Cartoon Activity – ANSWERS

Name: ____________________________

ENTHUSIASM IS NOT ENOUGH.
“Give it a belt with this, cobber!”

▲ Cartoon by Ted Scorfield, *The Bulletin* (Sydney), 9 September 1942, p.7
Look at the austerity-themed cartoon of John Curtin on the previous page. In discussion with your teacher and other students, answer the questions below.

1. **Setting**
   a) What is the setting of the cartoon? **A fun fair.**
   b) Why has the cartoonist used this setting? **It allows the cartoonist to use the ‘trial of strength’ meter, which readers would recognise as a fun fair game for measuring a person’s strength. (The aim is to hit the target hard enough to make the arrow run up the post and strike the bell.)**

2. **Characters**
   a) Describe the characters in the cartoon. **The man on the left is dressed as an Australian soldier. The man on the right wears civilian clothing.**
   b) Who do these characters represent? **The soldier represents Australian troops fighting in World War II. The civilian is Prime Minister John Curtin – we can identify him by his glasses and face.**
   c) How has the cartoonist drawn these characters? **The soldier is tall and powerful, carrying a large wooden mallet that he would be strong enough to thump on the ‘trial of strength’ meter. Curtin’s sleeves are rolled up, ready for work, but with a tiny hammer and crooked posture he will not score well on the meter and looks smaller.**

3. **Historical event** – What year do you think this cartoon dates to? Give reasons for your answer. **The soldier’s outfit dates to World War II. Curtin was in office October 1941 – July 1945. Rationing and austerity began in mid-1942. Therefore the cartoon dates to 1942-3 at the beginning of the austerity campaign when people needed encouragement to participate. (CARTOON DATE: late 1942)**

4. **Symbols** – What symbols does the cartoonist use to get across his message? **The ‘trial of strength’ meter represents the success level of Curtin’s austerity campaign. The soldier’s mallet represents the power of a group – what people can achieve if they work together like soldiers. Curtin’s small hammer represents what one man can achieve on his own – his impact is limited.**

5. **Caption** – ENTHUSIASM IS NOT ENOUGH. “Give it a belt with this, cobber!” What does this mean? **Agreement that austerity is a good idea is not sufficient. Everyone has to reduce their spending on non-essential items, recycle materials and invest money in war loans. If everyone works together as a ‘homefront army’ they will be more effective (like the soldier with his large mallet) than just a few people (like Curtin with his small hammer). The idea is to ‘put your money where your mouth is’.**

6. **Meaning of the cartoon** – What do you think the cartoon means? **The austerity campaign aims to prevent waste and reduce the consumption of goods to maximise the resources available for the war effort. Curtin cannot achieve this alone, but will succeed if all Australians participate. The prize for making the meter hit the bell is victory over Japan. The cartoon supports Curtin’s austerity campaign.**