following ideas may be useful.

Activity 1

Write a newspaper story about the illegal markets, as it might have appeared in a local newspaper sometime between 1919 and 1922. Include some quotations from ex-servicemen who are struggling to earn a living and from legal market traders who object to the markets.

Activity 2

In addition to the case for the defence (in the final main activity of the lesson) also write a case for the prosecution, who were trying to close the illegal markets. Both cases can then be presented to the class as part of a simulated trial.