

From Cable Street to Today: Antisemitism, Resistance and Responding to Prejudice

Enquiry Question: *What can the history of antisemitism in Britain since Cable Street teach us about responding to prejudice today?*

Guidance Notes and Lesson Plan

Lesson Objectives

Students should leave the lesson understanding that:

- Neither Cable Street nor the Holocaust ended antisemitism, it simply adapted.
- Individuals and communities have repeatedly responded to prejudice in different ways.
- The "spirit of Cable Street" can help inform positive responses to prejudice today.
- They can begin developing a meaningful response to prejudice, discrimination or hate that could be entered into a competition.

Key Information

This lesson is designed for students aged 13 and above. It is devised for History classes.

The timings suggested are based on a one-hour lesson and may need adapting based on circumstances. Some adaptations have been suggested where appropriate.

Prior knowledge is not needed. However, the notion that students may arrive with knowledge, ideas and preconceptions is embraced and should be utilised to explore and resolve misconceptions.

If possible, students should remain in the same small group throughout this course of lessons.

Resources:

- Lesson plan
- Lesson PowerPoint containing:
 - a short video (Slide 3)
- Workstation Information Packs (2 for each workstation)
- Student worksheet (A4; one per student)
- Planning Sheet (A4; enough for one or two per small group)

Introduction

The previous lesson explored the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Cable Street, including the continued existence of the British Union of Fascists, changing but continuing antisemitism, and differing interpretations of the Battle's significance. This lesson moves the story forward by examining what was touched on at the end of the previous lesson, namely, what happened in Britain after the Second World War and asking students to consider how antisemitism changed, persisted and was challenged in the decades that followed.

Rather than focusing on the question *What happened after Cable Street?*, students now explore two broader historical enquiries: **How did antisemitism change and continue after Cable Street?** and **What can people do in response to prejudice and discrimination?** In doing so, they investigate the 1947 anti-Jewish riots, the emergence of the 43 Group, the persistence of antisemitic attitudes in post-war Britain, and patterns in antisemitic incidents up to the present day. The lesson emphasises that major historical events, including the Holocaust and the defeat of fascism in the Second World War, did not automatically eliminate prejudice. Instead, students examine evidence of both continuity and change over time.

The lesson also represents a shift in emphasis from historical interpretation towards the concepts of **continuity and change**, **active citizenship** and **meaningful responses to prejudice**. Through a combination of historical case studies and contemporary examples, students explore the different ways individuals and communities have responded to hatred, discrimination and extremism. This culminates in students developing their own proposals for responding to prejudice, inspired by historical examples such as the residents of Cable Street, the 43 Group and more recent community responses. Students will be encouraged to evaluate these responses and begin designing thoughtful and constructive responses of their own to contemporary forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Starter: The Myth of "Problem Solved" (5 minutes)

This starter activity serves two purposes; to link back to the previous lesson by recapping some of the learning, and to set the scene for exploring this lesson's Enquiry Question. Display three statements (**Slide 1**):

- | | |
|--|----------|
| A The Holocaust ended antisemitism | YES / NO |
| B Cable Street ended antisemitism | YES / NO |
| C Antisemitism changed, but did not disappear | YES / NO |

Students vote on each statement. After each vote, ask for contributions as to why they voted ‘yes’ or ‘no’. By this stage of the unit, students *should* vote ‘no’ to the first two statements and ‘yes’ to the third, although it is possible some students may vote ‘no’ as they may think that either antisemitism has disappeared, or that it hasn’t changed or disappeared. If that is the case, the teacher may want to revisit this vote at the end of the lesson.

Tell students that in today’s lesson they will investigate whether prejudice really disappears after major historical events. Hence by extension, they will come to better understand that the results of such events can be complex, nuanced and long-lasting.

Video: From Cable Street to Today (5-8 minutes)

Show the embedded video (**Slide 3**) which ends with a final question encouraging students to consider what we can learn from the people who chose to respond to continued antisemitism.

