



What has the Warneford Hospital meant to its community?

Teacher notes and lesson plan

TEACHER NOTES

GUIDELINES:

- This is designed to be used over two 60-minute lessons
- It is recommended that this lesson is used for History classes at the upper end of KS3 (year eight or nine), or GCSE
- Lesson one is designed to provide background on the history of the Warneford Hospital using primary sources
- Lesson two is designed to enable students to contribute to the commemoration of the Warneford Hospital.
- We are very keen to promote the voices of young people in the telling of these histories. You can send student work to us, and we will select submissions from students to be made publicly available on the Warneford 200 website.

A NOTE ON CONTENT AND LANGUAGE

CONTENT WARNING:

- This session explores the history of the Warneford Hospital, which has acted as a hospital for people with mental health conditions for the past 200 years. There will therefore be mention of mental health which can sometimes be distressing.
- In this resource, we have included some suggestions for how to bring this up with your young people, as well as places they can go to for support.

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE:

- This resource will be making use of language used over the past 200 years. Language used to refer to people with mental health conditions has shifted over time, and words used in the past are no longer deemed acceptable.
- This resource includes discussion around acceptable language, as well as the types of language we should seek to promote with young people.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Use evidence from the past to construct an idea of experiences at the Warneford hospital over its 200 year history
- Use this understanding to consider how the Warneford should be commemorated today



Lesson 1

What was life like at the Warneford Hospital over its 200 years?

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Use primary sources (letters, poems, photos, records) to reconstruct what life was like at the Warneford.
- Describe and analyse how the Warneford might have been experienced differently by its staff and service users.

RESOURCES

- Slide deck
- Primary source pack

ACTIVITIES

1. INTRODUCTION

10 MINUTES

Have the big enquiry question on the board, and ask students to discuss, or note down:

1. What do you know about the Warneford Hospital?
2. What do you know about how people with mental health conditions were treated in the past?

TEACHER NOTES:

There's no issue if students haven't heard of the Warneford Hospital. They will learn about it through the session. If you'd like to mention something briefly – it's a mental health hospital based in Headington, Oxford. It was founded 200 years ago, in July 1826.

Again, it's okay if students don't know much about mental health histories, but encourage them to think about popular culture, or their assumptions. Their usual responses are often a very negative view on mental health histories, with cases like Bedlam, or other Victorian institutions chaining patients up etc. There is also the assumption that mental health is a modern phenomenon.

2. CONTENT WARNINGS AND A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

2-3 MINUTES

Tell students something along the lines of:

"We are going to be exploring the Warneford Hospital today, which has acted as a hospital for people with mental health conditions for 200 years. There will therefore be mention of mental health today. I know this can be upsetting, so if you need a moment, please let an adult know. There are lots of places you can go to for support if you feel affected."

You could:

- Talk to a Trusted Adult. This could be a parent, carer, older family member, a teacher, school counsellor, a GP, or head of year
- <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>
Can help you to find advice and support

You don't need perfect words. You could say:

"I've been having a hard time lately and I think I need some support."

If you'd rather talk to someone outside your usual circle, these are free and confidential:

- **Samaritans** – Call 116 123 (24/7)
- **Shout** – Text the word 'Shout' to 85258 (24/7 text support)
- **Childline** – 0800 1111 or online chat

A note on language:

"I also want to warn you about the language that you might see used. In the past people used many different terms to refer to mental health conditions that we might not use today."

"You might see words like insane, mad, lunatic. These are words that people might use in everyday conversation, but we don't use these words anymore to refer to people with mental health conditions."

"This is because over time these words became dehumanising."

"We shouldn't define a person by their mental illness or disability. We should try to use more respectful, 'people first' language that emphasises someone is a person first – they have a disability rather than they are disabled, they are living with schizophrenia rather than they're schizophrenic. We also try to be more specific with their mental health condition."

3. BRIEF BACKGROUND TO THE WARNEFORD HOSPITAL**10 MINUTES**

Take students through the two information slides (outlined below), which also have questions to encourage thinking and to check understanding.

A 'Think, Pair, Share' format:

- 30 seconds of individual thinking,
- 30 seconds to share with your neighbour, and then
- hands-down questioning of the class to share ideas – is recommended for this, but please use whatever works for you.

Information slide one has a map with the Warneford Hospital marked on it, and it reads:

- Officially opened to the public in July 1826
- Sliding scale of charges so you could pay what you could afford
- Purpose was to cater for the genteel middle classes; the clergy and professionals, who were frequently neither rich enough for private care or poor enough to apply to the parish.
- In 1846 the Littlemore Hospital was opened to cater for poorer patients

The student questions are:

1. Can the Warneford tell us about the experiences of all types of people who struggled with their mental health around 200 years ago?
2. Whose stories might be missing?

TEACHER NOTES:

- This question is designed to draw out similarity and difference. In particular, the Warneford can give us limited information on what it was like to be a working class person in a mental health institution. You may also want to draw out that there could be regional variations too.

Information slide two is a labelled original ground plan of the Warneford Hospital.

