

ANDERSON SHELTERS

Everybody was expecting that there would be enormous casualties if the Germans dropped bombs on British cities. Trenches were dug in the public parks and some street shelters were built, but a better way of protecting ordinary families was needed.

A shelter was designed which could be put in peoples' gardens. It was a sort of tunnel, made from curve corrugated-iron sheets which had to be bolted together. There was a flat steel plate at each end, with an opening in one of them for a door. The Anderson shelter had to be partially buried. First a hole, at least one metre deep had to be dug and the shelter fitted together inside it. Then the roof was supposed to be covered with about half a meter of soil.

The shelters were issued free to those on low incomes, and over two million were put up, starting in 1938. They could withstand almost anything except a direct hit and they probably saved many lives.

There were serious drawbacks however. The worst was that they tended to fill up with water and there was no light or heating. People tried to make them more comfortable by putting in a floor and building bunks inside, but they were always cold and damp.



Name: _____

ACTIVITIES

1. Match the words on the left with their correct meanings, by drawing lines to link each pair.

Casualties	problem or difficulty
Drawback	wavy, in ridges
Bunks	people killed or injured
Corrugated	outlast or pup up with
Withstand	small, beds, one above the other

2. Answer these questions

1. Where were the Anderson Shelters built?
2. What were they for?
3. Can you explain why Anderson shelters tended to fill up with water? What could be done to stop this happening?
4. Imagine you have just helped to set up your family's Anderson shelter. Write a story about how it was done. You could make it funny if you like.
5. How would you "furnish" your shelter to make it more comfortable when you have to spend the night in it?
6. Decide what six items you would take with you into your shelter for a night when air raids are expected. Check with the list at the bottom of the page. Did you forget anything important? Explain why these items might be needed.
7. Can you suggest why many people did not use their shelters except when an air raid had actually started?
8. Make a model of an Anderson Shelter, using corrugated cardboard. Why is it important to make sure the corrugations go the right way?