It may be helpful for some students to go through the questions on their worksheet prior to watching the video so that they know what they are looking for. (An approximate script of the video is in Appendix A at the end of the Guidance Notes and Lesson Plan.)

Check understanding with the following questions (**Slide 4**):

- What happened to antisemitism in Britain after the Holocaust? *(Probable answers will be that it remained, although in different forms as it was less publicly tolerated, and that there were anti-Jewish riots.)*
- What was the 43 Group and why was it formed? *(Answers should include that it was mostly made up of ex-servicemen and women who had fought against fascism and were shocked to see it continue in Britain. It was formed to confront fascists directly.)*
- What was the pattern of antisemitism after the war up to today? *(Answers should include that it continued, different forms may be mentioned and that there were spikes in intensity which seemed to be linked with wider national and international events.)*
- What have been the responses to continued antisemitism? *(Answers should focus on things such as community responses as well as individual ones, the “Battle of Trafalgar Street” might be mentioned.)*

Activity: Carousel Group Work (20 minutes)

Students are now going to consolidate and expand on the knowledge gained from the video. The first main activity of this lesson is group-based investigative work. Divide the class into **six** small groups. Point out the three workstations set up around the classroom. These are **(Slide 5)**:

- Post-war antisemitism in Britain
- The 43 Group
- Modern day antisemitism

Each group goes to one of the workstations (no more than two groups at each workstation) and, using the information there, completes the relevant task on their worksheets. After 5 minutes, tell the groups to move round to the next workstation and repeat the process. Allow 5 minutes then move on to the third and final workstation, completing the relevant tasks on their worksheets in the process.

Circulate round the workstations checking understanding by asking students what they are going to write for the questions in their worksheet. After all the groups have visited each workstation take feedback using **Slides 6 – 8**.

Workstation 1 – Post-war antisemitism in Britain (Slide 6)

1. How did antisemitism change after the Second World War? *(Give examples that show how antisemitism changed.)*
2. In what ways did antisemitism stay the same after the war? *(Include examples of things that stayed the same.)*

Workstation 2: The 43 Group (Slide 7)

1. What was the 43 Group and why was it created? *(Include information about who the members were and why they formed the group.)*
2. How did the 43 Group respond to fascism? How was this different to responses to fascism before the war? *(Include examples of what the 43 Group did that were different to responses before the war, as well as things that were the same.)*
3. How much support did the 43 Group have? *(Include information about who did and who did not support the 43 Group, and why some didn't support the group.)*

Workstation 3 – Modern day antisemitism in Britain (Slide 8)

1. Can you identify any patterns in antisemitism in modern day Britain? (*E.g. has antisemitism increased or decreased steadily? Has it increased or decreased at particular times?*)
2. What, if anything, surprises you about the statistics on antisemitism since 2014? (*Include information that explains what you think.*)

Activity: End of Unit Project (20 minutes)

Why Is the spirit of Cable Street still relevant in modern Britain?

We now reach the main intended outcome of this unit celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street. The aim is for students to recognise that they can respond to prejudice in meaningful and effective ways, using what is often referred to as “the Spirit of Cable Street”. What is important here is that students are encouraged to build on what they do in the lesson and create something meaningful to them; it should be clear to them that they have the freedom to do this.

Explain that in this unit we have come across a range of responses to prejudice. Ask students to name as many as they can, perhaps asking for an example for each one to check their knowledge, then show **Slide 9**.

- Petitions
- Community organising
- Demonstrations
- Education
- Art / Murals
- Newspapers
- Theatre
- Campaigning

Today students are going to begin to develop their own response.

Students will be working in pairs or small groups of three or four (it can be beneficial to allow students to decide this for themselves). Do not allow the groups to be bigger than four at most (three is preferable). Explain that the aim of this task is for them to begin to develop their own response to prejudice (**Slide 10**).

Distribute the Planning Sheet (included in Appendix B) and talk through the guidance on it, using **Slide 11**. The first thing that each small group must do is identify a prejudice or intolerance that they can engage with. This could be something personal, local or national – it is important that students feel a sense of ownership of their work, so it is not necessary for them to tackle something with which they have no immediate connection.

