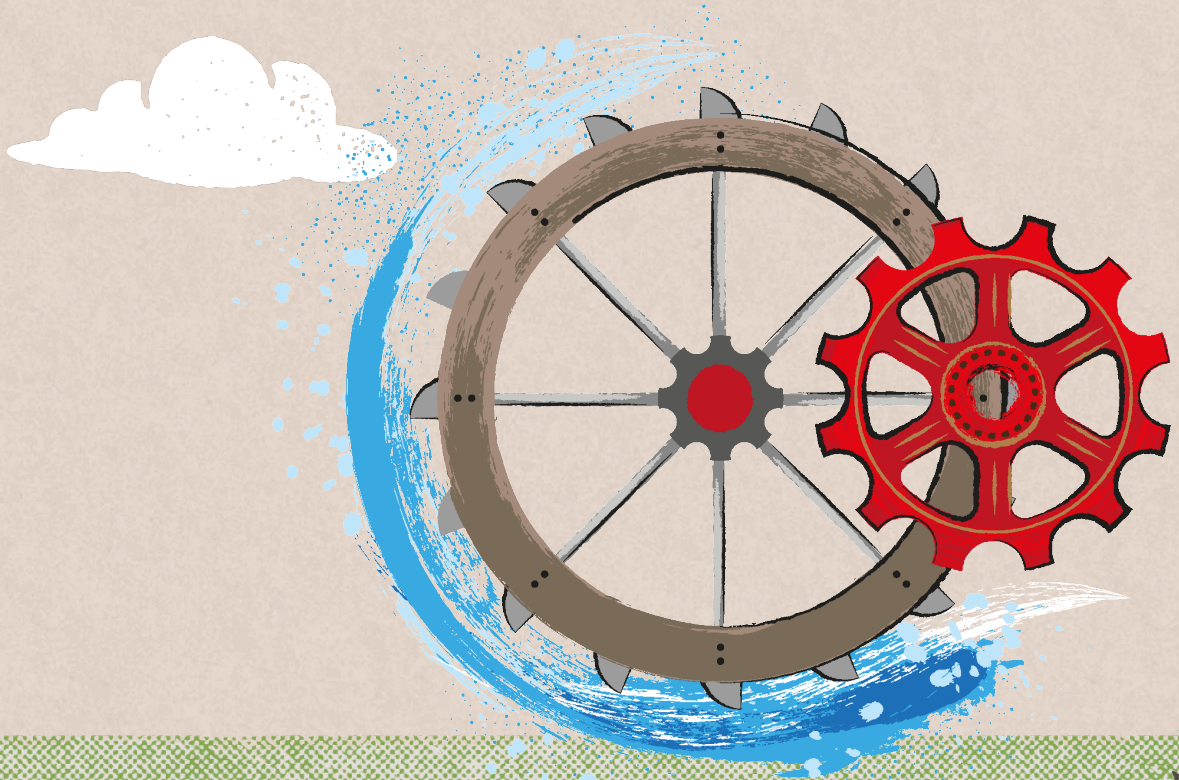
MILLS

CENTURY of CHANGE

CENTURYOFCHANGE.ORG

SESSION NOTES



Miner2Major
The Real Sherwood Forest

Made possible with
Heritage Fund

Top Weir

Century of Change Day - Mills

We suggest you complete Activity 1 as an introduction to this theme and then choose from across the remaining activities to further enhance learning around Mills in the Sherwood Forest Area.

Background Notes for this theme provide a useful underpinning for the delivery of these activities.

Background Notes are designed for teachers, but if you are working with Y6 they might provide a useful activity stimulus in themselves.

1 Activity 1. Why were there so many mills in the Sherwood Forest area?

Excite. An introduction. ***A film and flowing discussion.***
Explore and make connections. ***Looking at maps and images.***
Explore and explain. ***Maps in a muddle.***
Defining features. ***A question of quantity.***

2 Activity 2. What was it like to work in the mills?

Excite. ***An introduction to jobs in the Mills.***
In Summary. ***Jobs of the day***

3 Activity 3. A London Boy at Mr Robinson's Mill

Communicate. ***Who lived and worked in Papplewick?***
Communicate. ***What do we know about the people of Papplewick?***
Interpret and share. ***How might we tell their stories?***
In Summary. ***What impact did mills have on the environment?***

1 Activity 1. Why were there so many mills in the Sherwood Forest area?

Excite! An introduction.

A film and flowing discussion.

Discuss the idea of local history and the evidence that can reveal the story of how mills impacted the area.

Use the video of Dr Stephen Walker to set the challenge to find out:

- What is a mill?
- Why were there so many mills in and around Sherwood Forest?
- What was it like to work in the mills?
- What impact did mills have on the environment?

