Initially the first toys for the beach were made of wood, but soon tin became more common, especially for buckets as it gave more opportunity for colourful patterns and pictures. Today most seaside toys are made of plastic, which means they no longer become rusty. Today some lucky children have a sand pit in their garden but going to the beach is always special.

Wealthy families began to visit the seaside in the 18th century, but it wasn’t until the 19th century that the seaside holiday, as we know it, developed. It was made possible by the expansion of the railways in the 1840s and 1850s, which made long distance travel affordable for most people.

What do you do when you go to the beach?
**Toys Loans Box**

**Dinky toys (phone box, taxi, Esso blue tanker, plane)**

*Dinky toys* were the first British toy cars produced using advanced die-casting techniques which made them cheaper and easier to make than *tin toys*.

The first Dinky toys appeared in the 1930s in Liverpool but *World War II* brought production almost to a standstill for several years. When it resumed *Dinky Toys* produced *cars, trucks, buses, military vehicles, aircraft, ships, dolls house furniture and farm implements* and virtually every boy and many a girl in the *1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s* would have played with them.

*Can you think of any toys that you have at home that show ordinary life?*

The Dock Museum, North Road, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 2PW
dockmuseum@barrowbc.gov.uk; 01229 876400
Writing slate

In Victorian schools, very young children first learned to write their letters in sand trays using their fingers or a stick. When about seven, they progressed onto writing on slates which were made from quarry slate set in wooden frames. A slate pencil was used to form the letters which was often sharpened on the school wall.

Children had to bring a damp cloth to clean their slates but often they would use their own spit and the cuff of their sleeves! This is the origin of the phrase 'to wipe the slate clean,' which we still use today to mean to make a new start.

How many different ways do you write? On what objects?
Toys Loans Box

Soft toys

Mickey Mouse was created by Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks at the Walt Disney Studios in 1928. Mickey has become one of the most recognizable cartoon characters in the world.

Peppa Pig is a more recent creation with the programme being first aired on television in 2004. The show revolves round Peppa, a pig, and her family and friends including this toy here of Rebecca Rabbit.

These soft toys demonstrate the importance of television in creating icons and recognisable characters worldwide. The characters created on TV also come into the home in a variety of merchandise from soft toys, duvets, puzzles and many more products that could be named here.

What toys do you have that come from TV programmes?

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Toys Loans Box

Rubik's Cube

The Rubik’s Cube has become one of the most popular ever puzzles with many millions being sold. It was invented in 1974. Each of the six faces has different coloured stickers (orange, blue, red, white, green and blue) on the squares and the aim is to move each side so that you end up with one side of just one colour.

Although it is a difficult puzzle some people are so good at it that competitions are held to see who can solve the puzzle in the fastest time. A number of solutions have been developed which allow you to solve the cube in under 100 moves.

How long does it take you?

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The earliest Easter eggs were hen or duck eggs decorated and painted in bright colours at home with vegetable dye and charcoal. Some people still roll chicken eggs down hills at Easter time. Do you?

The Easter egg, for Christians, is a reminder that Jesus rose from the grave and that believers will also experience eternal life (as from an egg comes life). Easter is the most important time of the year for Christians.

Decorative eggs were made in a wide range of materials from the late 18th to mid-19th centuries. Tin and cardboard eggs and bunny figures first made in the early 20th century once held sweets. The Victorians had cardboard and satin covered eggs filled with Easter gifts and chocolates.

Do you receive eggs for Easter? What are they made of?
Toys Loans Box

**Album of cut-outs**

In the late Victorian age children would buy these a few at a time on a perforated sheet and they would be either cut out or pushed out and then stuck into an album. The album could contain hundreds of pictures and subjects that could be covered were: pets, Christmas, folk stories, children, toys, shops, trades people and customs.......all captured in the style that we call Victorian.

Today sticker albums are more popular and special booklets are sold for events like the Football World Cup and also related to popular TV programmes.

Do you have a sticker album?

The Dock Museum, North Road, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 2PW
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The first marbles were made of clay, stone or real marble. The Victorians loved to play marbles – their favourite ones were made of real marble and were thought to be the best for shooting, but they were very expensive.

Marbles made of glass were cheaper and for the people with very little money, ones made of clay like the ones in the box were played with.

In some games with marbles you throw your marble, but most games use shooting. To shoot properly you need to put the knuckle of your forefinger on the ground with the marble balanced in the bent forefinger. Then you need to put the thumb behind the forefinger and release with whatever force you like.

Have you played marbles before? Are you any good?!
Toys Loans Box

Japhet and Happy book

The book features the Noah family of characters and their wooden pets as they appeared first in the Daily News and then in the News Chronicle.

Japhet was the son of Mr Noah and Happy was a small bear cub. The Noah family was also known as 'The Arkubs.'

Can you think of any popular cartoons that started in a newspaper?
Traditionally rag dolls were stuffed with cloth, sawdust or straw. This life-sized doll is a lithographed cloth cut out doll and it has a date of 1900 marked on the side of each foot. Many of the dolls were home-made for children but from about the 1850s rag dolls were produced commercially and were printed on cloth or had their features hand painted in oils.

Do you play with dolls at home? What does your doll look like?