The student questions are:

1. What do you notice about the plan of the hospital?
2. What can this tell us about class and gender?

TEACHER NOTES:

- Whilst a range of student contributions might come out, this question also hits on class. You'll notice that the 'superior class' patients are situated towards the front, whilst the 2nd and 3rd classes are at the back nearer to the kitchens and wash houses.

- There is also a clear gender segregation, with female quarters on the left, and male on the right.

4. WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE AT THE WARNEFORD?**25 MINUTES**

Students should be given source packs, and should answer the questions to find out about what life was like at the Warneford hospital.

The questions they should be working on are:

1. What type of source is it?
2. Who does it tell us about?
3. What does it tell us about experiences at the Warneford? (e.g. daily life, feelings, treatments)

TEACHER NOTES:

- Please feel free to run this activity as you wish – either through carousels, in pairs, small groups, or a walking gallery with the sources laid out around the room.

- There is also an information collecting table for students to use, should you wish to provide it.

5. CONCLUSION**5 MINUTES****Discuss as a class:**

1. Was life at the Warneford the same for all patients and staff? Why/Why not?
2. What surprised you most about mental health care in the Warneford?
Think about what your initial ideas were at the start of the lesson. Have they changed?

TEACHER NOTES:

- This is designed to get students to reflect on their learning throughout the lesson. You could discuss as a class, or get the students to talk in pairs, and use the questions as an exit ticket.



Lesson 2

What has the Warneford Hospital meant to its community?

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Explain why the Warneford matters to their community, both in the past and today.
- Identify whose voices are heard in the history of the hospital and whose voices are missing.
- Use historical evidence and their own ideas to decide what should be remembered about the Warneford.

RESOURCES

- Video link
- Slide deck
- A range of creative materials for the final activity, depending on availability e.g. sugar paper, coloured paper, glue sticks, felt tip pens, scissors, play-dough

ACTIVITIES

1. INTRODUCTION

5 MINUTES

This is designed to recap the previous lesson's learning, and set up for the commemoration activity.

Discuss with students:

1. What source stood out to you the most from last lesson? Why?
2. If you weren't here, what do you know about the Warneford hospital?
3. What does it mean to commemorate something?

TEACHER NOTES:

- A think, pair, share format may be helpful here. But again, please use these questions however works best for you.
- Commemoration usually refers to remembering and honouring an event or person from the past. We'd like you to help us with our commemoration of 200 years of the Warneford Hospital.
- But, sometimes people think commemoration should only about the positives – we acknowledge that the Warneford has a complicated past and people's experiences of it differed. We want you to tell the stories you think are important, whether they are positive, negative, or somewhere inbetween.
- Give a reminder to students of content warnings and the note on language.

2. THE WARNEFORD HOSPITAL TODAY

5 MINUTES

Watch the video from 14min–16:17:

<https://warneford200.co.uk/the-history-of-the-warneford-film/>

Get students to discuss:

1. What is the mission of the Warneford Hospital today?

3. SETTING UP FOR THE COMMEMORATION ACTIVITY

5 MINUTES

Let students know that:

- We're going to be thinking about how we can contribute to remembering the histories of the Warneford in the present and future
- Let's set up for that, by thinking about the types of stories we'd like to tell.
- Remember, the Warneford Hospital is based in Oxfordshire. As this is in your community, we would like you to be able to tell the histories of the hospital too, and emphasise the stories you think are important.
- Your work, with your consent, can be sent to us, and we will consider them for submission on the website. We will only use your first names, or pseudonyms if you wish.

To help guide their thinking, let your students know about the types of histories that have previously been told about mental health:

- Most of the early histories of psychiatric hospitals were written by doctors. Historians started to take more of an interest in patient voices around 50 years ago
- But, doctors, nurses and unseen teams kept the Warneford running

With that in mind, discuss these two questions:

1. What does it mean to you to have this hospital in your community?
2. Whose voices and what stories should we try to remember as the Warneford gets redeveloped?

TEACHER NOTES:

- Again, a think, pair, share format may be helpful here. The prompts above are just intended to inform students – they can focus on any part of mental health histories that they would like.

4. COMMEMORATION ACTIVITY

40 MINUTES

Students should work in small groups to design something to commemorate the Warneford Hospital's 200-year history.

Their design could try to show:

- How people experienced life at the Warneford
- What the hospital has meant to this community
- What/how it should be remembered as it changes in the future

Students can work in a broad range of formats. This could include:

Words:

- a short message to the community
- a poem, quote, or sentence inspired by the sources
- something you think people should remember about the Warneford

Images and symbols:

- drawings of the hospital, gardens, or wards
- symbols of care, hope, healing, or change

Voices from the past:

- short quotes from the sources you studied
- a patient's words
- a nurse's or doctor's words

Creative materials:

- colour, collage, textures
- play-dough or 3D elements
- a small 'memorial garden'

TEACHER NOTES:

- Please send any submissions, with parental/student consent as appropriate to: Dee Kyaagba (dee.kyaagba2@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)

- The work will be displayed with students' first names only. If the student would prefer to be anonymous, or use a pseudonym, please let us know.