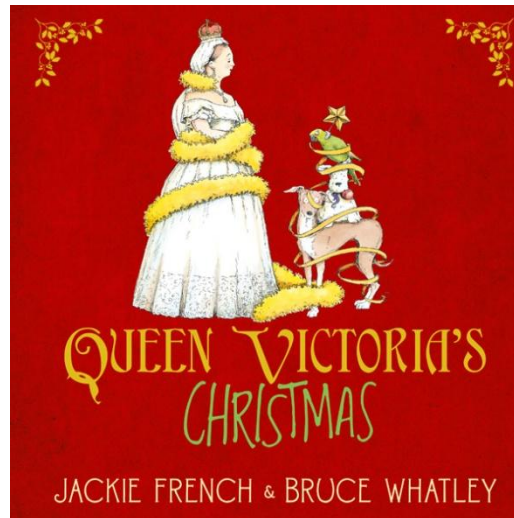


Queen Victoria's Christmas

TEACHERS' NOTES



By Jackie French and Bruce Whatley

ISBN: 9780 732 293 574

Notes by: Mandy Newman

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- Introduction
- About the author/illustrator
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Queen Victoria's Christmas can be used at both a **primary** and **secondary** level, for such topics as:

- Onomatopoeia
- Colour
- Framing
- Visual Literacy
- How words and text work together to create meaning.
- Language and literacy and responses to literature
- Thematic work on Christmas and celebrations, family and symbolism
- Questions for reading and discussion
- Bibliography
- About the author of the notes

Introduction

Something strange is happening at the palace and the dogs can't work it out.

The cooks are busy ... are royal visitors arriving?

Mysterious parcels are arriving.

And most curious of all ... what is that tree doing in Prince Albert's study?

From the creators of the delightful *Queen Victoria's Underpants* comes the story of the first 'traditional' Christmas, complete with a Christmas tree and presents for the family, as seen from the point of view of Queen Victoria's beloved four-legged friends.

About the author/illustrator

Jackie French is one of Australia's favourite and most awarded children's writers. She has written over 130 books, which have been translated into 23 languages, but her best loved work is probably *Diary of a Wombat*, created with Bruce Whatley, and adored by kids and adults across the world. In 2000, her novel, *Hitler's Daughter* was awarded the CBC Younger Readers' Award. *To the Moon and Back* won the Eve Pownall Award in 2005. *Macbeth and Son*, and *Josephine Wants to Dance* were both shortlisted for the 2007 CBC Awards and *Flood* (created with Bruce Whatley) and *Nanberry: Black Brother White* were Honour Books in the 2012 CBC Awards.

For more information, please see:

www.jackiefrench.com.au/about.htm

Bruce Whatley is one of Australia's best-loved and most-respected author-illustrators. His most recent books include the enormously successful and award-winning *Diary of a Wombat*, written by Jackie French, and its companion volume, *The Secret World of Wombats*, also illustrated by Bruce. The best selling team have also collaborated on *Pete the Sheep* and most recently, *Josephine Wants to Dance*. Two of Bruce's previous books, *The Ugliest Dog in the World* and *Tails from Grandad's Attic*, were named as Notable Books by the Children's Book Council of Australia in 1993 and 1996 respectively. In 2012, his collaboration *Flood* with Jackie French, was an Honour Book in the CBC awards as was *The Little Refugee* with Ahn Do.

For more information, please see:

www.harpercollins.com.au/author/AuthorExtra.aspx?displayType=interview&authorID=12885
<http://www.brucewhatley.com/>

Author Inspiration

Jackie says:

When I was a kid we spent days before Christmas making decorations; in hindsight, it was a great way to keep us kids out of the way and out of trouble, plaiting streamers and making cotton-wool snow. Then we'd keep lookout while Mum sawed down a small Casuarina in the bush near the house with the bread saw, hauling it back at dusk hoping no one knew we'd pinched it from public land.* Our Christmas tree changes every year. There have been years when it was a Casuarina branch, from one of the big trees in the creek where I live now; others when it was several eucalyptus braches roped together. These days it's more likely to be a potted dwarf lilly pilly, or NSW Christmas bush.

Greenery at mid winter feasts is as old as the ancient Roman Empire. They originated in cold Europe, when 'green was good' in bleak mid winter.

Our Christmas comes in mid-summer. It can be gold or brown, not green. Here, too, that gorgeous green tree symbolises growing things and happiness for the New Year ahead, even if it's a Lilly Pilly, rather than a German fir tree. Like Prince Albert's royal family, we all decorate the tree together; though we hang tiny toy wombats on ours, and in bushfire season, definitely don't use lighted candles. Our 'family' aren't all related by blood or marriage, either, but by many years of friendship.

The details don't matter. The symbols are the same — and so is the love and happiness of a family Christmas.

**The author strongly advises everyone NOT to steal a tree from public land- the world has too few trees already.*

Study notes on themes and curriculum topics

Queen Victoria's Christmas can be used for children ages: 6-18, for both the primary and secondary school classroom and the activities below can be adapted for these age groups.

