

# Curious Objects

*These learning packs introduce some of the ‘curious objects’ in Cambridge University Library’s collections.*

*As well as providing printable reproductions and background information on the objects, Library staff have suggested learning activities and discussion topics for use in the classroom.*

## Paper Dolls – Key Stage 1 & 2: English

### Contents of this learning pack

- ✓ **Background information and plot summaries**
- ✓ **Suggested English activities for Key Stages 1 & 2**
- ✓ **Vocabulary flashcards and short plot summaries**
- ✓ **Printable paper dolls**
- ✓ **Introductory powerpoint presentation**

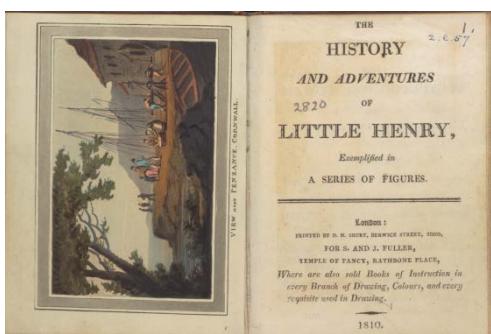
## Background information

### What are they?

These three sets of paper dolls tell the stories of Henry, Fanny and Lauretta.

Each one was sold in a paper pocket with a miniature storybook, several cut-out images of different costumes and one head to swap between the costumes.

The little books accompanying the dolls told stories, either in prose or verse, about the changing fortunes of the main character.



Lauretta the Little Savoyard



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## **When were they made and who made them?**

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This unusual type of paper doll with a removable head was invented in 1810, and remained popular in England until around 1817.

The address of the manufacturers, S. and J. Fuller, was the 'Temple of Fancy and Juvenile Museum' in Rathbone Place, London.

## **Who used them and how much did they cost?**

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Each set of dolls had to be cut, coloured and assembled by hand, with the intricate pockets pasted on to hold the heads correctly, so these books were fairly expensive toys for more affluent children.

Each book cost between 5 and 8 shillings, which is around £10-15 in today's money. This high cost was one of the reasons this pre-cut paper doll format became less popular.

## **How were they used?**

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As they read, or listened to the stories, children would play with the paper dolls to re-enact and reinforce the narrative of disobedience or mishap, downfall from a loving family and prosperity to poverty and danger, and the eventual happy ending.

Instead of using paper tabs to attach different outfits to a doll's body, this design had a single paper head with a long neck tab, which would be inserted into a paper pocket on the back of each costume. They often also featured a range of hats.

When a child first opened the book, the paper costumes were slotted into the book at the appropriate point in the story – the reader only had to add the head each time.

But the paper dolls – unlike illustrations in a picture book – could also be used independently of the storybook. By reordering the costumes, children could invent new narratives and adventures for the characters, or even swap heads from different books, if they owned more than one example.

The few surviving paper dolls in libraries are often worn and grubby (with the heads particularly well-used) while the accompanying books were often barely worn. This suggests that many children spent more time playing creatively with the dolls than reading their moralistic stories.

## **What were the stories about?**

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The content of the stories was moralistic, aiming to teach young readers important lessons about obeying their elders or concentrating on learning, instead of frivolous things.

### **The History of Little Fanny:**

A short extract from the story of Little Fanny shows the simple rhyming couplets used in the verse stories, and how the story immediately shows that Fanny is in need of moral improvement:

*See Fanny here in frock as white as snow,  
 A sash of pink, with long and flowing bow,  
 Shoes that sit tight and closely to her feet,  
 Her whole appearance tidy, clean and neat;  
 And in her arms a favourite doll she bears,  
 The only object of her hopes and cares;  
 Fanny with books will ne'er her mind employ  
 For play's her passion, idleness her joy.*



Little Fanny

After running away from home when she is not allowed to show off her new winter outfit in the park on a warm day, Fanny is robbed of her fine bonnet, coat and muff and becomes a beggar.

She begins selling fish, then butter and eggs in the street, and is finally sent on an errand to her own house.

Too ashamed to go in, she collapses on the steps but her mother finds her and Fanny is reunited with her family. The last paper doll is diligently reading a book instead of playing with her doll.

### **Lauretta, the Little Savoyard**

Lauretta, a pretty Swiss goatherd, is distracted from her duties and falls into a stream while picking flowers.

She spends a few days living in a cave with two goats, drinking their milk, instead of returning home. Her reputation ruined, Lauretta joins a band of traveling gypsies and learns to dance, sing, and perform on the tambourine, flageolet and hurdy gurdy.

Aged 10, she is talent-spotted by a musician from the Opera House, and later becomes an actress. A wealthy benefactor leaves his fortune to her, and Lauretta decides to give up her acting career and go home to Switzerland after turning down several marriage proposals. She is finally reunited with her parents and is wooed by a local nobleman.

### **The History and Adventures of Little Henry**

Henry's nursemaid neglects her charge and he is stolen by gypsies. She later dies of shame.

Little Henry becomes a beggar, is sold to a chimney sweep and runs away to become a drummer boy in a military regiment.

He finds his calling on a naval ship in the Napoleonic wars, starting out as a cabin boy and rising to midshipman through his courage and virtue. His parents eventually hear of his renown and he is reunited with them.



Little Henry

# Suggested English Activities for Key Stages 1 & 2

## Practical tips

The three pages of paper dolls can be printed on A3 paper or card and cut out for children to use for creative play, storytelling and imaginative writing.

