A Day in the Life: Victorian Diary Entry

Learning objective: To understand and empathise with the daily experiences of children living during the Victorian era by composing a structured historical diary entry.

Imagine you are a child living in the Victorian era. Use the diary template below to describe your day. Consider your home life, school experience, or the work you might have done. Use the word bank to help you include accurate historical vocabulary. Make sure to reflect on how your day felt compared to your life today.

Word bank: Workhouse · Apprentice · Chimney sweep · Slate and chalk · Industrial · Victorian · Strict · Labour · Coal · Poverty

1. Setting the Scene: Describe your home and the environment you live in. Where are you writing this entry and what can you see or hear around you? (2 marks)

2. Daily Tasks: What were your main responsibilities today? Explain the type of work or school lessons you completed and how you felt whilst doing them. (3 marks)

3. Food and Comforts: What did you eat today? Describe your meals and compare them to what you might eat in the modern day. (2 marks)

4. The Victorian Experience: How does your life in the Victorian era compare to life in the 21st century? Identify one major difference. (3 marks)

5. Reflective Thought: If you could change one thing about your life as a Victorian child, what would it be and why? (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Research a specific Victorian invention (such as the steam engine or the penny black stamp) and write a short paragraph explaining how it changed the lives of people living during Queen Victoria's reign.