

THE VICTORIANS

OVERVIEW: Explore the following fact sheets and activities to find out more about Victorian times.

CATEGORIES

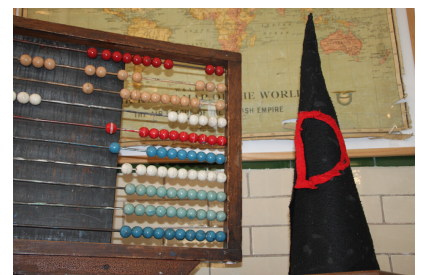
Victorian Braintree

- Buildings
- Mourning
- Farming
- Straw Plaiting



Victorian Schools

- Lessons
- Punishment
- Manor Street School, Braintree
- Handwriting Activities



Victorian Money

- Imperial Currency
- Symbols
- Worth
- Money and Sums Activities



TOPIC: VICTORIAN BRAINTREE

OVERVIEW: Read this fact sheet to find out what Braintree was like during Victorian times.

BUILDINGS

Braintree looked very different in the Victorian period compared to today. The town was smaller with less houses and people. Some buildings from the Victorian period are still standing today.



BRAINTREE CAGE

- Built: 1840
- Use: To lock people up overnight if they were found behaving badly by the police. It was used until 1875.
- Fun Fact: The roof is made from solid stone to stop people from trying to escape.



HIGH STREET

- Built: There has been a street here since Roman times.
- Use: Shopping
- Fun Fact: Compare this Victorian postcard to the High Street today, you will see that not much has changed over the past hundred years.

BRAINTREE MUSEUM

ONLINE RESOURCES



ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

- Built: 13th Century and with changes made by the Victorians.
- Use: For religious services and weddings, christenings and funerals.
- Fun Fact: In the 1600s the church was used as a grammar school.



MANOR STREET SCHOOL

- Built: 1862
- Use: Primary and infant school
- Fun Fact: This building is now home to Braintree Museum.

MOURNING

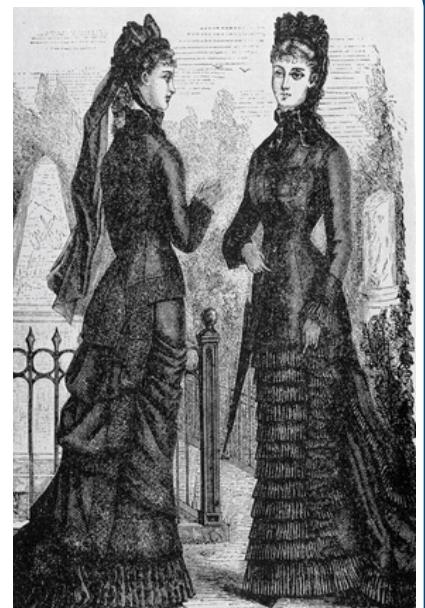
- Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, died in 1861 at the early age of 42. Victoria never recovered from this loss and spent the rest of her life in mourning. She rarely appeared in public and when she did she wore a black mourning gown and bonnet.
- There were very strict social rules about mourning in the late 1800s.
- Rules and clothes for mourning were advertised in ladies' magazines.
- Mourning clothes were special black clothes which someone wore when a member of their family or friend had died.
- Children were not expected to wear mourning clothes although some girls would wear white dresses.
- The Courtauld family (Courtauld & Co) were famous for making the fabric for mourning clothing.
- Courtauld & Co. had factories in Braintree, Bocking and Halstead.



**Courtauld's
Mourning Crape**



**Courtauld
Braintree Factory
around the 1900s**



**Victorian mourning
clothing advert**

FARMING

- Farming was a very important part of life in and around Braintree during Victorian times.
- Children as young as six years old would work on farms.
- Boys would have to complete tasks such as; scare birds away from crops, guard the farm animals, plant seeds and gather crops during harvest.
- Teenagers and adults would be in charge of ploughing the fields and other hard tasks.



Farming mural in
the Town Hall.

STRAW PLAITING

- Straw plaiting was another job which many adults and children did in Braintree.
- Straw plaiting is where you sit and knot straw together to make objects.
- Women and children as young as three, would sit and plait straw for up to 14 hours a day.
- They made hats, bags and baskets to sell.
- They also made straw items such as corn dollies (a plaited figure) for special celebrations such as the harvest.
- If a child could not plait, their job would be to sit and suck on the straw to make it soft for others to use.
- A women and two children earnt up to 12 shillings (60 pence) per week from straw plaiting.



