

LESSON PLAN: History - The Victorian Period 1837-1901

LESSON TITLE: The Merchant House at Jersey Museum

Lesson focus: How to use evidence from buildings and artefacts to suggest what life was like for an affluent family in Jersey in the 1860s.

Date:

Duration:

Learning Objectives:

- * To discover some of the characteristic features of particular periods and societies in the past.
- * To discover some of the experiences of men, women and children from particular periods and societies in the past.
- * To find out about aspects of the period studied using a range of sources of information.
- * To ask and answer questions relating to historical enquiry.
- * To consider what life was like for children in the past.

More specifically

- * To get an appreciation of what life was like for an affluent family in Jersey in the 1860s.
- * To understand that ways of life differed greatly across Victorian society.
- * To use evidence from buildings and artefacts to suggest how people from the past lived.

Learning Outcomes:

- * Children will be able to appreciate some aspects of what life was like for an affluent family in 1860.
- * Children will be able to recall some of the key features of Victorian society.
- * Children will be aware that there are a range of sources that can be used to gather historical evidence.
- * Children will be able to state the differences between Victorian life and their own.
- * Children will be able to recognise some of the artefacts, their uses and suggest their significance to Victorian society.
- * Children will be able to communicate to others what they have learnt about Victorian society.

Lesson content

Introduction

There are 3 floors of the Merchant House to explore each with up to 4 rooms. Start on the bottom floor of the Merchant House and familiarise the class with the area.

Tell them:

This is a restored Victorian house where a family actually lived. It has been restored so that it looks like it did in 1861. It was the house of successful merchant (he had about 20 ships) called Philippe Nicolle. When he died in 1836 he left his house to one of his daughters, Jeanne.

We are currently in the year 1862 and Jeanne lives here with her husband (Charles Ginestet), her 3 stepchildren (Berthe, Alice and Theo), her sister (Anne), her nephew (Sydney) and their servant (Elizabeth Mourant).

Development

- * Set the ground rules for boundaries and behaviour and then set them the task.
- * Split the class up into groups and send each group to a different room on a different floor to start their investigation.
- * After a given amount of time, groups are to swap floors and continue investigation there. This continues until all groups have visited all rooms and floors.

Plenary

- * Gather group together and discuss what the children have learnt. Address any questions which have not yet been answered. Build on information gathered in future lessons (see houses and homes activities)

Your role/role of other adults

Ratio 1:8 or less

Each adult to have a group or they could be split so there is an adult on each floor.

Teacher

TA

Parent Helpers

The task

The activities can be done individually, in pairs or groups

The children are to look carefully around each room in the house looking closely at the artefacts and layout of each room.

As they do so, there are 3 tasks to be completed (depending on time and ability):

1. There are a number of picture clues that they need to find. Some can only be found in 1 room, others have examples in several rooms.
 - They need to find the item and write down the room/s they have found it in.
 - By the end of the visit they also need to suggest what the item is and what it might be used for.
2. There are several questions to answer as they look around the house.

The children have to use the information on the sheet about the family who lived here, to suggest which family member stayed in which bedroom. They should write the evidence (artefacts) that leads them to their answer.

Assessment

The following things could be looked at/assessed:

- Did the children find all the picture items?
- What did they think the objects were and did?
- What did they base on their ideas on?
- How close were they to the actual use?
- Did they recognise who belonged in each room?
- What evidence did they use to lead them to their answer?
- Did they answer all the questions?

In addition:

- What can children recall about the features of Victorian society?
- Can children suggest the significance/role of some of the features of Victorian society?
- Can children appreciate the similarities and differences with their life now and/or the poor?

All children must	Most children should	Some children could
be able to find most of the picture clues and suggest what some of them are used for.	be able to find all of the picture clues and suggest what some of them are, what they are used for and give some reasons for their answers.	be able to find all of the picture clues and suggest what most of them are, what they are used for and be able to state why they think it.
be able to observe sources of information to answer questions about the past based on simple observations.	be able to use sources of information in ways that go beyond simple observations to answer questions about the past.	be able to use prior knowledge and observations to answer questions about the past.
be able to state which room some of the main family members stayed in.	be able to state which room most of the main family members stayed in and be able to give some reasons for their answers.	be able to state which room most of the main family members stayed in and be able to give evidence for their answers.
be able to recognise that their own lives are different from the lives of people in Victorian time	be able to recognise and/or suggest some of the similarities and differences between the rich and poor in Victorian society	be able to describe the characteristic features of the Victorian Period including ideas, beliefs, attitudes and experiences of people of the time
be able to ask more complex questions to instigate historical enquiry	be able to begin to select sources of information to answer questions arising from evidence presented	be able to begin to select and combine information from different sources and record information relevant to the focus

Differentiation

- Expectations of 'must', 'should' and 'could' used to differentiate outcomes;
- Mixed ability groups chosen so higher abilities can support.
- Activity sheets could be differentiated/adapted so that there is less information to find out/investigate for some pupils.

