

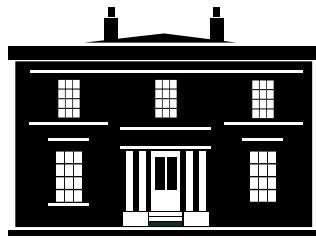
Elizabeth Gaskell's House

Teacher Resource pack



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This learning pack is designed for Key Stage 2 teachers, supporting English and History through:

 **Creative Writing**  **Learning about the Victorians**
 **Local history**

This has been designed as a resource for KS2 students after a visit to Elizabeth Gaskell's House although it can be adapted as a stand-alone resource.

Recommended for
KS2 History and English.

Visiting the House

Details about visiting the House with your school group can be found on the website
elizabethgaskellhouse.co.uk/visit/school-visits

Learning Session 1

Create your own Writer's House

Overview

Students get to explore the purpose of historical literary houses and to become a tour guide for their own house.

Outcomes

Designing a 'literary house' is a project-based learning activity that combines creative writing and architectural design. It helps build literacy skills, encourages creative expression, and develops critical thinking

Curriculum links

English

- Develops descriptions of settings
- Explores new vocabulary and develops understanding how choices can change and enhance meaning.

History:

- Explores similarity, difference, significance and change through a local history study of a significant place in the school's locality.
- Discusses the significance of historical buildings.

Equipment and resources: Paper and writing/drawing materials



Activity

1. Pick a famous or favourite writer and ask children to come up with a list of things that you might find in their house (*this can be done verbally as a whole class or in table groups and share back*)
2. If the class have visited Elizabeth Gaskell's House they can include things they remember from their visit as well.
3. Ask students to imagine that they are a famous writer and to design or write about the house they would have. *Participants can draw/write.*
4. Everyone is asked to pick one room from their house and add particular details: e.g. an object that reminds you of your childhood, an object that tells us about a hobby, an object that tells us about a cause you believe in.
5. Write up a tour guide speech for this room.
6. Get students to share their tour with the person next to them and to come up with two questions for each other.



Learning Session 2

Found Poetry

Overview

Students write a 'found poem' using words and phrases that have been selected and rearranged from another text.

Outcomes

Writing found poetry provides children with a range of valuable outcomes, from enhancing literacy and critical thinking to boosting creativity and emotional expression. By refashioning existing text, children learn to see language in a new way, transforming familiar words into something entirely new.

Curriculum links

English

- Developing writing composition.
- Exploring different poetic forms.
- Understanding language and word choice.

History:

- Exploring similarity, difference, significance and change through a local history study of a significant place in the school's locality.
- Discusses the significance of historical buildings.



Equipment and resources: Scissors, glue, paper and a selection of words cut from the sheet below, leaflets, newspapers and magazine (this could be done in advance or by the students)

Activity

1. Ask students to think about a favorite place they like to visit (e.g. *park, library, museum, football pitch*) **OR** to think about their visit to Elizabeth Gaskell's House and how it made them feel and/or what they liked most about it. Students to share verbally in small groups or with the whole class.
2. Ask students to cut/use words from leaflets, newspapers, magazine and to construct a short poem about their favourite place / Elizabeth Gaskell's House.
3. Students given 30 minutes to create their own poem.
4. Poems to be shared with the group.



Learning Session 3

Victorian Pen Pal

Overview

Students engage in an activity exploring Victorian cross-writing that combines historical context with a practical, hands-on task. Cross-writing was used in the 18th and 19th centuries to save on expensive paper and delivery costs. Letters were written on one page and then turned 90 degrees to write a second layer of words across the first.

Outcomes

The activity helps children understand the social and economic reasons behind this communication method and encourages empathy by stepping into the shoes of a Victorian.

Curriculum links

History

- Provides a tangible insight into the daily life of Victorians and highlights the differences between then and now.
- Explores the impact of industrialisation and may provide an entry point for discussing wider issues of social and economic change during this period.
- Uses historical sources and evidence.

English

- Composition writing.
- Transcription.
- Vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation.
- Reading comprehension.
- Speaking and listening



Resources and Equipment: Paper, pens and example of Cross writing

1. Begin by showing the class an example of a cross-written letter (see example below) and explain that the Victorian writer, Elizabeth Gaskell, wrote many letters to her family and friends and in some of her letters she used cross-writing. (*students who have visited the House will have seen an example during their visit*)
 - Explain that;
 - Paper and postage were expensive before the introduction of the Uniform Penny Post in 1840, so people would write on the same sheet of paper twice to save money.
 - They would fill the page writing horizontally.
 - Next, they would turn the page 90 degrees and write across the first set of lines.



2. Explore the historical context with questions such as;
 - Why would a Victorian family (including Elizabeth Gaskell) want to save money on postage?
 - What would it have been like to read or write a letter like this?
 - How do we send letters or messages cheaply today?
3. Explain that students will become Victorian pen pals, writing to each other in this style. They could write about their visit to Elizabeth Gaskell's House or about a recent event at school.
4. Get them to write a short letter using the cross-writing technique
5. In pairs see if they can decipher each other's letter.
6. Reflection activity;
 - Was it easy or difficult to read the cross-writing? Why?
 - How did the activity make you feel?
 - What have you learned about the difference between communicating in Victorian times and today?
 - What are the pros and cons of cross-writing? (e.g. saving money vs. difficulty reading).



Elizabeth Gaskell's cross writing



Victorian	Rooms	dolly tub
historic	garden	iron
writing	Morning Room	four-poster bed
patterns	study	desk
old	books	chair
big	reading	tea
servants	writing	learn
children	quill	bed warmer
study	pen	coal scuttle
Drawing Room	Elizabeth	stairs
Kitchen	William	Library
Dining Room	lamp	The North
fire	coal	Manchester
piano	sewing	industrial
top hat	bonnet	factories
apron	scrub	horse
carriage	growing	walking



Cut out lost poetry

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