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HANDS ON HISTORY

THE VICTORIANS

Victorian toys and games

The Victorian age in British history is named after Queen Victoria, who was Britain's queen from 1837 until 1901. Life was very different for children in Victorian times. There was no TV, no central heating, no cars (until the last few years of Victoria's reign) and many children went to work, not to school.



Victorian games



Victorian children didn't have computers or television so they played lots of games. Board games such as Snakes and Ladders, Ludo and Draughts were popular indoor games. Outdoors, Victorian children played with toys like hoops, marbles and skipping ropes, with friends in the street, or in the school playground. They played chasing games such as Tag, Blind Man's Bluff, and played catch with balls. If they didn't have a proper ball, they made them from old rags, and made bats from pieces of wood.

Some of the games that were popular in Victorian times are still played in playgrounds today. Have a go at playing hopscotch with your friends and family.

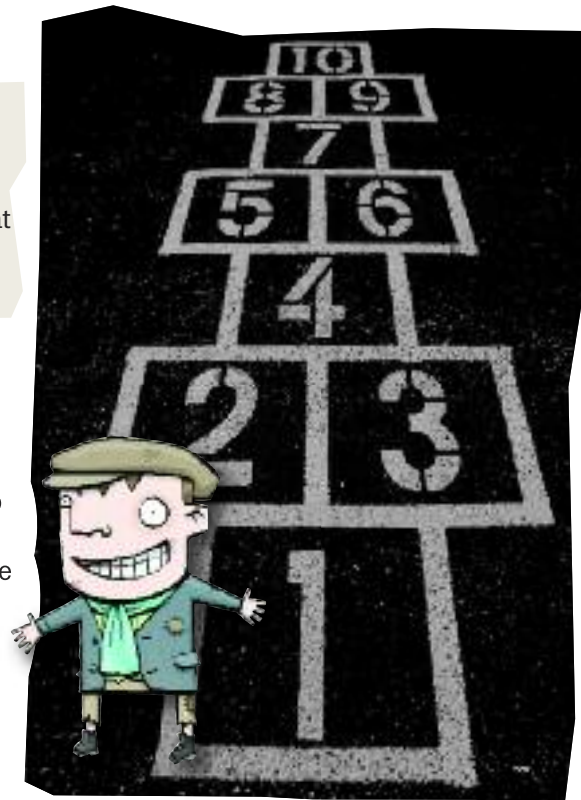
How to play hopscotch

You will need

- Chalk or masking tape
- A marker – this would traditionally have been a flat stone, but you can use a bean bag or a ball of modelling clay

Instructions

1. Draw the hopscotch board on to the floor with chalk – or you could use masking tape.
2. The object of the game is to throw the marker onto the board and hop over it onto the next square (or set of squares), working your way up and down the board without making a mistake.
3. To begin the game, the first player throws their marker onto square one. They must hop over that square and land on squares two and three with one foot in each. Then they try to hopscotch up to the top of the board – hopping in single squares and landing with two feet in double squares – once they reach the end of the board they must turn and come back down, stopping to pick up the marker on the way back.
4. If no mistakes were made, the same player continues by throwing their marker to square two and repeating the process, always avoiding contact with the square that contains the marker.
5. The next player starts their go when the board is complete or if:
 - A player does not throw the marker in the correct square.
 - A player loses balance and places a hand or second foot down.
 - A player steps on a line, hops on the wrong square or hops on the square containing their marker.
 - A player puts both feet down in a single box.



Victorian toys

The toys children played with in Victorian times often depended on how wealthy their family was. Children from rich families played with rocking horses, train sets, doll's houses and toy soldiers, whereas children from poor families tended to play with home-made toys such as peg dolls, spinning tops and skipping ropes.



Make a thaumatrope

A popular toy during Victorian times was the thaumatrope. The thaumatrope is a disc or card with a picture on each side which is attached to two pieces of string. When the strings are twirled quickly the two discs spin round and animate the pictures! A popular Victorian thaumatrope featured a picture of a bird and a cage. When you spun the thaumatrope, the two images became one and it would appear that the bird was actually in the cage.

Follow the instructions to make your own thaumatrope. You can use the template of Eric on the next page or design your own.