Some ideas for following up work:

What do the artefacts tell us about Victorian life?

- * Use the artefacts pictures to suggest what evidence this item gives us about Victorian society. Why was it important? How did it suggest status? Was it a new innovation?
- * They could use books or the Internet to produce research to find the answers.

How did the life of the poor compare to the rich?

- * Use the artefacts pictures and other information to compare the rich and poor in society.
- * Use books or the Internet to produce research to find out whether these same items would have been used in poor families and if not is there an equivalent?
- * Find out how and where the poor lived and produce a comparison.

Look at the role of the housekeeper in the household.

- * Use the evidence from her room in the house, the additional information sheet and other research to find out what her role was and what her day would have been like.
- * Write a diary of a day in her life.

Research:

Carry out further research and work on:

- * Photography and portraits,
- * Toys and childhood (school),
- * Writing and the Penny post,
- * Jersey and the trade with Gaspé,
- * The development of shipping,
- * The British Empire.



Ship building at Gorey about 1870

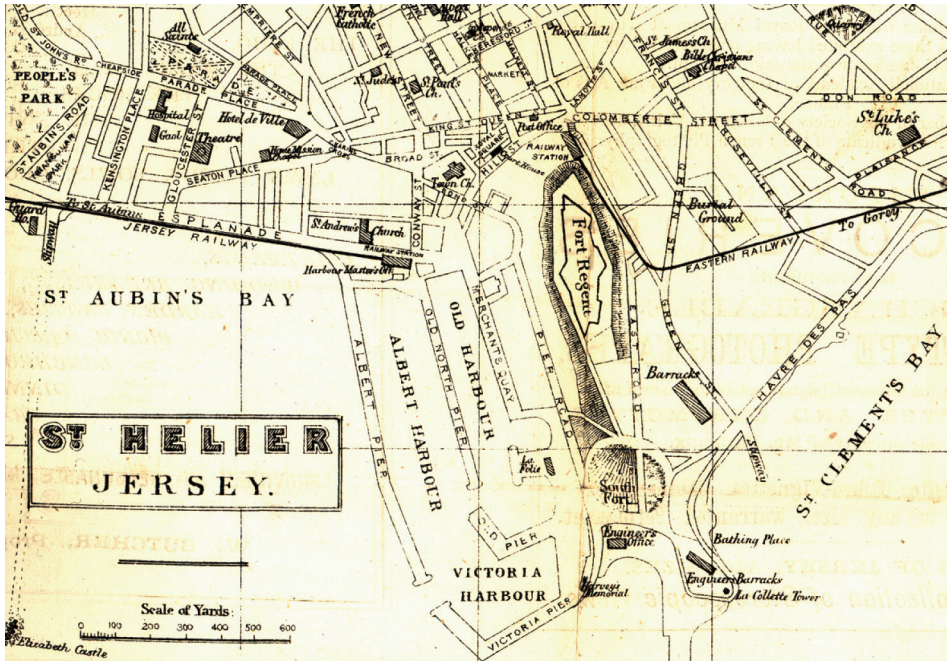
Spot the Victorians!

How many of the following can you spot around the house?		
Item:	Number spotted:	Questions:
Clocks		In Victorian times, ornamental things were increasingly used for decorating houses. Why do you think a house like this one has so many of these types of items?
Dogs		
Flowers under glass covers		
Vases		
Write down any other ornamental type items that you spot in the rooms:		
Fireplaces		Which rooms don't have fireplaces or gas lights?
Gas lights		
Candles		
Oil lamps		
Jugs		There are a lot of jugs in the bedrooms. What do you think they might have been used for?
Chamber pots		
Umbrellas		
Rocking Horses		
Portrait paintings		What do these portraits suggest about the status of this family?
Portrait photographs		
Quills		
What childrens games/toys can you find around the house?		
Playing music was an important part of Victorian life for entertainment. What musical instruments can you spot?		
Other things to spot – write down a room you find these items in:		
Bath:	Cake stand:	Rail of clothes:
Doll:	Coal bucket:	Hairbrush:
Doctor's bag:	Sword:	Shoe cleaning equipment:

Visit to the Merchant's House at the Jersey Museum

1. The Merchant's House is situated at 'No. 9 Pier Rd'. On the plan of St Helier from 1882 can you draw a line from the Merchant's House to this square.