Pause the video as instructed to allow time for discussions in pairs or small groups. This film will introduce some of the key vocabulary and concepts for this theme. Challenge children to record their paired discussions using simple images and phrases by creating a Flowchart of information.

Dr Stephen Walker carried out research into the mills of Papplewick.

He found out a lot of information about the people of Papplewick. How might he have found the information?

- Baptism Records in the church
- Marriage records
- Burial Records
- Reports from Government
- Job advertisements in local newspapers
- Newspaper articles.

Resources

Video of Dr Stephen Walker setting the challenge.

Explore and make connections.

In this session children act as historians and archaeologists. They look at the evidence of mills in the Sherwood Forest Area.

Their task is to look at maps, photographs, illustrations and records from the Historic England's Map Packs and the resource pack, A London Boy at Mr Robinson's Mills. They should try to make connections between different resources.

Resources

Photographs from PPT Century of Change Discussion

Historic England Map Packs

A London Boy at Mr Robinson's Mills pack

Explore and explain.

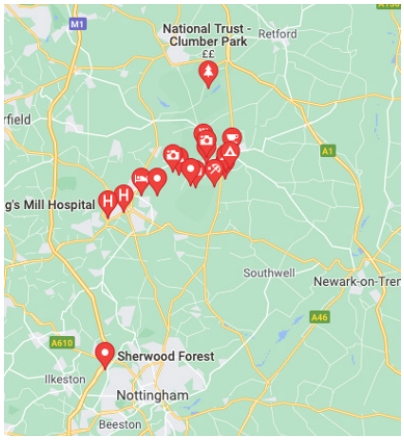
Maps in a muddle.

Now hand out sets of maps of the school area.
Ask pupils to look at the maps and see if they can spot what is similar or different in each.
Ask them to put them in order of oldest to most recent.

Resources

Historic England Map Packs

Share thoughts around the class on why a map might be older or more recent than another map.
Ask pupils to explain the reasons for their decisions.
Next put the maps in order of most to least interesting
Again, what are the reasons for their choices?
Repeat the exercise with maps of Papplewick the focus of this session on mills.



Defining features

This session is about mills. How can children find out about mills in the area?
Look at the Mills in Derby and Nottinghamshire between 1780 and 1800.
What features can they pick out.
Next look at the map of Papplewick and Linby from 1880. How are the maps similar or different?
What features can they see on the Papplewick Map.
Can they identify;

- Rivers
- Ponds that may have powered the mills
- Buildings that may have been mill workers' cottages.

Resources

Papplewick and Lindby Map (in Historic England Maps pack)

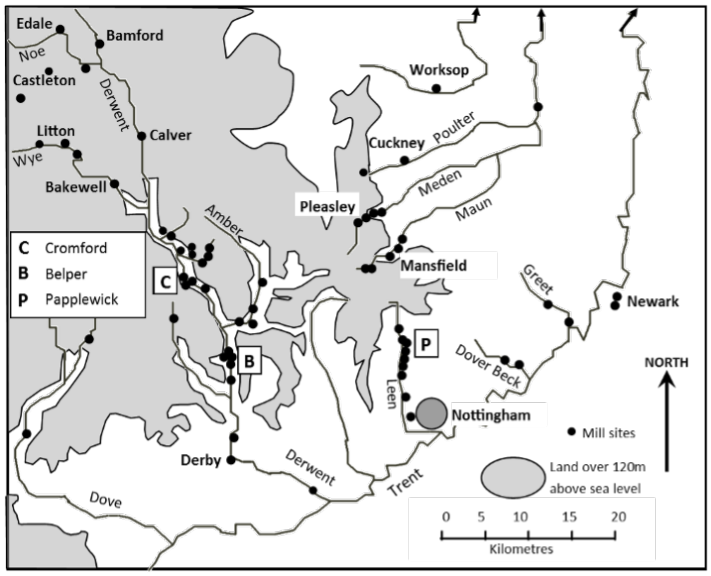
Mills in Derby and Nottinghamshire between 1780 and 1800.

In Summary

A question of quantity

Ask children to prepare a statement in pairs to share with the rest of the class that explains why there were so many mills in the Sherwood Forest area. Ask each pair to present to another pair and then refine to create one statement for a group of 4. Then ask each group of 4 to share their statements.

Mills in Derby and Nottinghamshire between 1780 and 1800.



2 ACTIVITY 2. WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO WORK IN THE MILLS?

Excite. An introduction to jobs in the Mills.

A bit dramatic.