Straw crown made in
1977.

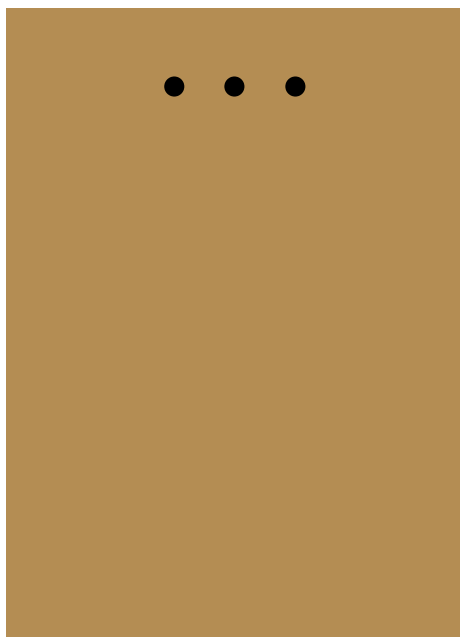
ACTIVITY 1: STRAW PLAITING

YOU WILL NEED:

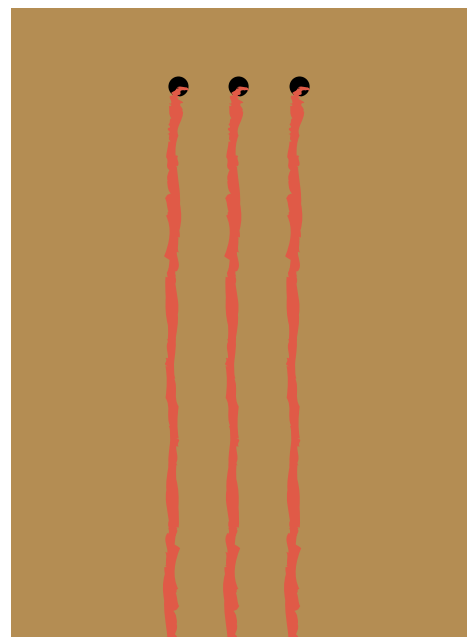
- An A4 size (or about) piece of card(board) per plait
- String or wool
- Scissors and a pencil (or similar) to make holes in the card

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Take your piece of card(board) and get an adult to help you pierce 3 and/ or 5 holes in a line at the top, see picture below.
2. Thread through the string and tie a knot at the back to secure.
3. Start plaiting by following the instructions on the next page.



1



2

ACTIVITY 1: STRAW PLAITING

INSTRUCTIONS THREE STRAND BRAID

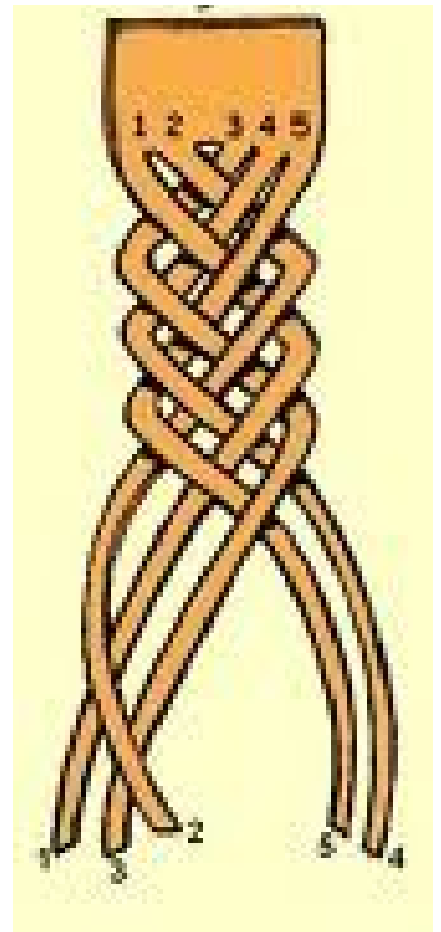
- Pick up the right hand strand and move over the middle strand so it is now in the centre.
- Next, pick up the left hand strand and move that over the middle strand so it is now in the middle.
- Repeat these steps until you have used up all the thread.



INSTRUCTIONS FIVE STRAND PLAIT

When completing the five strand plait, you need to remember the following rhyme; over one and under two, pull it tight and that will do.