THE
MERCHANT'S
HOUSE



2. Name 2 landmarks near the Merchant's House that could help people find it.

a. _____

b. _____

3. Who built the Merchant's House and when?

4. Who lived here in 1862?

5. Complete the table

Similarities to houses now	Differences to houses now


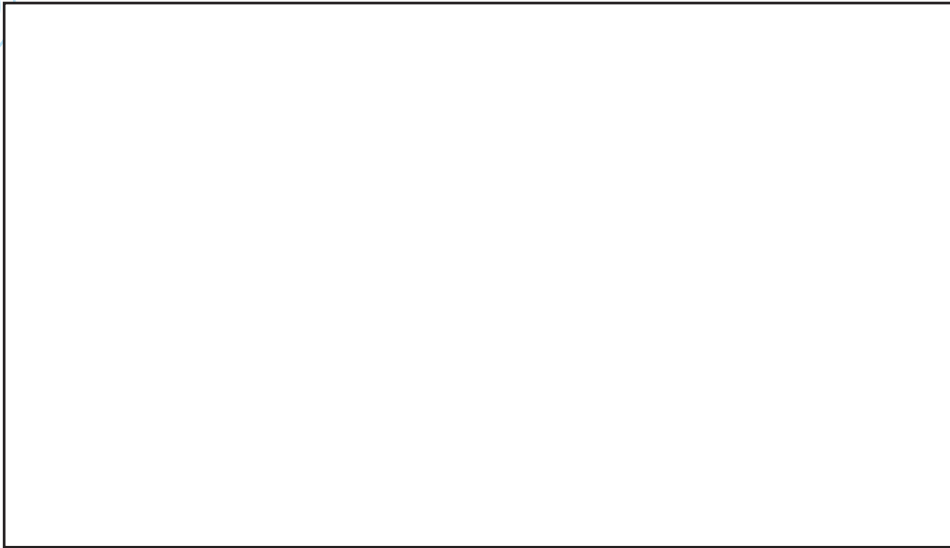
6. As you visit the different levels of the Merchant's House make a sketch plan of each floor

Top (4th) floor





3rd floor



2nd floor



Remember that there used to be rooms on the 1st floor and the ground floor as well. They were:



A Victorian Christmas

No era in history has influenced the way in which we celebrate Christmas, quite as much as the Victorians.

Before Queen Victoria's reign started in 1837 nobody in Britain had heard of Santa Claus or Christmas Crackers. No Christmas cards were sent and most people did not have holidays from work. The wealth and technologies generated by the industrial revolution of the Victorian era changed the face of Christmas forever. Charles Dickens wrote a book 'A Christmas Carol' in 1843, which actually encouraged rich Victorians to give money and gifts to the poor.

Queen Victoria and her family encouraged people to adopt a high moral tone. Charitable works by the wealthy and church going for all, were an important part of Victorian life. The Christmas service was traditionally held in the Parish or village church with a Nativity scene often prominently displayed near the altar and the church decked out with greenery and candles. The whole family and all the members of their household were called by the pealing of the bells and carols were sung during the special Christmas service.



Although most people did not stop work until Christmas Eve, the traditional Victorian Christmas began with the making of the Advent wreath from ivy, laurel and holly and four candles, one to be lit on each of the four Sundays of Advent symbolizing faith, joy, love and peace. They may also have made an Advent calendar, with windows to be opened daily until Christmas Eve.

The custom of 26 December as "Boxing Day" also originated during the Victorian era. It was a day when the churches opened their alms boxes (collection boxes) and distributed the money to the poor and so it evolved into the day for exchanging gifts and presents with family and friends. However, by the end of the 19th century Christmas Day had become established as the day for giving and receiving gifts making the day a charitable occasion as well as a family one.

The holidays

The wealth generated by the new factories and industries of the Victorian age allowed middle class families in England and Wales to take time off work and celebrate over two days, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. The newly invented railways allowed the country folk who had moved into the towns and cities in search of work to return home for a family Christmas.