Display the list of jobs there were at Lower Mill:

The workforce at Lower mill (based on Pearsce, c1790)
Details
1 batter, 2 staplers and 10 to 12 women preparing the cotton wool
1 man as overlooker in the picking rooms
21 cards in the carding room, one boy working at each
2 men as overlookers in the carding rooms
21 children working as spinners, servicing 42 frames, with 40 spindles per frame
2 men as overlookers in the spinning rooms
40 women employed at reeling
A super-overlooker, named as Jim Simpson
A treasurer to weigh the bundles – named as John Cotnam
Total: 8 men, 50 women, 21 boys and 21 girls under the supervision of 2 managers = 102

Divide the class into 6 groups. Assign each group one of the job titles and ask them to discuss in small groups what they think each of the jobs entailed:

- A batter
- A stapler
- An overlooker
- A carder
- A spinner
- A reeler

Ask each group to create a mime showing what they think each worker would do to fulfil their role.

Ask each group to present their responses before revealing the real duties of each:

Batters and **Staplers** unpacked the bales of compressed raw cotton. The work would be dirty and dusty.

An **Overlooker** took charge of a group of workers to make sure that they did a good job.

A **Carder** worked on a carding machine, which had a large revolving drum with sharp teeth, combing the raw cotton to get all the fibres parallel, ready for spinning.

A **Spinner** worked on the spinning machine, checking that the cotton yarn was running onto the bobbins correctly as it was spun. Each person looked after two frames and each frame had 40 spindles (bobbins). They would have to join the thread if it broke, for example.

Resources

The Workforce at Lower Mill Poster.

A **Reeler's** job was to take the thread that had been wound on bobbins by the spinner, and to join it into longer lengths on bigger reels. The cotton yarn was then removed from the reels into hanks. It was the hanks of yarn that were sent out of the factory to supply framework knitters.

Ask groups to adapt their mimes to show the actual duties each performed.

The factory could be brought to life for a few minutes with the teacher acting as the 'super overlooker'. The overlooker could admonish workers not fulfilling their roles efficiently.

After a few minutes, stop the role play. How do the children think it would have been working at these jobs for 13 hours a day, five and half days a week?

In summary.
Jobs of the day.

Ask children to compare what they know of jobs in their community to the jobs described in the mills. How are they the same and different? And why might this be? Have a short discussion about the 'jobs of tomorrow'. How do children think industries will continue to change and why? A useful discussion here about Artificial Intelligence for example, the Industrial Revolution and the role of technology compared to human creativity.

Activity 3. A London Boy at Mr Robinson's Mill

Communicate.
What we know about the people of Papplewick.

Invite the children to choose a character that interests them from the story.

Draw an outline of this person.

Outside of the line, make notes/words/images about what these people might look like: how old, what colour hair, eyes, teeth, what might they wear, how might they feel, what sort of first impression do they make?

On the inside write words to describe how this person might feel.

Are they tired, greedy, worried, happy, sad, inventive, lazy, powerful, strong, healthy, ill, frightened, bold?

Share your character with your neighbour. What is similar or different about your choice of character?

Might these characters know each other?

What sort of relationship might they have?

Would they be pleased to see each other?

Would they speak to each other? What might they say?

Hand out copies of the original records Dr Stephen Walker found during his research. Ask the children (in pairs) to describe what they can see.

Invite the children to share their observations with a neighbouring pair.

Then hand out the transcriptions.

How does this help the children?

What do they know about the different characters involved in the story of the Papplewick Mills?

Use the Activity Mat of Enquiry Questions to guide learning around each of these characters.

Invite the children to feedback.

Resources

A London Boy at Mr Robinson's Mills pack

Activity Mat of Enquiry Questions.
Computer, online map

Interpret and share.

How might we tell their stories?

Dr Stephen Walker and the volunteers at Moor Pond Wood tell the stories of the area through interpretation boards. Century of Change would like the children to create an interpretation board to tell the story of people who worked in the mills, particularly children.

Creating an interpretation board

Brief

The Century of Change team would like young people to design an interpretation board to tell the story of the children who worked in the mills. Look at the example board from Moor Pond Woods. It has strong images and a few words.

People typically spend:
3 seconds deciding if they are interested in an interpretation board
30 seconds reading an interpretation board that interests them
3 minutes engaging with an interpretation board that interests them a lot.

What will you use to make people want to look at the interpretation board? Images, textures, words, games? Sketch main ideas and share with others to get some feedback before designing a final board.

Resources

Interpretation boards from Moor Pond Woods

In summary.

What impact did mills have on the environment?

When the mills were at their height a lot of the land would have been used to store water to power the mills. This land has now been reclaimed in most cases and redeveloped as we have seen by the work around Moor Pond Woods. But what do children know about other impacts of various industries on the environment? An interesting and encouraging story might be to share information about Vicar Water Country Park near Clipstone or Northumberlandia which is a unique piece of public art set in a 46 acre community park as part of the restoration of the adjacent Shotton surface coal mine. Compare this to what children can find out about polluted rivers etc from other abandoned industrial sites within and beyond Nottingham and the UK.

Interpretation boards from Moor Pond Woods