

# Did children exist in the past?

## Session Leader Notes

### You will need:

- Printed worksheets (blue worksheet).
- Access to computer, projector and sound to display Oxplore Challenge presentation.
- Writing surface and pens.

### General pointers on this session:

- This session takes approx. 45 minutes to deliver. An extension activity (pink worksheet) is available if you have more time or fast-paced learners.
- This session works well with group sizes from approx. 8 to 40 pupils.
- Pupils will need to be broken up into small groups. Small groups should ideally not contain more than 4 pupils per group.
- This session is designed to build the Oxplore Key Skills of questioning, critical thinking and curiosity.
- This session is focused on humanities subjects but skills are transferrable across all subjects.
- If your group completes the activities more quickly than the suggested timings, you can also use the extension activity (pink worksheet).

### Session breakdown:

Suggested Timings (minutes)	Slide Content	Discussion Points/Notes
Prior to pupils entering room	Slide 1: Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to Slide 2 as soon as pupils begin entering</li> </ul>
From first pupil entering room to all pupils seated	Slide 2: Mini-Challenge (What do you think these 3 objects have in common?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils may start calling out ideas/discussing aloud.</li> </ul>
0.00-1.00 (1 min)	Slide 3: Mini-Challenge answer (all the objects belonged to children in different past societies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did anybody guess correctly?</li> </ul>
1.00-2.00 (1 min)	Slide 4: Skills you'll be building today: Questioning, Critical Thinking, Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefly introduce each skill, give more detail if this is group's first Oxplore Challenge</li> <li>• You could point out here that these skills are essential for careers and further study, and will help students in their GCSEs and A-levels.</li> </ul>

2.00-3.00 (1 min)	Slide 5: Video intro (video approx. 1 minute)	
3.00-13.00 (10 min)	Slide 6: Discussion slide activity: What does it mean to be a child in your culture?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct pupils to discuss in pairs or groups and write down their ideas on their worksheet.</li> <li>• Some groups may require check-ins to keep on task.</li> <li>• Ask them to share their ideas with the rest of the class.</li> </ul>
13.00-14.00 (1 min)	Slide 7: Video (video approx. 1 minute)	
14.00-34.00 (20 min)	Slide 8: Activity instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils choose one of the objects shown on the presentation and note down their ideas to the questions on the worksheet.</li> <li>• Ask them to share their ideas with the rest of the class.</li> </ul>
34.00-40.00 (6 min)	Slide 9: Final thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole class discussion about whether they think children existed in the past.</li> </ul>
40.00-41.00 (1 min)	Slide 10: Action: Send Team Explore your work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you would like to, please photograph pupils' work and email it to us at, <a href="mailto:exploreteach@admin.ox.ac.uk">exploreteach@admin.ox.ac.uk</a> . There is no obligation to do this, but it is very helpful for qualitative evaluation purposes. If uploading, please do not include identifying information about pupils, eg. crop/blur names.</li> <li>• Pupils may ask "Do people at Oxford really read it?", the answer to this is yes, as it helps us to understand whether or not our programmes are helping people to develop their skills.</li> </ul>
41.00-42.00 (1 min)	Slide 11: Today's skills: Questioning, Critical Thinking, Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils are asked to judge whether they have practised each key skill.</li> <li>• You could ask pupils to carry out their self-assessment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Closing their eyes and raising their hands if they feel they have practised each skill</li> <li>○ Giving a thumbs-up/thumbs-down to say whether they feel they have practised each skill</li> <li>○ If you are able to record how many pupils feel they have practiced each skill, please email this to us (<a href="mailto:exploreteach@admin.ox.ac.uk">exploreteach@admin.ox.ac.uk</a>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• This is another good time to build academic self-concept by emphasising that these skills are important for your future, and will get stronger each time you use them.</li> </ul>
42.00-43.00 (1 min)	Slide 12: Congratulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This could be a good point to gesture forward to future Explore Challenge sessions, or tally how many sessions the group has now completed if you are keeping count.</li> </ul>
43.00-45.00 (2 min)	Slide 13: If you enjoyed this session, here are some subjects you may be interested in studying in the future...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have additional time, this could be a useful jumping-off point for discussion about super curricular opportunities available within your school/local area.</li> </ul>

NAME:

DATE:

# Did children exist in the past?

What does it mean to be a child in your culture?

Are children treated very differently from adults in your culture?

Use the table below to help you answer this question.

Yes - treated differently	No - treated similarly

## What can objects tell us about the lives of children in the past?

All of the objects pictured below were either owned or used by children in different cultures in the past.

Choose ONE of the objects and write down your ideas to the questions on the next page.



Bobbin winder for lace making

England

Nineteenth century

Spinning top

Papua New Guinea

Early twentieth century



Miniature spear and shield

Swaziland

Early twentieth century

Which object have you chosen?

How do you think it was used by children?

What does it suggest about children's lives in that culture at that time?

What does it suggest about how children were viewed? Do you think they were seen as mini-adults or as a separate group of people?

What other things would you want to find out about that culture to help you decide whether or not children were seen as mini-adults or not?

# Did children exist in the past?

## Extension Activity

Which 3 objects from your culture would you put in a time capsule to give future historians some clues about what it is like to be a child today?

My first object would be...

I would choose this object because...

My second object would be...

I would choose this object because...

My third object would be...

I would choose this object because...

# Did children exist in the past?

## Transcript Part 1

00:00 Did children exist in the past? Hi everyone. My name is Innocent Otunnu and I work at Trinity College, which is part of Oxford University. When I was a student at university, I studied history and one aspect of history that I was particularly interested in was the history of childhood.

00:16 Perhaps like me, you've already spent some time wondering about what it would've been like to have grown up in another time and place. Would you have gone to school or would you have gone to work? What would you have done in your spare time? What would your family have been like?

00:31 In today's challenge, we're going to be thinking about this and exploring the question, did children exist in the past? On the face of it, that might seem like a bit of a strange question. Children have always existed, right? Well, yes and no.

00:46 There have certainly always been young people, but have they always been treated as children, as people who are somehow different from adults? Let's explore the challenge.

## Did children exist in the past?

### Transcript Part 2

00:00 You've explored how children are treated similarly and differently from adults in your culture. But what about in the past? Historians have debated this. French historian, Philip Ariès argued that in the Middle Ages, childhood wasn't seen as distinct from adulthood. He argued that before the sixteenth century, children were viewed as mini adults, dressing and working like their parents.

00:23 For a long time, many historians agreed with Ariès but others argue that childhood has always been seen as a distinct time of life. For example, Turkish historian Ruhi Özcan argues that in the Ottoman Empire, children's milestones were celebrated with rituals, and their toys and play had special meanings unique to their life stage.

00:44 In the next activity, you'll use historical objects or material culture, to determine if children in another period of history were treated as mini adults or as distinct from adults.

00:57 Material culture refers to objects created by human beings in the past and present, such as buildings, tools, toys and art. Archaeologists and historians use these items to learn about past societies.