The next step is to work out what the most suitable method of tackling their issue will be. Explain that in order to do this, students will need to decide exactly **what** it is that they wish to achieve. They should aim to be realistic in this. So it may be that they simply wish to raise awareness of a prejudice or intolerance. On the other hand, they might want to create a direct challenge to the prejudice they are addressing. Take some suggestions of possible methods and write these on the board for future reference. Students could write them on to their Planning Sheet. *(Examples might include a poster or social media campaign, a mural or other public artwork, a community event or exhibition.)*

The third step, and one which will help them decide if they have the best approach to tackling the prejudice they have identified, is to work out what the potential impact of their approach might be. For example, if a group chooses to raise awareness, then a hard-hitting and widespread social media campaign may be deemed suitable, with a high chance of success.

Slide 12 summarises the approach they will need to take, and links back to the 43 Group and one example of tackling prejudice and intolerance.

Inevitably, the question “do we actually have to carry out our plan?” will be asked. Hopefully, having identified an issue important to them, students will *want* to put their plans into action and they should be encouraged to do so. This will help them to create something appropriate and manageable.

With this in mind, the teacher will decide how much time can be allowed, which may be in the form of a series of homework tasks. Two extension suggestions are given below which serve to develop the unit and the follow-up work.

Plenary (2-5 minutes)

Regardless of how far into the planning of the End of Unit Project the students have got, enough time should be left at the end of the lesson for the plenary. Check overall understanding with the questions on the final slide (**Slide 13**).

- In the 90 years since the Battle of Cable Street, have intolerance and prejudice become less acceptable? How do we know this?
- Give an example of how prejudice and intolerance have been challenged since the Battle of Cable Street
- Is the “spirit of Cable Street” still important? Why?

The Unit should end with the following question to be discussed as a class: **Why is it important to remember historical struggles for equality and fights against prejudice and intolerance?**

Encourage students to use the knowledge and evidence they have gained throughout the unit, alongside their own knowledge and perspectives to support their responses.

Extension 1: Presenting ideas

If there is time, or perhaps a forum outside the lesson, groups can pitch their format. Explain that they need to describe the prejudice or intolerance they have chosen, explain why it is an important issue, what their “spirit of Cable Street” response is and how it will be delivered. Essentially, this means answering the questions on the planning sheet and explaining their proposal in an enthusiastic manner which would encourage others to get on board with it. Students should evaluate why their response is likely to work better than other approaches.

Extension 2: Gallery Walk and Peer Review

Students move around the classroom to as many of the other groups that they can in the time available and look at their proposals. Provide post-its so that students can leave a strength and a challenge for another group’s idea. Feedback can then be taken.

APPENDIX A

Video (5 minutes)

Overview: Continuing antisemitism and other forms of prejudice; challenges to these and community responses

Visual: Presenter standing next to the Cable Street mural

Scene 1: Opening

Presenter Script

In our last lesson, we discovered that the Battle of Cable Street did not bring an end to fascism or antisemitism in Britain. The British Union of Fascists continued to exist, antisemitism remained a problem, and the consequences of Cable Street were far more complicated than many people expected.

Today we're moving forward in time. We'll explore what happened after the Second World War, how antisemitism changed and continued in Britain, and how people responded when they encountered prejudice and hatred.

Scene 2: The 1947 Anti-Jewish Riots

Visual: Newspaper headlines from 1947 – Maps showing affected cities such as Liverpool, Manchester, London and Glasgow

Presenter Script

Many people assumed that after the defeat of Nazi Germany and the revelations of the Holocaust, antisemitism would disappear.

But that didn't happen.

In 1947, anti-Jewish riots broke out in several British cities. Jewish businesses were attacked, windows were smashed, and antisemitic incidents occurred across the country. For historians, these riots are surprising because they happened only two years after the end of the Second World War, but they remind us that prejudice can survive even after major historical events such as the Holocaust. Unsurprisingly perhaps, Oswald Mosley, who had been released from prison in 1943 due to ill-health, formed a new fascist organisation, the Union Movement, in 1948.

