

Aston Hall and the Victorians

Worksheet

(To use on a visit or with the relevant website)

Today the rooms in Aston Hall have displays representing different times throughout its 400 year history. They include rooms from early Victorian times as follows: -

The Library

Every rich Victorian home would have its own library.

- ◆ What do you think the books covered with?
- ◆ What did James Watt do at his desk?
- ◆ What is a zograscope?

The Drawing Room

The name for this sitting room developed from the 'withdrawing room' of earlier times. This is where that new Victorian fashion - afternoon tea - took place.

- ◆ Describe the two cupboards on either side of this room.
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- ◆ How was the room heated?
- ◆ Why are the candles in glass funnels?

- ◆ What popular Victorian musical instrument is in this room?
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The Small Dining Room

James Watt had several large rooms where he could give grand visitors sumptuous banquets. But this room was for meals alone or with a few friends.

- ◆ What is the fireplace made from? _____
 - ◆ A decorative epergne is in the centre of the table. What is it made from?
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- ◆ The silver cutlery was kept locked in boxes when it was not being used. How many of these boxes are in this room?
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- ◆ What shape is the wine cooler? It is a lead lined box (to take ice) with a lid on the floor.
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- ◆ What makes you think the Victorians were keen to show off their china?
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The Johnson Room

A gentleman's room. James Watt would come in here after dinner, on his own or with gentlemen friends, to smoke cigars and drink port or brandy.

- ◆ Why would the shapes on the top of the table help prevent drinks from being knocked over?

- ◆ What is in the room to do with writing?

- ◆ How do you think the exercise horse was used?

The Blue Room (a bedroom)

Rich early Victorians had very heavy solid four poster or tester beds (tester is a word for the roof part). Lots of homes had bathrooms put in, but this did not happen at Aston Hall.

- ◆ What type of bed is this? _____

- ◆ What is the piece of furniture by the bed for? _____

The Nursery

Better off Victorian children had a night nursery with beds, and a day nursery for playing and taking lessons with a governess or tutor. There is just a day nursery on show at Aston Hall.

- ◆ What materials are the toys made from? _____

◆ How old was the girl who embroidered the picture? _____

◆ List the toys that would have been used with dolls.

◆ List the animal toys _____

◆ Look at the picture by the window. Why did the little girls have to wear pinafores?

◆ **The Housekeeper's Room**

The housekeeper was in charge of the maids and the smooth running of the house.

◆ In what way does the furniture in her room look typically Victorian?

◆ What is missing from the half tester bed? _____

◆ How has the screen in the corner been decorated?

◆ What would the very low padded stools have been used for?