

Treehouse Theatre

A Play-in-a-Day Children in Victorian Times

"The historical content and knowledge taught discreetly was amazing. The drama skills and techniques picked up by the children had them absorbed" Downton Primary School, Wiltshire

The aim of 'Children in Victorian Times' is to help today's children understand what life was like for children their age during the Reign of Queen Victoria.

The play begins and ends in a Victorian schoolroom, with the story following the life of Lord Shaftsbury, who we meet as a visitor to the school. The play reflects the very different lives that rich and poor children experienced, with a particular emphasis on children who had to work and the kind of jobs that they did. As time passes during the play, we learn about the changes to the lives of children that took place in Victoria's reign.

Although this play has a good balance of light relief, it has been written to make children really think about how life has improved for children since the Victorian era.

"Very informative and quite gruesome!. The children learnt a lot about the Education Act. Acting was excellent, children really engaged" ACS Egham International School, Surrey



Main topics covered in the Play

- What it was like in a Board school classroom
- The workhouse and the rural poor
- The life and work of Lord Shaftsbury
- Parliamentary debates about working children and education
- Children working in factories & mills
- Children working as chimney sweeps
- Children working down mines
- Children working as mudlarks, toshers and beggars
- The life of rich children (illustrated by the family of Lord Shaftsbury)

"Thanks Ben for another fantastic time-travel experience! The day provided a significant learning experience for all involved, its said that children remember 90% of what they hear say *and* do!" Forelands Middle School, Isle of Wight

Thanks to Ryde School, Isle of Wight, for the great photos