YEAR 5: THE VICTORIAN AGE (4 lessons)

Contents Include:
George IV
Coronation of Queen Victoria
Victoria’s reign
Life in 1900

Suggested Teacher Resources:
- The BBC has a collection of articles about life in Victorian England, clips from a series about Victorian criminals, and many resources about Queen Victoria.
- Clips from films and documentaries could be used to illustrate live in the Victorian age, such as The Victorians (2009) and The Victorian Farm (2010).
- Books such as The Victorians (Dorling Kindersley) and The Victorians (Usborne).
Lesson 1.  George III and IV

Part of the reason why Queen Victoria was so popular, was the Kings who preceded her were rather unsympathetic characters. This lesson should fill in the gaps between George III (studied at the end of year 5) and Queen Victoria. George III (1761-1820) lost the American colonies, and went mad towards the end of his reign. George IV (1820-1830) was greedy, badly behaved and grew enormously fat. William IV (1830-1837) never wanted to be king, and rarely went out in public. They are a colourful collection of characters, who put in context the great reception that Queen Victoria received on her coronation.

See pages 125 of What Your Year 6 Child Needs to Know.

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| To understand how George III and IV are remembered as Kings. | George IV, also known as the Prince Regent, was an extremely unpopular King. He spent all of his money, grew very fat, and lived in an irresponsible way. His father George III was the King during the American War of Independence. Later in life he went mad and was unable to rule. George IV was briefly replaced after his death by William IV. When William died, Victoria became Queen. One of the reasons she was so popular is that the Kings who came before her were disliked. | Study the Gilray cartoon of George IV, A Voluptuary Under the Horrors of Digestion, to understand what it says about his approach to being King (resource 1). See an engraving of George III having gone insane. Watch the much loved Horrible History video of the 4 Georges, Born 2 Rule. Also, watch scenes from the film The Madness of King George (1994), and Blackadder Season 3 which features George IV. | Prince Regent coronation | Why was George IV such a bad King?  
Was there anything positive that George IV can be remembered for?  
Why did George IV have to become acting King (Prince Regent) whilst his father was still alive? |
1. **George IV**

George IV, also known as the Prince Regent, was an extremely unpopular King. He spent all of his money, grew very fat, and lived in an irresponsible way. This cartoon, *A Voluptuary Under the Horrors of Digestion*, was drawn by James Gillray in 1792 to show how unpleasant he was.

Look at the image [here](#) and [here](#), and see which of the following features you can locate.

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<tr>
<th>George’s face looks arrogant and self-satisfied. He is picking his teeth with a fork, showing very bad manners for someone who is soon to become King.</th>
<th>George’s Carlton House, a new palace, midway through construction. There to remind people of how much of Britain’s money George IV spent on himself.</th>
<th>Portrait of Luigi Conaro, a famous Italian dieting specialist (like a Renaissance Paul McKenna!) who after living a wild life until 35, but then put himself on a strict diet and lived to the age of 99. The inclusion of the portrait is there to juxtapose with George IV’s reckless drinking and eating.</th>
<th>The Prince of Wales’ Crest, modified to have knife and fork as its central crest, ridiculing George IV’s love of eating. Below it is a medicine table, suggesting his health is suffering.</th>
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<td>Sitting on top of a pile of bills is an overflowing toilet pot. Not a very nice detail!</td>
<td>Dice, a list of horse races at Newmarket, and a book of debts from card games. Showing how much money he wastes on gambling.</td>
<td>George’s tailcoat cannot fasten over his fat bely, and it has burst out of all but one of his waistcoat buttons. No wonder people at the time nicknamed him the Prince of Whales!</td>
<td>A collection of empty wine bottles below his table, showing that he has been drinking all day but is trying to hide it from people.</td>
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Lesson 2. The Reign of Queen Victoria

Queen Victoria is the longest reigning monarch in British history, ruling from 1837 to 1901. She had such a profound impact on the culture and life of the nineteenth century, that the period is commonly known as the 'Victorian Age' – even in nations aside from Great Britain. Queen Victoria typified a change in the culture of Great Britain during the nineteenth century, from the wild and flamboyant national culture represented by her immediate predecessors George IV and William VI, to the more sober and moral climate of the Victorian age. Queen Victoria was presented to her subjects as a loving wife and ideal mother.

See pages 125-128 of What Your Year 6 Child Needs to Know.

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<td>To consider how Queen Victoria made a series of sensible decisions as Queen.</td>
<td>Victoria became Queen as a very young girl (aged 18), but did the job well from the start, vowing ‘I will be good’. She had a successful marriage to the German Prince Albert, who was an excellent source of advice and who she loved very much. Victoria made some sensible political decisions, spending a lot of time in Scotland which strengthened the Union, and forming strong relationships with Prime Ministers.</td>
<td>Complete a chart of the different areas in which Victoria made sensible decisions: Marriage, Politics, Family, Scotland. Or, complete a timeline of the main events during Queen Victoria’s reign (resource 2). Look at three celebrated depictions of Queen Victoria, and consider how she was presented to the British people, see here, here and here. The BBC Primary site has many resources about Queen Victoria. Complete a piece of extended writing comparing Queen Victoria to her predecessors, George III, George IV, and William IV.</td>
<td>Prince Albert Balmoral Tartan</td>
<td>What sort of Queen was Victoria? What good decisions did she make when she first became Queen? What was Queen Victoria’s relationship with Scotland?</td>
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2. Queen Victoria Timeline

- 1837
- 1840
- 1851
- 1861
- 1866
- 1876
- 1897
- 1901
2. Queen Victoria Timeline (comp.)

