



Remote Reminiscence – Getting Elders Online

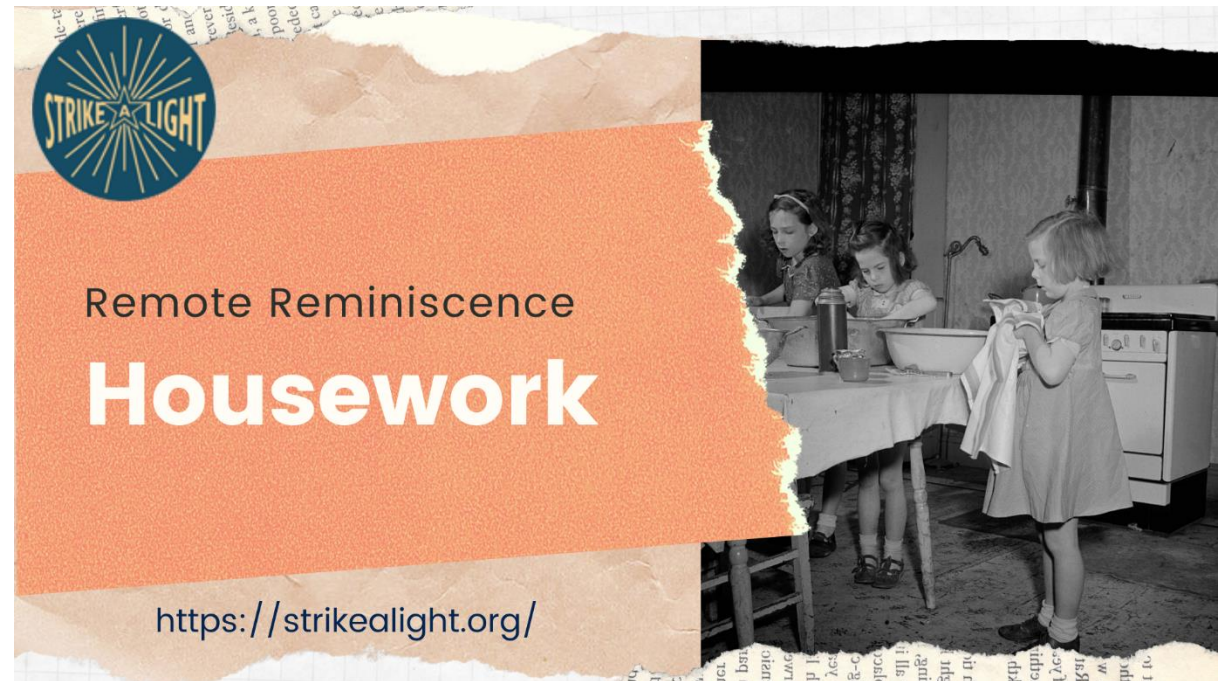
Theme #10 – Housework

1

This activity pack looks at memories of aspects of housework, and life in the home including rituals such as wash day.

You can use this resource as a stand-alone series of activities or in conjunction with a short film available for free on our YouTube channel.

Why not have a look through and pick ideas to support activities with friends, family and in groups too.



The link for the accompanying film can be found at the end of this activity.



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- This section is all about Housework. There are lots of images of objects and suggestions here to get conversations started.
- We will think about the different tasks that used to be involved in housework and how these have changed.
- The accompanying short film will also discuss using objects and products to trigger memories.

2

Icebreaker Activity

- Can you think of any songs linked to cleaning and housework? Why not share one – have a try and sing a few lines.
- Here's a suggestion to get started:

*'Twas on a Monday morning
When I beheld my darling,
She looked so neat and charming
In ev'ry high degree.
She looked so neat and nimble, O,
A-washing of her linen, O,
Dashing away with the smoothing iron,
She stole my heart away.*

