

The Changing Towns 1851 - 1901



- 1 At the top of the resource sheet there is a time line.
 - Colour in the section that represents 1851 - 1901.
- 2 As towns grew, so the conditions in these towns became worse for some people.
 - Using the evidence try to imagine what it would have been like to live in a city at this time? Describe what you might have seen, heard and smelt as you walked through the streets.
- 3 Some of these conditions can only be imagined. Look at the extract on the resource sheet, which describes a room in Newcastle, Staffordshire in 1849.
 - Create a space on the floor of your room that is 10 rulers by 10 rulers square. Stand 10 people in the square then get them to lie down.
 - Apart from lack of space, what other problems would you find living in these conditions?
- 4 On paper, draw a grid 8 squares by 8 squares. Number the squares like a snakes and ladders board.
 - Think of five good things about living in a 19th century town. Write these at the bottom of your ladders: the better the reason, the longer the ladder.
 - Think of five bad things about living in a 19th century town. Write these at the top of your snakes: the greater the problem, the longer the snake.
 - Using a die to play the game then compare your board with other members of your class. Compare what you have used for snakes and ladders.
 - As a class, construct a spider diagram in which you identify all the good and bad things about urban life at this time.
- 5 The census asked questions about number, age and gender of people in a house.
 - Construct a graph of the population of London, Staffordshire and Lancashire. Compare the trends in the population of the three places.
 - What additional conclusions can you reach, if you divide the population by the area? What use might this information be to the government?
- 6 It is 1901, and your 70th birthday. You have been asked to give an interview to a young reporter about the changes that you have seen in the town you live during your lifetime.
 - In pairs, write a series of questions and answers that you might expect to get in such an interview. Use as much information as you can from the resource sheet.

The Changing Towns 1851 - 1901

Theme Urban living conditions in the late 19th century

This unit uses census data and other contemporary evidence to describe changes in the conditions of urban life between 1851 and 1901.

The materials aim to stimulate an investigative approach using role-play, a historical game, and the interpretation of documentary evidence.

Curriculum context

History at Key Stage 3.

Students evaluate sources to reach relevant conclusions. (Hi 1, 2a, 2c, 2e, 3b, 4, 5a, 5c)



Classroom ideas

The materials include something for all students, although certain concepts, such as an Act of Parliament may need to be explained. The focal points are discussions about what students have discovered at each stage.

- As an introduction ask students to explain what they believe brings about changes in the way society operates. How does new information, knowledge and propaganda influence decisions?
Note: Visual information is very powerful, but it is important to look for impartial and objective evidence, of which the census is one reliable source.
- The first five activities can be completed either by the whole class together, or in groups. The first two exercises focus on chronology, and the establishment of a context. Two could be completed either as a written piece or used as an observational exercise.
- Tasks 3 and 4 use different active approaches to engage students with the evidence provided. Students should be encouraged to express their opinions on the problems of life in a town at this time.
- Task 5 develops skills in manipulating and interpreting data. The census data could also be transformed using a spreadsheet, to focus attention, not only on rising population, but also to raise questions about population density.
- Task 6 brings together all the elements on the sheet. Emphasis should be placed on using evidence to stimulate change. Students should be encouraged to recognise that the better the quality and quantity of evidence, the more dependable the conclusion.

