How were the lives of the poor and rich so different in Victorian Britain?
Starter Activity

We are learning about the impact that the Victorian era had on our lives today. Last week we looked at some of the wonderful inventions from this time including the first lightbulb and the first telephone. We also found out it was when the football league started.

Watch the video in the link and see how many more amazing inventions you can identify. 
https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zhwqxnb

1.
2.
3.
4.

You could add them to your timeline from last week if you want.
Task 1
Think about how poor and rich people live today. Divide your page in your notebook in half and label the columns as demonstrated below. Think of as many ways that you can compare and contrast poor and rich people. There is an example and a picture to start you off.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RICH</th>
<th>POOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rich people might have more than one house.</td>
<td>Poor people might have a very small house or might not have a house at all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Lives of the Rich and Poor in Victorian Britain.

As we have looked at the different inventions, the Victorian era was a period of time of great technological advances which changed the world forever. More things were made in factories, and canals and railways were built. This was called the Industrial Revolution.

During this time people got very rich but other people were also very poor. Look at the next 6 slides to see how life was different for the rich and poor Victorian people.

Task 2

Draw a large venn diagram like the one on page 12. Read through the slides and make notes in the venn diagram on how different the lives of the poor and rich were. In the middle circle, write the ways they are similar.
Victorian Houses

The **Industrial Revolution** meant large numbers of people moved to towns and cities to work in factories. Rows and rows of back-to-back terraced houses were built for the poor. These houses were very small, with two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs. They didn’t usually have gardens, but small yards.

Richer Victorians lived in much better houses. They were larger, sometimes even having rooms in the attic for servants to sleep in.
Victorian Clothing for the Rich

Rich women wore corsets under their dresses. These were pulled very tight. Hoops and petticoats were worn to make skirts stand out. At one point, bustles were popular. These gave extra shape to the back of a skirt. All these layers made getting dressed quite a long process which required the help of a maid.

Wealthy Victorian men wore suits with waistcoats. Bowler hats were worn outdoors for everyday occasions, with top hats for special events. A pocket watch was often carried.
Victorian Clothing for the Poor

Most poor people owned very few outfits. What they wore had to be practical and hard-wearing. If they were fortunate, they would have a slightly better outfit to wear to church on Sundays.

Clothes were dark as it was difficult to keep clothes clean in factories and mines where many poor people worked.

Poor people had to make their shoes last. Many wore things called hobnail boots. These boots had nails hammered in to the soles to make them last longer. Men and women wore hats or caps. Men took their hats off inside, women often kept theirs on.
As with other things in Victorian lives, there were huge differences between the rich and the poor.

Servants prepared food for wealthy families. Breakfast included ham, eggs, bacon, bread and fish. During the day, rich Victorians ate lunch and afternoon tea. Dinner was made up of many courses including soup, a fish course, meat and vegetables and cake.

Poor families spent a large amount of the money they earned on food, yet even this wasn’t enough to provide an adequate diet. They mostly ate bread, milk, cheese and potatoes. Meat was a luxury eaten once a week if they were doing well. Many poor children died of malnutrition.
In a poor Victorian family, each member worked as hard as possible to try to earn money in order to survive. Jobs included factory work and mining and was very poorly paid. Even children worked in jobs down mines and sweeping chimneys.

Victorian Work

Mothers of wealthy Victorian families didn’t work. They spent their days calling on friends and relatives. Most of the child care was done by a nanny. Rich Victorian men had jobs such as doctors, lawyers, bankers and factory owners.
Until near the end of the Victorian era, parents had to pay to send their children to school. This meant that many poor children received no education and could neither read nor write. There were some charity schools to help educate the poor, but most families needed their children working and earning money.

Victorian Schools

Wealthy Victorian children were educated at home by a governess. At the age of ten, boys would then go to boarding school while girls continued to be taught by a governess.
Task 3

Using your knowledge of the lives of the rich and poor in Victorian Britain and the information provided, complete the Venn diagram with the notes below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rich Life</th>
<th>Poor Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some families lived in small houses with several family members sharing the same bedroom.</td>
<td>It was the start of the Industrial Revolution so there was an increase in jobs and employment, particularly for those who had skills or who were strong and able workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses had polished wooden floors, beautifully carved furniture and framed portraits.</td>
<td>Men wore suits, waistcoats and top hats. Women wore long dresses with hoops or petticoats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back-to-back houses were built in rows.</td>
<td>Clothes were often badly fitted, dirty or worn out. They were made to last a long time rather than be luxurious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servants or kitchen staff lived in servants’ quarters in their houses.</td>
<td>Every member of the family needed to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There were no toilets inside the house.</td>
<td>Children would have toys, such as rocking horses, dolls’ houses or train sets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes were washed by hand using soap and water.</td>
<td>School lessons focused on the 3 Rs: reading, writing and arithmetic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extension

1. How many of the differences between rich and poor today are similar to the way rich and poor people were in the Victorian era?

2. Do you think life is better now than it is now? Can you give your reasons?