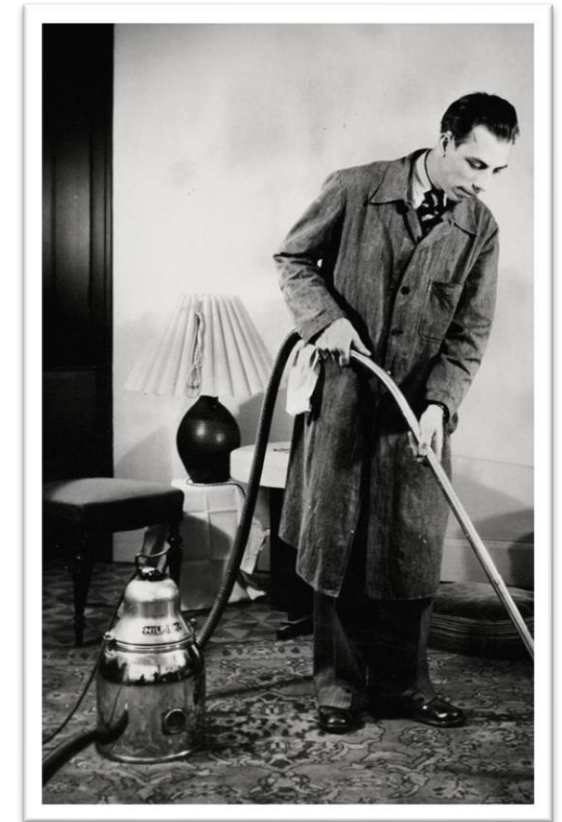


Figure 1: Man hoovering in the 1930s.
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3

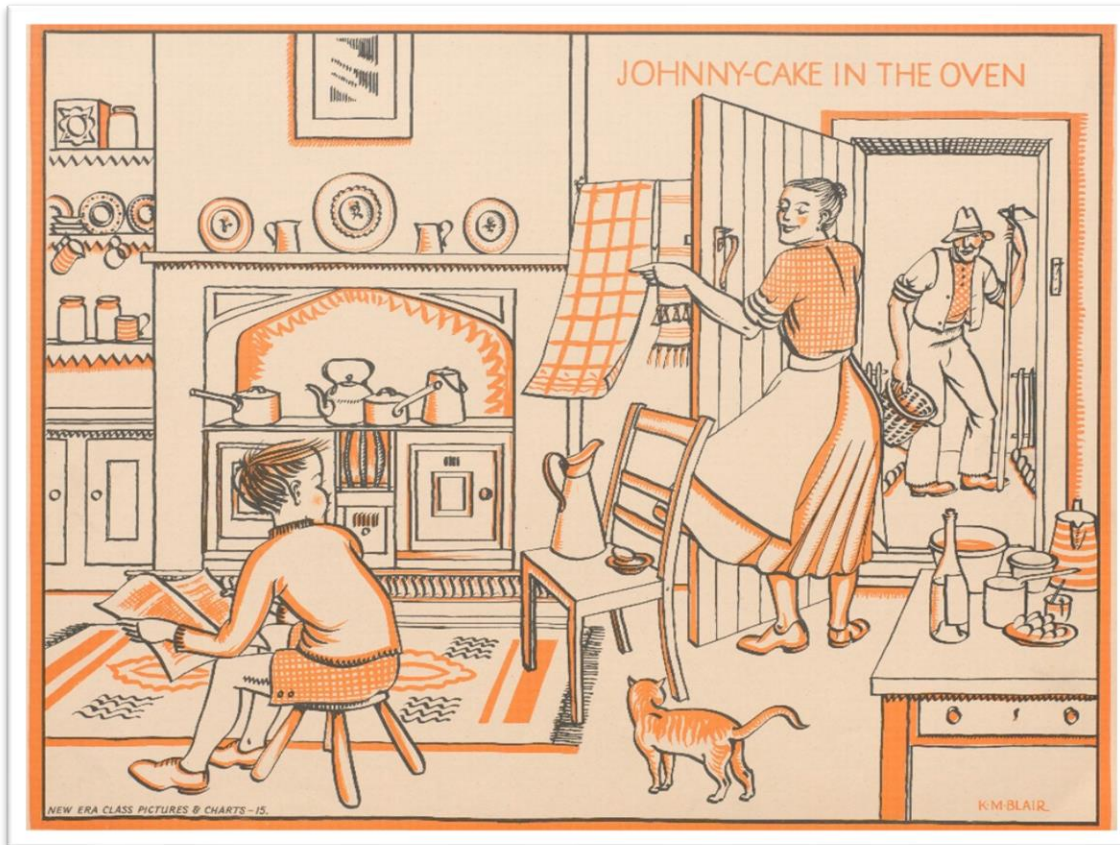


Figure 2: 1930s educational poster. Copyright free image.