- First, pick the furthest right hand strand before moving it over one strand and under the next. The strand you were holding should now be in the middle.
- Next, repeat these steps again, this time using the furthest left hand strand. As you start each step, if you keep alternating between the furthest left and the furthest right hand strand.
- Repeat until you have used up all the thread.



TOPIC: VICTORIAN SCHOOLS

OVERVIEW: Read this fact sheet to find out some interesting facts about schools during Victorian times.

VICTORIAN LESSONS

- Teachers in Victorian times were often stricter than today.
- Victorians did not need to have a good education or pass any exams to become a teacher.
- Many Victorian teachers were female.
- Lessons in Victorian schools focused around reading, writing and arithmetic (maths).
- Most of the work done by pupils was copying down or repeating out loud what the teacher wrote on the blackboard.
- Paper was expensive in Victorian times, so pupils would write on slates with slate pencils.



Victorian Teacher
re-enactment at the Museum



Abacus and dunce's hat

VICTORIAN PUNISHMENT

- Children were punished for many things including; being rude, poor work or answering back.
- The cane was the most used form of punishment. A cane was a long, thin stick used to hit pupils on their hands or bottom.
- Other forms of punishment included writing lines or detention.
- Pupils who were not as clever as other in the class would be made to wear a dunce's hat. This was tall, pointed and had the letter D on it.
- Teachers would also use equipment on pupils to correct the children's posture. A back straightener would be used to stop a child from slouching and finger stocks were used to stop them fidgeting.

BRAINTREE MUSEUM

ONLINE RESOURCES



MANOR STREET SCHOOL

- The Braintree Museum building was a school in Victorian times.
- The school was called 'Manor Street School' and was built in 1862.
- By 1890, the school had approximately 130 boys, 130 girls and 95 infants attending each day.
- Today, the Museum has a classroom the same way as it was all those years ago.



Slate and slate pencil



The Victorian Classroom at Braintree Museum



Manor Street School around the 1900s



A class in Manor Street School around the 1900s

ACTIVITY 1 & 2: VICTORIAN HANDWRITING

YOU WILL NEED:

- A printer
- A4 paper
- A sharp pencil and rubber

INSTRUCTIONS

- Print off the handwriting activities.
- Using a sharp pencil, practice writing the letters and words in the activities by tracing over the copy.
- Next, try writing each word again freehand in the lined spaces below your first try.

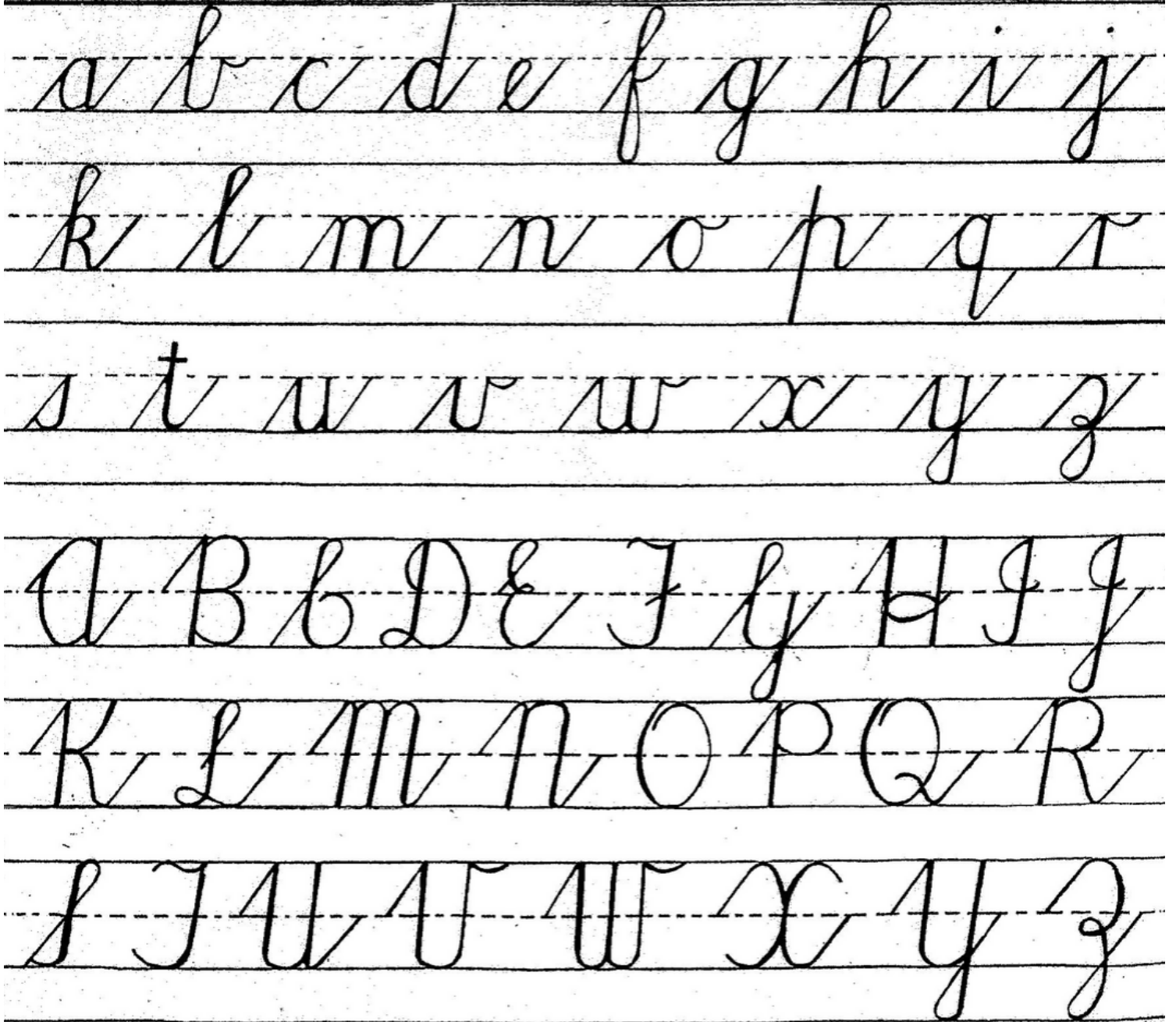
WHY WAS HANDWRITING IMPORTANT?

