

Claire – Good afternoon Miss Baker, good afternoon teachers good afternoon everyone. We are J8 and our assembly today is about the Victorians.

Faye -In 1880 a law was passed that said all children between the ages of 5 and 10 had to go to school.

Jessica K - child skipping

Gary - child with hoop

Dean -100 years ago most children under the age of 13 were summoned each morning by the school bell.

Ashley T-In some ways not much has changed since then, but in others ways school life in Victorian Britain was very different from school life we know today.

Claire -So watch our assembly and then try to decide what was so different then and what has stayed the same.

Jonathon – (rings a bell)

(Children enter and stay stood up.)

Jonathon -Please sit

Kirsty – (Girls register)

Kirsty – Victoria Everitt

Vicky -(stand) yes ma'am.

Kirsty – Jessica Keane

Jessica K -(stand) yes ma'am.

Kirsty – Jessica Le

Jessica L -(stand) yes ma'am.

Kirsty – Ria Taylor

Vicky – Please ma'am she's not here , I think she's late.

Kirsty – Jodie Waring

Jodie -(stand) yes ma'am.

Kirsty – Kerry Woods

Kerry -(stand) yes ma'am.

Ria (arrives and stands at front.)

Kirsty - and where have you been Ria Taylor? You're late again.

Ria -I overslept ma'am I didn't hear the bell.

Kirsty -but you know what I told you last time you were late. You'll be severely punished. Go to your seat.

Jonathon –(Boys register)

Jonathon – Gary Berry

Gary -(stand) yes sir

Jonathon – Ashley Chapman

Ashley C -(stand) yes sir

Jonathon – Daniel Dawson

Daniel D -(stand) yes sir

Jonathon – Daniel Kenny

Daniel K -(stand) yes sir

Jonathon –Matthew McColl

Matthew Mc -(stand) yes sir

Jonathon – Matthew McColl have you brought your school pence this week?

Matthew Mc -No sir.

Jonathon – Then I suggest you go home and fetch it. You know the rule and so does your mother. Every child must bring thrupence to school each week towards the cost of his education.

Matthew Mc -What's the point? She won't give it to me. She'll say what's a great big boy like you doing at school anyway. She thinks I ought to be out at work earning the money to pay for all the food I eat.

Jonathon – Home!

Everyone -Song all things bright and beautiful.

Faye - religion played an important part in the life of a Victorian school. Once a week assembly would be taken by the local vicar. As chairman of the board which employs the teachers and which runs the school, he is a very important man.

Scott - if a man has an orchard full of apples and we have not. Should he then go stealing those apples. Should he not respect both the man and his apples.

Matthew S -(whispering) he's got a very fine orchard.

Ashley C -(whispering)and its full of very fine apples.

Scott - Quiet!

Dean - after assembly and scripture lessons would begin. Reading, writing and arithmetic.

Everyone - chant 6 times tables.

Jonathon - and so Paul Let us return to our sum. If there are 6 boys and each takes 12 apples. How many apples are taken altogether.

Paul -Dunno sir. I reckon they shouldn't have taken the apples in the first place.

Jessica L -Not if they belong to the vicar.

Everyone - laugh

Jonathon -that's quite enough.

□ (white board with date on top and
21, 987, 654, 321 lower down)

Daniel L -twenty one thousand, nine hundred and eighty seven million, six hundred and fifty four thousand three hundred and twenty one.

Ashley T - the infants spend hours on end chanting their alphabet. Older pupils were employed as monitors to teach the younger ones.

Everyone -chant the alphabet backwards)

□ (written on white board

zyx wv
uts rqp
onm lkj
ihg fed
cba

with Kerry as monitor pointing to the groups of letters)

Claire - after they had learned the alphabet children started to read single syllable words. Learning to read in groups under the eye of a monitor could be very frustrating for better readers. Some children had to reread the same book over and over again.

Gabriel –

M A N – man
M A T – mat
B A G – bag
B A T – bat
B A B – babe

Jodie -Bab the word is bab.

Gabriel -Bab

Faye - some of the books the children were given to read didn't always make a great deal of sense.

Ashley C -(finger on book)

my bun is in the tun
my gun is in the tun
my dog is in the tun
What's a tun?

Craig -It's a large barrel. Carry on!