Father Christmas / Santa Claus

Normally associated with the bringer of gifts, Father Christmas or Santa Claus came from two entirely separate traditions. Father Christmas was originally part of an old English midwinter festival, and he was normally dressed in green, a sign of the returning spring. St Nicholas came from America, where as Sinter Klass, he had been taken by Dutch settlers in the 17th Century. From the 1870s Sinter Klass became known in Britain as Santa Claus and with him came his unique gift and toy distribution system – reindeer and sleigh.

The Gifts

At the start of Queen Victoria's reign, children's toys tended to be handmade and hence expensive, generally restricting availability to those rich enough to buy them. With factories however came mass production and this meant that games, dolls, books and clockwork toys all became more affordable. Toys were still quite costly so poor families would also give their children a few things such as an apple, orange and a few nuts. Christmas stockings first became popular from around 1870.

Christmas Cards

Were introduced in 1843 by Sir Henry Cole following the introduction of the Penny Post in 1840. Before then it was the custom to write long detailed letters to friends and family at Christmas. Cole commissioned an artist to design some cards which carried a short seasonal message and had a thousand cards printed for sale in his art shop in London at one shilling each. The popularity of sending cards was given a boost in 1870 when a halfpenny postage rate was introduced as a result of the efficiencies brought about by the new railways.



The Tree

Queen Victoria's German husband Prince Albert helped to make the Christmas tree as popular in Britain as they were in his native Germany, when he brought one to Windsor Castle in the 1840s. Before this people decorated what was called a 'Kissing Bough' – a large branch or a ball of evergreen leaves was hung up and decorated with fruit and small presents. The 'new' trees were decorated with bows, tinsel and candles and then in 1882 the first fairy lights are said to have appeared, when Edward H. Johnson – a friend of inventor Thomas Edison – had 80 tiny red, white and blue light bulbs made especially for his home Christmas tree. A special gift might be kept under the tree, but even in the wealthier homes children didn't receive large numbers of gifts.



The Crackers

Invented by Tom Smith, a London sweet maker in 1846. The original idea was to wrap his sweets in a twist of fancy coloured paper, but this developed and sold much better when he added love notes (mottos), paper hats, small toys and made them go off with a BANG!

Turkey Time

When Queen Victoria first came to the throne both chicken and turkey were too expensive for most people to enjoy. For Jersey people Christmas dinner would be roast beef with roast parsnips with a plum pudding afterwards. In northern England roast beef was also the traditional meal for Christmas dinner while in London and the south, goose was favourite although many poor people made do with rabbit. On the other hand, the Christmas Day menu for Queen Victoria and family in 1840 included both beef and a royal roast swan. As people became better off turkey became associated with Christmas dinners.

Carol Singers

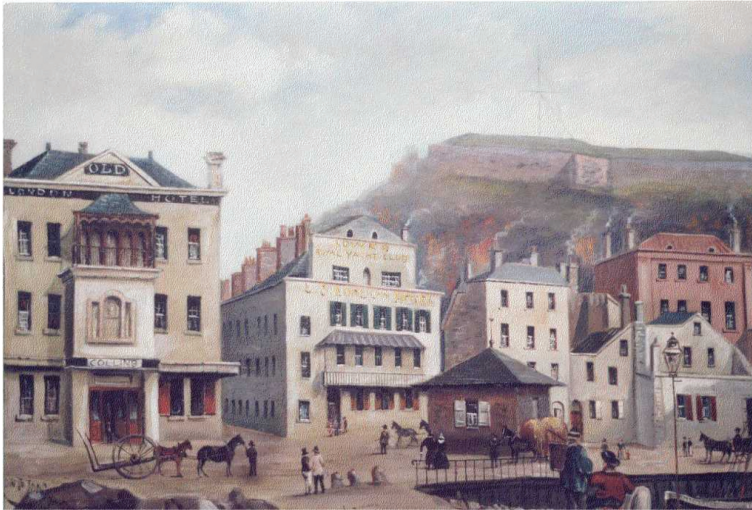
Carol Singers and Musicians - 'The Waits' - visited houses singing and playing the new popular carols;
1843 - O Come all ye Faithful,
1848 - Once in Royal David's City,
1851 - See Amid the Winters Snow,
1868 - O Little Town of Bethlehem,
1883 - Away in a Manger.



Victorian Town Walk

Route

From the Museum walk onto the Weighbridge Square to look over Liberation Square, then turn right into Mulcaster Street crossing by the Pedestrian Crossing. Turn left into Bond Street and walk through the Church yard into the Royal Square From the Royal Square return to the Museum via Broad Street.



