

History

How did life change in Bolton in Victorian times?

In this S.O.W. children investigate some of the ways their local area changed during the Victorian era, and some of the reasons for those changes. Children use the local area to explore characteristic features of Victorian times, how the area changed over time and the reasons for and results of these changes.

Who lived here in 1841?

Objectives-

Children should learn:

- to find out about the past from census returns
- to select and record information relevant to a chosen topic

Activities

Ask the children to find 1841 on the class time line. Ask them who they think might have lived in the local area in 1841 and how they could find this information. Introduce the idea of a census, and discuss what information might be on it. Give the children copies of a census return and ask them to list the headings under which information is collected.

Give the children returns from 1841 for the local area. Ask them to record the name and one other field of data (age, occupation, place of origin, size of family). Discuss with the children their findings, helping them to identify patterns and draw conclusions about the area in 1841.

Ask children to produce graphs for fields they have investigated.

Outcomes

Children:

- understand what a census return is and what can be learnt from it
- extract data from a census return and record it in a graph

Who lived and worked here in 1891? What has changed since 1841 and why?

Objectives

Children should learn:

- to make comparisons that illustrate change within the Victorian period
- to give reasons for these changes
- to identify characteristic features of Victorian transport and industry.

Activities

Give children census returns from 1891, and ask them to research the same fields as in the previous activity. Ask them to list findings to report to the class.

Discuss with children what has changed since 1841. *Are any of the same families still living in the same homes? Are there more people living in the area who were born elsewhere? Have people's occupations changed?* Discuss why some of these changes might have taken place, encouraging the children to speculate on the basis of their own knowledge.

Let the children see pictures showing changes in transport and industry in the Victorian period and ask the children to describe some of the main changes at a national level.

Show them pictures of transport and industry in the local area in the Victorian period, *eg. railway stations, canals, mills, factories.*

Discuss with the children whether changes in transport or changes to industry were the most important in their local area.

Outcomes

children

- identify changes between the census of 1841 and that of 1891
- speculate about possible reasons for change

N.B

Census returns need to be for the same streets

What evidence of Victorian times remain in our area?

Objectives

Children should learn:

- to identify and record characteristic features of Victorian buildings
- to recognise ways in which buildings have been changed over time, and consider reasons for the changes

Activities

Explain the characteristic features of Victorian buildings, *eg. typical windows, doors, roofs, building materials*, showing pictures of local examples. Explain about the expansion/decrease in local population during the Victorian period. Discuss with the children where Victorian buildings might be found, using local maps.

Arrange a visit to look at local Victorian buildings. Ask the children to record the external features of buildings, *eg. by sketching, taking photographs, recording on video*.

On their return to school, show children pictures of the same buildings in the nineteenth century. Ask them to identify those that have remained as they were, those that have changed, and how they have changed, *eg. replacement doors, windows, conversion, cladding*. Discuss with the children reasons why the buildings might have been changed.

Outcomes

children

- identify features of Victorian buildings
- record features of Victorian buildings
- identify changes in buildings and suggest reasons for the changes

N.B.

This should be the core activity of the unit if your local area has a number of streets or buildings that can obviously be identified with the Victorian period. The amount of preparation needed for any visits will depend on the class and their familiarity with the locality. The children may need worksheets or discussion points to focus their observations and deductions.

Where possible, children should visit streets studied when looking at census returns, street directories or the railway.

English Heritage publishes a range of teacher resources on finding out about the local area from its buildings.

How did life change in our locality in Victorian times?

Objectives

Children should learn:

- to recall information about the area in Victorian times
- to organise their knowledge and use it to summarise their learning about the changes

Activities

Discuss with the children what they have learnt about their locality in Victorian times. Focus on the main changes that occurred in the locality over the period and the causes and effects of these changes. Use flow diagrams, other charts and a collection of pictures to illustrate what they discuss.

Identify categories, *eg. population, place of origin of inhabitants, occupations and sources of employment, buildings.*

Ask the children to choose one of the categories and use a range of sources to find out about and summarise the changes that took place.

Outcomes

Children:

- suggest the ways in which the locality changed in the Victorian period
- summarise what they have found out about one way the local area has changed

N.B.

A speaker from a local history society could be invited to talk about the local area in the Victorian period.

Information can be presented in various ways, *eg visually, in written form, as a class presentation (assembly), electronically.*

Children's writing skills can be developed by using the activity as a means of revising the features of explanatory texts, including presentational devices like charts and diagrams. Children could be taught how to use these devices to support the making of a summary, and as notes for an oral presentation.

This activity could be linked to IT. Children could construct databases and present data in graph form, or as data files using multimedia programs. They could use desktop publishing programs to produce leaflets for other children, visitors to the school, or even for display in local museums.

What was it like to live here in the past?

In this S.O.W. children are introduced to an enquiry-based approach to a local study. It is best to focus on an aspect of the local community in the immediate locality. It might also be part of a field visit. Children compare two or three periods of time. A house or group of houses, a shopping street, the school, a workplace. It gives opportunity for direct access to historical sources and is an excellent chance to develop fieldwork and research skills. The S.O.W. also provides an opportunity to consider citizenship issues such as planning for change, conservation, local identity and social responsibility.