



LEARNING AT HOME

HOMES OF THE PAST

KS1 History with links to: KS1 English, Science, Design and Technology

A Victorian house was very different to the homes we live in today. There was no electricity, no central heating and no hot water. Most Victorian houses had a fireplace in every room to provide heat and to boil water.

Let's take a look at some objects from a Victorian home:



This small ceramic pot is a **chamber pot**. It was used in a Victorian home as an indoor toilet. Not many houses had flushing toilets or even plumbing.

This **cast iron kettle** would have been put on the fire to boil water. Hot water was needed for hot drinks, personal washing and household washing. Working class families had cast iron kettles, however in richer families they were made out of copper. Today we use electrical kettles.



This is a **carpet beater**. It was used to 'beat' the carpets. Carpets and rugs on the floor were taken up and held up on a line whilst being hit with the carpet beater to remove dirt and dust. **What would we use today?**

This is a **hot water bottle** made of pottery. The top was unscrewed and hot water poured inside. This could then be put in the bed. We still use hot water bottles today but they are made from different materials. **What materials would we use today?**



WASH DAYS

With no electricity or piped water, washing and drying laundry was a tiring chore that often took up an entire day. Clothes had to be soaked, beaten and rinsed by hand.

Washing was placed in a large **tub** of water and pounded with a **posser** in an up and down movement to mix the laundry in the water.



This **posser** has a wooden handle and a copper dome.

The clothes were rubbed with soap, up and down on a **washboard** with a corrugated surface to remove any stains.



These **wooden tongs** were used for lifting items out of the water when it was hot.



When the clothes were fully washed and rinsed, they would be squeezed and twisted to remove excess water and hung up to dry, either outside or on a rack over the fire. Some clothes and bedding would be put through a **mangle** to smooth them before ironing.

A **flat iron** like this one was heated at an open fire. The metal handle would get very hot so it was picked up with a thick rag.



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Imagine you live in a Victorian home on wash day. Act out how to clean your clothes using an imaginary tub, washboard, posser and iron.

Use old magazines, catalogues and pictures you have drawn to create a picture of a modern house. Think about a Victorian home and which objects would be similar or different.

Choose one Victorian household object and describe it. What is it made from? How does it work? Now write about an object in your own home.

Craven Museum and Gallery is currently being redeveloped, increasing the accessibility of the Museum and the collection, as well as creating new and innovative displays to tell the stories and showcase the treasures of the Craven Dales. We look forward to welcoming you to the museum when we reopen. Thank you to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, made possible by generous National Lottery Players!