The Weighbridge,
St Helier, 1832 by
George S Shepherd
(1784-1858)

No 9 Pier Road
(The Merchant's House) is
the pink/red building on the
right with three chimneys.

"The Town lies fronting the sea, and is backed by a range of heights: but betwixt these heights and the town, there is a level, varying from a quarter of a mile, to a mile and a half, in breadth. This level forms a semi-circular suburb, the arch of which is not less than three miles; and the whole of this space is occupied by villas and cottage residences, with their gardens and orchards ..."

H.D. Inglis, "The Channel Islands", 1834

In the 19th century St Helier grew dramatically - the low lying area between King Street and the bottom of Mont de la Pouquelaye was infilled quickly with working class housing on the lowest lying areas and the better off middle class housing and those villas for the English residents being built on the surrounding slopes. Jersey had its own Irish quarter around Clare Street. Gas in town was available from the late 1830s, by the middle of the century work was beginning on a modern drainage system and from the 1870s onwards piped water was brought into Town.

Development of the harbour

Jersey's prosperity through the 19th century was dependant upon the development of the harbour here in St Helier. Originally the sea virtually extended up to the St Helier Church yard wall and the only harbour was down in the area of South Pier and La Folie. Gradually new piers were built and the harbour was enclosed.

- Old North Pier was built between the 1790s and 1821 and was widened to create the New North Quay 1887-97.
- Albert Pier was built between 1847 and 53. Originally named the West Pier it was named after the Prince Consort in 1859 during the Second Royal Visit.
- Victoria Pier was built between 1841 and 1846. The Queen named it during the first Royal Visit to the Island in 1846.
- Commercial Buildings (Quai des Marchands) was built between 1814 and 1818 on reclaimed land. It was created to build warehousing and storage yards on.

Liberation Square area

Originally the site of the Weighbridge on which produce was weighed before being loaded on to the ships in the harbour. The Island Site was the St Helier terminal of the Jersey Railway Company 1870-1936

- The old Tourist office was rebuilt in 1901 as the terminus of the Jersey Railway Company.
- Harbour Office was built in 1863
- Abattoir was built in 1888
- Southampton Hotel was built 1899 - following what was classed as a typical 'seaside' architecture.
- Wharfe Street lead down to the harbour and the wharfe (in front of what is now the Royal Yacht Hotel and Jersey Museum).
- Royal Yacht Hotel was built in the 1820s but was largely rebuilt in the 1870s. It was on the roof of this building that the Island's first photography studio was set up in the summer of 1841.
- The Lamplighter was originally built in 1877 as Daly's Hotel and was known as "The Grapes" / "La Grappe de Verjus". A local sculptor Jean Philippe "Turnkey" Giffard (1826-1892) created the statue of Britannia on the roof and carved the garlands of fruit which covered the front of the building, originally coming right down to the ground.
- Bond Street was largely occupied by shipping agents, and offices associated with Jersey's shipping industry during the mid-19th century.
- The Town Church railings topped by the Gothic spires were designed by the Jersey artist John Le Capelain (1812-1848) and forged by Joseph Le Rossignol of Grandin's Iron foundry in 1845. The section at the end of the wall look totally different because they were originally in the Gloucester Street Prison and were part of the screen that separated the male and female prisoners.

Royal Square

Initially called the market place. Best described as the most offensive part of town (because of the animal muck) until 1803 when the market was moved to Halkett Place. Nearby streets are called le Coin des Anes and Le Coin des Cochons; Church Street was known as La rue Trousse Cotillons - Pick up your petticoats road - because of this.



Local writers described the square in a number of ways. In 1834 Inglis wrote that it was "the resort only of the male lounge". While 40 years later Hill recounts that it was "generally used for business and gossip."

States Building

Royal Court, States Chamber, old library. Built throughout the Victorian period, the Royal Court (the central section) was built first in 1866 by architect Thomas Gallichan and remodelled 1877 by Philip Le Sueur & Philip Bree). In 1879 it was extended to the east when the Judicial Greffe was built as a single storey building. Almost immediately it was decided that the States Assembly should have its own meeting room and so architects Ancell & Orange designed a new Chamber to be built over the Greffe. This new States Chamber was opened in 1887. On the western side of the Royal Court another extension was built also by Ancell & Orange. This contained the States Greffe on the ground floor and a new Library above. This was completed in 1886. (The rounded façade facing the Church was only added in 1931.)

Before the present building appeared, the artist John Le Capelain (1812–1848) had a studio on the top floor of a building in the area of what is now the Royal Court.

