

Toys Through the Ages (GH47378)

This collection contains a variety of toys played with by children throughout history. Ideal for studying toys and exploring how toys have changed.

Contents: -



1. 1 x Knitting Doll
2. 1 x Whip & Top
3. 1 x Roman Toy Horse
4. 1 x Flip the Frog Game
5. 1 x Jacob's Ladder
6. 1 x Stump Doll
7. 1 x Saxon Doll
8. 1 x Cup & Ball
9. 1 x Tiddly Winks
10. 1 x Beetle Game
11. 1 x Duck on a Bike
12. 1 x Wooden Viking Longboat
13. 1 x Wooden Spinner
14. 1 x Set of Wooden Skittles

(Please note contents may vary)

Key questions when looking at toys through time:

- What materials are the various toys made from and why?
- Did the toy have a different initial use?
- How have toys changed over time?
- How can I decide if a toy is from the past or a modern toy?
- Can you describe what a "toy" is?

Teaching Ideas

Children can create a timeline for the toys in this pack starting with the oldest and ending with the newest. Ask the children to look at the timeline of toys. Can they think about if there are any toys which are / aren't still available today? Are there any differences between those supplied and the modern versions we know today? What are these differences, and are any changes for the better? What features made them think that toys were old? Hold a class discussion on what features children think makes a good toy?

All About the Artefacts

1. Knitting Doll

The wooden dolly and wooden crochet hook allow pupils to explore materials and learn basic techniques of knitting to engage in creative activities. The process involves wrapping yarn around the pegs and lifting the lower loops over the upper ones to form a knitted tube. This wooden dolly is in the style of Rapunzel and the pupils can have a go at knitting her long golden hair. They were commonly made of wood but later some were made of plastic.

2. Whip & Top

The whip and top was a traditional toy consisting of a top that was spun by whipping it with a string attached to a stick. They date back to ancient times but were common in the Victorian times and were often made of wood or clay. The challenge was to keep the top spinning for as long as possible.

3. Roman Toy Horse

This replica toy, a wooden horse on wheels, is like one in ancient times used by young Greeks and Egyptians, as well as Romans. Gripping, pushing and pulling are some of the first actions young children learn to do. Toys that respond to these actions have always been popular, and those made for Roman children were no exception.

The horse is made from hand-carved wood, and the wooden wheels are turned on a lathe. The four wheels are substitutes for legs and are attached on either side to the body. The wheels are free to spin to let the horse move, so they are fixed by an axle bored through the body. A pin stops each wheel from falling off. A piece of string is threaded through a hole in the horse's nose so that the toy can be pulled by the child. The toy is quite low to keep it stable when it is pulled over rough ground. This is a replica of toys found in Roman burial sites.

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA26687



Roman



Greek



Viking

4. Flip the Frog Game

A three-dimensional game in which the frogs are the tiddlywinks, and the three-level lily pond is the playing area. It's great fun, has a lovely nature theme and takes a wonderful, traditional game to the next level.

5. Jacob's Ladder

This mysterious and fascinating toy has ancient origins (probably China) but became popular in Victorian times and remains so today. The toy consists of a series of flat wooden blocks held together via specially arranged coloured ribbons. To operate, hold one of the end blocks firmly by its edges, and then watch in amazement, the block appears to tumble down over and over without falling to the ground. Repeat by reversing the toy and starting again.

6. Stump Doll

One of the simplest dolls was the stump doll made from a single part or branch of a tree (made easier if the shape already somewhat resembled a person). A face was painted or roughly carved on it and a stump doll was born. The "baby" could also be wrapped in a piece of cloth or fabric, decorated and customised by the children. Dolls remain one of the most popular children's toys played with today.

7. Saxon Doll

Saxons 410-1066 A basic doll made by simply wrapping a piece of cloth around a small piece of wood. They were handmade and cherished playthings for Saxon children.

8. Cup & Ball

The cup and ball was created in around the 14th century, but it was very popular in Europe during the 16th Century. It was improved and modified in different ways since then, the Cup and Ball toy is essentially a wooden handle with a cup at one end and a small ball, attached with a string.

The main goal of the game is to get the ball into the cup. While the concept is very easy, mastering the game can sometimes be challenging. Alternatives and adaptations such as "Ring and Pin" or "Kendama" remain popular toys around the world. Cups and balls came to England from France where it was called 'Bilboquet'.

9. Tiddly Winks

Tiddlywinks is a game played on a flat felt mat with sets of small discs called "winks", a pot, which is the target, and a collection of 'squidgers', which are also discs. Players use a 'squidger' to shoot a wink into flight by flicking the 'squidger' across the top of a wink and then over its edge, thereby propelling it into the air. The aim is to get the wink to land in the target pot.

10. Beetle Game

Beetle is originally a British party game in which players draw a beetle in parts. The game may be played solely with pen, paper and dice. Modern versions allow players to make a physical 3D Beetle adding limbs and other body parts to make a "real" beetle. Often made of plastic and easily mass-produced in the 1950's and 60's.

11. Duck on a Bike

In the late nineteenth century, many toys that had previously been made from wood were replaced by cheaper toys produced from tinplate. These were mainly manufactured in Germany and were often mechanical toys, which moved when wound up with a key, using clock-making skills for the mechanism.

The rise of plastic toys in the post-World War II era gradually led to the decline of tin toy production. Plastic was cheaper, lighter, and easier to mould, offering a competitive alternative.

12. Wooden Viking Longboat

Vikings 800-1050 Archaeologists have discovered wooden toys such as the Viking longboat. The Vikings used longboats to travel, for raiding and for trading. The boats could have been used for imaginative play, like reenacting sea voyages. Making the boats from wood would teach children the skills needed for later in life when they might be ship builders or carpenters.

13. Wooden Spinner

The simplest (and oldest) of wooden toys is the wooden spinner (or top). It was designed to be spun onto a flat surface until its energy is lost, it starts to wobble and eventually stops. Some tops have bodies with symbols, numbers or inscriptions, and would have been used like dice to inject randomness into games, or for divination and ritual purpose (e.g. Dreidel). The origins of spinning tops can be traced back to ancient civilizations, with depictions found in ancient Greek and Egyptian art.

14. Wooden Skittles

Skittles is usually played indoors on a bowling alley, with one or more heavy balls, usually spherical but sometimes flat disks, and several (most commonly nine) skittles, or small bowling pins. The general object of the game is to use the ball(s) to knock over the skittles, either specific ones or all of them, depending upon game variant. Exact rules vary widely on a regional basis, and historically many table-top versions were/are available to play (and often gambled on) in pubs and clubs.



Look for games and toys in Bruegel's painting 'Children's Games' c.1560.
How many can you spot? Can you point to them and name them?



Watch Toys with Magic Grandad and explore toys from the past.

Share books such as 'Lost in the Toy Museum' by David Lucas, 'Old Bear' by Jane Hissy, 'Toys and Games' by Sally Hewitt.

Useful Websites:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zbs2h4j>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z8x7m39>