Dean - after break it's time for writing. In the infant class children practised their letters in a sand tray. the next step is using a slate and a slate pencil.

Claire - By the time a child is 7 or 8 they begin to use a copybook and a dip pen. It was a serious matter to blot ink on your copybook.

Ashley T - Victorian children were given many things to learn by heart. Including a great deal of poetry. Very often the poems the children recited would deal with those less fortunate than themselves.

Matthew Mc -Recite the poem.

The Chimney boy's song.

Inside the chimney, high I climb.
It's dark inside the sooty stack.
I bang my head, I graze my back,
I lose all sense of passing time.
Inside the chimney, high I climb.

Faye - at 12 o'clock the children have an hour off for lunch. There are no school dinners provided so the children eat what they've brought with them.

☐ 12 o'clock sign.

Gary -Cold tea to drink.

Jodie -Bread and cheese to eat

Daniel D -A baked potato that's been kept warm in some straw.

Matthew S – (eating an apple)

Paul -where did you get that from?

Matthew S -Can't you guess?

(Matthew S and Paul smile and giggle)

Claire -in Victorian schools children were caned for many different reasons.

Daniel K -For cutting my initials in my desk

Vicky -For blotting my copy book

Matthew S -For stealing apples.

Dean - each school had to keep a punishment book. In which the Headteacher recorded every offender and every offence.

Craig -For playing truant and telling lies

Jessica K -For spoiling the ribbons on Victoria Everitt's hat

Matthew Mc -Throwing a slate at the Pupil teacher

Ria -For being late three times in one week.

Ashley T - the worse the crime the harsher the punishment.

Jonathon - hold out your hand (pretend to hit Gabriel, he winces and puts his hand under his armpit)

Jodie -spit on your hand and you won't feel the pain

Jessica L -put a hair on your palm and it will split teachers cane

Paul -rub your hand with an onion, then it won't hurt

Kerry -brush it against a nice cold wall

Daniel D -rub it with a leaf that will ease the sting

Jonathon - now go to your place. Let this be a lesson to you all. I will not tolerate such behaviour in my school.

Faye - discipline was strict in Victorian schools. Discipline in all things was very important.

Kirsty - now I don't need to tell you that tomorrow is a very important day in the life of our school. At 10 o'clock we shall receive a visit from her majesty's inspector.

Claire - once a year Her Majesty's Inspector would visit the school to test the children. The amount of money the school received from the government depended on how well the children did.

Ashley T - if the exam results were poor the money to run the school and pay the teachers would be cut. This system was called payment by results.

10 o'clock sign

Kirsty - the inspector is coming children, sit up straight. Remember to be on your very best behaviour.

(Dale enters, children stand)

Dale - good morning children

Everyone -good morning sir

Dale - you may sit down.

(white board with

396

54

172 +

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Dale - begin

(children try to do sum)

Dale - History. Daniel Kenny in what state were the Ancient Britons at the time of the Roman conquest?

Daniel K -In a very rude state, wearing no clothes only a piece of woollen cloth around their waists. And living in huts

Dale - Huts?

Daniel K -In mud huts.

Dale - thank you.

(Paul reads from a book)

Infant Joy

I have no name

I am but two days old.-

What shall I call thee ?

I happy am

Joy is my name, -

Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee:
Thou dost smile.
I sing the while.
Sweet joy befall thee.

Dale - well read. Do you understand it?

Paul -No sir.

Dale – (sighing) next

Matthew S (holding a book upside down)

Ben has a hen

Bet has a net

Nell has a bell

Ned has a bed

Meg has a peg

Dale - young man you're holding your book upside down

Matthew S (nervously puts it the right way round and sits down)

Dean - finally the inspector would ask to hear the children sing.

(everyone sings my grandfathers clock)

Dale leaves

Faye - and so the inspection comes to an end. The inspector has left and the school can relax. At least until the results are known.

Ashley T -Please can you put your hands together and close your eyes for our prayer.

Father, we thank thee for the night
And for the pleasant morning llight,
For rest and food and loving care,
And all that makes the world so fair.
Help us to do the things we should.
To be to others kind and good,
In all we do, in all we say,
To grow more loving every day.

Claire - this is the end of our assembly. Thank you all for listening and watching.