



The Victorian School Challenge

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Discover what schools were like in the Victorian era.

Education has changed a lot over the past 150 years, especially for children in the poorer areas, like East London. Discover the pioneering women who led that change, improving the lives of children.

How to use this pack

How you use this pack is completely up to you. We encourage you to complete the activities as a family, as children will enjoy learning most when you are learning too.

The pack is designed for 5-11 year olds. We've tried to make it as accessible as possible, to meet all learning needs. So there are some simple ideas, and some activities that might be best for older children. Our guiding principal is that this is not history as you learnt it at school – this is exploring heritage through play, creation and imagination.

Top tips

You might like to start by listening to our [Rebel Women podcast](#). The episode for this pack is called Victorian Schools for Kids, and is available where ever you listen.

If podcasts aren't for you, we also have a blog. You can find one for this pack at bit.ly/victorianschoolsforkids

If you child has learning difficulties and is finding the podcast and blog hard to access, we've broken the learning down into smaller chunks. See the "fun facts" scattered throughout this activity sheet.

Do as many of the activities as feels right – there are no rules

We will occasionally provide you with physical resources for the activities. Otherwise, use what you have around the house. There is no need to buy anything in.

Adapt and extend each activity as you like. You will find other ideas at www.pinterest.com/eastlondonwomen. For this pack see the *Victorian schools for kids* board.

Activities

1. Look at some pictures of Victorian schools online – we have collected some on our Pinterest board to help you. Think about what is the same and what is different, then recreate a Victorian school with either your friends in the park or at home with your toys. Take it in turns to be teacher.

Fun Fact

Today, most children go to school to learn. It wasn't always like this. Children as young as five might be sent out to work, to help support their families. Many never learnt to read and write. That all changed in 1870, when a new mass schooling program was introduced to ensure all children got an education.

2. Have a go at making a Victorian school dinner. Do you think they ate the same lunch as you do?

3. Girls and boys did not learn the same things at school. Only boys were allowed to learn about science, while girls did needlework. Have a go at some embroidery. Older children may like to explore more sewing ideas on our Pinterest board.

Fun fact

Clara Grant was a Head Teacher at a school in East London. She knew that school was more than learning to read and write. The children at her school were very poor, so she provided them with clothing, gave them a hot meal (often the only one they had all day) and introduced the first school nurse. She was best known, however, for her *farthing bundles*. Children with a farthing (less than 1p) could walk under an arch that read: Enter All Ye Children Small, None Can Come Who Are Too Tall. They would then be given a newspaper bundle, inside which were lots of small gifts to unwrap. See our Pinterest board for pictures of the arch.

4. Make a farthing bundle for a friend. Or maybe make a few and donate them to a local food bank. You don't need to buy anything – the original farthing bundles contained bits of fabrics, old pencils, and other small odds and ends of things that children love.

For older children

Explore online to discover what education is like for girls in countries around the world. How equal is it between girls and boys? Tell you family what you have found out. You may like to talk, write or even draw what you have learnt.

Challenge complete?

Make sure you are signed up to get next month's activity pack at <http://eepurl.com/bPjLpD>

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