



Normally, videos created by our team have subtitles to make them accessible to a wider range of viewers.

However, as this workshop has been created for primary pupils, we believe that subtitles across the bottom of the screen would be a distraction and a barrier to learning for many in this age group. But because we understand that there may be pupils or staff taking part in this workshop who have hearing impairments, we have included this transcript of the videos for you to use as appropriate.

Video 1- Meet Lizzie

My name is Lizzie. And for me, it's Christmas Eve today. Christmas Eve 1895- so that's 125 years ago. I live in Victorian times, which means I live in a time where the Queen of England is called Victoria.

Welcome to my home. This is Preston Hall. Preston Hall is a very big and fancy house. It is filled with lots and lots of different rooms. And it's such a big house because lots of people live here. The man who owns this house is called Mr Ropner. Mr Ropner is very, very rich. He lived here with his wife, Mrs Ropner and their children. They have ten children- there are five boys and five girls! But the Ropner family aren't the only people living here. There are other people living here as well. MR Ropner is so rich and has so much money that he pays people to come and live in the house with the family and look after them. And do all of the nasty grown up jobs that Mr and Mrs Ropner don't want to do! The people who are paid to live here and look after the family are called servants. And we are always very busy. We cook for the family, clean for the family, do the gardening , drive the carriage- we even look after and teach the children!

My job is being a maid, which means I mainly do a lot of the cleaning. But because it's such a busy time of year, I'm busy doing lots of jobs, it's all hands on deck. And that's because Christmas is a special time for us Victorians. When is a special time for you during the year?

Video 2- Decorations and Charity

As you can see, I have been getting the hall ready for Christmas. I've been outside, collecting leaves and holly and berries, and I have been making wreaths for the doors, I have been making swags for the windowsills and I have been making garlands. I have to be careful while I'm working though not to knock the Christmas tree. I love the Christmas Tree.

Can you believe that until Victoria became Queen, no one in England had a tree up at Christmas! But when Victoria got married, she married Albert, and Albert grew up in Germany. And in Germany, every year at Christmas they would chop down a tree, bring it inside and decorate it. And when Albert married Victoria he decided he wanted a tree in the Palace. And everyone who saw it thought it was beautiful and they started to copy. And now everyone has a tree up at Christmas.

I'm going to start putting baubles on the Christmas tree soon, but I will have to be careful- they are made from glass, I need to make sure I don't drop them. I am going to have to start putting the candles onto the tree soon as well. They clip on and then I'll have to light them, but I am



always really nervous. I'm always a bit scared in case the candles set me or the tree on fire. Mister Ropner loves the candles on the tree at Christmas though so I will have to do it.

I actually really like working for Mr Ropner. He is a kind man. He does lots to help people who need it. A lot of people who live near here are very poor. Stockton city in particular is very overcrowded and dirty. There was nowhere for children to play where it was safe, and nowhere for people to walk or run and have some fresh air. And so Mr Ropner actually bought the people of Stockton a park! He also paid for a Convalescent home to be built. A Convalescent home is where people who have been sick can go and live while they recover. He is very kind.

Acts of charity are actually very important to us Victorians at Christmastime. An act of charity is when you do something kind for someone who needs it. So that could be giving them someone money or something they need, or giving up your time to help them. Do you do any acts of charity at home or at school?

Video 3- Food at Christmas

Lizzie: I'd like you all to meet my friend Lucy. Lucy works as the Cook here at Preston Hall. Lucy is going to tell us all about how she is getting ready for Christmas.

Lucy: Hi everybody. I have been prepping for Christmas for weeks. I have had to place lots of orders. Orders for the market, the grocers, the bakers, the butchers. I feel like all I have done is cook sweetmeats and pies for days. I have just finished prepping the plum pudding. Its not Christmas without a plum pudding, the best thing about plum pudding is putting a small silver coin inside. And if you are lucky enough to get a piece with that little coin inside, that means you will have good luck for the rest of the year. You do have to be careful though, last year Mrs Ropner got that piece and she chipped her tooth!

I am also going to start prepping for the turkey. It feels a bit weird to be saying turkey because normally we would have a goose or beef but we seem to be following the Americans because they have turkey, so I think it must be becoming fashionable over here to have turkey for Christmas.

But before I start with the turkey I need to decorate some biscuits for the children. Would you like to help me decorate a tasty treat?

Video 4- Christmas Presents

Charity is important at Christmas, and so is food, but there is something else that is important as well- presents of course! The ten children who live in this house love presents. Every year Father Christmas brings the children presents- if they have been good of course!

But Mrs and Mrs Ropner like to buy the children presents as well. Mr and Mrs Ropner have lots of money so they get their presents from toy shop- they are very expensive and really fancy. So last year one of the children got this doll, she is made from porcelain, and I have to be very careful not to drop her. One of the children got this really fancy toy as well. Its made from metal and when you wind it up it goes all on its own.



When I was little I didn't have presents like this. I come from quite a poor family, my parents didn't have very much money so they couldn't afford to get me toys from a toy shop.

Instead my Mam and Dad would make presents for me from things they already had lying around the house. So instead of a china doll when I was a little girl I had a hankie doll, she is made from fabric and ribbon. One year my Dad had to chop up on of our kitchen chairs for firewood so that we could keep warm. And he saved a little but of the wood from the chair and he very cleverly carved me this. It looks like a horse's head. My favourite Christmas gift though was this. My Mam made it for me, and it's a peg doll. She has carved a wooden peg and painted a face.

I love the children who live in this house and I want to get them a present this year. But because I am a maid I can't afford to go to a toy shop and buy toys for them either. So I was thinking I might make the children a peg doll, just like the one I had when I was a little girl. Would you like me to show you how to make a peg doll, to give to someone special at Christmas this year?

Video 5- Traditional Christmas Story

Everyone is so busy tonight. Even Nanny, who usually looks after the children. She has asked if I will read their bedtime story to them. Would you like to listen? It's my favourite story, The Night Before Christmas.

It's a poem that was written before Victoria was even Queen. But it's a very popular story in Victorian England. It's all about Santa arriving on Christmas Eve with his sleigh and reindeer.

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;

*The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;*

*Out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,*

*With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.*

*"Now, DASHER! now, DANCER! now, PRANCER and VIXEN!
On, COMET! on CUPID! on, DONNER and BLITZEN!"*

*And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my hand, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.*



*He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.*

*His eyes -- how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;*

*The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly.*

*He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;*

*He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;*

*He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A GOOD-NIGHT!*

Video 6- Favourite Things

Thank you for all of you help today everyone. I hope that you have all had a lovely time learning about Christmas in Victorian times. It's almost time for me to go to bed. But I can hear something lovely happening outside. I can hear some carol singers. Every year people come to the door of Preston Hall to sing for the family and maybe get a little bit of money for their trouble. I love hearing people sing, it is my favourite thing about Christmas. What's your favourite thing about the holiday period? Merry Christmas everyone!