Scene 3: The 43 Group

Visual: Photographs of 43 Group members – Images of Oswald Mosley speaking after the war – Graphic: "Discuss - Decide - Do"

Presenter Script

But not everyone was prepared to stand by and watch. In 1946, a group of mainly Jewish ex-servicemen and women created an organisation known as the **43 Group**. Many of its members had fought against fascism during the war and were shocked and outraged to find fascist groups becoming active again in Britain.

The 43 Group used a range of tactics: they gathered information about fascist organisations, disrupted meetings, protected local communities and challenged antisemitic propaganda. They swiftly grew to over 300 members.

Their methods were often controversial, but they believed they had a responsibility to prevent fascism from growing again. Like the people of Cable Street, they were asking an important question: what should you do when you see prejudice and hatred spreading? The 43 Group's philosophy was 'Discuss – Decide – Do it'.

Scene 4: Antisemitism After the Holocaust

Visual: Presenter next to the Cable Street mural

Presenter Script

After the Holocaust, British society changed in important ways. Open antisemitism became less acceptable, fascism became deeply unpopular, and greater attention was given to preventing discrimination. Yet antisemitism did not disappear. Instead, it often changed form.

Historians talk about both **continuity and change**. In this case, some attitudes changed and improved, but prejudice, stereotypes and conspiracy theories continued to appear in different ways. Understanding this balance between change and continuity is one of the key challenges of studying history.

Scene 5: Modern Antisemitism and Patterns

Visual: Simple graph showing CST figures

Presenter Script

Today, organisations such as the Community Security Trust monitor antisemitic incidents across the United Kingdom. Something that researchers have noticed is that incidents do not rise steadily. Instead, there are often sudden spikes. Periods of international tension, political conflict, or increased public anxiety can sometimes be accompanied by significant increases in antisemitic incidents.

This tells us something important: prejudice is not simply a thing of the past; it can reappear and adapt to changing circumstances.

Scene 6: Community Responses

Visual: Community vigils – Memorials

Presenter Script

But this story is not only about prejudice; it is also about the people who respond to it. Across Britain, communities have challenged hatred through education, campaigning, public awareness projects, support for victims, and community action.

These responses are often very different from one another. Some focus on learning, some on solidarity and support, and some focus on campaigning for change. Nevertheless, all of them raise the same question of how can people respond effectively when they encounter prejudice?

Scene 7: Brighton – The Battle of Trafalgar Street

Visual: Brighton railway station – Trafalgar Street – Trafalgar Street plaque – Map comparing the areas of Cable Street and Trafalgar Street

Presenter Script

More recently, some people have even compared recent events in Brighton to Cable Street. On Saturday, June 13th, 2026, in what has locally become known as the **Battle of Trafalgar Street**, thousands of anti-racist protesters mobilised in opposition to a planned far-right march through the city. The march was prevented from moving much further than the train station from where it began. The comparison with Cable Street was made because protesters believed they were continuing a long tradition of collective action against racism and fascism, and because of the numbers involved on either side: around 4,000 – 5,000 anti-fascists confronted around 200 – 300 far-right activists.

Whether or not you agree with the comparison, it shows something important. Ninety years after Cable Street, people are still debating what lessons can be learned from that history.

Scene 7: Conclusion

Visual: Cable Street mural – Photograph of the 43 Group – Brighton image

Presenter Script

From Cable Street to the 43 Group, from the 1947 riots to the present day, history shows that prejudice can continue, but so can resistance to it. So our final question is: **what can we learn from the people who chose to respond?**

APPENDIX B

Student Worksheet

What can the history of antisemitism in Britain since Cable Street teach us about responding to prejudice today?

Task 1

Whilst watching the short video, write notes under each of the questions below. Be ready to feedback in discussion afterwards.

