

Seaside 2 - What to wear

TEACHERS' NOTES

Learning Objectives

- Compare the clothes that people have worn on the beach at different times in the past
- Develop children's research skills in interpreting historical images, in particular with a to view recognising which are older and which are more recent

Sources



Source 1. People on the beach at Worthing, 1849



Source 2. Young women on the beach, 1869



Source 3. Young women in the sea, 1884



Source 4. Children paddling on Worthing beach, 1900



Source 5. Bathers on Elmer Beach, Bognor Regis, c1925



Source 6. Woman and children paddle on the beach, Worthing, 1930

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Source 7. Boys building a sandcastle on the beach, Worthing, 1930



Source 8. Children on Worthing beach c1951



Source 9. Children paddle in the sea, Worthing, c1952



Source 10. Young ladies on the beach, Worthing, c1952



Source 11. Holidaymakers on the beach, East Wittering, c1960



Source 12. Children at Brooklands paddling pool, Worthing, c1970



Source 13. Children on the beach, Bognor Regis, c1967

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[To find additional material related to this topic, go to the Source Gallery and search by keyword, e.g. fashion, clothing, or click on 'Extra material' in the topic list.]

Source 1

In the mid-19th century, people visiting the seaside would wear their usual day-clothes for walking on the beach. For bathing, they would use bathing machines to change and get into the sea, with men and women bathing in separate areas of the beach (see also Topic 4: In the water).

Sources 2 and 3

These two pictures are from magazines of 1867 and 1884.
The text accompanying the picture in Source 2 describes the materials used to make the bathing costumes. They are made of flannel; colours include red, purple, lilac-and-white stripes, and grey, all with white trimmings. The caps are made of oilskin.
In Source 3, the woman on the right wearing a dress and hat is the "guide" or woman who helped the people hiring the machines into and out of the sea.

Source 4

By the end of the 19th century, young girls would still wear their day clothes to the beach but would hold up or tuck up their skirts while they were paddling.

Sources 5 and 6

By the 1920s and 1930s, men, women and children would bathe directly from the beach. Men as well as women wore full bathing costumes, often with material reaching part-way down the thigh.

Sources 7 and 8

The boys playing on the beach in 1930 are wearing long shorts and long-sleeved shirts, and are both wearing hats or caps.
By the early 1950s, the boy is wearing shorts and a short-sleeved shirt, though the girl is wearing a long-sleeved cardigan and they are both wearing shoes and socks. Neither is wearing a hat.

Sources 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13

These photographs illustrate the changes in beachwear fashion for children and young people in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.
Note an early appearance of the bikini in Source 10.
In Source 11, note that the man is wearing normal trousers rolled up to the knee, as was often the case in the 1950s and early 1960s.

NOTE: There is a detailed history of swimwear in the Source Gallery. There is also a document with photographs of bathing costumes from 1900 to 1950. To find these, go to the Source Gallery and search by keyword "Swimwear".