

Civil War Survivors



What happened to injured soldiers, war widows and orphans after the war?

1-3 lessons

Introduction ([Link](#))

The English Civil War broke out in 1642 between the supporters of King Charles I and Parliament. Before the war, they had argued over religious policy, foreign policy and taxation. Charles had even tried to rule without Parliament between 1629 and 1640.

In 1646, King Charles I was forced to surrender and he gave himself up to the Scottish army at Southwell in Nottinghamshire. This was an attempt to secure a deal, but the Scots handed the King over to Parliament in exchange for money that was owed to their soldiers. The King was imprisoned. Whilst apparently negotiating a settlement, he engineered a Second Civil War. Some Parliamentarians felt it was impossible to make peace with the King. He was tried and executed for treason in 1649.

The period between 1649 and 1660 is known as the Interregnum. The country was a republic which means it had no king. However, from 1653 until his death in 1658, Oliver Cromwell ruled England as Lord Protector. He was succeeded by his son Richard. Richard was removed from power by the army after six months. Following a period of confusion, Charles I's son was invited to return to England as King in 1660. He was known as King Charles II. The return of the King was called the Restoration.

Resource sheets

1a Film Quiz or 1b Multiple Choice

Film Quiz

1c Quiz answers

2. Judge's score sheet

3a, b, and c Petitions

4a Survivor identities

4b 'Pop the Petition' writing frame



A trip to the [National Civil War Centre](#) can include a re-enactment of the trial of Charles I. Digital versions of this trip are also available for schools who are unable to travel. Find more details [here](#)

Activity 1 Film Quiz ([Link](#))

The war had affected the lives of a higher percentage of the population than either the First or Second World Wars. Many soldiers were left very disabled and unable to make a living. The wives and children of the men who died were also left penniless. These injured soldiers, widows and orphans appealed to the government for help to survive. In order to receive money, they had to ask someone to write them a petition and have this read out in court. A certificate from a doctor or a character reference from important people in their parish strengthened their case.

1. Show the students this [film](#)

2. Ask them to complete the quiz sheet 1a or 1b



Activity 2 The County Court ([Link](#))

Set up:

Choose three pairs of performers and give them each a different petition to perform (sheets 3a-c). In each pair one is a silent petitioner whose job is to look miserable and trustworthy! The other member of the pair reads out the petition (of course, groups could be larger and reading shared out) These performers leave the room to rehearse. The rest of the class are the judges at the County Court. They are briefed to score the petitions.



Introduction

We are going to set up the County Court and hear the petitions of three people whose lives have been turned upside down in the war. Some of you are going to be the petitioners. The rest of you are going to be the judges. Judges will score the petitions and decide who to help and how much money to give them.

1. Judges' Briefing

Not everyone who asked for help could be given money. Judges had to decide who deserved help and who did not. When people petitioned for assistance immediately after the war, what criteria do you think judges would use to help them make this decision?

Ask the students to work in pairs or small groups to discuss their ideas and then ask for feedback. Work as a class to brainstorm a list of all of the key things a judge might be looking for to determine whether someone deserved assistance. When you have a class list give out sheet 2 the Judge's Score Sheet which summarises what the judges were looking for.

The petitioners had to show themselves to be in real need and they had to sound humble and trustworthy. Immediately after the war they also had to show that they fought for Parliament.

2. The County Court

Invite the Petitioners to perform. Ask the judges to tick the box when they hear one of the elements on the score sheet. When the three performing petitioners have finished, send them back to their tables to join in with the next part of the activity.

Ask the students to confer with their neighbours to decide who should be given money. Give them the following information.

- ◆ **It costs £10 a year for an ordinary labourer to maintain a family**
- ◆ **The court can only award £12 in total. This can be given to one petitioner or split between more than one.**

Ask the children to confer and feed back their decision.

Vote on who wins a pension.

Activity 2 The County Court: Learning from home version



Hold your own County Court

Listen to the petitions below.

You can give money to **one** of these people.

Who will you choose? Use the Judges scoring sheet handout to help you.

1) James Moore of Letwell, West Riding of Yorkshire

Click on this link to hear James Moore's petition: <https://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/the-petition-of-james-moore-of-letwell-west-riding-of-yorkshire/>



Click here to view a copy of James Moore's petition:

<https://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/petition/the-petition-of-james-moore-of-letwell-west-riding-of-yorkshire-january-1699/>

2) Joyce Barroll of Hereford, Herefordshire

Click on this link to hear Joyce Barroll's petition: <https://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/the-petition-of-joyce-barroll-of-hereford/>



Click here to view a copy of Joyce Barroll's petition:

<https://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/petition/the-petition-of-joyce-barroll-of-hereford-herefordshire-1662-to-1663/>

3) Jane Merrick of Upton Bishop, Herefordshire

Click on this link to hear Jane Merrick's petition: <https://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/the-petition-of-jane-merrick-of-upton-bishop-herefordshire/>



Click here to view a copy of Jane Merrick's petition:

<https://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/petition/the-petition-of-jane-merrick-of-upton-bishop-herefordshire-1661-to-1662/>



Activity Three: Pop The Petition ([Link](#))

Set up:

- Give out a Civil War Survivor identity from sheet 4a to each group.
- Give out a copies of sheet 4c Pop the Petition Writing Frame to each student.
- Make sure each group has copies of Sheet 2 The Judge's Score Sheet from the previous lesson.

Introduction

Petitions were written on behalf of survivors by respected members of the community who could read and write. Having sat in the County Court, you are now all experts in how to win money. I am going to introduce you to another survivor of the war. You have the details of this person on your table. They have come to you for help. They need you to write them a petition that will successfully tell their sad story to the County Court and win them the money they need to survive.

Extension Task

Ask the students to look for a petition on the [Civil War Petitions website](#). They could select a petition for any reason that interests them, the nature of the wound, the location of the petitioner or even the petitioner's name. Can they find out if the petition was successful? Can they identify any of the strategies in this petition that match the successful strategies they learned about in these lessons?

Writing a Petition

Recap the elements of a successful petition and introduce the writing frame.

Groups/ pairs write their petitions.

The County Court could sit again and consider the presented petitions of these survivors.

The class could use the score sheet again to judge the petitions and vote on who receives money.