





Look at these images.

What do you think they are and when do you think they were made?

What evidence can you see to support your ideas?





# Victorian Christmas Cards

---

The images are of Victorian Christmas cards. You can see some actual Victorian Christmas cards on display at Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey.

Look at the images again.

- **What do you notice about the style of the picture?**
- **Can you spot any themes in the designs?**
- **How do they compare to Christmas cards today?**

When was the Victorian  
period?

What else do you know about this era?

In the history of the United Kingdom, the Victorian era was the period of Queen Victoria's reign, from 20<sup>th</sup> June 1837 until her death on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1901.

---

**Q: How many years, months and days was Victoria on the throne?**

**Q: If Queen Victoria was born in 1837, in what century would we say the Victorian era began?**

The Victorian era followed the Georgian period and came before the Edwardian period.

Picture credit: edition.cnn.com



# Creative Past-times

As part of Arts Award you get to try out lots of different art activities.

What creative activities might the Victorians have taken part in?

# Victorian Scrapbooking

---

Scrapbooking was a popular pastime in Victorian times for both children and adults.

Creating a scrapbook was not only a craft project, it was also a way of preserving memories. Scrapbooks tell stories about a person's life.

**Q: Why do you think scrapbooks are useful to historians?**



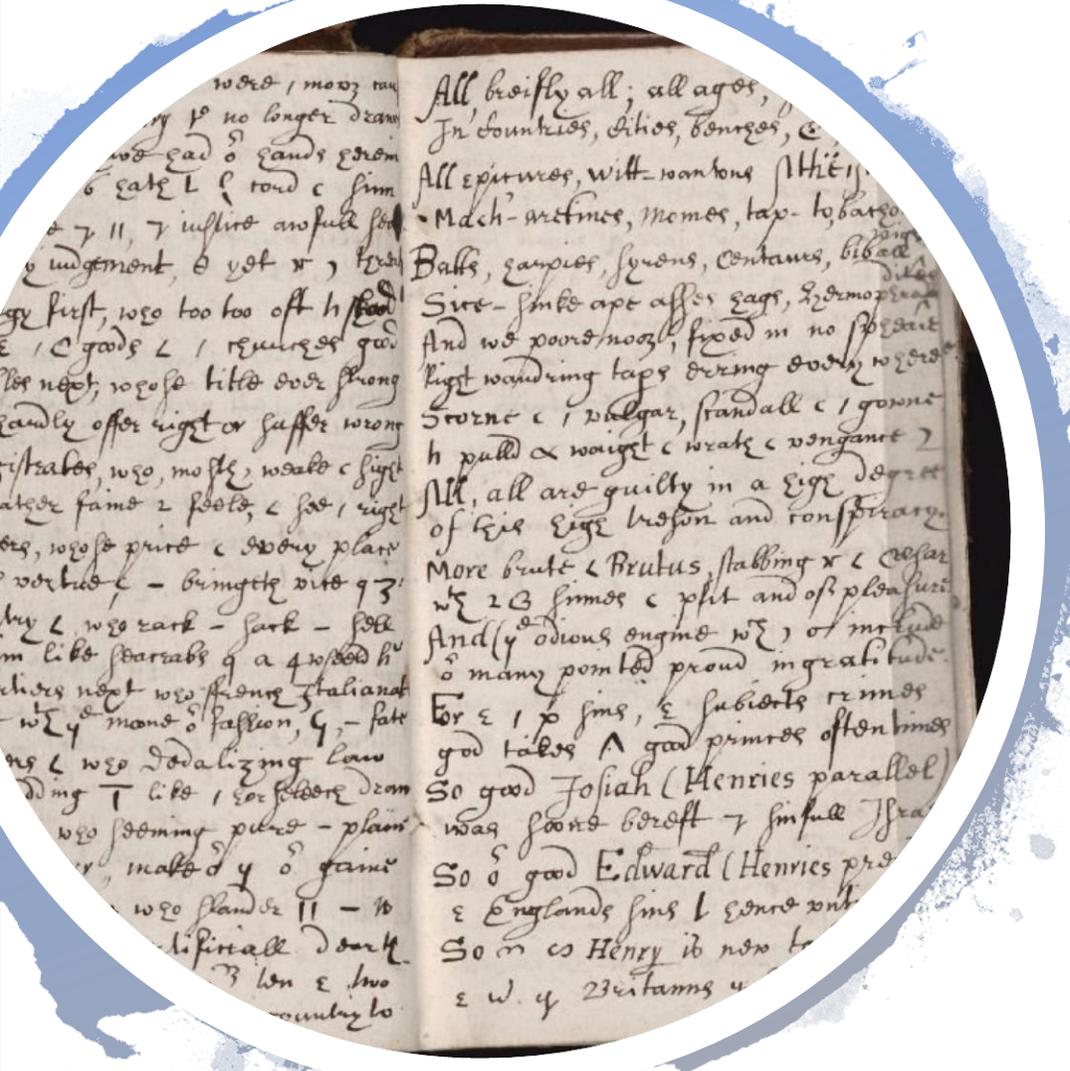
# Where did scrapbooks come from?

