

## History Mystery Photo Pack

### Introduction

The purpose of the History Mystery Photo pack is to encourage pupil's communication and historical enquiry skills as they try and determine what the object actually is.

Suggested questioning could include:

- What kind of materials may have been used in making the item?
- Would it have been made by a machine or by hand?
- Does the object have any parts that move?
- Is there anything similar available nowadays?
- Who might have used this item?
- What might it have been used for?

### Carpet Beater

The carpet beater was very cheap and simple to use and was normally made from bamboo or twisted wire. It did not require electricity, but could be quite a physical task. Clothes and carpets would be hung over a clothes line and hit repeatedly with the carpet beater to remove any dirt and dust. Carpet Beaters were in use from the mid Victorian period right up to the 1920's. They were made redundant by vacuum cleaners and carpet sweepers which gained popularity.

### Glove Stretcher

Glove Stretchers were used to keep gloves in shape when they were not being worn. Gloves were a very important item of clothing in the Victorian period. They would also sometimes be worn even at night to keep the hands soft and white. Good well-fitting gloves were a Victorian status symbol, so a lot of attention was paid to their care. The glove stretcher would also be used to restore the fingers to shape after the gloves has been washed or cleaned; this was mainly because the Victorians did not have our modern stretchy materials.

### Embroidery Sampler

Girls learnt to sew and embroider during the Victorian period. They would embroider samples like this to show off their needlework skills and the samplers would represent a variety of images.

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## **Coffee Grinder**

This is an example of a Victorian coffee grinder. Coffee was introduced in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was considered as a luxury. The Victorians would buy their coffee as beans and then would use the grinder to turn the hard beans into a powder. The beans would be poured into the top and then the handle would be turned to crush them on the inside. The powder would then fall into the drawer at the bottom, be collected together and hot water added to produce a cup of coffee. Coffee beans can still be seen nowadays in some shops although instant coffee was made readily available in the 20th century.

## **Warming Pan**

An example of a Victorian hot water bottle! This warming pan would have been filled with hot coals and placed between the sheets to warm the bed.

## **Darning Mushroom**

This was made of wood and would be used when socks with holes were actually darned and not just thrown away. The darning mushroom was put under the hole and then darned across and down with wool to repair the hole.

## **Donkey Stone**

Donkey stones are scouring stones which were originally used to provide a non-slip surface on greasy stone staircases. They were available in three colours, cream, and brown and white. Women would scour their front steps, window sills and sections of pavement to make their area clean and tidy.

## **Sugar Snappers**

The Victorians used to buy sugar in cones or blocks which were very hard. The sugar would then have to be cut off in small pieces when some was needed. To make sugar in a powder form like today the sugar would have to be pounded very hard, normally by using a pestle or mortar.

## **Sugar Tongs**

After the sugar cones had been cut down into smaller pieces using the sugar snappers, Victorians would use the tongs to add the sugar to cookery or to drinks. Sugar tongs are still common nowadays and are the most hygienic way of transferring sugar lumps to food or drink.

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## Wool Winder

Wool would not have been supplied in balls as it is today. Instead the long pieces would have been attached to the winder and this would then wind the wool up into balls which people could then use in knitting. Some people would work as 'wool winders' and would earn their wage from making the wool into balls, ready to sell on.