Piquet House

Built on the north side of the square in 1803 the Piquet House housed a detachment of soldiers until 1834 and then again between 1887 and 1934 to help the Honorary police in times of trouble. Ironically there were no soldiers on hand to quell the oyster riot of 1837*.

Set into its wall is a sundial. The inscription on the sundial encouraged people to set their watches to Jersey time rather than Greenwich-meantime, which is 8 minutes different. Jersey signed up to Greenwich-meantime in 1898. Telling the time accurately only became important with the advent of trains. The speed of trains meant that accurate timetables needed to be drawn up. Railway time (Greenwich mean-time) was devised, which standardised time throughout Britain.



Quick to follow the transport revolution of the steam train was the communication revolution of the telegraph. The wires followed the railway lines and were usually owned by the same company. When Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837 it may have taken 20 days for news to reach Edinburgh by horse and cart. When she died in 1901 a courier travelling by train could have been reached Edinburgh in less than a day but the news would already have beaten him there because of the telegraph (1837) and telephone were in use (1876).

*1837 riot

In 1837 over 200 oyster fishermen from the Gorey area marched to Royal Square where the States debated a petition containing their demands. The mood was festive until news that the petition had been rejected by one vote, and that one of those who had voted against it, despite having promised to vote for it was their very own Chef de Police, Elias Gaudin. When Gaudin left the building the mob attacked him and he was only saved by the timely intervention of some friends and police who dragged him back into the building. A St Helier centenier captured one of the ringleaders and dragged him to a nearby

French coffee shop, locking the doors to prevent his rescue. The mob stoned the building breaking 13 of the windows but by this time 70 soldiers stationed at Fort Regent had answered the Bailiff's call for assistance and several more ringleaders were arrested. The soldiers brought the situation under control, the mob gradually dispersed and went home.

Broad Street

The bank buildings in this area are all Victorian although varying in style.

- Lloyds Bank 1858
- NatWest 1873
- HSBC 1884 & 1900



Le Sueur Obelisk 1855

The monument commemorates the work of Pierre Le Sueur as constable of St Helier. He was elected five times and was instrumental in wiping out Cholera* by introducing sewers. The Lion heads were fountains to provide water for the horses – the cab stand was adjacent. The obelisk is aligned to be visible from the George II statue in the Royal Square.

***The Cholera** - In 1832 with 16,000 of the Island population of 36,000 living in St Helier, the town was somewhat overcrowded in the poorer areas down by the quayside. The drainage of the low-lying areas was rather sluggish with only a 3" to 100 yards drop. The population was boosted by immigrant English and Irish labour who were ineligible for poor relief and malnutrition and drunkenness were common. In this squalid environment the Cholera epidemic broke out in Cabot's Yard in Sand Street.

In 10 weeks 806 cases were reported over 2% of the total population. 348 died, nearly 1%. This was a 43% fatality rate and 90% of these lived in town. In fact of St Helier's 311 deaths, 267 were in La Vingtaine de la Ville.

The 1849 epidemic, which resulted in nearly 300 deaths and the 1867 epidemic, both followed the same pattern.

Tasks:

At the end of the walk you will have the opportunity to split up into smaller groups to make some sketches or photograph various features you have seen. These could include:

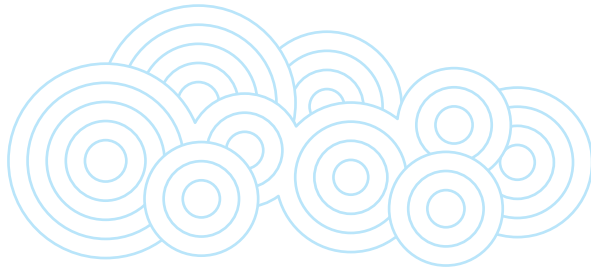
- * the façade of the Lamplighter
- * the Gothic railings around the Church yard
- * the lions heads on the Le Sueur obelisk
- * the decorative plasterwork around various windows

You can also copy down the inscriptions that you see

- * on the sundial
- * the obelisk

Look above the door of the NatWest Bank – what name can you see?

Why do you think it was called La rue Trousse Cotillons?



Artefacts

	Picture clue/artefact	Room/s it can be found in	What is it?	What is it used for/how is it used?
1				
2		Mr Ginestet's room		
3				
4				
5		Anne Nicolle's room		



Artefacts

	Picture clue/artefact	Room/s it can be found in	What is it?	What is it used for/how is it used?
6		Berthe and Alice's room		
7				
8				not to play but to teach
9				
10				