Primary School

This text helps students to examine a range of language and visual techniques such as:

- Allusion
- Onomatopoeia
- Colour
- Framing

As noted by the **National Curriculum for English** study in Year Three, this book will also enable students to:

- Make predictions about the text using illustrations on the cover and the title
- Identify literal information in the text including the characters involved and the sequence of key events
- Link key ideas in the text to personal experience
- Use known and learned vocabulary, including technical vocabulary
- Identify the audience, purpose and the author's underlying message of the text
- Use appropriate punctuation including capital letters and full-stops
- Use knowledge of sounds and high frequency words to spell accurately

High School Years 7-8

Themes

The book will also help students in Years 7 and 8 to examine:

- Some key introductory ideas and concepts of visual literacy
- How words and text work together to create meaning.

Queen Victoria's Christmas could be used in the **Key Learning Areas** of:

- **English –Language and literacy activities**
- **HSIE**
- **History**
- **Art**

What is a picture book?

A picture book is a story told in words and pictures. Each makes a different input to the way the story is told and the way meaning is created.

According to Jackie French a picture book:

‘...isn’t the same as an illustrated short story. In a picture book both the art and the words tell the story. Sometimes they tell different parts of the story. They can even tell quite different, but complementary stories.’

Questions:

Do the text and images in Queen Victoria’s Christmas tell exactly the same story?

Can you tell some things from the pictures that you can’t find in the text? Does the text tell you some things that you don’t find in the pictures?

Would the pictures alone be enough to tell the story?

Read the text to someone and don’t show them the pictures. Can they tell what the story is about just from the words?

Author/Illustrator Collaboration

Find the other books that Bruce Whatley and Jackie French have created together. What do they all have in common?

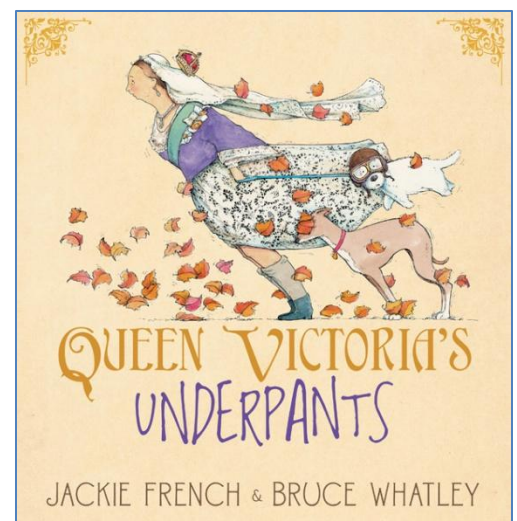
Have a look at Queen Victoria’s Underpants, the other ‘Queen Victoria’ title that Jackie and Bruce have worked on together. What part do the dogs play in this title? What does the flap hide in this book? What element of Victorian times does this book explore

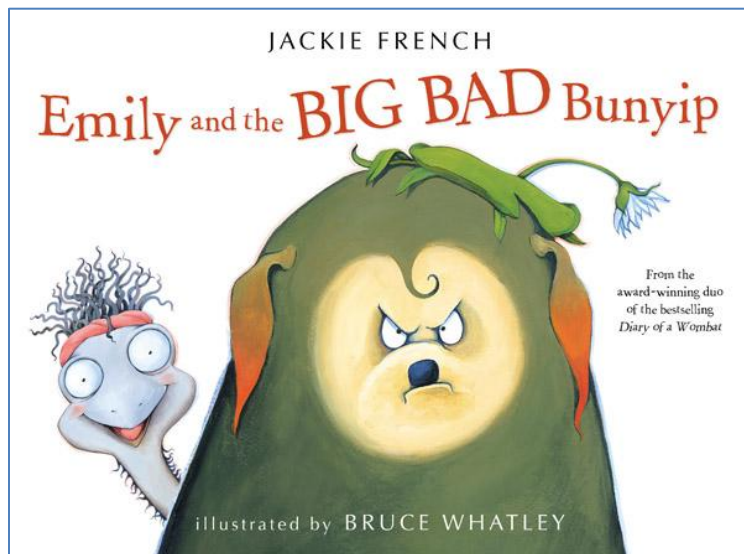
Can you see one that they have made that also looks at Christmas celebrations? How they similar to Queen Victoria’s celebrations? How are they different?

Do you think the books they create together are different from their other picture books? Why?

Have a look at the other Christmas books Jackie and Bruce have made together, especially *Emily and the Big Bad Bunyip* (see below).

How are the Christmases different? Are there any similarities? Which Christmas would you prefer to participate in?





For some fantastic picture book/illustrators websites, please see:

www.slv.vic.gov.au/look/ - Look! The art of Australian picture books today

www.slv.vic.gov.au/node/3147 - Creating a picture book

<http://www.jackiefrench.com.au> - Jackie French's website

www.brucewhatley.com/ - Bruce Whatley's website

Pre reading activities – Understanding the social and historical context

1. Why are we surrounded by statues, buildings, landmarks, streets and places named Victoria?

Brainstorm all the things that we can think of that have the name Victoria in it

Please see:

www.royalcollection.org.uk/sites/default/files/Learning_Evidence%20of%20Victorians%20-%20Walking%20Map%20pdf_0.pdf

<http://www.qvb.com.au/>

www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/residents/swimmingpools/VictoriaParkPool.asp

www.whereis.com/vic/#session=MTM

www.murrayriver.com.au/river-towns/lake-victoria/

2. Who were Queen Victoria and Prince Albert?

Please see:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uX9LI5CDVkm>

Class exercise: Ask the students to conduct some research and produce a poster or a short film/PowerPoint/prezi presentation or podcast that answers at least four of the following questions:

Who was Queen Victoria? Who was she married to?