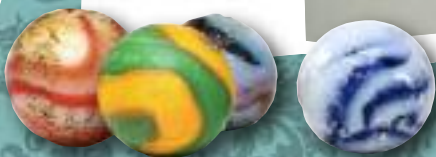
You will need

- Cardboard, scissors, pencil, coloured pens, string, glue



Instructions

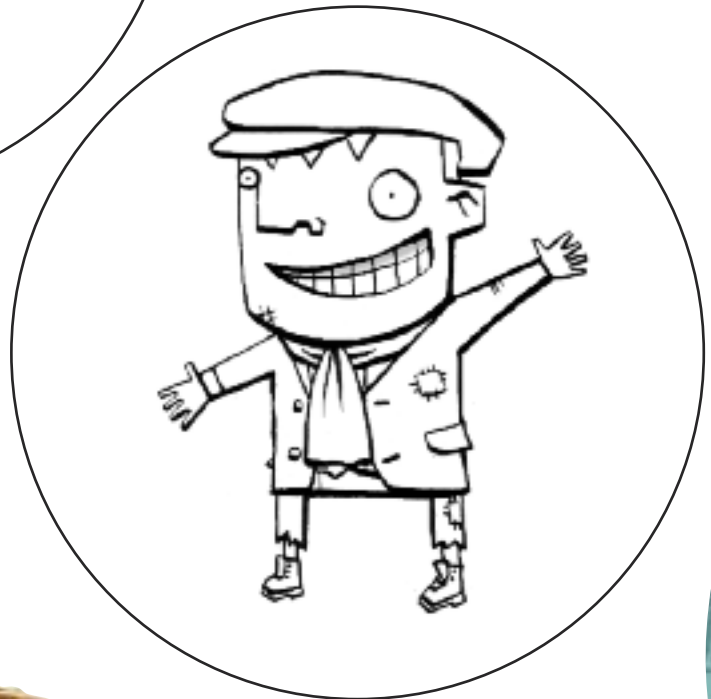
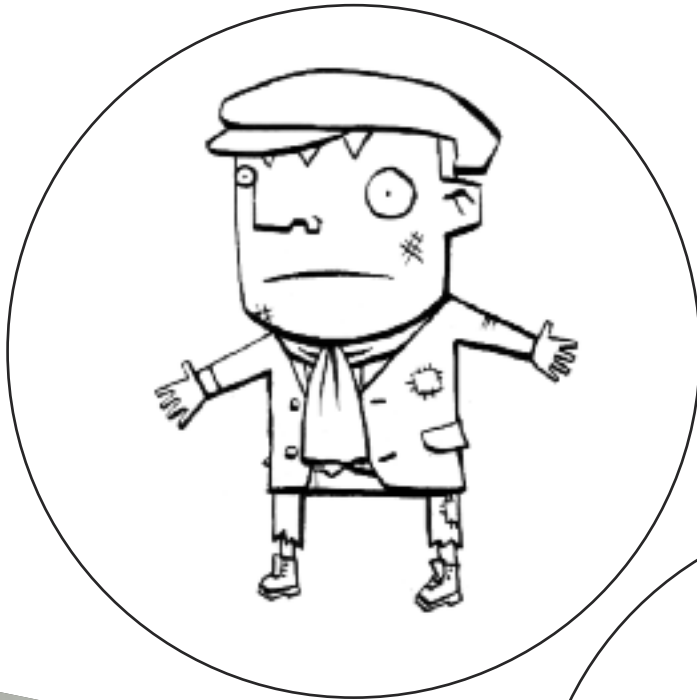
1. If you are going to use the pictures of Eric - cut them out and stick them to some card. If you're designing your own thaumatrope, cut out two circles of card. You could draw round a cup to get a perfect circle.
2. Use a hole punch to punch two holes through each of your circles of card.
3. Now you can add your design. If you're using Eric, colour him in. If you are using your own design, draw it on to your circles of card. You need to choose two images that will form an animation - like a fish and a fishbowl, a bird and a cage or a smiley face and an unhappy face.



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4. Use some glue to stick the back of the two circles together. One of the pictures needs to be upside down to ensure the animation works. Also, make sure the holes you made with the hole punch are lined up with each other. You might need to ask an adult to help you with this.
5. Cut two pieces of string about 20cm long each and thread them through each hole. Pull the string back on itself so you have two loops on each side.
6. Wind the string up by twisting it between your fingers and then pull tight to release. As the circles of card spin around, watch the two pictures appear as one moving image!



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Make a spinning top

Another popular toy during Victorian times was a spinning top. Victorian spinning tops would have been made out of wood but you can make a simple version using some card and a pencil.

You will need

- A short pencil
- A piece of cardboard
- Scissors
- Coloured pens
- Sticky tack
- Sticky tape



Instructions

1. Draw a circle on a piece of card, 7cm in diameter. You could draw around a mug to create a perfect circle.
2. Cut the circle out carefully with scissors.
3. Draw a pattern on the card with coloured pens. Patterns that start at the centre of the cardboard and work out to the edge will look really good when the top is spinning.
4. Take your pencil and poke it through the centre of the circle of card so the point sticks out by a couple of centimetres. Push the pencil into some sticky tack to protect the point. Ask an adult to help you with this. Use a little sticky tape to hold the pencil in place.
5. Your spinning top is finished! It will work best on a flat surface, but remember it is a pencil so will leave a mark. Use it outside or on newspaper if you use it indoors.

