1.1 Favourite toys and games

Some toys and games we play with today are very different from the toys and games children played with in the past. Some are very similar. Which toys and games are still popular today?

Sixty years ago computer games had not been invented. I played with different toys and games.

I played with my toy cars.

Do you like to play with any of the toys that Anna’s grandfather played with? Do you like to play any of the games he played?

I also liked to fly my kite in the park.

What is oral history?

When people remember and talk about their life in the past, this is called oral history. Oral history is an important way to find out about the past.

Activities

1. Write five questions to ask your grandparents about the toys and games they played with when they were young. Start your questions with ‘What’, ‘Who’, ‘Where’, ‘When’, ‘How’ or ‘Why’.

2. Make a class display of the toys and games that your grandparents played with. Are any of these toys and games still popular today?

Challenge

Choose one game that your grandparents played. Talk to your grandparents and find out how this game has changed over time.

Words

popular liked by many people

the past all the time before now

Activities

I played chess with my friend.

I played with my toy cars.

Toys and games in the past

Anna and her grandfather are playing a computer game. Grandfather tells Anna about the toys and games he played with when he was a boy.
1.2 The first teddy bears

Teddy bears are popular toys all over the world. Why are they called ‘teddy’ bears? When were they first made? What were they made of?

How did the teddy bear get its name?

Teddy bears are named after Theodore Roosevelt. He was president of the USA from 1901 to 1909. His nickname was Teddy. One day, President Roosevelt went hunting with some friends. His friends caught a small bear for the president to shoot. He refused to shoot the bear because he had not caught it himself.

The first teddy bears

The first teddy bears were made in 1902. They were handmade.

Look at a modern teddy bear.

a Describe what you can see.

b What is the teddy bear made of?

c How does it feel?

2 Write three ways in which a modern teddy bear is different from the first teddy bears. Write three ways in which it is the same.

Activities

1 Look at a modern teddy bear.

a Describe what you can see.

b What is the teddy bear made of?

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2 Write three ways in which a modern teddy bear is different from the first teddy bears. Write three ways in which it is the same.

Which bear is best to give to a baby: a modern bear or an old bear? Explain your ideas to a friend.
1.3 What were dolls made of?

Toys are made of many different materials. What materials were used to make dolls in the past?

Natural materials

The first dolls were made of natural materials such as wood, cloth or clay. Clay is wet earth that becomes hard when it is dried and heated.

This paddle doll is over 4000 years old. The doll is from Egypt. What materials is it made of?

Some dolls were made using china. China is a type of clay that breaks easily.

This china doll was made in Germany 150 years ago. You can move the head, arms and legs of the doll.

Man-made materials

From the 1950s, many dolls were made of plastic. Plastic is a man-made material. It is made in a factory using machines. Plastic is light and strong. It does not break easily.

Dolls’ clothes

Dolls’ clothes have changed over time because the clothes people wear have changed. Looking at dolls’ clothes can tell us about the clothes that people wore in the past.

Activities

1. Write a list of the different materials used to make dolls over time. Which material do you think is the best? Explain why.

2. Compare the clothes of the china doll with the clothes we wear today. Tell a friend your ideas.

Challenge

Draw a timeline showing how dolls’ clothes have changed over time. Use the pictures on this page, reference books and the Internet to help you.

Words

man-made made by people
material what something is made of
natural not made by people
1.4 Making toys move

Toys that can move are great fun! People in the past used different ways to make moving toys. Changes in technology help us to invent new types of toys and games.

Puppets
A puppet is a model of a person or animal. The puppet in the photo is Mexican. It was made in about 1930. If you pull the strings you make the puppet move.

Clockwork toys
This is a toy robot from the 1950s. Inside the robot is a clockwork motor. You turn a key to wind up the motor and the robot begins to walk.

Toys with electric motors
This doll was made in the 1960s. There is an electric motor inside the doll. You control the motor with a handset. A wire links the handset to the doll.

Computer games
In the 1970s, many people began to play games on a computer. You use a handset to make pictures on a screen move.

Activities
1. Think about the moving toys and games we play with today. How are they the same as the toys and games in the pictures? Tell a friend your ideas.
2. Draw a timeline.
   a. Draw some toys on the timeline to show how moving toys have changed over time.
   b. Add to the timeline one moving toy you play with today.

Challenge
Use reference books or the Internet to find out about other types of puppets from the past. How do we make these puppets move?
1.5 Why have toy cars changed?

The first toy cars were different from toy cars today. What did the first toy cars look like? What were they made of? How did they move?

Toy cars and real cars
Toy cars have changed over time because real cars have also changed. The cars we drive today look very different from the first cars.

Did you know?
The first real car was invented in 1885 by Karl Benz.

Toy cars then and now
This toy car was made in the 1930s. The car is made of tin. How would you make this car move?

The modern toy car in the photo is made of plastic. How would you make this car move?

Some modern toy cars use an electric motor to move. The motor makes the car go fast, slow, forwards or backwards.

Activities
1. How is Karl Benz’s car different from the cars people drive today? Tell a friend your ideas.
2. Make a fact file comparing old toy cars with modern toy cars. Think about:
   a. what the cars look like
   b. what the cars are made of
   c. how the cars move.

Challenge
Work together as a class. Find out three facts about Karl Benz and the first real car. For example, find answers to these questions:
When was Karl Benz born? Where was he born? What was the name of the first car?

Be a good historian
Good historians know there may be more than one reason why something changes over time. Why have toy cars changed? List all the reasons.
1 Review

Answer these questions in your notebook.

Choose the best answer from the choices below. Write a, b or c as your answer.

1 One game that was not played 60 years ago was:
   a chess
   b a computer game
   c kite flying

2 The teddy bear is named after an American:
   a president
   b teacher
   c sports star

3 The first dolls were made using natural materials such as:
   a wood, cloth, plastic
   b wood, clay, plastic
   c wood, cloth, clay

4 Computer games became popular in the:
   a 1930s
   b 1950s
   c 1970s

5 Old toy cars can tell us about:
   a ships and trains
   b what real cars looked like in the past
   c roads in the past

Decide if these statements are true or false. Write ‘True’ or ‘False’ for each one.

6 Some of the games we play today are the same as the games our grandparents played.

7 Plastic dolls are heavy and break easily.

8 We can make toys move using clockwork or electric motors.

Now answer these questions.

9 Why is oral history a good way to learn about the past? Write a sentence to explain your ideas.

10 Which toy do you think has changed the most over time – a teddy bear, a doll or a toy car? Write some sentences to explain your ideas.