Why was she famous?

What things did she make popular?

How many children did she have?

What were the names of some of Queen Victoria's dogs?

What other pets did she have?

Can you find pictures of some of her pets?

When did Queen Victoria live?

What other important historical events took place during Queen Victoria's reign?

How old was Prince Albert when he died?

What was the name of his favourite dog?

What kind of dog was it?

What do you think it was like to be a pet in the palace?

How many crowns did Queen Victoria have?

What is the story of the small diamond crown of Queen Victoria?

Please see the following websites for research:

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/famouspeople/victoria/

www.vam.ac.uk/page/v/victorian/

www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/victorians/victorianhome.html

www.royal.gov.uk/pdf/victoria.pdf

www.pbs.org/empires/victoria/text.html

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/victorianbritain/

2. What is the history of celebrations at Christmas?

Read the Author's Note at the back of the book and have a class discussion about Christmas and Christmas traditions.

What are some of the traditions students associate with Christmas?

What does a Christmas tree symbolise?

How long do the students think some of the traditions have been going for?

What are some other cultures and religions major annual celebrations?

What do they do, what do they eat to mark the occasion?

Please see:

www.news.bbc.co.uk/local/berkshire/hi/people_and_places/history/newsid_9286000/9286971.stm

A look at some other religious and cultural traditions:

www.bbc.co.uk/victorianchristmas/history.shtml

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/judaism/hanukkah.shtml - Jewish celebration of Hanukkah

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/islam/eid_haj.shtml - Muslim celebration - Eid

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/hinduism/diwali.shtml - Hindu celebration - Diwali

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/buddhism/buddha_day.shtml - Buddhist celebration - Wesak

www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/ - interfaith calendar of important dates

Literacy activities – primary years

Discuss with the class picture books and what the students already know about them. Use the following to structure discussion and help students become familiar with the metalanguage of picture books.

Cover: What does the cover tell us? What predictions can we make about the story?

Endpapers: How do the endpapers take you into the story? What information is provided here? Do the endpapers set a mood for what is to follow?

Title Page: Look at the font used and the illustration-How are you positioned as a reader? How is your reading of the book directed?

Page Opening: What information can be gleaned by examining the first two pages that face each other in a picture book?

Size: How does the size affect your response to the book? Does the size encourage sharing or the private viewing of the book?

Format: A picture book will be in a square, vertical or horizontal format. The format affects the shape that the artist fills with pictures. How does the shape affect what the artist can show?

Design: Look at the 'extra bits' in Queen Victoria's Christmas, like the decorations at the corners of some of the pages. What do you think these add to the book? Do they make it feel more 'Victorian' or 'Christmas like'?

Illustrations: Compare the illustrations on this book with the photographs and portraits of Queen Victoria and her family. How are they different? Do you think the artist is right to make the illustrations less detailed than the photographs? Would this book be funnier, or tell you more about the time, if it was made of photographs?

Purpose: What is the purpose of the text? Who is it for? Is it to entertain? Is it to inform? According to Jackie French 'A good picture book doesn't just make the reader laugh, nor teach them about the world. If a picture book works the reader shares the world inside the book.'

Predict: Ask the class what they think the book will be about by looking at:

- .The size of the book
- . The shape of the book
- . The colours used in the book.

- . The design of the book
- . Do they think the book would be better if it was bigger? Smaller? A different shape?
- If there were more words? Fewer words? More detail or less detail in the illustrations?

2. Find some of clues hidden in the text and pictures that tell us something about the time that Queen Victoria lived.

- What did they eat?
- What did they wear at night and during the day?
- How were kids' clothes different from the ones adults wore?
- What games did kids play back then?
- How are they different from the games kids play today?
- Look at all the characters in the book. Can you tell what job they had by what they wore?

Look at some of the objects in the illustrations and find out if they became popular while Victoria she was Queen.

- Is there anything in the book that the students do or have seen their parents or grandparents do?
- Does anyone have a grandparent who makes a plum pudding or Christmas cake?
- Do the students give each other Christmas cards?
- Most Christmas cards in Queen Victoria's time were made by hand. Has anyone ever made their own Christmas or birthday cards?
- What is in mince pies? (Hint: there isn't any mince in them.) Why are they called 'mince pies'?
- Has anyone eaten a mince tart?
- Why did carol singers go from house to house singing carols?
- Has anyone ever gone to sing Christmas carols in the park?
- Does anyone put up a Christmas tree in his/her home around Christmas time? Why?
- What has a Christmas tree got to do with Christmas?

In novels, picture books and films, words and objects can be laden with meaning and symbolism and can locate the reader in a particular point of time.

Find an object and identify what it is, when was it invented or when did it or they become popular in Victorian times? (Draw a picture of it)	Do we still use something like it today?
Christmas crackers	
Plum pudding	
Carol singers	
Fruit mince pies	
Tinsel	
Christmas tree	
Dolls	
Christmas cake	
Christmas cards	
Train sets	
Angel at the top of the tree	

Please see the end of these notes to find:

Queen Victoria's Christmas word search - BLM 1

Queen Victoria's Christmas cross word – BLM 2

How to make a Christmas cracker – BLM3

Frame outlines which students can use to draw a portrait or see how framing a picture in different ways, changes the meaning – BLM 4

recipes for Christmas treats.

