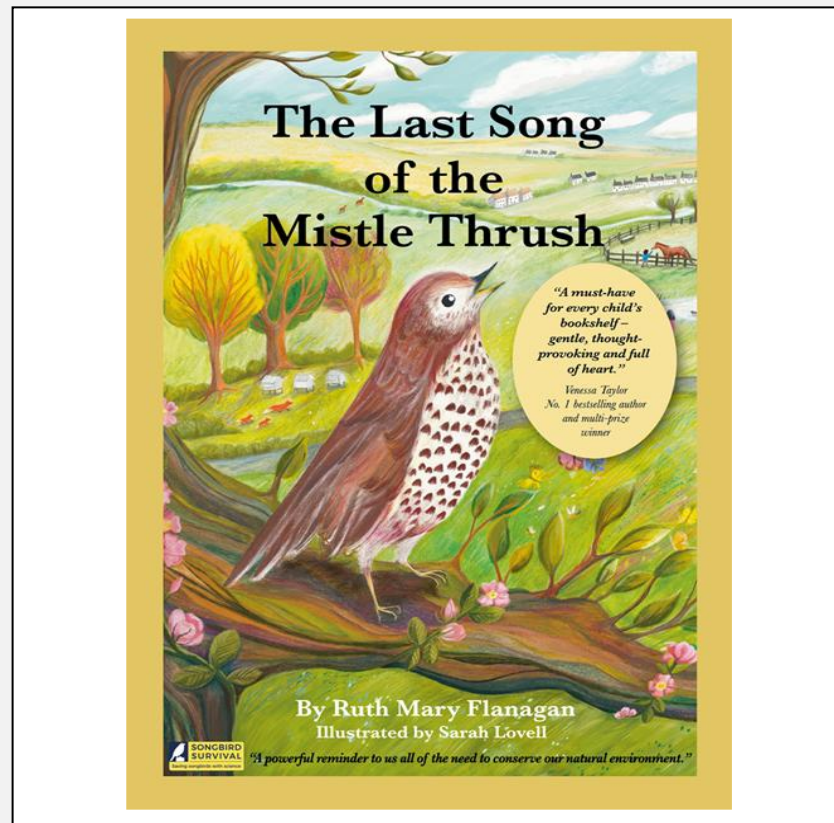


The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush

A topic web for primary school teachers

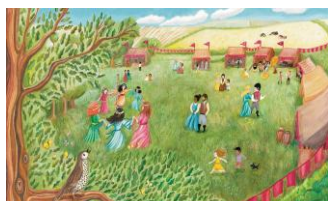
With over 60 ideas to support English, history, maths, science, geography, RE, art, drama, design technology and music, that can be adapted to suit any primary year group.



Created by Ruth Mary Flanagan

Life in Victorian pre- industrial England

1. Victorian society - rich and poor/town and rural
2. Victorian transport
3. Homes, furniture and decoration
4. Entertainment -fayres, games, music, dance, toys.
5. Holidays, feast days and festivals
6. Farming
7. High street shops and occupations - draper, confectioner, fish monger, iron monger, cobbler etc.
8. Fashion
9. Victorian food and drink, cooking recipes and ingredients
10. Schools and education



Victorian Christmas 1841+ Festivities and traditions



Victorian children's poems, rhymes and games



The environment (pre-industrial)

1. Widespread forests
2. Uncut fields & hedgerows
3. Clean air
4. Unpolluted water with plenty of fish
5. Vast varieties of animal species
6. Small population
7. Widespread use of horses for farming and travel
8. Stable seasonal weather

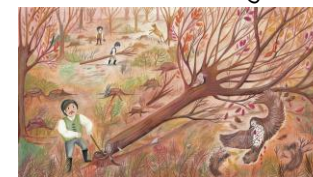


Industrial Revolution

1. Inventions
2. Use of fossil fuels to fuel factories, furnaces, engines, railways etc.
3. Mass production/mechanisation
4. Child labour and working conditions
5. Social reforms
6. Urbanization - air and water pollution
7. Disease and medicine
8. Travel and communication
9. Human encroachment on wildlife habitats including forests
10. Changes in farming and husbandry

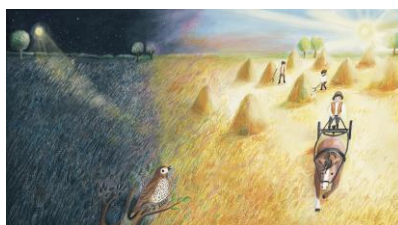
Post Industrial Revolution and contemporary concerns

1. Population growth and the demand on Earth's natural resources
2. Demographic changes/urbanization
3. Pollution
4. Intensive farming
5. Deforestation
6. Desertification
7. Loss of habitats
8. Rise in the no. of endangered species
9. Global warming



Seasons

1. The Victorian farming calendar and rural life throughout the year.



Animal or bird (mistle thrush) topic

1. Learn about a chosen animal or bird.
2. Create a simple classification grid.
3. Gather information to create graphs that show growth or decline in numbers over time.
4. Wildlife throughout today's seasons.
5. Hibernation.
6. Migration-routes and distances.
7. Location/ climate/terrain of other countries where migratory birds visit.