1801

1851

1901

1951

2001

The Changing Towns 1851 - 1901

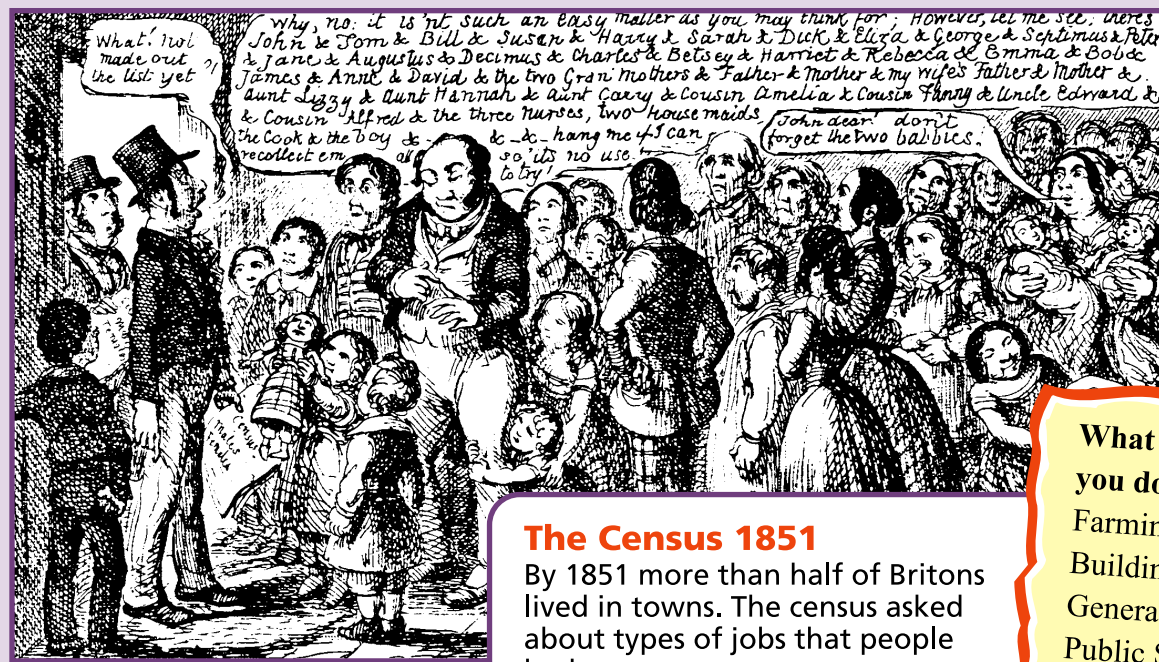
By **1851**, the census had recorded that Britain was the first country in the world to have more than half of its population living in towns and cities.

The rapid growth of towns caused living conditions to worsen. The number of people grew faster than the number of houses. The authorities found it difficult to keep up with the demands for clean water and safe waste disposal.

With the growth of population, came problems of health, poverty and overcrowding. By the turn of the new century, in **1901**, there were some new ideas as to how to solve these problems but the lack of quality housing was not properly addressed in 19th century Britain.

	Area in acres	Population		
		1841	1851	1871
London	78092	262744	305933	417767
Staffordshire	755017	101346	120485	171542
Lancashire	1319391	294650	356158	536889

Collecting the census in London 1861



By George Cruikshank

The Census 1851

By 1851 more than half of Britons lived in towns. The census asked about types of jobs that people had:

What sort of job do you do?

- Farming / Mining / Building / General Labour / Public Service / Domestic Service.

The Census 1871

With growing towns, the 1871 Census wanted to know how many people lived in an area as well as their age and gender.

How many people live here?

What ages are the people who live here?