Using sound to create meaning - Onomatopoeia, rhyme, assonance and alliteration

In picture books words are chosen very carefully. Every word has to pack a punch. Writers choose words that work hard and combine words together, using alliteration or rhyme to increase the power of words. But they also have to be careful not to use too much, in case it makes it difficult to read aloud. ('Saucy soft short shirts for Christmas snakes', for example, would be difficult to read aloud easily.)

Read the text aloud. Is it easy to read, or are there places where you stumble each time?

Do the words have a rhythm?

Do they have a hint of Christmas song about them?

Read the story together, out loud, as a class. Try and find examples of alliteration, rhyme, assonance and onomatopoeia in the story. Do you think there is too much? Or not enough?

Draw students attention to the sound devices in the story i.e. alliteration, rhyme, assonance and onomatopoeia. How do they add to your understanding of the story?

Identify the technique	Find an example in the text	What does it make a reader, think or feel?
Onomatopoeia		
Rhyme		
Assonance		
Alliteration		

Reading response - Ask students to draw a picture of Queen Victoria and write down three things about her, what she looks like or what she likes doing.

This activity asks students to recall a character from the story and then use writing to link personal knowledge to the character. It demonstrates a good knowledge of concepts about print directionality and a beginning understanding of how to use sound–letter knowledge to write unfamiliar words.

Response to a letter - Read out a letter from Queen Victoria and ask students to write a response.

Dear Class,

My name is Queen Victoria and I live with my family and all our pets at Buckingham Palace. It's big and draughty and cold in winter, but at least there is plenty of room for a giant Christmas tree!

I was most surprised when my husband Albert first bought home a large tree for Christmas. But now I love it. Christmas is certainly not Christmas without a Christmas tree.

I would love to know how you celebrate Christmas in your family.

Can you write a letter to me and tell me what you like to do at Christmas or other important celebration, or even how you like to spend your Christmas holidays, and draw a picture for me?

If you send it to me, I will show it to my family.

Thankyou ever so much,

Her Royal Highness,

QV.

This activity allows students to make meaning from the text they have heard; allows them to identify connections between a text and personal experience; enables students to use letters of the alphabet to represent sounds in words and allows students to write common sight words, for example 'my', 'like', 'play'.

These activities have been adapted from work samples for Foundation Year English National Curriculum: Please see: www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/worksamples/AC_Worksample_English_F.pdf

Queen Victoria's Christmas - Inferring Reading Strategy

My Prediction

Brief recount of the text

What type of connection did you make with the text? Text to self, text to world, text to text

What have you learned about Queen Victoria and Christmas trees?

Who would enjoy reading this book? Children/teenagers/adults/other

Why do you think the author wrote this book? To entertain/tell a message/how do you know?

Why is this book fun?

Why do you think this story is told from the point of view of Queen Victoria's dogs? Would it have been funnier if one of her children had told the story? Yes/No/ Please explain

Tell the same story from the point of view of the parrot.

Draw a picture of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their Christmas tree.

Bloom's Domain	Verbs	Sample Questions/Activities
Remembering (read at text level, directly from the words)	Recalling information, recognising, listing, describing, retrieving, naming, finding.	What is the book about? When did Queen Victoria live? What did Albert make popular at Christmas? What other things did Queen Victoria popularise?
Understanding (requires some understanding, comprehension, interpretation of events)	Explaining ideas or concepts, interpreting, summarising, paraphrasing, classifying, explaining.	Why did Albert and Victoria's Christmas traditions change Christmas celebrations around all the countries in the English Empire? Tell the story again from the point of view of: a princess; a prince; the cook; the guard; or the parrot.
Applying (must be able to apply understanding to a new situation)	Using information in another familiar situation, implementing, carrying out, using, executing.	Write a dialogue between Queen Victoria and her husband Albert about why he wants to bring a Christmas tree to Buckingham Palace.
Analysing (comprehending relationships and their effects)	Breaking information into parts to explore understandings and relationships, comparing, organising, deconstructing, interrogating, finding.	Produce a short video or create a wiki on how Christmas traditions have changed over the last 150 years. Interview and write a story about how your Grandparents celebrated Christmas or other cultural event. How has it changed since she or he was a child?
Evaluating	Justifying a decision or course of action, checking, hypothesising, critiquing, experimenting, judging.	Write a newspaper article as if you were living in the 19 th century objecting to the expense of celebrating Christmas with trees, presents and cards and crackers. Write a diary entry as Prince Albert about how he felt when he put up the Christmas tree for the first time.
Creating	Generating new ideas, products, or ways of viewing things, designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing.	Create a powerpoint presentation or a short movie on the history of Christmas celebrations and the effects they have had on the way we live. Retell the story in four pages without using words.

Literacy activities – Years 7 and 8

Introduction to Visual Literacy - Part One - Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

It is important that students understand the metalanguage of visual design as this gives a language for interpreting and deconstructing images, and for conveying information. They will need this skill throughout high school.

Provide students with definitions of the following terms in the context of visual design:

Purpose – Consider the composer’s purpose: to entertain, satirise, inform, to make comment, provoke thought or emotion; or persuade. May be one or more of these.

Audience – the group of people a composer intends to influence.

Context – The range of personal, social, historical, cultural and workplace conditions in which a text is responded to and composed (BoS NSW 2003). Relates to when the text was composed; type of publication and evidence to support this.