The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush topic web – 60 Supporting ACTIVITIES to choose from

A Pre-industrial Victorian England

1. Read The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush and study the pictures. Imagine you are living in pre-industrial England. Write a diary and describe what you can see and what your days consist of.
2. Draw a home in Victorian times and add the furniture that might be found in each room.
3. Have fun making Victorian toys – thaumatropes, peg dolls, spinning tops, cup and ball, shoe box theatre, paper chains.
4. Play Victorian parlour games such as Blind Man's Buff, Charades, Pass the Slipper, Oranges and Lemons, Drop the Handkerchief etc.
5. Create a Victorian fayre and play juggling games, Punch and Judy, Hook a Duck, Hoopla, Tin Can Alley, Ball in a Basket, singing and dancing around a May pole (or similar) with ribbons.
6. Learn some Victorian rhymes or poems. Make some up.
7. Make or taste some Victorian food using Victorian recipes.
8. Create a Victorian menu.
9. If studying this topic around Christmas, reconstruct a Victorian Christmas in the classroom.
10. Create a collage of Victorian costumes or have a Victorian fancy dress day to experience Victorian fashion.
11. Play act or write a play entitled 'Upstairs – Downstairs' centered around life in an affluent Victorian home, with the lord and lady living upstairs and the servants, downstairs.
12. Create a Victorian classroom for the day. Set the tables in rows. With children and teacher in Victorian costumes, re-live the experience.

13. Paint or use cardboard boxes, to make a model Victorian high street. What shops/stores will there be? Let each pupil paint / make a different type of shop and then put them altogether to create a street. Play 'Who am I?' – children guess the shop owner's occupation. How does this high street compare with today's high street?

14. Visit St. Fagans Living Museum in South Wales.

B

15. Study the poem and pictures in The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush and make a farming calendar or wheel. Chart what happens in each season.

16. Study the phases of the moon and superstitions and discover their influence on agricultural practices at the time of the mistle thrush.

Industrial Revolution

1. Read The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush and study the pictures. Imagine now that you are living in a factory town or are a factory worker. Write a diary and describe how your life has **changed since pre-industrial times**.

2. Play 'before or after the Industrial Revolution' sorting games.

3. Use a 'before and after the Industrial Revolution' scene. Play spot the differences.

4. How might the sights seen by the mistle thrush have changed since the Industrial Revolution?

5. Chart the pros and cons of industrialisation. Have a debate.

6. Create a Victorian time-line.

7. Play snap and bingo – make cards and bingo boards depicting inventions, famous Victorians and events.

8. Create simple crosswords and wordsearches around inventors / inventions, discoverers / discoveries and famous Victorians / why they are famous.

9. In the hall or playground, play games which involve the children running to one side or another depending on their choice of answer. E.g. Who invented the light bulb? Run to the left if you think it was Thomas Edison or to the right if you think it was Henry Carlisle.
10. Challenge the children to create a Victorian board game.
11. Create mix and match games around inventions / inventors, discoverers / discoveries, famous Victorians / why they are famous.
12. Challenge the children to make an invention e.g. Seed drill (Design Technology)
13. Have a quiz.
14. Visit the Black Country Living Museum.
15. Visit Rhondda Heritage Park Museum
16. Visit Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron and Iron Bridge.

Using The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush to compare and contrast the two periods, to suggest ways to move forward with conservation and additional activities to support other curriculum areas

A – Geography/environmental science and science and maths

1. Study the poem and pictures in The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush. Describe what happened to the bird's home and what the bird predicted might happen as a result of the trees being lost. What did the Mistle Thrush say that we must do to help the Earth recover? Are we doing what it asked? Give your reasons.
2. Describe what the mistle thrush would see from its tree today.
3. Demonstrate the changes that have been happening to the world's environment and climate, by conducting simple scientific experiments to illustrate processes such as evaporation.

4. Use sequences of pictures that show the process of deforestation, desertification, global warming. Focusing on one theme at a time, take the sequence of pictures, mix them up and let the children place them back in the correct order and explain what is happening in each.
5. Create a 'winners' and 'losers' chart. What do you see happening in the world today? Who are the winners? – (eg. Humans) Who are the losers? (e.g. mistle thrushes, tigers, polar bears, caribou etc). How can this be reversed or balanced?
6. Imagine you are a gardener, how could you help the wild life in your garden?
7. Choose one creature or plant and decide how you are going to help it to thrive throughout each season. Make a season wheel and chart its needs throughout the year.
8. Where might you find a mistle thrush? Take an exploratory nature walk and collate and discuss findings.
9. Play mix and match card games that help to identify garden birds/eggs etc.
10. Draw/paint animals that hibernate and create a list of food that they will need to store in preparation
11. Discover which birds migrate. Plot their routes and distances on maps. Compare past and present routes. Discuss why these changes may have happened.
12. Discover location/climate/terrain of other countries that migratory birds might visit. Have their routes changed over time? If so, why?
13. Choose an animal or bird such as the mistle thrush. Learn all about it and create a simple classification table – e.g
Beak – yellow, feathers – brown with white tips etc.
14. Create different types of graphs to show whether its numbers are growing or declining. Compare and contrast results. Discuss reasons why this is happening.
15. Look at life cycles of living things. Why is the Last Song of the Mistle Thrush a good example of life cycles?

B – English

1. Write to the mistle thrush and tell it what you are going to do to help the world today.
2. Write another verse to the poem. How will your poem end?
3. Write a poem about your favourite season, bird or animal.
4. Imagine you are sitting on the mistle thrush's wings. Where would you fly and what would you see?
5. Write a message/letter to the world from the mistle thrush. What will its message be?

C – Religious Moral/Education

1. Why does the mistle thrush remind us of Christ and the resurrection? Create a picture sequence of the ending in both and compare.
2. New life / renewal is at the heart of all religions. Why is The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush a good example of this?
3. Why is saying sorry and forgiveness so important and how does The Last Song of the Mistle Thrush illustrate this?
Make up a story about forgiving something or someone.
4. What is the moral of this story?

D – Art and music

1. Paint/draw a mistle thrush and label its features.

2. Listen to its song on a recording. See if you can identify it from the song of other birds. Can you recreate it using musical instruments?
3. Can you adapt the birdsong into a tune or jingle with words?
4. Visit a bird and wildlife park.