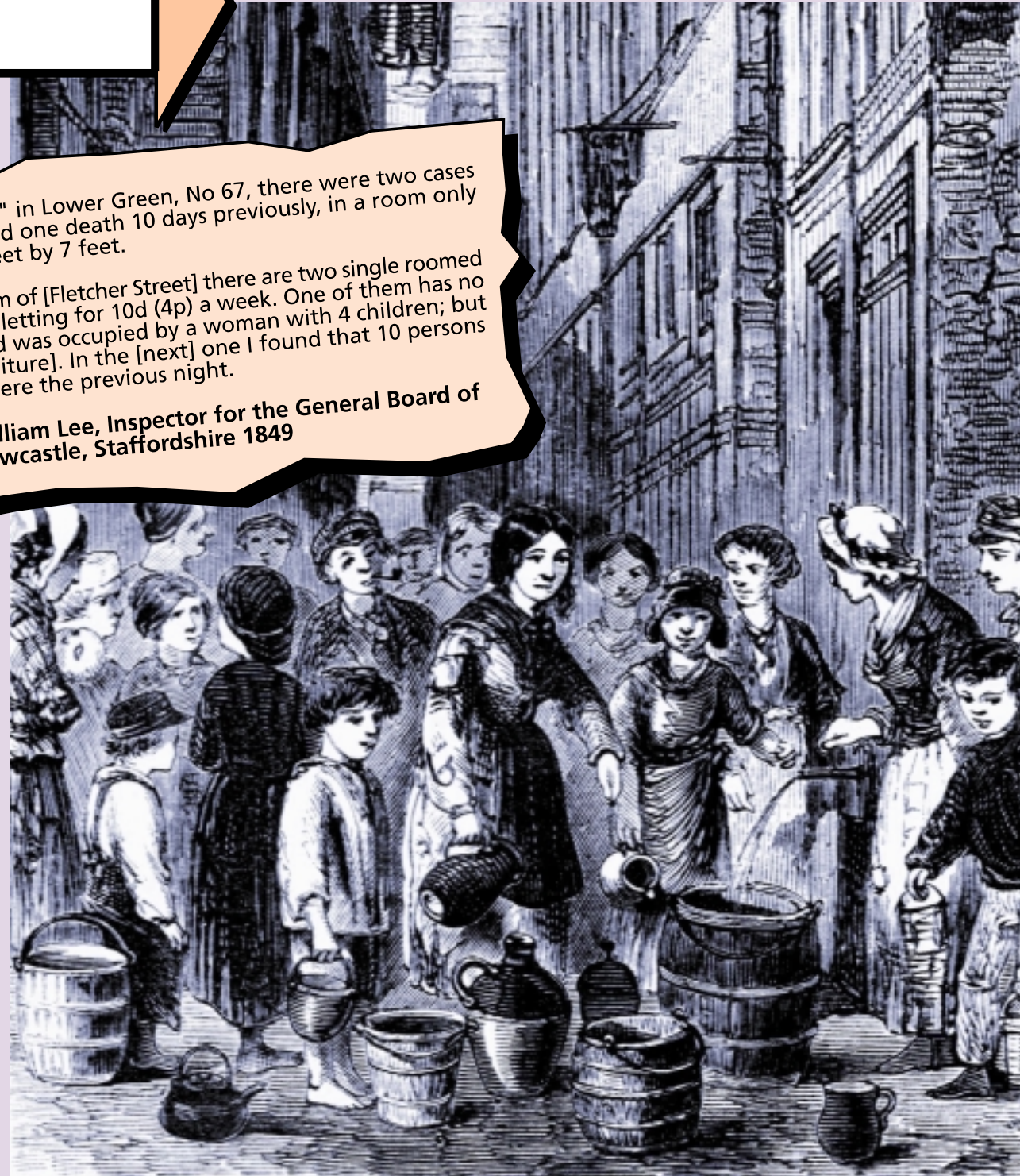
Male: 0-14 / 15-29 / 30-44 / 45-59 / 60 - 74 / 75+

Female: 15- 44 / 75+

At "The Hole" in Lower Green, No 67, there were two cases of cholera and one death 10 days previously, in a room only 6 feet by 9 feet by 7 feet.

At the bottom of [Fletcher Street] there are two single roomed hovels, each letting for 10d (4p) a week. One of them has no window, and was occupied by a woman with 4 children; but has [no furniture]. In the [next] one I found that 10 persons had slept there the previous night.

Source: William Lee, Inspector for the General Board of Health, Newcastle, Staffordshire 1849



Queuing for water in Clerkenwell, London in 1870

"If ... we can prevent such a waste of life, power, energy, health, and everything that makes a nation healthy and wealthy, it is our duty ... to see whether we cannot do something."

Richard Cross introducing the Artisans Dwellings Bill in the House of Commons 8th February 1875

"They spoke of sweeping away streets in which it was not possible to live a healthy and decent life; of making the town cleaner, sweeter, and brighter; of providing gardens and parks and a museum, ... that good water should be supplied ... at the lowest possible prices ..."

Rev. R.W. Dale, speaking about Birmingham in the 1870's

FACT

By the Public Health Act of 1875, towns were forced to provide clean water, as well as proper sewage and drainage. Towns could also widen streets as well as pave and light them, and provide parks for public use.

The Changing Census...