

Toys and Pastimes

Pre and Post Visit Learning Experiences

Rules

In the latter half of the nineteenth century games such as football, cricket and boxing were given proper rules for the first time.

Discuss:

- Why do games need rules?
- How would a game like “Hide and Seek” work without rules?
- What are the rules for playing “Hide and Seek”?
- What rules are important rules for most games?

List the rules necessary for most games e.g. first turn rules, rules to prevent injury, rules for scoring points.

Work in small groups and invent a game that can be played by four or more players. Write five rules for this game then test it with some friends. Add more rules if necessary. (Remember that too many rules can spoil a game.) Evaluate the success of the game.

Interviews with Older People

Choose a person who grew up in the 1950’s or earlier.

Ask:

- What toys/games did you enjoy playing with most when you were young?
- If the toy/game is still played how has it changed? Why do you think it has changed?
- Have you kept any toys that you once played with? What have you kept and why?

Make a comparison chart to share everyone’s findings. You will need to explain some of the differences as you record e.g.

Toys we Have Now	Toys From the Past
Robots with batteries	Wooden blocks
Bikes with gears	

Why and how have toys changed over time?

Pastimes

In early times Auckland children including the Buckland children would have amused themselves in many ways. A list of their activities would have included:

Tree climbing	Cricket
Rope swinging	Hoops
Ferry ride	Stilts
Going to the races	Listening to the band playing in the Domain
Picnics	Whipping tops
Collecting shells	Knuckle bones
Climbing cliffs	Hopscotch
Building huts	Skipping ropes
Horse riding	Skittles
Boxing	Cycling
Football	Sailing toy boats
Tennis	Running races
Playing with quoits	Playing with dolls
Croquet	Card games
Playing a musical instrument	Chess
Recitals	Parcheesi
Hide and seek	Reading
Plays and dressing up	Billiards
Rocking horse	Rhyme games
Toy carts	Dominoes
Swaps	Scrapbooks

Ask:

- Which of these pastimes are no longer popular?
- What activities do you do that Victorian children didn't know about?
- Why have our activities changed?

Group the activities above (e.g. outdoor activities, training for adult life) and label each group. Write two or three statements about the groups you have organised.

Research any unfamiliar activities and describe them.

Research

Find out what toys and games looked like in the past. Look in books and investigate the following websites.

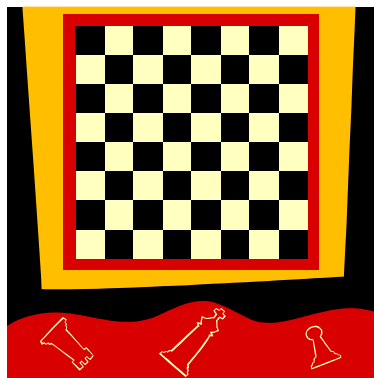
Toy Wikipedia,
Victorian Fun and Games,
Victorian Hobbies and Pastimes,
Victorian Children

Discuss:

- What materials were used to make toys in the nineteenth century?
- What are toys made from nowadays?

Select one toy or game from the past and find out as much as you can about it. Record your findings in a booklet or chart. Include illustrations, descriptions, rules (for a game), what the toy/game was made from, how it was used and whether or not it still exists today.

Board Games



Collect, display and try out a variety of board games e.g. Monopoly, Snakes and Ladders, Chess, Draughts, Scrabble... Select one or two of the games to discuss.

Ask:

- What is the purpose of this game?
- How easy is it to learn to play?
- How could you make a similar game?

Work in groups to invent a new board game. Points to consider:

1. How many players can play?
2. What is the purpose and theme of the game?
3. What rules will be necessary?

4. What will be the easiest way to make the game? Share the jobs.
5. How should the game be advertised and promoted?

When the game has been made ask people to try it out and evaluate its success. Make changes if necessary.

Problems

This is a statement about games from last century.

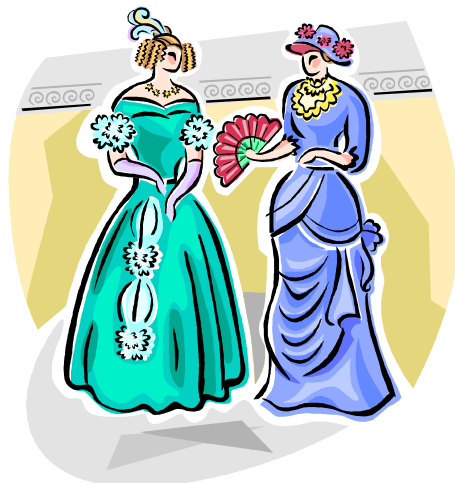
“We used to play marbles. But mother didn’t like the girls getting on the floor. She said, “You’re dirtying your clothes up. You’re not to do that.”

Discuss:

- Why would the mother be so worried about the girls’ clothes getting dirty?
- How long ago do you think this was? Why do you think so?
- How restricted were girls by the clothes they had to wear?

Look at the list of pastimes and decide which of these activities were not possible for girls.

Find out how sports fashions and equipment have changed. Collect pictures of sports gear and clothing in the past e.g. swimming costumes, mountain climbing equipment, tennis racquets. Compare them with today’s equivalents. Make a display board and record your thoughts about the difficulties of playing games in the past.



After a Visit to Highwic

Use the study guide “Toys and Pastimes in Victorian Auckland”. Read through your notes about the toys and games on display in Highwic. Read the following extract from Jan Harris’s account of “The Buckland Family Home and Social Life”.

“Family life at Highwic would have been fairly lively. There might be a dozen children of varying ages at home at any one time. Alfred, as one might expect, left much of their upbringing to Matilda, and evidently did not get to know his children intimately. It is said that on one occasion when he encountered one of them he asked, “Which one are you?”

Write an account of how you would spend your spare time if you were one of the Buckland children in the nineteenth century. Write in the first person. You will need to include:

- Your Victorian name
- What year it is and what season
- What game you will be playing or what toys you will be playing with
- What rules you are keeping to
- Where you will be playing (include a description)
- Who you will be playing with

Publish your account in a booklet and include illustrations. Or you may wish to read your story aloud to a group of people.

