

## **Workshop 1: Who was Josiah C. Wedgwood?**

### **Workshop 1: Aims**

To interrogate source material about Josiah Wedgwood's life

To create an outline biography of Josiah Wedgwood

### **Resources:**

A set of source materials 1A-1L printed out for each group of 4-5 pupils

Additional information from Teachers' Introduction

### **Key questions for exploration:**

Who was Josiah C. Wedgwood and what did he do?

What sort of a man was he? What were his beliefs and why?

Why are we studying him?

### **Workshop 1 Activity: Who was Josiah C. Wedgwood?**

#### **Stage 1: Sources 1A-1L**

Pupils start with no information except the source materials 1A-1L.

Ask pupils to work in small groups of 4-5 to examine source materials. Ask them to use detective skills to work out as much information as they can to create a timeline of Josiah C Wedgwood's life, including as much detail as possible.

#### **Stage 2:**

Using Sources 1A-1K, and introducing information from teachers' notes, ask students to discuss in small groups and then in class the following questions:

What kind of a man you think Josiah Wedgwood was?

How did others see him?

What made Josiah Wedgwood who he was?

Why should we study and remember him?

### **Extension**

As MP for Newcastle-under-Lyme, Josiah Wedgwood made many speeches in Parliament. Here is a brief excerpt:

May 1933

I have said that there are very few things for which we would fight. One of the things for which I would fight, and I think most people would agree with me, would be to prevent injustice. When you see the sort of injustice that is going on in Germany to-day, the veriest pacifist is converted into an ardent militarist.

Wedgwood was referring to Hitler's rule in Germany. Nazi leadership was persecuting Jews, disabled people and others, and imprisoning people who disagreed with them.

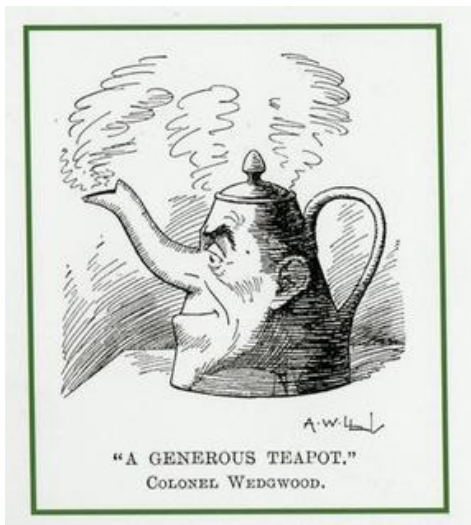
Ask pupils if they agree that we should go to war to prevent injustice in another country? Ask them to imagine that Josiah Wedgwood is their own MP, and write a letter to him, giving reasons why they agree or disagree with his speech.

### Skills required

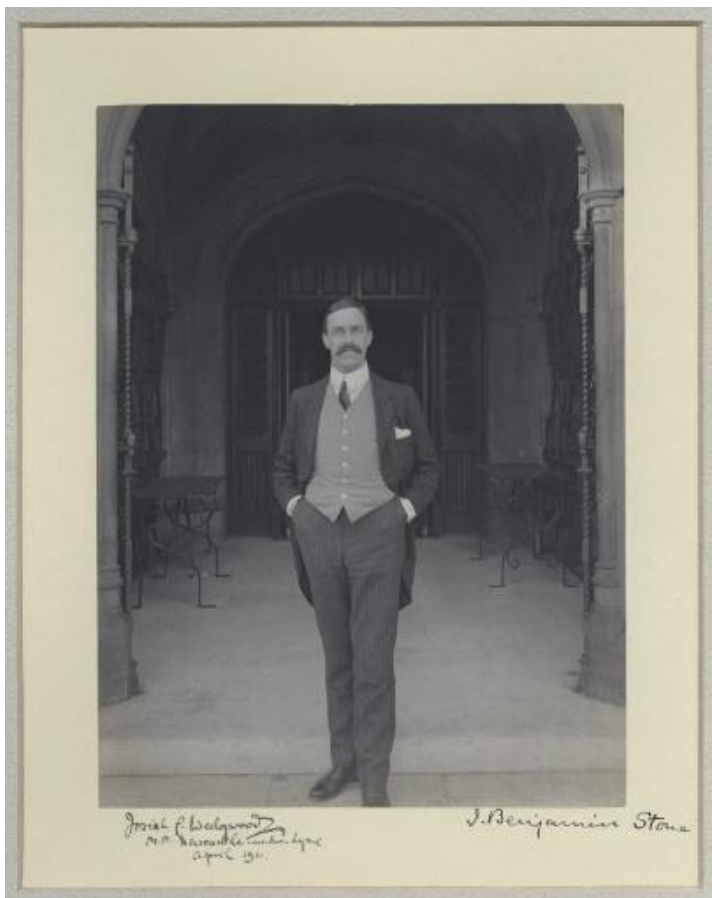
- Analysing sources in context
- Using evidence rigorously
- Mapping material from disparate sources
- Discussion using evidence

