

## Leisure: Activity 1 - Leisure and Sport

## TEACHERS' NOTES

### Learning Objectives

- Learn about the activities that Victorian children could do in their spare time
- Understand the differences between leisure time and sport activities today and in the Victorian period
- Develop children's research skills in using historical sources, in particular photographs and ephemera

### Cross-curricular Links

- Art
- ICT
- Literacy
- PE

### Sources



Source 1. Annual nurserymen's outing, Worthing, 1892



Source 2. Children paddling in the sea, Worthing, c1900



Source 3. Boys play marbles in Charlton, 1893



Source 4. Circus parade at Southgate, Chichester, 1895



Source 5. Early motor car, Worthing, c1895



Source 6. Shoreham Football Team, 1890

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Source 7. Boys play cricket at Lancing Grammar School, c1860



Source 8. The Goodchild Family of Shoreham with croquet equipment, c1860



Source 9. Extracts from Long's Worthing Directory Pages 53-61, 1892



Source 10. Table of Musicians created from information recorded in the 1881 Census of Worthing.



Source 11. Petworth Jubilee Fete Programme of Races, 1897



Source 12. Amberley Programme of Sports for Diamond Jubilee Celebration, 1897

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<b>Source 1</b>
Nurserymen (market gardeners) pose for a photograph as they prepare to go on their annual outing by horse-drawn charabanc. They are wearing their 'Sunday best'. Some of them are members of the local brass band and carry musical instruments to play during the outing. For many of them, this outing would be their only holiday.
<b>Source 2</b>
Although the children are paddling in the sea, they are wearing normal 'day clothes'. The boys are wearing caps, the girls hats. Note the fashionable 'sailor suit' the boy in the centre is wearing, and the pinafores the girls wear to protect their dresses.
<b>Source 3</b>
These boys are playing marbles in the village street. The rough quality of their clothes and boots indicates they come from working class families.
<b>Source 4</b>
Children are walking alongside a Circus Parade in Chichester. As well as the horses pulling the wagon, there is a camel or dromedary, and an elephant.
<b>Source 5</b>
The men are formally dressed in top hats, stiff collars, waistcoats and jackets and look quite well-off. They are sitting in a motor car, an expensive and rare machine in Victorian times. Comparing this picture with Source 1 of working class people, you can see that the groups in each photograph are dressed differently. Most of the men in Source 1 are wearing suits, ties and hats, their clothes are not of the same style or quality as those in Source 5. Also, they are using a cheaper form of transport, a charabanc. Only rich people could afford to have a car.
<b>Source 6 - Shoreham football team</b>
The players' football strip appears 'old fashioned' in the photograph as the shorts are much longer than players would wear today, the boots are made of heavy leather, the socks are woollen, and their shirts are made of a heavier material. Note also the caps some are wearing.
<b>Source 7</b>
The boys are playing cricket. The boy on the left is probably the bowler, there are boys with bats at both ends of the pitch, and a wicket on the right with wicket keeper.
<b>Source 8</b>
There are croquet hoops and balls on the lawn, and the girl standing fourth from the left is holding a croquet mallet. Croquet players hit a wooden (now sometimes plastic) ball with a mallet through hoops embedded into the grass. The game travelled from Ireland to England in around 1851 as a pastime of the aristocracy. At first, croquet was most popular among women.

**Source 9**

The sports mentioned are: athletics, boating, rugby union, football, gymnastics, rowing, cycling, swimming, and cricket.

Other leisure activities included: chess, playing music and singing (Orchestral Society, Sacred Harmonic Society), Saturday Evening Entertainment, archaeology, needlework and blanket-making, debating, gardening (Horticultural Society), and pigeon breeding and racing (Fanciers' Association).

**Source 10**

Music was a popular pastime in the Victorian period as it is today. Victorians were able to play music at home, attend musical events and listen to bands. Different music professions as listed in the 1881 Census of Worthing:

- Teacher/Professor of Music - they would teach music in school or in homes.
- Musicians - they would play in a band or orchestra.
- Music Governess/Mistress - they would teach music privately to children.
- Pianoforte Tuner - a piano tuner.
- Music Dealer - they would sell musical instruments, sheet music and scores.

It is also interesting to note that many of the musicians listed in the census came from other countries.

**Sources 11 and 12.**

Sports competitions were among the most popular events organised to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897.

In the two programmes, there are running races (also called 'flat races') of different lengths and for different age groups. 'Handicap' or 'handicapped' races meant some competitors were allowed to start ahead of the others.

Other events included:

- three-legged race
- sack race
- tug-of-war
- scramble down the hill (the competitors would chase after spherical cheeses and oranges that were rolled down the hill)
- needle and cotton race
- egg and spoon race
- wheelbarrow race
- cycle race
- high jump
- long jump

**SUGGESTED HOMEWORK ACTIVITY**

Research the history of the Football Association and which teams were founded in the Victorian era (1837-1901).

Look at a TV guide to see which sports are being played. Which of these do you think would have existed in the Victorian Era?

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### ADDITIONAL NOTES

Towards the end of the Victorian period, leisure time increased, for example through the Bank Holidays Act of 1871. Children had more time and opportunity to play as a result of laws controlling the amount of time they were allowed to work.

Going to the circus, public celebrations such as Jubilees, playing at the seaside, listening to music, going on an outing or playing football and other sports are all still enjoyed today.

The wider range of leisure activities, and the differences between similar pastimes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and now, are largely due to technological advances:

- Transport: More people today have their own cars. Frequent and cheaper plane, train and bus services mean people travel further for leisure, and go abroad more often.
- Technology has advanced the way we play, record and listen to music today, and developments in science, electronics, and mechanics have created sports such as car racing.
- Sports clothing and equipment have improved and are now made of lighter materials. There is a wider range of sports available to most children, and sports and PE are part of a normal school week.

### HOMEWORK ACTIVITY

Children could research the history of football on the Internet, through books in libraries, in museums, and archives in sport organisations (eg. FA and FIFA).

Some historical pictures of West Sussex football teams can be found on this website:

[www.westsussexpast.org.uk/pictures/index.html](http://www.westsussexpast.org.uk/pictures/index.html)

Other football websites:

[www.thefa.com](http://www.thefa.com)

[www.fifa.com/en/history/history/0,1283,1,00.html](http://www.fifa.com/en/history/history/0,1283,1,00.html)

In Victorian times, football was played at many public (fee-paying) schools such as Eton, Harrow and Rugby, each of which developed different rules. The Football Association was established in 1863, when one set of rules was agreed on, allowing football to be played between adult teams.

The Football League was founded in 1888.