My name is Vicky Green and I am a research associate on the Living Archive of Learning Disability History Project. I think it is really important to hear people’s stories. These education activities will help more young people find out about the history of Learning Disability. Many of the activities are based on Mabel Cooper’s film, which I really like and I think everyone should watch. Here is why:

Some of what’s important to me is hearing about how the language that was used in the past, to talk about people with learning disabilities, has changed. Words and phrases that were used then to describe people like me I think are really insulting and disrespectful now compared to what they were meant to be in the past.

Looking at people’s stories of what life used to be like in Saint Lawrence and other institutions makes me think about the difference between myself, who has got a mild learning disability, and people who I know who have got more severe learning disabilities.

In the past we might have been sent to long stay institutions like Saint Lawrence because people’s attitudes and peoples beliefs about us were very different.

Thinking about some of what happened to people like Mabel, and her friend Gloria, makes me feel quite sad and sorry for them. I started to put myself in their shoes and think about how it would be for me in that situation: not nice.

We made these education resources because Mabel said students and teachers need to know about this history. It shouldn’t be hidden anymore. We need to talk about it.

The activities cover loads of stuff. For example, about institutions and about language. But they also cover bullying of people with learning disabilities, which carries on today.

The activities can be used by children in primary and secondary schools. They are for students in mainstream or special needs schools. And some of the activities can be used by adults with learning disabilities.

I think the activities do look fun! And I hope you use them!