## Workshop 1 Sources

1A "A Generous Teapot" cartoon from 1920 , reproduced courtesy of *Punch magazine*



1B Photograph of Josiah C. Wedgwood, M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1911 at the Houses of Parliament by Sir Benjamin Stone, reproduced courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery



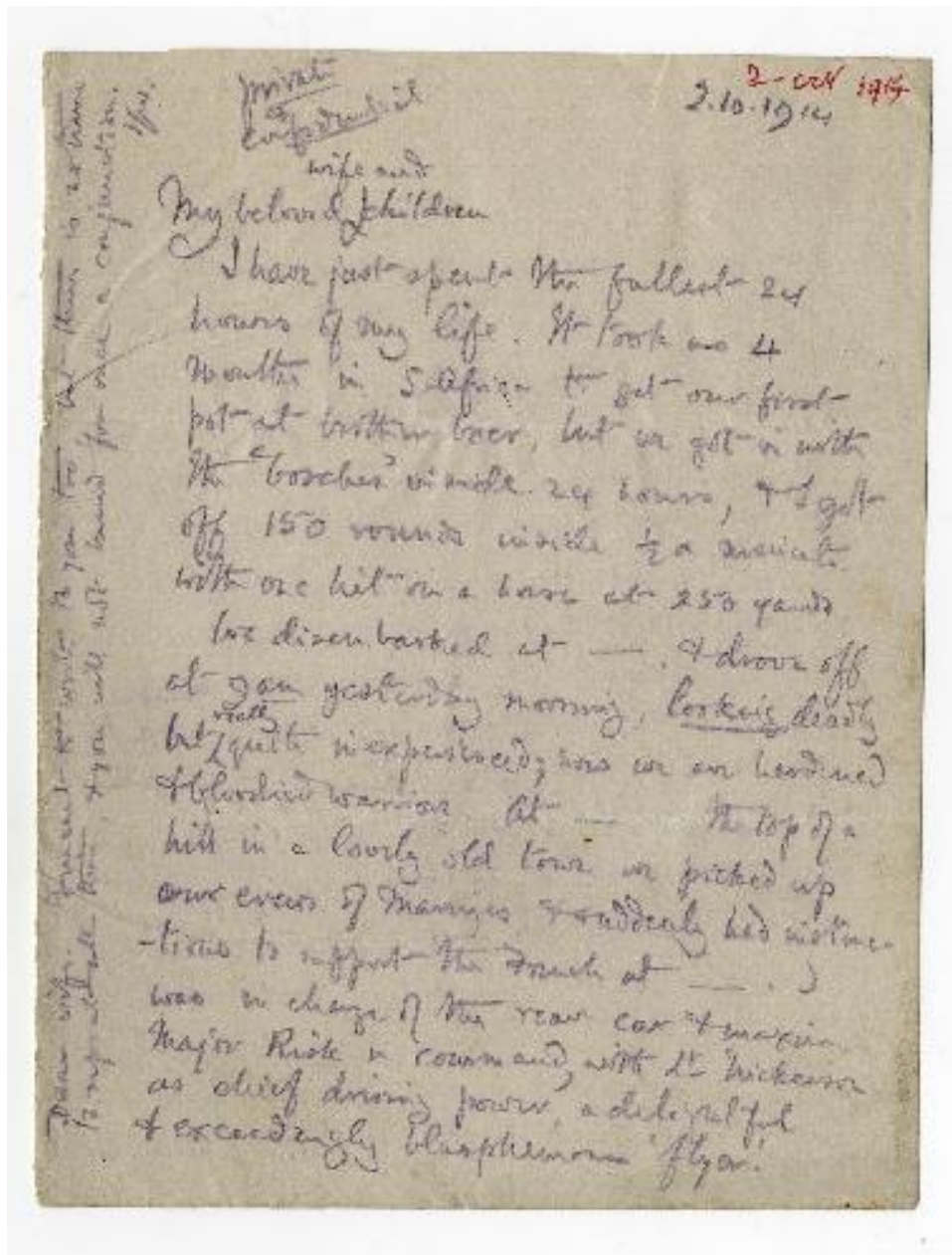
1C Portrait of Josiah C. Wedgwood, reproduced courtesy of the Brompton Museum and Art Gallery



1D *Am I Not a Man and a Brother?* Medallion created in 1787 as part of anti-slavery campaign by Josiah Wedgwood, great-great-grandfather of Josiah C. Wedgwood.



