

Reading and speaking

Living in the past

- 1 What do you know about the time when your grandparents and great-grandparents were young? When was it? What were their houses like? What did they do for entertainment?
- 2 Look at the photos. What things can you find that are typical of the 19th century and the 1950s?
- 3 Work in two groups.

Group A: Read about **Peter Saunders**.

Group B: Read about **Joanne Massey**.

Answer the questions.

- 1 Which era is he/she obsessed by? What started the obsession?
 - 2 What does she/he wear?
 - 3 How does he/she source the things for the house?
 - 4 What does she/he not like about modern life?
 - 5 What does he/she like about the bygone era?
 - 6 Which 'mod cons' do they have in their houses? Where do they keep them?
 - 7 How do they entertain friends?
 - 8 What do other people think of their lifestyle?
 - 9 What do you learn about other members of the family?
- 4 Work with a student from the other group. Use the questions to tell each other about your person.
 - 5 With your partner try to guess the meaning of the highlighted words in your text.

What do you think?

- Why do some people like the idea of past times so much?
- Which past era would you like to live in, or do you prefer life today?
- Which 'mod cons' would you miss?
- What is your opinion of Peter's and Joanne's lifestyles? Which do you prefer? What do you like/not like about them?

Project

Choose a past time which interests you. Research it and present your findings to the class.

▶ Watch a video about a living history museum, and learn about how people lived in Victorian times.



Peter Saunders is a council worker from Nottingham. He's just 35 years old, but he is a huge fan of all things Victorian. He has spent £1,000s turning his house into a late 1800s haven.

Peter takes Victorian life very seriously, even down to wearing a waistcoat and flat cap. Every item in his cottage is 100 per cent authentic. There is no factory-produced furniture, everything from the toilet to the tins in his pantry have been lovingly hand-picked from car boot sales, antique fairs and eBay auctions. A portrait of Queen Victoria hangs proudly above the sitting room fireplace.

The 21st century woman who lives in the 1950s

Joanne Massey, 40, lives in a re-creation of a 1950s home in Stafford with her husband Kevin, 47, who is a graphic designer.