- **1837**: Victoria becomes Queen after the death of her uncle, King William IV. She is only 18 years old, but immediately makes her mark as clever and confident.

- **1840**: Victoria marries her German Cousin Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg. They have an extremely happy marriage, and he is the love of her life.

- **1851**: Queen Victoria opens the Great Exhibition, an international exhibition organised by Prince Albert. It is remembered as the high point of the Victorian period.

- **1861**: Prince Albert dies of typhoid fever. Queen Victoria was devastated, and for five years she made no public appearances. For the rest of her life, Victoria wore only black.

- **1866**: Queen Victoria makes her first public appearance after the death of her husband to attend the Royal opening of Parliament, improving her popularity with her subjects.

- **1876**: Queen Victoria is made Empress of India following the Indian Mutiny and the Creation of the British Raj. She was a keen supporter of the British Empire.

- **1897**: Queen Victoria celebrates her Diamond Jubilee marking 60 years as Queen. Soldiers from all over the Empire parade through London.

- **1901**: Queen Victoria dies aged 81, the longest-reigning monarch in British history. The whole nation mourned, and lined the streets to watch the funeral procession.
Lesson 3. How did inventions change life in Britain

The Victorian Age saw rapid advances in England in terms of politics, technology, education and the economy. This period of innovation saw many new inventions, including lots of items that we still use today. This was very much a consequence of the industrial revolution, which through the development of engines and factories, opened up the possibility of mass production and automation. A lesson studying the inventions of the Victorian era will give the pupils an appreciation of the pace of change during this period, and how the world as we know it today was developing.

See pages 153 of *What Your Year 6 Child Needs to Know*.

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| To understand that the Industrial Revolution gave birth to a whole range of new inventions, many of which we still use today. | Following the industrial revolution, there was a technological revolution (sometimes known as the second industrial revolution).  
This saw the invention of a number of technologies that we still enjoy today.  
For example, the first telephone was invented in 1876, the first film in 1894, and the first aeroplane in 1603. | Quiz pupils with a list of 12 inventions, and a number of questions could be asked. Pupils put them in a line according to which was invented when. Or, pupils have to guess whether the invention existed before or after 1900. Once this is done, pupils can design an inventions timeline (*resource 3*). | Prince Albert  
Balmoral  
Tartan | Why did so many inventions occur during the nineteenth century?  
What was the most important invention of the Victorian Age? |
3. **Inventions**

- The camera
- Coca Cola
- The machine gun
- Antibiotics
- The light bulb
- The toaster
- The radio
- The aeroplane
- The telephone
- The vacuum cleaner
- Movies
- Cornflakes
3. Inventions
(comp.)

1838
The camera

1876
The telephone

1879
The light bulb

1885
The machine gun

1886
Coca Cola

1894
Movies

1895
The radio

1896
Cornflakes

1899
The vacuum cleaner

1903
The aeroplane

1919
The toaster

1928
Antibiotics
Lesson 4. Life by 1900

By the time of Queen Victoria’s death in 1901, Britain was not that different from today. This lesson should focus on everyday life in the nineteenth century, and would ideally combine with a school trip. There are many resources online, such as the Geffrye Museum and the Victorian School which can be used to illustrate Victorian social history. Similarly, the BBC website has resources about Victorian schools and toys and games. By the end of the period, professional football, department stores, newspapers, cars, street lights, medicines were all similar to what we have today.

See pages 153-155 of What Your Year 6 Child Needs to Know.

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<td>To consider how much of the modern world as we know it was already in existence by 1900.</td>
<td>Many aspects of life by 1900 were not that dissimilar to today. Street lighting, medicines, trains, the motor car, department stores and compulsory education were all in existence by then. In 1870, Parliament made education compulsory for every British child up to 11 years old, beginning the age of mass education. When Queen Victoria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, it was captured on an new invention—the moving camera.</td>
<td>Ask the pupils to list their favourite hobbies (shopping, football, computer games) and consider how many of them existed by 1900. Watch footage of old films online, like this one of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee procession. The Geffrye Museum has an interactive tour of a Victorian house which can give pupils an idea of daily life for a Victorian family. It also has this resource pack. The Victorian School interactive museum makes a great school trip, and also has many resources about Victorian life online. Run a lesson, or part of a lesson, along the lines of a Victorian school, see here.</td>
<td>Prince Albert Balmoral Tartan</td>
<td>How different was life by 1900 to how it is today? What existed by 1900 that you still benefit from today? What would you have most missed had you lived in 1900?</td>
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