During the Renaissance period (the 14th to 17th centuries), it was popular for noble and educated Europeans to keep what were called “commonplace books”.

Commonplace books were not personal diaries or even a way of recording the owner's inner thoughts.

They were a way of collecting and organizing a variety of information and material that came to the person from a number of different sources – a literal gathering of informational “scraps”.

Students and scholars might copy down key passages from materials studied in libraries. Scientists, writers and philosophers used their commonplace books to record inspiration and the progress of their work. Ladies would record their favourite religious passages, recipes, and quotes from the books that they read.





# Book of Scraps

In the 1800s, the automated printing press was invented.

**Q: What does automated mean?**

**Q: Can you think of anything else that was automated in Victorian times?**

Suddenly books and printed material became much more widely available.

As well as *writing* in their commonplace books, people began to cut out and stick in *printed* items.

Things like greeting cards, calling cards, postcards, prayer cards, advertising trading cards and newspaper clippings were collected.

Some of these books contained a mix of personal journal entries, hand-drawn sketches and water colours, along with various scraps of printed material. These books were literally books of scraps.

# Designer scraps

By the 1820's, collectable scraps had become more elaborate.

Some items were embossed - a process by which a die (a metal stamp for cutting or pressing) was punched into the reverse side of the paper, giving the front a raised three-dimensional appearance.

The Victorians delighted in romanticism and sentimentality.

**Q – What do these words mean?**

Sought-after subjects for scraps included angelic-looking children, fashionably dressed ladies, birds, butterflies, pets, angels and fans.

Also popular were military and naval themes and scraps depicting Victorian pastimes such as the circus and outings to the seaside.





# German scraps

Many of the best-quality scraps of the period were produced in Germany, where bakers and confectioners used small reliefs to decorate cakes and biscuits for special occasions such as christenings, weddings, Christmas and Easter.

**Q – What do you think of these cake decorations? Is there anything similar around today?**



Clara B. Hunott

## Calling Cards

Another item often collected for scrapbooks was the calling card

In Victorian times, you didn't just drop in for a visit with someone. Instead, a card would be dropped off – with the corner folded to indicate it was delivered *in person*.

If the person wished to receive a visit, then a card would be delivered *back* to them. A card delivered in an envelope, however, was a polite brush-off.

Post being much more regular, sometimes multiple calling cards would be sent or received in a day. They became a much collected item.



# Invention of photography

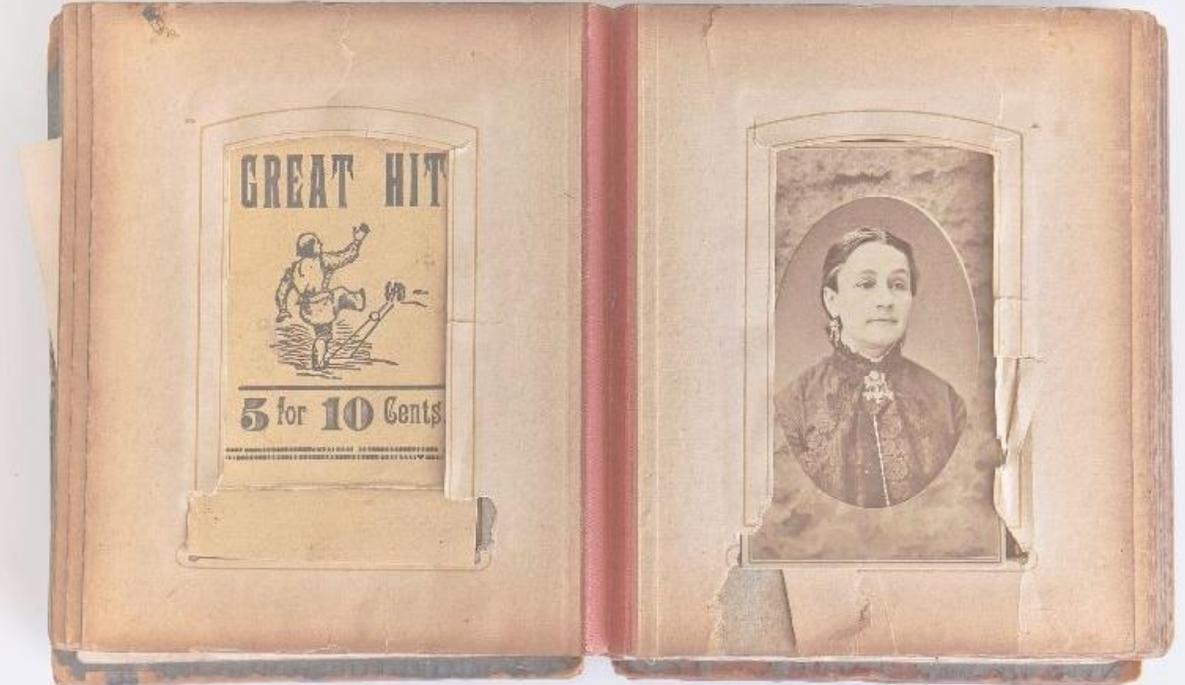
In 1827, Joseph Niépce took the first photograph. It required an 8 hour exposure!

