

Schooling: Activity 1a - Absenteeism

TEACHERS' NOTES

Learning Objectives

- Understand why some Victorian children did not attend school
- Discuss and write about the schooling of Victorian children
- Retrieve information from Victorian School Logbooks
- Develop children's research skills, using historical sources, in particular extracts from school logbooks, a photograph and a painting, to learn about absenteeism in Victorian schools.

Cross-curricular Links

- Art
- ICT
- Literacy

Sources



Source 1a. Logbook extract from East Parade Board School, Girls' Department, Horsham, 1880-1881



Source 1b. Transcript of 1a



Source 2. Logbook extract from South Bersted National School, 1879



Source 3a. School Logbook Extracts: Various schools in West Sussex, 1880-1888



Source 3b. Audio version of Source 3a



Source 4. Print from *Punch Magazine*, 1852, boy scaring birds from a field



Source 5. Children pick blackberries in a country lane, c1855

Schooling: Activity 3 - Absenteeism

TEACHERS' NOTES

Sources 1, 2 and 3

School logbooks are books in which teachers would write comments about school attendance, pupils' behaviour, learning progress, etc.

Source 1

The school had to be closed for a week and a half because of poor weather.

Source 2

Poor attendance is mentioned in the entries for July 28, July 30, September 1, 12 and 18.

Reasons: Illness (chicken pox), working (harvesting), other events (Bognor flower show)

Source 3

Reasons for missing school - illness (chicken pox, whooping cough, smallpox, chilblains); bad weather; lack of suitable clothing such as waterproof shoes; doing work (bird-scaring, haymaking, hopping, beating for shooting parties, servant); required at home for household duties or looking after young family members; entertainment like a circus coming to town; preparing for events like May Day or bonfire night.

Source 4

Print from 'Punch' Magazine - A little boy is employed as a 'bird-scarer' in a field. He should be at school. The children beside him are playing.

Source 5

Watercolour painting called 'The Blackberry Gatherers' - Children are picking berries from the side of the road.