Salience – Most noticeable point or important feature. The protruding or conspicuous element of the text.

Vectors – lead the reader from one element to another

Reading path – Taken from the most salient images to the less salient images.

Framing - The frame determines the amount of information given to the viewer as well as sometimes signalling a social relationship with a viewer.

Colour - Colour is used both to create convincing images and suggest particular mood or feelings. Variation in tone and saturation can be used for a variety of purposes.

Angles - The use of angles in images allows different relationships to be conveyed between people and between people and objects.

Size - Illustrations may vary in size to establish and enhance the relationship between the viewer, the image maker and the page.

Demand and offer - The eyes of the character in the image determine either a demand or offer. When the eyes are looking directly at the viewer, they are called a demand. An offer is looking away from the camera.

Adapted from NAPLAN 2011 teaching strategies Visual literacy: Analysing and interpreting visual images, Stage 4:

www.schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/7-12assessments/naplan/teachstrategies/yr2011/index.php?id=literacy/reading/lr_cold/lrcold_s4b_11

Please see for more information:

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/secondary/english/assets/pdf/grammar.pdf

These techniques can be used by composers to try and persuade the reader to a particular point of view or to try and make the reader feel a particular way.

Type of text	Literary or visual technique	Possible effect on the reader
Poems and picture book verse	Similes, Metaphor, Personification, Alliteration, Assonance, Rhyme, Repetition, Onomatopoeia, Symbols Motifs.	Can make the subject amusing and endear subject to reader. They can also make a text difficult to read aloud, or the poetic effect can overwhelm the story. Do you think the text here uses enough, or too much, of these poetic techniques?
Novels and autobiographies	Use of first/second/third person	First person can drag the reader into the story and increase emotional impact. Third puts a space between the reader and writer but can allow for more information and detail. This story is told

		<p>from the dog's point of view. Would it be better to tell it from the point of view of a child, the Queen, or in the third person? How about the parrot's point of view?</p>
Advertisements/ posters /picture books	<p>Use most salient objects vectors, layout, contrast, angles, gaze, frontal/ oblique body angles and colour.</p>	<p>Use of colour juxtaposition, angles, salience and gaze can shape meaning. How do these things shape meaning in the text?</p>

Adapted from:

www.hsc.csu.edu.au/english/esl/belonging/3692/Reading%20Activities/textformfeatures.pdf

Part Two: Look at how some visual techniques shape meaning

Look at some images of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert



For more images please see:

www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp04634/queen-victoria

Look for people, symbols, objects and colours. A painting or a posed photograph is a condensed and concentrated account of someone. Symbols are used by composers to quickly convey a message.

Why is Victoria wearing a crown most of the pictures?

What does the sashes denote?

Why are Albert and Victoria surrounded by animals and children? What does this tell you about them?

What objects or colours appear in the paintings – are there some things that appear in more than one painting? Why? What do they symbolise?

What did you find in the pictures? Decode the symbols.

What do you notice first? What is the first thing you see? Why is your eye drawn to this object? (Salient object)

Are there any other figures that are prominent in the picture? Why are they there? How do they contribute to the meaning of the picture?

Why are Victoria and Albert wearing sashes? What does the sash signify? What do the crown and veil in the third picture signify? Why is she wearing such a small crown in one of the pictures? What do crowns signify? How do framing and angles convey meaning? What are the main colours used?

The blue sash:

Find out what the sash means. Please see:

www.royalinsight.net/ask-windsor/ask-windsor-may-2011

www.heraldicsculptor.com/Garters.html

Queen Victoria's crowns:

Find out the kinds of crown's Queen Victoria wore, particularly after the death of her husband Albert. What is the story of Queen Victoria's small diamond crown? Please see:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Small_diamond_crown_of_Queen_Victoria

royalexhibitions.co.uk/crown-jewels-2/royal-regalia/

Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, children and dogs:

Queen Victoria loved dogs – her favourite was called Dash and her husband's favourite was called Eos. Please see:

www.royalcollection.org.uk/press-release/noble-hounds-and-dear-companions

www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/theroyalfamily/9327775/Queen-Victorias-silver-gift-to-Prince-Albert-on-sale-for-200000.html

Class exercise:

Think about your grandparents or an important older person in your life and create a portrait of him or her. Include four things that symbolise her. You can use the frames in BLM 1.

Part Three: Apply knowledge and examine the visual techniques used on the cover of *Queen Victoria's Christmas*

As a class, annotate the front cover of *Queen Victoria's Christmas*, ensuring that students can identify:

The purpose of the book.

The target audience for the book.

The salient feature of the cover.

The reading path of the cover and if any vectors are evident.

How framing and angles are used to convey meaning.

The use of colour and the purpose of it.

The symbols.

Questions you can ask:

Is there anything on the cover that is similar to the paintings?

What is the first thing you look at on the cover of the book? This is called the “salient object” (the object that stands out most). Why is your eye drawn to this object? Compare your response with other classmates’. Are their salient objects the same as yours?

Are there any other figures that are prominent in the picture?

Why are they there?

How do they contribute to the meaning of the story?

If there is no figure on the cover, why?

What does that tell you about the story?

What are the main colours used on the cover of the book?

Why do you think the illustrator has chosen these colours?

Listen to the story being read aloud without looking at the illustrations. Then, read the story while viewing the illustrations. Do the illustrations change your understanding of the story in any way? How?