Younger children will need help from an adult to cut the dolls out. For the suggested English activities, one sheet can be shared between a group to save time.

## Introductory powerpoint

The introductory powerpoint encourages children to look closely at primary sources, ask perceptive questions and use evidence to understand the past.

The key historical questions addressed are:

- What are these objects?
- How old are they?
- Where were they made?
- How were they used?
- Can we use other evidence, from adverts and pictures, to find out more?
- What can these toys tell us about how children in the past played?

## Adapting the narratives

The original books contain content which would be inappropriate in children's stories today, with the child protagonists abducted by gypsies or sold to beggars or chimney sweeps. The vocabulary would also be very challenging for KS1 and 2.

We have therefore included short summaries of the stories (on pages 9-11) for you to adapt.

You might also prefer to invent a new name for Little Fanny!

## Curriculum links

We have included suggestions for using the dolls in three **English** activities.

You might also find these dolls useful for lessons on **toys from the past**, or the study of **life in Victorian times**.

### English Activity 1 (KS1)

- ✓ **Observation and description**
- ✓ **New vocabulary**
- ✓ **Distinguishing parts of a sentence: nouns, adjectives and verbs**

1. Children look carefully at the different costumes and describe them to a partner.
2. Give out the relevant page of noun and adjective flashcards provided on pages 6-8.
3. Children cut out and match these flashcards with the costumes.
4. Children sort nouns from adjectives by marking the flashcards with two different colours.
5. Looking at each costume, children choose one verb which the character could be doing in each picture, write it on a blank flashcard and add to their collection of vocabulary for each costume.

## **English Activity 2 (KS 1 or 2)**

- ✓ **Matching text and image**
- ✓ **Reading using inference to sequence a narrative**
- ✓ **Creative writing**

1. Children match the costumes with the story synopsis sentences on pages 9-11.

(You will need to pre-cut the sentences so that the sequence is mixed up. These sentences deliberately do not tell the whole story, but stick more closely to what can be inferred from the images. You may prefer to fill in the gaps from the fuller synopses on pages 2-3, or leave the details to the children's imaginations.)

2. Children sequence the sentences in an order which makes sense to them.
3. Discuss different choices as a group and ask children to explain their decisions.
4. Children stick the sentences into their books in their chosen sequence and fill in the gaps around them by adding extra details of invented characters, events or descriptions.

## **English Activity 3 (KS 1 or 2)**

- ✓ **Discussion**
- ✓ **Group work**
- ✓ **Writing and editing prose texts**

1. Working in groups, children each take a paper doll and write a sentence or paragraph of narrative on a piece of paper with space above and below. This is based on what they can see and imagine around the costume and setting.

(Depending on the size of groups, they can discard some dolls or one child can write for two figures.)

2. Children share their work and then discuss how they could combine the sentences together into one story, debating the best sequence.
3. When they have a sequence for the narrative, they each read their section aloud to the group.
4. The children then discuss changes and additions which they can make to help their narrative make sense as a whole.

(Encourage them to adapt as many of the original ideas as possible, while creating a coherent story.)

5. Children collaboratively edit their own work, changing the original text where necessary and adding text before and/or after to help link the sections and rationalise different interpretations in the original sentences.
6. After sharing the revised sections as a group, they read their group's story out to the class.

## Vocabulary flashcards for Fanny

White	Stone paving	Warm
Silky	Doll	Feather
Carpet	Sash	Furry
Bonnet	Ribbons	Apron
Book	Muff (to keep your hands warm in winter)	Scales (to weigh things)
Cold	Basket	Bare
Rich	Shoes	Hat
Cloak	Socks	Poor

## Vocabulary flashcards for Lauretta

Goat	Shepherd's crook	Coat
Cave	Rich	Brown
Headdress	Hurdy gurdy (a musical instrument)	Flowers
Dog	Tambourine	Cottage
Apron	Church	Lonely
Striped	Mountains	Graceful
Bright	Sandals	Bowl
Poor	Boots	Village

## Vocabulary flashcards for Henry

Hat	Ship	Drum
Ragged	Buttons	Sash
Boots	Gold	Sword
Smart	Uniform	Stick
Rope	Striped	Tents
Cannonballs	Black	Bare
Campfire	House	Clean
Cannon	Sack	Dirty

## Synopsis sentences for Fanny

The girl loves playing with dolls.

The girl has fine new winter clothes.

The girl's fine clothes and shoes are stolen.  
She has to beg in the streets wearing rags.

The girl saves up some money to buy shoes, new clothes and a basket of fish.  
She carries the basket on her head and sells the fish in the street.

The girl saves enough money for a warm cloak.  
She goes around the city with her basket carrying messages and shopping for other people.

The girl loves to read.

Synopsis sentences for Lauretta

Lauretta looks after goats in the mountains of Switzerland.

One day Lauretta gets lost and has to sleep in a cave with her goats.

Lauretta meets a group of travelling musicians and dancers who give her new clothes.

She learns to play the tambourine and dance.

She learns to play the hurdy gurdy.

Lauretta becomes an actress and dresses as Flora, the goddess of spring.

Lauretta becomes rich and goes home to Switzerland with her little dog.

## Synopsis sentences for Henry

Henry lives in a big house on the edge of a wood.

One day he gets lost and has to beg in the streets.

A chimney sweep trains him to climb chimneys and clean out the soot and ash.

Henry joins the army as a drummer boy.

He goes to sea as a cabin boy.

Henry becomes a junior officer on the ship - a midshipman.

He fights bravely in many battles.