By 1837, Louis Daguerre had developed a new, faster method, making photographs more commonplace.

Did you know, Queen Victoria was the first monarch to have her photograph taken?

By the 1850s, a form of photography called *carte de visite* (visit card) started to spread across Europe. These small photos were about the size of a calling card and were printed in sheets of eight photographs.

It was common to trade them with friends and family or purchase prints of celebrities. This led to the desire to preserve the collected photos in albums – creating the first *true* scrapbooks!





# Now it's your turn!

Try any - or all - of the following creative tasks.

You can do this just for fun, but you can also use the activities for Part A of your Arts Award.



# Task One: Create your own Victorian calling card

As we have learned, in Victorian times, calling cards were often sent in advance to request a visit, or left behind if the recipient wasn't home. The cards were ornate and beautifully decorated in full colour, typically with floral designs and pastoral scenes.

---

## Follow the steps below to make your own calling card:

- 1) Look at the images on the next slide for inspiration.
- 2) Experiment writing your name with different fonts and in different colours – this could be by hand, or on a computer.
- 3) Cut out some coloured cardboard - 6cm (h) x 9cm (w).
- 4) Put your full name in the middle of the card using your chosen font and colour – either handwritten or printed out and stuck on.
- 5) Draw or collage a decorative border all around your name, using themes from the Victorian period. Remember to make it as brightly coloured and ornate as possible. You may want to draw on white paper first, then stick this on.
- 6) Now turn your card over, and decorate the back.
- 7) If you have access to a printer, scan your card in and print a number of copies onto printing card.
- 8) Cut them out and trade them with your friends. Don't forget to stick one in your Arts Award logbook!





## Task Two: Decorate a book with Victorian Scraps (Why not use your Arts Award Logbook?)

- 1) Look at all the different scrap samples at the end of this presentation.
- 2) Choose the scraps/images you would like to use in your design. Maybe your design will have a Victorian theme, like the seaside, the circus, flora or fauna. Think about the different colours you might use, and the size of the images.
- 3) Once you have chosen your scraps, print them off and cut them out. (If you don't have access to a printer, you can use images from old books, wrapping paper or magazines instead.)
- 4) Lie your book on a table so that you can see both the front and the back cover. Arrange the scraps/images on your book, using both covers. Take time to play around with different combinations. Ask yourself what looks good where and why?
- 5) When you are happy with your design, take a photograph to remind yourself what went where! Then carefully take each item off your cover, one scrap at a time.
- 6) Use a non-toxic glue to stick your design onto your book cover. (PVA is best, but Pritt Stick or similar will be fine). Don't forget to look at your photograph to see what went where.
- 7) Leave your book to dry completely. Once dry, use a pen to add any written detail or patterns. Gold pens work well!
- 8) When you are happy with your cover, use some sticky back plastic to cover the cover and seal in your design.

## Task Three: Create your own scrapbook

If you want more of a challenge, rather than simply decorating the cover of a book, why not try creating your own scrapbook?

You will need:

- A blank notebook
- Scissors
- Glue
- Pens / pencils / paints

You will also need scraps! It is completely up to you what you collect and stick in to your scrapbook, but here are some things to think about before you start.

- Will you have a theme - friendship, school, holidays, nature, pets, food, fashion, family? Remember, the broader the theme, the more scraps you are likely to find.
- Scraps can be anything! Here are some of the things the Victorians used to collect: Postcards, poetry, music, calling cards, photographs, programs, stamps, sweet wrappers, tickets, greetings/birthday cards, notes, messages and letters from friends, recipes, prayer cards and even locks of hair!
- Use decoration and imagination. One of the reasons the Victorian scrapbooks are still so admired today is that they are beautifully presented. Think about how you can make your scraps look amazing. Perhaps you will hand-draw borders around the scraps or the pages? Maybe you will present items on different coloured paper, or have themed items presented together? You could even use collage to decorate your book, with material, lace, foil and ribbons!
- Make sure your book is unique. A scrapbook is a very personal thing, so make sure your book tells your own story, and reflects your own thoughts and ideas - not someone else's! You can write notes next to your scraps, draw or paint pictures and write your own poems, jokes or riddles. It's completely up to you, but be as imaginative as you can.



Wings of Whimsy - Victorian Floral Tea Cup Children Ca 1890



Free for personal use - Love & Light - Gunnvor Karita 2015







10007 Made in Germany

7391

7391



ges. gesch.













Thanks for taking part in  
our session!

If you have enjoyed this class then look out  
for our other creative resources.

<https://efdmuseum.com/>

©2020 Epping Forest District Council



@EFD Museum



<https://www.facebook.com/efdmuseum/>