Adapted from:

www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/secondary/english/stages4_5/teachlearn/nthsydghs/nthsydgghs.htm

Part Four: Close study of two images to build upon previous knowledge of visual language

Deconstruct these images as a whole class identifying the different visual techniques. Focus in particular on the use of colour and framing. Examine how the images work together.

Watch this short video about illustrator Anne Spudvilas and the processes and choices she makes when illustrating picture books. Please see: www.slv.vic.gov.au/node/3147



Image One

How is colour and framing used in this picture?

Which element is the most salient?

How does that contribute to meaning?

Why are all the characters and the dog looking in one direction, away from the viewer?

Why are there no words on this page?



Image Two

How are the pictures framed? Does this picture make more sense if you look at with the other picture?

How is colour used and angles, demand and offer?

Class exercise:

Working in pairs, choose a double page spread from the book and comment on the features of the written text and the illustrations and present findings to class.

In pairs, create your own two page illustrated text on a historical figure using text and colour and framing in particular to try and persuade the reader.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Blackline Master One

WORD SEARCH

Queen Victoria's Christmas

E R A E O T E M I N C E G H
E E N E E U Q S M L S S R M
E I N T E U S A R P O U E D
A D P I O N N P I E G R Y E
S A R E T G U C P E S D H R
R N L I E D Y R R R E V O N
E E E R D N I M E I I D U E
G R S I R N A K T C R Y N E
N G N E C N C S T A L S D R
I G I E Y A E O U L L S A G
S P T A R W R G O L C M P A
G I R C I I S H T R E B L A
E E R T A C H R I S T M A S
E L E N G L A N D L O R A C

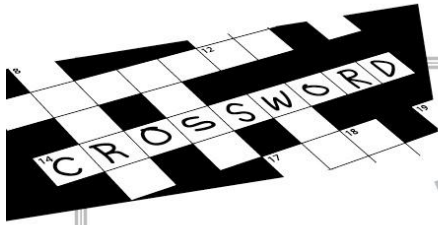
WORD LIST

- ☐ CHRISTMAS
- ☐ CRACKERS
- ☐ PUDDING
- ☐ MINCE PIE
- ☐ SPICY
- ☐ CAROL SINGERS
- ☐ MANGER
- ☐ TREE

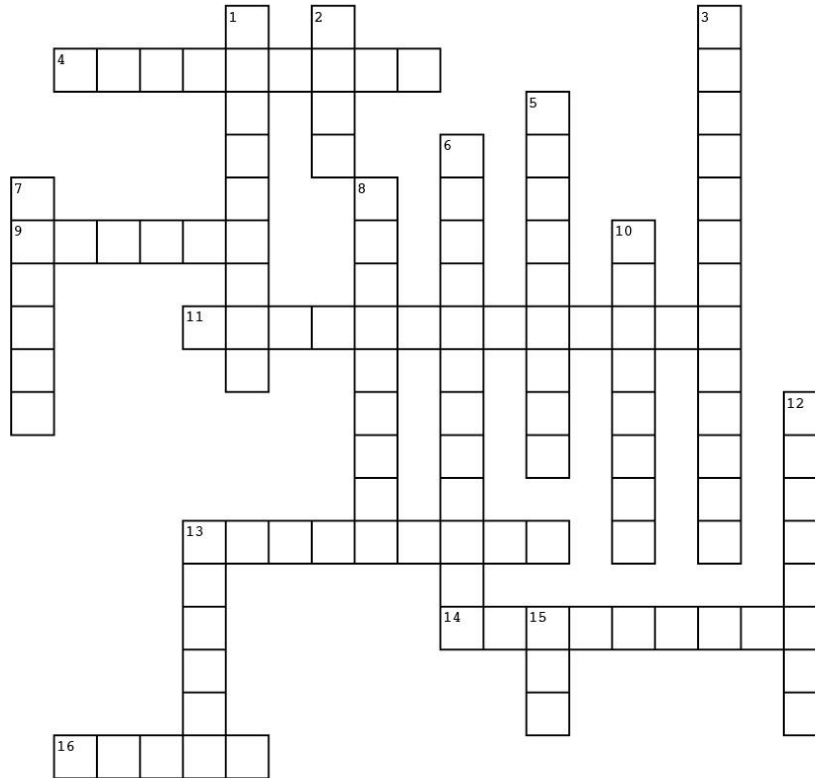
- ☐ QUEEN
- ☐ PRINCE
- ☐ ALBERT
- ☐ VICTORIA
- ☐ TINSEL
- ☐ GRENADIER
- ☐ GUARD
- ☐ RED

- ☐ GREEN
- ☐ HOLLY
- ☐ GREYHOUND
- ☐ EOS
- ☐ WESTIE
- ☐ GERMANY
- ☐ ENGLAND
- ☐ SUET





Queen Victoria's Christmas



ACROSS

4. A tall, slender dog that can run very fast
9. Queen Victoria's husband
11. A famous Australian author
13. The man that invented Christmas crackers
14. The first regiment of the royal household infantry
16. An evergreen shrub, with prickly leaves and red berries

DOWN

1. An annual Christian festival celebrating Christ's birth, held on 25 December
2. The hard white fat from cattle and sheep used to make puddings, pastry, and mincemeat
3. A famous Australian illustrator
5. A plant that retains green leaves throughout the year
6. A rich boiled suet pudding containing raisins, currants, and spices
7. A long trough from which horses or cattle feed
8. A tree or shrub that sheds its leaves annually
10. A small round pie of sweet mincemeat, typically eaten at Christmas
12. Prince Albert's wife
13. Thin strips of shiny metal foil attached to thread
15. Prince Albert's favourite dog



RECIPE

Blackline Master Three

How to make your own Christmas Crackers

Crackers became popular in Victorian times.

