

Victorian Children

Life for Victorian children was very different from our lives today. Children in rich households had toys to play with and did not have to work, but children in poor households often had to work long hours in difficult, dangerous jobs.

They didn't have toys to play with but sometimes made their own.

Children in poor households would often leave their schooling early to work in hard jobs or, if they were lucky, take on apprenticeships and learn a trade. Poor children often lived in small, cramped homes with lots of siblings sharing a room, but some children grew up in the Workhouse, a place where poor people went when they had nowhere else to go for food or shelter.

Conditions in the Workhouse were very poor.

Rich Victorian children would have gone to school, or been taught at home, and they would have had lots of time to play.



Victorian Children's toys

You might recognise some of the toys Victorian children played with and you might even have your own versions!



Toys for rich children

Rich Victorian children usually had a variety of wooden or metal toys to play with. Toys were expensive so they wouldn't have had as many as you probably do!



You can learn how to make some Victorian toys in our #MuseumFromHome video this week



Toys for poor children

Poor Victorian children's toys were usually simple home-made toys like peg dolls, ball & cup games, spinning tops, or hoops to play hoop trundle with. They might have played games in the street with their friends too, like skipping, leap frog or marbles



Victorians

Imagine that you are a child in the Victorian era - that is over 150 years ago!

Write an entry in your diary about how you plan to spend the summer holidays. Decide whether you are a rich Victorian child or a poor Victorian child.

You could write about the toys you want to play with, the games you might play with your friends or the things you learnt at school that year.

If you are a poor Victorian child, write about your job and how it might be different over the summer - will you continue to work in a factory, a mine or as a maid, or will you work on the farm with the farmer?

Next, write a diary entry as a child in 2020 as you look forward to the summer holidays, how does it compare to your Victorian diary entry?