- What happened to antisemitism in Britain after the Holocaust?
- What was the 43 Group?
- What was the pattern of antisemitism after the war up to today?
- What have been the responses to continued antisemitism?

Task 2

You are now going to build on the knowledge you gained from the video you have just watched. In your small group, visit each of the workstations round the classroom. Use the information at each workstation to answer the questions below. There is a set of questions for each workstation.

Discuss the information at the workstations in your small group before answering the questions. You might want to divide the information between each person in your group.

You only have **5 minutes** at each workstation. You do not need to write much for each question, but make sure that what you do write answers the question.

Workstation 1 – Post-war antisemitism in Britain

1. How did antisemitism change after the Second World War? *(Give examples that show how antisemitism changed.)*
2. In what ways did antisemitism stay the same after the war? *(Include examples of things that stayed the same.)*

Workstation 2 – The 43 Group?

1. What was the 43 Group and why was it created? *(Include information about who the members were and why they formed the group.)*
2. How did the 43 Group respond to fascism? How was this different to responses to fascism before the war? *(Include examples of what the 43 Group did that were different to responses before the war, as well as things that were the same.)*
3. How much support did the 43 Group have? *(Include information about who did and who did not support the 43 Group, and why some didn't support the group.)*

Workstation 3 – Modern day antisemitism in Britain

1. Can you identify any patterns in antisemitism in modern day Britain? *(E.g. has antisemitism increased or decreased steadily? Has it increased or decreased at particular times?)*
2. What, if anything, surprises you about the statistics on antisemitism since 2014? *(Include information that explains what you think.)*

APPENDIX C

The Battle of Cable Street: Antisemitism & Extremism in the UK: End of Unit Project

Why is the spirit of Cable Street relevant in modern Britain?

Planning Sheet

Britain has come a long way since before the Second World War, and is a much more tolerant country than in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. How can we ensure that “the spirit of Cable Street” lives on in the face of intolerance and prejudice?

Today, you are going to begin to develop your own response to a prejudice which is meaningful to you. You will be working in pairs or small groups of three or four, using the knowledge and understanding that you have gained throughout this Unit, plus the guidance and hints on this Planning Sheet.

Stage 1

The first thing to do is identify a prejudice or intolerance that you feel strongly about. This could be something personal, local or national. Something that has been in the news or not, it's up to you. Use the space below to write down some ideas and discuss them with your partner/group, using the questions as guidance. Make notes of your discussion as well.

Hint: If you are struggling to think of anything specific, written down examples of prejudices that you can think of, such as racism or sexism. Then, come up with an example of each prejudice that you have written down. These could be something from the news, or something you have witnessed or experienced.

Hint: Why is it important to you or to other people? What evidence shows that the issue matters?

Stage 2

The next step is to work out the most suitable method of tackling the issue your partner/group has decided on. You will need to decide exactly **what** it is that you want to achieve. Use the questions below to help you, as well as the whole class discussion and jot down some notes in the space below.

*Hint: Look back over the work you have done on this Unit and note down examples of how people challenged Mosley's British Union of Fascists. Okay, you're not going to barricade the streets, but that **is** an example of community action! How else can prejudice be tackled? Who will benefit from your campaign?*

Hint: Is your aim to change people's minds about something? Or to illuminate an issue for people that you feel needs to be understood better? Or to stop something from happening just one time? Are there other reasons for choosing your particular action? How is your idea inspired by the spirit of Cable Street?

Hint: What resources will you need? This will depend on, for instance, whether you are online or in public, at an event such as an exhibition, for instance. Why have you chosen those particular things?

Stage 3

The third step, which will help you decide if you have the best approach to tackling the prejudice you have identified, is to work out what the potential impact of your approach might be. Use the guidance and questions and make notes in the space below.

Hint: Think about how you get information about things that matter to you. Could one of these ways be used for your campaign? How and why would it work?

Hint: What groups of people do you want to reach? Think about the ways in which different groups of people get information? Online or in person? Out and about or at home?