

Schools Then, Schools Now

The Victorian Era was a long time ago, over 100 years in fact! Back then, schools were very different from today.

School in the Victorian Era

School started at 9am and did not finish until 5pm. Children did have a two hour lunch break but this was because they had to go home for their lunch.

Classrooms

Classrooms did not have colourful displays on the wall and the windows were high up so children could not look out.

There were no interactive whiteboards. The teacher used a blackboard and chalk. Younger children used a slate pencil and slate to write on, while older children wrote with ink pens.

Class sizes were bigger and children sat in rows. Boys and girls sat separately.



Lessons

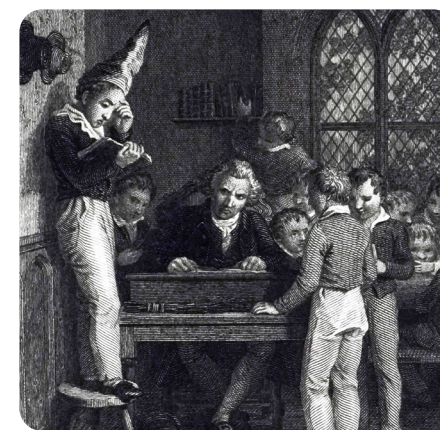
Children learned the Three Rs:
Reading, **wR**iting, and **aR**ithmetic.

Ways of learning were different back then. There was no group work. Children spent most of the time copying things from the teacher's blackboard and chanting facts aloud to try to remember them.

In the afternoon, girls learned to sew, cook and look after a home, while boys learned woodwork and technical drawing.

Teachers

Teachers in Victorian times were very strict. Children had to sit up straight and be very quiet and well-behaved. If a child broke a rule, the teacher may hit them with the cane, make them write lots of lines or make them stand in a corner wearing a dunce's hat.



Playtimes

Children played with marbles, skipping ropes, hoops and spinning tops. They played games like Tag, Hopscotch, Blind Man's Buff, Follow the Leader and Drop the Handkerchief. Some of these toys and games are still enjoyed by children today.

Samuel Wilderspin

Samuel Wilderspin was a teacher in Victorian times. He was different from many teachers at the time, as he thought that children should be treated with kindness. He believed that learning should be fun and active. Samuel introduced playgrounds to his schools. He wrote a book and travelled around the country sharing his ideas. As a result, lots of schools began to copy his ideas.



Glossary

arithmetic	Mathematics.
spinning top	A conical shaped toy made from wood or metal that can be spun by twisting it or using a cord known as a whip.
technical drawing	The skill of producing a neat and careful diagram that shows how to make or build something.
Victorian Era	The historical period of Queen Victoria's reign in Great Britain, from 1837 to 1901.
woodwork	The craft of making things out of wood.