

Activities in Victorian school lessons

Activity 1: Writing

1. Cut out this box and stick it at the top of a lined page in an exercise book.

Learning ennobles the mind.

2. Copy the sentence ten times on the lines below it in your exercise book.

Activity 2: Reading and learning

Read the following and learn it by heart.







A catechism on Victorian Life

- Q. Why are Victorian people so called? (A. Because they lived in the reign of Queen Victoria.)
- Q. When did Queen Victoria reign? (A. From 1837 to 1901.)
- Q. Was Queen Victoria married? (A. Yes she was married to Albert, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.)
- Q. Did she have any children? (A. Yes. She had nine.)
- Q. What were their names? (A. Victoria, Edward, Alice, Alfred, Helena, Louise, Arthur, Leopold and Beatrice.)

Activity 3: Money calculations

The units of our money are pounds (£) and pence (p) but in Victorian times they were pounds (£) shillings (s) and pence (d). Twelve pence made a shilling and twenty shillings made a pound.

Weights were measured in pounds (lb) and ounces (oz). Sixteen ounces made a pound. Try these calculations.

1. If sugar is 2d for 4oz, how much is a pound of sugar worth? 
2. One pound of meat is 6d. How much is five pounds? 
3. Add £1 10s 4d to £2 4s 3d 
4. Add £1 14s 8d to £2 10s 2d 
5. Take away 8s 2d from £1 10s 4d 
6. Take away 6s 6d from £1 4s 8d 

Teacher's sheet

Based on pages 26 and 27 of *How life changed in Victorian times*

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Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet. Exercise book.

Using the worksheet

These activities are examples of activities that school children performed in their lessons. Activity 1 is linked to **w**riting. Activity 2 is linked to **R**ead and learning, and activity 3 is linked to **a**rithmetic – the three Rs. You may like to use these activities on a Victorian day or simply when you are studying schools in the student book.

The school children spent long periods copying writing to improve their own style.

A catechism is a series of questions and answers. They were used in Victorian textbooks to build up knowledge. The children learned them by rote and could be asked to recite them.

If the students have studied *Rich and poor in Tudor times* in this series they may already have met pounds, shillings and pence before. If they have, you may like to remind them of it now. Victorian children had to do complicated calculations on money and on units of measurement for weights as these were related to calculating the price of food and preparation for being sales assistants. If the students find the calculations easy, make some harder ones for them to try.

Answers

1. 8d
2. 2s 6d
3. £3 14s 7d
4. £5 4s 10d
5. £1 2s 2d
6. 18s 2d

Younger students

The students should be able to manage activity 1. Look for signs of improvement in the writing and comment on it to them. They may have difficulty remembering all the names of Queen Victoria's children. They should practise until they can say

the whole piece without omission. The students may have difficulty with the money calculations and you may like to begin with asking what are twenty pennies in shillings and pence (1s 8d) or what is thirty shillings in pounds and shillings (£1 10s 0d). You may like to substitute some easier questions for the ones shown. The main point of the activity is to show that the Victorian children had to do very complicated calculations compared to the calculations done in today's schools.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Copy a style of writing.
- Read and learn a piece of information.
- Perform simple calculations on money used in Victorian times.

Older students

The students should manage activities 1 and 2 without difficulty but they may have problems with activity 3. You may like to begin with asking what are twenty pennies in shillings and pence (1s 8d) or what is thirty shillings in pounds and shillings (£1 10s 0d). You may like to make up some easier questions for the ones shown but try to get them to have a go at the questions on the sheet. The main point of the activity is to show that the Victorian children had to do very complicated calculations compared to the calculations done in today's schools.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Copy a style of writing.
- Read and learn a piece of information.
- Perform calculations on money used in Victorian times.