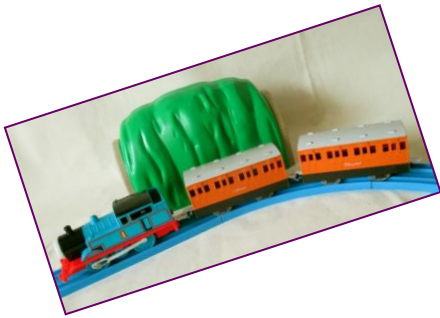


# Contents and background information

## Changing toys, games and pastimes



# Changing toys, games and pastimes

This collection offers a familiar context for children to explore differences between the past and present. Within the collection there are several matched pairs of similar toys that are from different generations of the past within living memory. These allow children to **explore changes** between two periods of the past and today – things like materials used to make toys, safety issues, the advent of electronic toys and the move from predominantly active outdoor play to indoor sedentary and often solitary pursuits. We have not included the ‘today’ versions of these toys, if required you may ask pupils to bring in examples of named items.

## Outdoor / action toys

Many toys from the past were for outside play and were often home-made or adapted from readily available items.

### Yoyo 1940/50s

Wooden version - yoyos periodically regain popularity. **Changes to examine:** materials used - compare to more modern versions bought in from home probably plastic and may be electronic light up versions.



### Skipping ropes

Skipping has been around for a very long time. Our older skipping rope is from early 20<sup>th</sup> century, made from industrial bobbins and sash cord. The newer version is linked to the children's TV programme *Lazy Town* and plays music.



**Changes to examine:** popularity - this is another pursuit which has waxed and waned



in popularity in the past - do pupils' parents recall skipping crazes? Also as skipping can be an individual or group endeavour we include some examples of group skipping chants/games, but parents/ grandparents/ other adults might be able to show the actions and rhymes they remember from their childhoods.

<p><b>Skipping games and chants</b></p> <p>There are many ways to skip and a lot of fun to be had. Some of the most popular are:</p> <p><b>Sally, Susan, Young Fanny</b> Sally, Susan, Young Fanny, they were all girls. Sally, Susan, Young Fanny, they were all girls. Sally, Susan, Young Fanny, they were all girls. Sally, Susan, Young Fanny, they were all girls.</p> <p><b>Who's the best?</b> Who's the best? Who's the best? Who's the best? Who's the best? Who's the best? Who's the best? Who's the best? Who's the best?</p> <p><b>Stinky Bear, Tinky Bear</b> Stinky Bear, Tinky Bear, they were all bears. Stinky Bear, Tinky Bear, they were all bears. Stinky Bear, Tinky Bear, they were all bears. Stinky Bear, Tinky Bear, they were all bears.</p>	<p><b>Doctor, Doctor</b> The doctor says that the best way to skip is to skip in a circle. The doctor says that the best way to skip is to skip in a circle. The doctor says that the best way to skip is to skip in a circle. The doctor says that the best way to skip is to skip in a circle.</p> <p><b>Counting Rhymes</b> One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.</p> <p><b>Ball games and chants</b> Ball games and chants are a great way to play. Ball games and chants are a great way to play. Ball games and chants are a great way to play. Ball games and chants are a great way to play.</p>
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## Marbles and marble information sheet

**Changes to examine:** Marbles were known to both the ancient Egyptians and the Romans, but what were they made of?



An information sheet detailing some games to play with marbles is included but parents/ grandparents/ other adults may know some others they can share with pupils.

## Roller skates 1940/50s and 1990s



Roller skates have been around some time, and have had many adaptations – inline skates/ roller boots etc. **Changes to examine:** The pair from the late 1940s/ early 1950s are aimed at older children and don't look like they would stay on too well (safety rules). The pair from the late 1990s are aimed at much younger children and coloured to appeal to girls whereas the other pair are non-gender oriented.

## Indoor Toys

Unlike the past, indoor toys dominate today. Many are electronic in some way, even construction toys such as Lego now have electronic control mechanisms and gadgets.

### Cars – 1975 Mini Hot Rod.



As soon as cars were invented, toy versions emerged. From then on manufacturers kept up with the latest models. They produced cars for all pockets by varying the level of detail and quality of paintwork etc. **Changes to explore:** different materials – e.g. tinfoil (compare to speedboat), wood, steel, plastic. Modern innovations such as radio controlled cars.

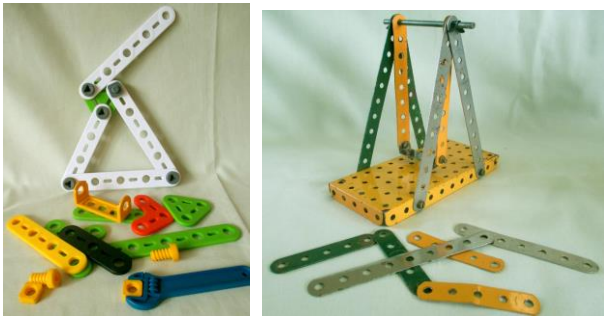
**Thomas the Tank Engine 1990s and Hornby clockwork train set 1950s**



**Changes to explore:** Materials, methods of propulsion - clockwork was the first form of mechanised propulsion for such toys, followed by electricity. However, for young children, even modern train sets such as Brio, are usually propelled by those playing with them.

Although both our train sets are for children (slightly older children for the Hornby train), model trains are also produced which are aimed at the adult market. These are not toys but a pastime or hobby. It might be possible to invite an adult who pursues this hobby to come and talk to your class about their interest and how and when it started.

**Modern and original Meccano**



**Changes to examine:** Changes in materials; target audience, later, plastic Meccano is aimed at younger children and the original packaging for Meccano says ‘for boys’ – this would not of course be allowed today.

Meccano was invented by Frank Hornby (who also made the train sets that bear his name) to encourage boys into engineering. It is still used occasionally in engineering today to make scale models and/or to test new designs. Would the girls in your class like to play with this? If not, why not? Are they being swayed by stereotypical gender roles? In the instruction booklets for some models, errors were deliberately included in an attempt to make those building the model explore alternative solutions to make the model work correctly.

**1950s Snap cards**

**Changes to examine:** Do pupils’ families still play card games? If not, ask children to find out if their parents/ carers/ grandparents played them.



What games do they remember?

**Dolly’s tea sets from 1950s and 1990s**

**Changes to examine:** Changes in materials. Can be complicated by ceramic ‘retro’ sets which are now quite popular.



**Board games – Magnetic Fishing and Mousie Mousie (both reproductions)**



Magnetic Fishing was popular in the Victorian era, but versions were certainly around in the 1950-60s, Mousie Mousie was popular in the 1970s. **Changes to explore:** Pupils could ask parents/ grandparents/ adults about playing board games in their childhood, which games were popular, how often did they play them etc. Compare this with playing board games today, do children still play them or is it adults? What about on computers or online?

**1940s (?) stuffed fabric doll and 1970s BOAC Sindy doll**

**Changes to examine:** Changes in materials and possibly safety issues e.g. stuffing materials.



**Tinplate boat - modern repro item**

**Changes to examine:** Can pupils suggest what might be a more popular form of this toy today? Radio controlled boat

