



History at Home

with Ely Museum



TOYS LONG AGO

Victorian Sunday Toys

Over a hundred years ago, in the Victorian era, children were not allowed to play with toys on Sunday! Some children did have special toys that had a religious theme and taught stories from the Bible that they could play with on Sundays though. The Victorians took the ten commandments in the Bible very seriously. Sunday was treated as a day of rest and worship. Victorians believed that the ideal family was hard working, respectable and moral. It was important that these values were passed on to their children at an early age.

What do you think about only being able to play with certain toys on a Sunday?

Would you like it?

Noah's Arks were popular Sunday toys and would have been owned by most wealthy families. They helped to tell the story of the Great Flood described in the Old



Testament. Arks were generally made from wood and then painted. Sets could come with hundreds of carved animals!

Another example is a wooden toy called a Jacob's ladder. Jacob's story is told in the Bible called the Book of Genesis. In a vision he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven. The toy gives the illusion of a falling ladder using pieces of wood connected by cloth strips.



Quiet reading was allowed but the stories were carefully selected by parents. Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan was a popular choice, as were books with titles such as Good Words for the Young or Sunday at Home.

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Victorian Toys



A dolls House



Skipping ropes



Dolls & teddy bears



Bicycles



Hoops



Marbles

Children long ago played some of the same games and with some of the same toys you might still play with today.

Have you played with any of these toys recently?

Which would you like to play with?