1E handwritten letter from Josiah Wedgwood to his wife and children about his early experience at the Front in the First World War (October 1914)



1F

'Is life so sweet, or peace so dear, as to be purchased at the price of chains of slavery? I know not what course this may take, but, as for me, give me liberty or give me death.'

– Patrick Henry, quoted by Josiah Wedgwood

1G

Josiah Wedgwood born Barlaston, Staffordshire  
16 March 1872

1H

St Giles Church, Newcastle Under Lyme  
Memorial Service of Josiah Clement, Lord Wedgwood of  
Barlaston, July 1943

The most outstanding characteristic of all Josiah  
Wedgwood's fights ... always and everywhere on behalf of  
the poor, the needy and the oppressed.

"Jos" was ever the champion of the under-dog in whatever  
guise that helpless individual might be found ... he was  
always and utterly single hearted

- Right Rev. E.S Woods, Bishop of Lichfield

1J

General Election 1906: Newcastle-under-Lyme

Party	Candidate		Votes	%
Liberal	Josiah Wedgwood		5,155	63.6
Liberal Unionist	Alfred Seale Haslam		2,948	36.4
		Majority	2,207	



In November 1933, refugees began to pour into England - ruined Jews and Socialists. Between then and open war in 1939, I did my duty by England in personally helping to this country, and often thence overseas, two hundred and twenty-two of the victims of persecution. I did it in the teeth of every obstruction from Government, from anti-Semites, and from many English Jews who feared for themselves lest anti-Semitism should increase here.

- Memoirs of a Fighting Life by Josiah C Wedgwood 1941  
p226

... The distressed of the whole world have learnt to look to him, and through him to Parliament, for a patient hearing and the redress of wrongs.

There have been occasions when he and I have differed; but I have never doubted his single-minded pursuit of truth and justice.

Winston Churchill, Prime Minister, October 1940

Foreword to Wedgwood's Memoirs

## **Workshop 2: Refugees from Nazi Germany**

### **Teachers' Notes: Background knowledge for pupils**

Adolf Hitler, leader of the Nazi Party, came to power in Germany in 1933. Quickly he gave himself unlimited power, becoming a dictator. The Nazis arrested and imprisoned people who disagreed with them.

In Germany from 1933 onwards, and in Austria from 1938, hostility to Jews increased. The Nazis used propaganda in newspapers and newsreels to spread hatred towards Jews. Children were brainwashed in school and in the Hitler Youth Movement. The Nazis also persecuted Roma/Gypsy people, gay people and disabled people.

Jewish children were made to sit alone in school. Jews were banned from professional jobs such as medicine or law. They were banned from marrying non-Jews, and they lost the right to vote. Jewish businesses were boycotted. In 1938 Jews were banned from going to parks or participating in entertainments such as music, theatre and sport.

Violent attacks became frequent. On Kristallnacht (the Night of Broken Glass) in November 1938, Jewish shops and synagogues in Germany and Austria were smashed. Over 26,000 Jewish men were sent to concentration camps, and around 90 were murdered.

### **Learning content**

From 1933, Josiah Wedgwood spoke out against Nazi persecution of Jewish people and other people. Wedgwood wanted to help Jewish people to escape from Nazi rule. But the British Government was reluctant to accept refugees. They set limits on the numbers of Jewish refugees coming to the UK or to Palestine, which was at that time under British rule. They made it difficult for refugees to come unless a British citizen would pay £50 (about £3000 today) as a guarantee.

Wedgwood tried to persuade the British government to allow Jews and others to come to safety. He also supported Jews being allowed to settle elsewhere in the British Empire, for instance in Kenya.

Some people were worried that refugees might take jobs from British workers. But Wedgwood argued that Britain had benefited throughout its history from immigrants settling here. He encouraged local people and groups to work together to raise money for guarantees.



Some ships containing refugees who had escaped from Germany were turned away from Britain, Palestine and other countries too. Some of the refugees were returned to Nazi Germany.

Wedgwood supported the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, but he did not live long enough to see the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.