You will need:

- Coloured crepe paper or cellophane
- A cardboard roll, at least 30 cm long, cut into three pieces, one bigger piece and two smaller pieces that are the same size
- Glue
- String, ribbon
- Lollies or small toys to go inside the cracker
- A joke printed onto a small piece of paper to go inside the cracker
- Items to decorate the outside of the cracker with

STEP ONE

Lay out a few sheets of the crepe paper or cellophane.
Evenly place the three pieces of cardboard roll on the paper.

STEP TWO

Glue the edge of the paper and roll around the cardboard rolls.
Stick the edge down firmly.

STEP THREE

Carefully decorate the largest roll. This will be the main part of the cracker.

STEP FOUR

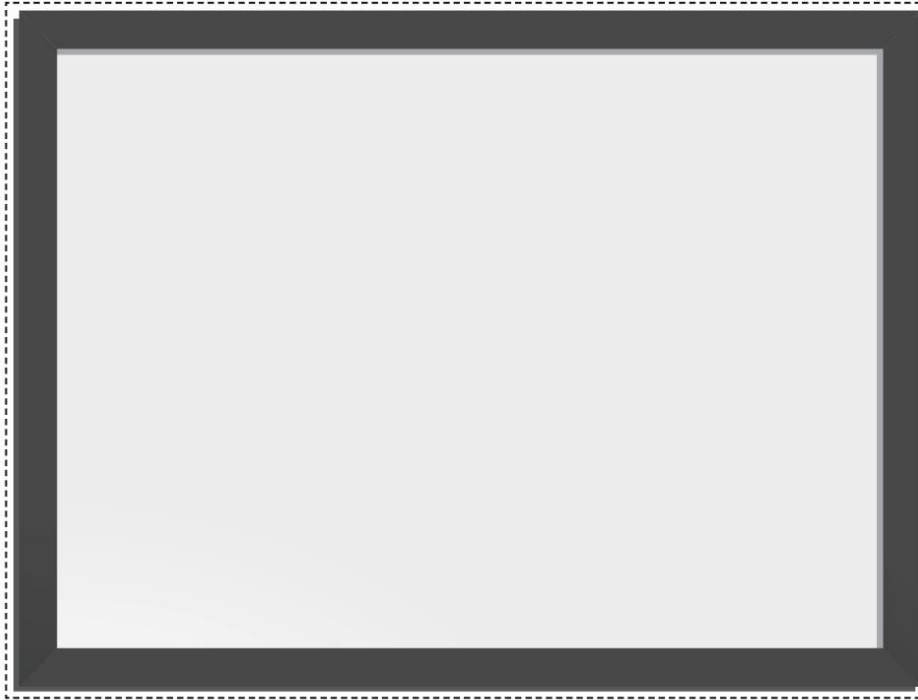
Tie a ribbon around the bottom end of the main roll. Fill the main roll with sweets, treats and the joke. Tie the other end with ribbon. Remove the cardboard ends.



FRAMES

Blackline Master Four

Queen Victoria's Christmas



Some other Christmas activities

Make your own Christmas cards

Take a square of plain or coloured thin cardboard.

Fold it in two.

Now draw on your favourite scene, or paste on cut out images. You could even cut out Christmas trees or other designs and paste them, too, or paste on glitter or coloured stars. There are one million ways to make a Christmas card, and all are fun.

Make your own Christmas hats

You'll need:

- Crêpe paper
- Scissors
- Glue or sticky tape
- A few stars or other decorations from the newsagent

Method:

Step 1. Cut pieces of crêpe paper about 60 cm x15 cm.

Step 2. Stick the ends together.

Step 3. Cut the top into a zigzag (remember how you used to roll up paper and cut out paper dolls or other shapes in kindergarten?).

Step 4. Stick on a few stars or other stick-ons, or get the kids to draw on original, never to be repeated, Christmas specials.

... and you have a hat.

Simple Christmas Tree Decorations

If you're just starting out on your Christmas tree collection, and don't want to pay a fortune, try:

- Gum nuts in clusters, painted gold, with a bit of red ribbon glued on to the end.
- Long gum leaves, also painted gold, with the stems tied onto a length of string (these will only last one Christmas though: by next year they'll be a crackly mess)
- Paint jacaranda seed pods or pine cones or the tiny cones from cedars, casuarinas and other conifers gold or silver or red, and glue on a tiny piece of red ribbon.
- Cut out cardboard stars, and paint gold or silver.
- Make tiny bows of gold red or silver ribbon
- Cut out circles of corrugated cardboard; paint red or gold and sprinkle on glue and glitter.
- 3D cardboard and glitter baubles: cut out two circles of corrugated cardboard, paint and add glitter to each. Cut each one half way down the centre, then slip one into the other and you'll see what is supposed to happen, so cut a bit more or wriggle a bit till it does!

