



6 Smile Please!

Focus: The usefulness of photographs in interpreting the past

For Teachers

When first invented, photography was expensive and the tripod and glass plates cumbersome. Toward the end of the nineteenth century a number of important innovations occurred. Hand-held cameras were invented and rolls of film replaced glass plates. This made photography relatively inexpensive and accessible to more people.

However, photographs were usually taken as a souvenir or remembrance of times past and poses tended to be staged. However, they do give us glimpses into the lives of ordinary people, revealing the clothes they wore and the leisure pursuits they enjoyed.

Main Activities

Why were photographs taken?

Composing your own photograph

Chronology of photographs

How useful and limiting are photographs

Outcomes

How useful have photographs been in helping us to understand life in the village at this time?

Websites

www.rapper.org.uk/notations/high_spen.pdf

[Explains some of the formations of particular dances](#)