- Handwriting practice was an important part of the Victorian school day.
- Handwriting was taught in schools as writing a letter was the main way which Victorian people communicated to friends and family.
- Having perfect handwriting was also useful for boys as many 'good' jobs in Victorian times involved writing and record keeping.

WHAT DID THEY USE TO PRACTICE HANDWRITING?

- Pupils would practice their handwriting using a slate (a sort of small blackboard) and pencil also made from slate. When pupils had finished, their work would be rubbed off using a sponge or rag.
- When they were older, pupils could practice their handwriting in a lined note book using a dip pen and blue or black ink from an inkwell.

ACTIVITY 1: VICTORIAN HANDWRITING



ACTIVITY 2: VICTORIAN HANDWRITING

Too many cooks spoil the broth

Time and tide wait for no man.

<i>Least</i>	<i>said,</i>	<i>soonest</i>	<i>mended.</i>

<i>Little</i>	<i>wealth,</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>care.</i>

ACTIVITY 3: POSTCARD WRITING

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Did you enjoy the Victorian handwriting activity?
Why not try the following activities:

POSTCARD WRITING

Search for old Victorian postcards online. Name 3 different scenes or pictures you have found on the postcards.

1:

2:

3:

Use the template on the next page.

Cut it out neatly and using your best Victorian handwriting, write a postcard to a member of your family or friend. The subject of your postcard can be anything you like.

Finally, draw a picture or scene on the other side of your postcard.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY: PARAGRAPH OR POEM WRITING

Look online and find a Victorian poem or paragraph from a famous children's book from that era.