Some Very Yummy Jackie French Christmas Recipes

Chocolate Gum Leaves

You'll need:

- Gum leaves, long and perfect and remember to remove the Christmas beetles, because chocolate-coated Christmas beetles don't taste very good and, anyway, a coating of chocolate upsets a beetle's centre of gravity, and Christmas beetles have a hard enough time staying upright through the Christmas season anyway
- Cooking chocolate
- Any useful flavourings that happen to around in unlocked cupboards like a few drops of Cointreau or finely chopped macadamias or other nuts or a few drops of peppermint essence.

Method:

Melt the chocolate over a double boiler or in the microwave.

Take off heat, stir in a few drops of flavouring or nuts and press the gum leaf into chocolate to coat it thickly on one side.

Leave to set, peel off the leaf... and you have a chocolate gum leaf.

NB: Do not eat the gum leaf unless you are a koala.

Red Christmas Cordial

You'll need:

- 250 - 350 gm of blueberries - frozen or fresh
- 4 cups sugar
- 1 cup lime or lemon juice
- 2 cups water
- 2 teaspoons tartaric acid

Method:

Boil the sugar and water for 10 minutes.

Add the fruit and juice, simmer five minutes.

Take off the heat, squish well with a spoon,

Strain, add the tartaric acid, bottle and store in the fridge for up to two weeks.

This recipe makes about 2 bottles cordial.

NB: If it starts to bubble change colour or grow interesting fungi, it's really only useful as a zoology project. Throw it out.

Parson Woodforde's Very Traditional Christmas Mince Pies

On the 25th of December, about 100 years ago, the Reverend James Woodforde ate a boiled rabbit and onion sauce, a sirloin of beef roasted, plum puddings ... and mince pies. A few years before, his Christmas dinner was two fine cods with fried soles around them and oyster sauce, a fine sirloin of beef roasted, some peas soup and an orange pudding, wild ducks roasted, a salad and mince pies.

Until pretty recently Christmas dinner was basically just the richest most celebratory dinner you could afford. Plum puddings usually featured, but then they were eaten at any winter feast, as were roast goose, duck, hen, beef and the occasional swan if you happened to be royalty.

Mince pies however were definitely Christmas only fare.

Mince pies were originally made in the shape of a cradle, with a pastry image of the Christ child placed in the hollow and a blanket of minced mutton and lamb's tongues covering Him and then more pastry tucked over that.

After the Crusades the pies became more and more highly spiced, with dried fruit added too in the Middle Eastern tradition - till nowadays there's no meat in mince pies at all and they're round instead of oval. If you want to make traditional mince pies - I mean a really traditional one - you first of all need to get oval moulds to put them in for which you will definitely need to go to a specialty kitchen shop.

You then take your shortcrust or puff pastry - either home made or bought - line the mould, reserve some for the top covering then make your small image of the Christ Child - an oblong and a round head are all you really need - after all, most of Him is tucked up in his blanket.

Now make the filling. A typical modern mix would be:

- 100 gm chopped apples
- 300 gm dried fruit
- 100 gm chopped or packaged suet
- 100 gm brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon mixed spice, cinnamon, a quarter teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 tbsp marmalade
- 2 tbsp rum or brandy

Just mix and put it over the pastry child, then tuck the pastry blanket up to His chin, and bake for about 25 minutes in a hot oven.

To be honest, I find modern mince pies too sweet and heavy. The traditional one, with a mix of meat and fruit, is much nicer - very pleasant indeed for lunch or dinner on a hot day.

Traditional recipes pack the raw ingredients into the pie shell, and cook them slowly for a long time. I prefer to pre-cook mine.

This recipe is based on one from 1560

You'll need:

- 500 gm of beef or mutton
- Olive oil (or lard for the more traditional)
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp , ground cloves
- 1 tsp ground mace
- 1 tbsp chopped seeded raisins
- 2 tbsp currants
- 2 tbsp chopped stoned prunes
- Pastry (see above)
- Melted butter,
- Sprinkle of sugar

Fry the meat... well, it should be in lard, but I prefer a good splash of olive oil, let's not be too traditional here. In fact I even go so far as to sometimes add garlic and an onion.

When the meat is brown, take it off the heat and add the ground black pepper, ground cloves, ground mace, the raisins, the currants and the chopped stoned prunes. Mix well.

The original recipe also had saffron in it, but with all that spice you can't taste the saffron and, anyway, the genuine stuff is expensive.

Once more, place a layer of meat mixture over the child in the cradle, tuck in the pastry blanket.

Glaze with melted butter, sugar and rosewater if you like or just beaten egg, bake 25 minutes in a medium oven, or till browned. Serve hot or cold, or even with modern tomato sauce.

Easy Mince Pies

An even easier way to make meat pies is to use frozen shortcrust pastry, and bottled fruit mince.

Line non stick muffin pans with squares of pastry.

Fill with the fruit mince.

Put a small circle of pastry on top.

Bake for 20 minutes at 200°C or until the top is pale gold.
Wait till they cool before you take them out.

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About the author of the notes

Mandy Newman BA (Sociology), MA (Creative Writing), BTeach is a journalist, writer and a secondary school teacher of English. Originally from Melbourne, she has called Sydney home for twenty years.

Mandy has worked as an Education Officer, a web producer at the *Australian Financial Review* and is the author of *How to Say I Do* (Allen and Unwin, 2009). She has appeared on *Sunrise* among other television programs and written features for *Sunday Life* magazine. She is now an education consultant working with major Australian publishers, a teacher and writer.

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