

Leisure: Activity 6 - Outings

TEACHERS' NOTES

See also Leisure Activity 8 - The Great Exhibition

Learning Objectives

- Appreciate that Victorian school children went on day trips just like children today
- Discover the wide variety of activities and games, some no longer played, which were enjoyed by Victorian children
- Develop children's research skills, using historical sources, in particular newspapers and guide books, to learn about outings enjoyed by Victorian children

Cross-curricular links

- Art
- ICT
- Literacy (Speaking and listening)

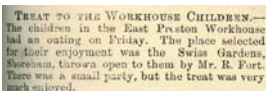
Sources



Source 1a. Description of a Sunday School Treat in Lancing, from *The Worthing Gazette*, 2 August, 1883



Source 1b. Audio version of Source 1a.



Source 2a. Description of a 'Treat to the Workhouse Children', from *The Worthing Gazette*, 7 August 1884



Source 2b. Audio version of Source 2a



Source 3a. Description of The Swiss Gardens, Shoreham, from *Worthing As It Is*, E. Wallis, 1843



Source 3b. Audio version of Source 3a

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Source 1

This newspaper report describes a typical 'treat' organised for Sunday School children.

-For many working-class Victorian children, whose families could not afford regular holidays or outings, this once-a-year treat would have been a special event.

-Food was a central part of outings organised for Victorian schoolchildren - they were given a substantial tea with cake and jam, and buns were given to all the children at the end of the day.

-Sport and games were an important part of the day out. These included races, cricket, tug-of-war, jingling (a version of Blind Man's Bluff in which all the players are blindfolded except one, who keeps ringing a bell in each hand while the others try to catch him), and trap-and-ball or trap-ball (a game with some similarities to cricket, in which a batter launched a small ball from a wooden spring-loaded 'trap' or funnel set in the ground, then hit it with a bat; members of the opposing team would try to get the batter out by catching the ball before it touched the ground, or throwing the ball back to hit the trap).

-Another regular feature of such outings was the giving of prizes at the end of the day, very often useful items such as books or writing desks.

Sources 2 and 3

It is interesting to note that even children living in the Workhouse were taken on outings for the day. Although workhouses were deliberately intimidating buildings, and living conditions were made as harsh as possible to deter people from seeking poor relief, conditions did become less strict towards the end of the century.

[For further details on workhouses see Poverty-How the Poor Lived].

'Pleasure gardens' such as the Swiss Gardens in Shoreham were popular destinations for both adults and children from the mid-19th to early 20th century. The Swiss gardens offered a wide range of indoor and outdoor sports and pastimes for all ages, including swings, roundabouts, sea-saws, archery, cricket, bowls, trap-ball, nine-pins (skittles) and a boating lake.