**Poverty in York**

**Information**

**Collection Pack**

**You will need to investigate several areas of Kirkgate to see what life was like for poor people living in Victorian York.**

**In the Temperance Cocoa Room:**

Cocoa Rooms were a social place to meet similar to a pub but without alcohol so people would visit them to chat, sing or discuss current affairs.

Alcohol was a part of everyday life. Pubs were important centres for news and political gatherings. But as well as this, alcohol was also prescribed by doctors and considered by most to be healing. A lack of clean drinking water meant that there was no cheap alternative to beer.

The temperance movement was not a tee-total attitude (no alcohol drunk), but one where followers would be moderate in their drinking of alcohol.

Find the picture showing the problems that drinking alcohol might cause.

Spot at least three things that could happen to those who get drunk and two other pictures in the room that show what people should be doing.

What sort of people do you think would come here and why?

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**Outside the Poor House**

Spot evidence of this being a poorer person’s house.

Find the water pump and toilet too.

Entire streets shared one or two outside toilets. That could be up to 15 families!

Outside toilets, or privies, had no plumbing. They were a wooden plank over a hole in the ground. Ash was often sprinkled to mask the smell.

Running water in houses was rare so many streets had a water pump for families to share. This was often polluted and caused illness and disease.

Is this person in primary or secondary poverty?

Primary poverty is struggling to have enough money to even buy the basics such as food and clothes.

Secondary poverty is lack of money due to spending it on items that were not necessary such as newspapers and alcohol. These families therefore lived in similar conditions to those in primary poverty.

How can you tell?

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**Outside Ambler’s Grocer**

Look at this meal plan for an average poor family.

Menu of meals provided during week ending Feb 22nd 1901

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Breakfast  | Dinner | Tea  | Supper |
| Friday | Bread, butter, tea | Bread, butter, toast, tea | Bread, butter, tea |  |
| Saturday | Bread, bacon, coffee | Bacon, potatoes, pudding, tea | Bread, butter, shortcake, tea | Tea, bread, kippers |
| Sunday | Bread, butter, shortcake, coffee | Pork, onions, potatoes, Yorkshire pudding | Bread, butter, shortcake, tea | Bread and meat |
| Monday | Bread, bacon, butter, tea | Pork, potatoes, pudding, tea | Bread, butter, tea | One cup of tea |
| Tuesday | Bread, bacon, butter, coffee | Pork, bread, tea | Bread, butter, boiled eggs, tea | Bread, bacon, butter, tea |
| Wednesday | Bread, bacon, butter, tea | Bacon and eggs, potatoes, bread, tea | Bread, butter, tea |  |
| Thursday | Bread, butter, coffee | Bread, bacon, tea | Bread, butter, tea |  |

Why are they not eating fruit and vegetables? Why do you think the meals are so repetitive? Is there anything they could have done to make the situation better?

Record your thoughts.

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**Outside Hardcastle’s Pawnbroker**

The main function of the pawnbroker was to lend money, although they often traded in second hand goods too.

A customer brings in the items they want to pawn and the Pawnbroker works out the value and how much money they are willing to lend. With the loan agreed, the details are entered in a register and on two tickets. One ticket is given to the customer and the other is attached to the goods. When the customer wants to buy back the item, they hand over their ticket and the payment is made – which includes interest and a ticket fee and the client takes the goods away – until the next time.

There is a slate in Ambler’s grocer’s showing money owed. The slate shows a total debt of 11d.

How would someone earning a small amount be able to pay off a debt like this?

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What do you think happened to them if they couldn’t pay?

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Belongings may have pawned items to help pay a debt, but what if there still wasn’t enough money? How might this affect the whole family?

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