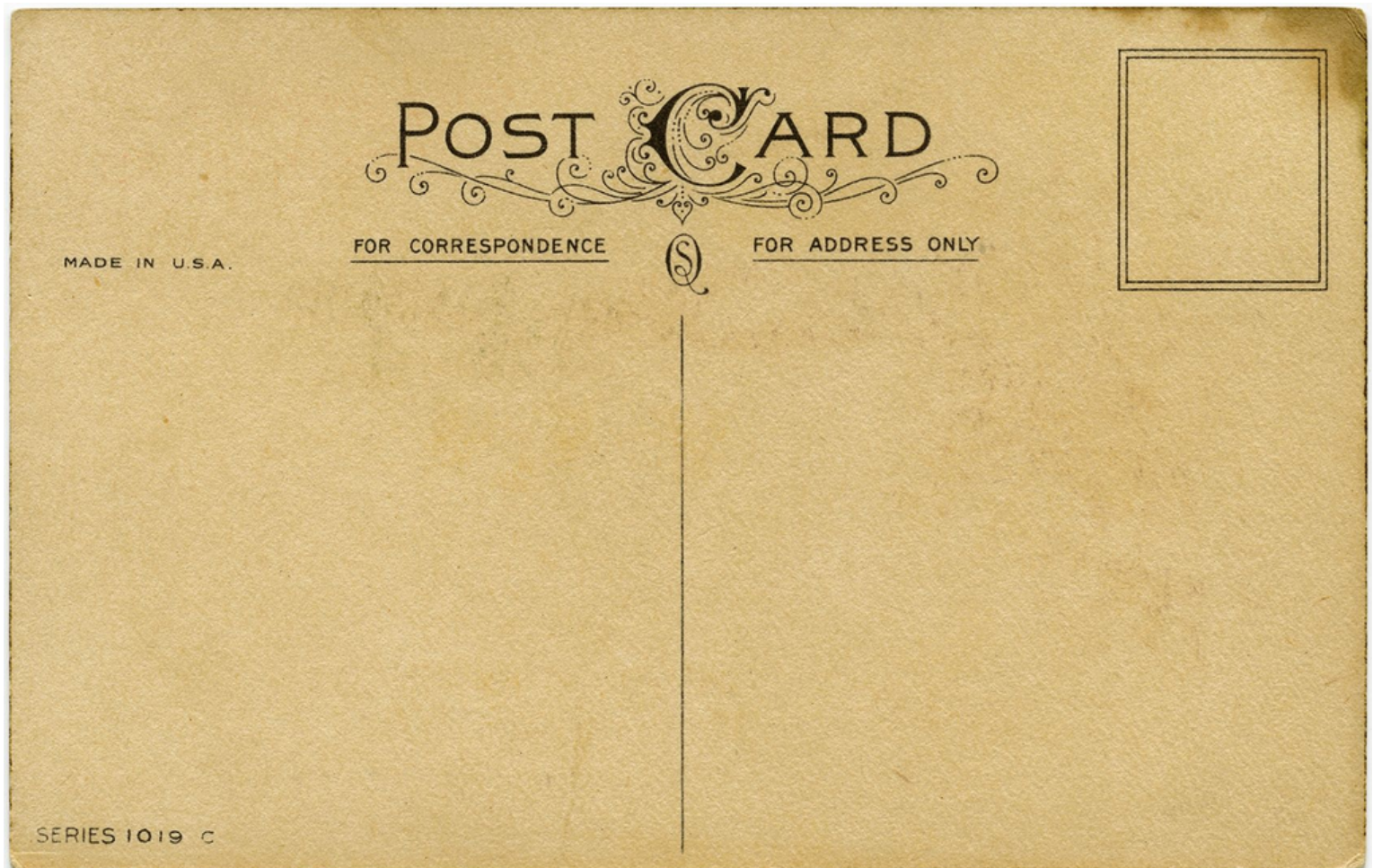
Next, using a ruler, draw some lines on a plain piece of paper then, using your best Victorian handwriting copy down your chosen paragraph or poem.

BRAINTREE MUSEUM

ONLINE RESOURCES



ACTIVITY 3: POSTCARD WRITING



TOPIC: VICTORIAN MONEY

OVERVIEW: Read this fact sheet to find out interesting information about money used during Victorian times.

IMPERIAL CURRENCY

In Victorian times bank notes and coins were different than today. They used what we call the Imperial system which had been used in England for hundreds of years, some of the coins are below. There are more Victorians coins, see if you can look them up online. We changed to our current system called Decimal in 1971. If you know someone who remembers that year perhaps you could ask them about the “old money” and the changes they and their family had to make in 1971 when they went shopping.



Farthing,
written as
1/4d



Halfpenny,
written as 1/2d,
known as a
ha'penny



One Penny,
written as 1d



Threepence,
written as 3d,
known as a
thrupenny bit



Sixpence,
written as 6d



One Shilling,
written as 1s



Two Shillings,
written as 2s,
known as a florin

There was also a Guinea, for which there was no coin or note! It was worth one pound and one shilling. It was used for professional fees, like for doctors and lawyers - and prize money for horse races!

MONEY SYMBOLS

The Imperial system used different symbols for each type of coin. One pound was written as £1, the £ sign comes from Roman times and is the sign they used for Libra meaning scales. It was probably the small weight they used on one side of their scales to measure quantities of the goods, such as grain or fruit etc.

One shilling was written as 1s, the s being the shortened version of shilling.

One penny was written as 1d, the d comes from the word denarius which means ten and was used from about 2000B.C. It was then used by the Romans for one of their coins and was in use during the Roman occupation of England.

