



Evacuations - Play 1

A news reporter interview a group of women and children at a railway station...

GOOD MORNING! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

Child 1 - We are being evacuated. We are moved temporarily from our homes in the city to places considered safer.

Child 2 - I think we are going somewhere in the countryside.

SO, WHO IS BEING EVACUATED?

Child 3 - Some 827,000 schoolchildren and some teachers are being evacuated.

Child 4 - Also, 524,000 mothers with children under five, as well as 12,000 pregnant women and some disabled people are evacuated.

Child 5 - I've heard that some people also evacuate privately, by themselves.

REALLY?

Child 2 - Yes, about two million wealthy people are evacuating by going to live in hotels in the countryside, or even by travelling abroad, to places like Canada, the United States, South Africa, Australia and the Caribbean.

BUT I STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND? WHY DID THE GOVERNMENT ASK YOU TO LEAVE THE CITIES?

Child 4 - The British government became worried that a new war might begin when Hitler came to power in 1933. They are afraid that British cities and towns will be targets for bombing raids by aircraft.

Child 3 - It is important for people to be evacuated because it may ensure the safety of young children from the cities.

Child 1 - Yes! Because cities like London, Coventry, Birmingham, and Portsmouth are considered to be in danger of German bombing!

SO WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO?

Child 5 - We are going to a small town or village in the countryside. We are going to live with complete strangers!

Child 1 - Not me. I am going to stay with relatives outside in the countryside.

Child 2 - There are people responsible for helping to find homes for the evacuees. They are called billeting officers.

Child 4 - Yes! And families in the countryside who billeted (or housed) city children are given money by the government.



HOW WILL YOU GET TO THE COUNTRYSIDE?

Child 5 - Some of us will be travelling by train and others by road.

WHEN DID THESE EVACUATIONS START?

Child 1 - To be precise, at 11.07am on Thursday 31st August the order was given to evacuate forthwith.

YOU MEAN NOW IN 1939, EVEN BEFORE THE WAR OFFICIALLY STARTED?

Child 2 - Yes, the evacuation started immediately.

Child 3 - I heard that 1.5 Million children, pregnant women and other vulnerable people such as the disabled, evacuated to safer countryside locations in just two days!

WELL, IT SEEMS TO ME YOUR THE TRAIN IS COMING. ALL OF THE BEST!

All - Thank you! Bye!