WHAT WAS IT WORTH?

In the late Victorian times (1890-1901) the value of money was very different to today. See below what you could buy for each coin in Victorian times. Try and find out what these items cost in today's money?



ONE SMALL BREAD ROLL



A LARGE LOAF OF BREAD



A MEAL OF FISH & CHIPS

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU EARN?

Like today, it was important for Victorian families to know how much money they could earn. This makes a difference to how expensive items would have been to buy.

A child chopping wood for one hour could earn one penny and one halfpenny, 11/ 2d, per hour.

For a family to live comfortably their income would need to be 22s per week or £57 a year.

ACTIVITY

The above information about income comes from an article written by William Booth about how poor families were having to live during Victorian times.

Can you find out who he was and why he was so important to poor people in England at that time?

ACTIVITY 1: VICTORIAN MONEY SUMS

YOU WILL NEED:

- A printer
- A4 paper
- A pencil and rubber

INSTRUCTIONS

- Print off the sums activity on the following pages.
- If you do not have a printer, copy the sums down on a piece of paper.
- Read the information provided before working out the money sums.
- Once you have finished the sums, there is an answer sheet available for you to check your work.

Before you try out the calculations you will need to know how pounds and pennies are connected.

One shilling (1s) can be divided into twelve pennies (12d)

12d = 1s or 1s = 12d

To help you to understand this, get a coin and draw round it 12 times onto a piece of paper.

They represent 12 pennies.

Now draw a circle around them and you have joined them together as 1s.

Now see if you can calculate the following sums.

ACTIVITY 1: SUMS WITH PENNIES AND SHILLINGS

If you have enjoyed doing these sums you might to try these harder ones. Before you can try you need to know the following:

One pound can be divided into twenty shillings, £1 = 20s 20s = £1

For example 13s. + 8s. = 21s. Change 20s. into £1 and you have 1s. left.

Put 1s. in the s. answer column and put the £1 on the £ column doorstep.

£.	s.	d.
5	2	6
2	7	3
+	+	+
<hr/>		

£.	s.	d.
5	13	8
1	9	1
+	+	+
<hr/>		

£.	s.	d.
5	9	7
6	17	9
+	+	+
<hr/>		

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Did you enjoy completing the Victorian money sums? If so, why not try the following activities

COIN RUBBING

Do you or your family members have any Imperial coins in the house? If so, you could do some rubbings of them. Alternatively you can use modern coins you find in the house instead.

To do a rubbing, place the coin under a plain sheet of paper then rub across the top of it using a pencil or crayon. You will have to make sure that the coin does not move so that you can get a clear rubbing.

NEW SUMS

Using your worksheet and instructions as a guide, why not try coming up with some new sums using old money before testing members of your family.

BRAINTREE MUSEUM

ONLINE RESOURCES



ACTIVITY 1: ANSWER SHEET

s.	d.
3	3
5	4
+ _____	+ _____
<u>8s.</u>	<u>7d.</u>

s.	d.
6	2
1	7
+ _____	+ _____
<u>7s.</u>	<u>9d.</u>

s.	d.
5	6
2	3
+ _____	+ _____
<u>7s.</u>	<u>9d.</u>

s.	d.
3	8
6	3
+ _____	+ _____
<u>9s.</u>	<u>11d.</u>

s.	d.
6	6
2	7
+ _____	+ _____
<u>9s.</u>	<u>1s.</u>
<u>1s.</u>	

s.	d.
6	5
1	9
+ _____	+ _____
<u>8s.</u>	<u>2d.</u>
<u>1s.</u>	

s.	d.
5	9
6	9
+ _____	+ _____
<u>12s.</u>	<u>6s.</u>
<u>1s.</u>	

s.	d.
7	7
6	10
+ _____	+ _____
<u>14s.</u>	<u>5d.</u>
<u>1s.</u>	

£.	s.	d.
5	2	6
2	7	3
+ _____	+ _____	+ _____
<u>£7</u>	<u>9s.</u>	<u>9d.</u>

£.	s.	d.
5	13	8
1	9	1
+ _____	+ _____	+ _____
<u>£7</u>	<u>2s.</u>	<u>9d.</u>
<u>£1</u>		

£.	s.	d.
5	9	7
6	17	9
+ _____	+ _____	+ _____
<u>£12</u>	<u>7s.</u>	<u>4d.</u>
<u>£1</u>	<u>1s.</u>	