Ideas for starters:

- I. How has housework changed since over the years?
- II. How did things used to be?
- III. Did you have appliances?
- IV. How much housework did you do?
- V. Did you parents do most of the housework, and if so, was it one particular parent?
- VI. What equipment did you used to have which you don't have now, and vice versa?
- VII. Is there a particular kind of chore you like/dislike the most?



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Activity: What housework tasks do you remember?

- Make a list of the household tasks that you used to do. Do you still do these?

4



Housework

- WASHING CLOTHES
- SWEEPING & SCRUBBING THE FLOOR
- BEATING CARPETS
- FETCHING WOOD & COAL
- LAYING THE FIRE
- POLISHING & DUSTING
- CLEANING THE CUTLERY
- TURNING THE BEDS
- COOKING

WHAT ELSE DO YOU REMEMBER?

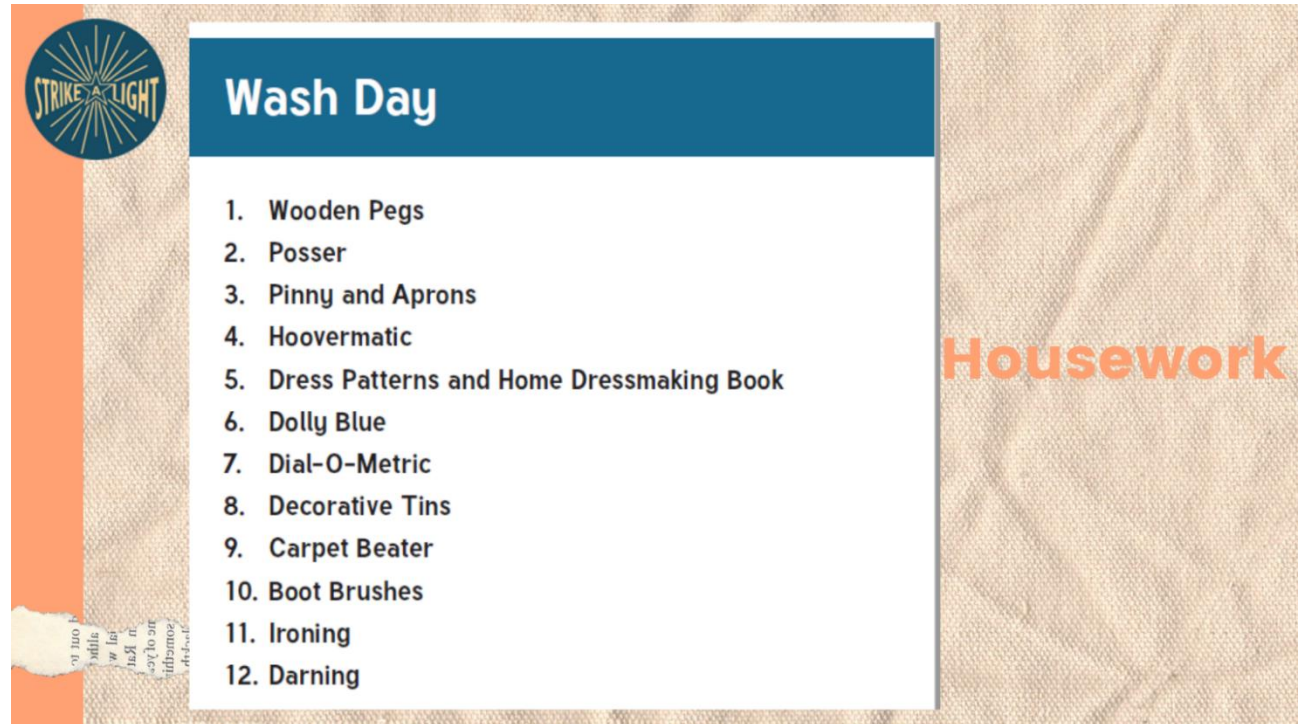




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Activity: Wash Day

- What do you remember about Wash Day? Break it down into a list of tasks.
- Did you have a particular day of the week that was Wash Day?
- What time did work begin?
- Did you have running water?
If not, did you have to fetch it?
- How was the water heated?
Did you have a copper to heat it in?
- What sort of soap or detergent did you use?
- How was the ironing done?
What sort of iron did you use?
- How often did you change your clothes and bedding?
- What method did you use to get the washing done?





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Activity: Boot brushes

- Read this passage below out loud or to yourself.
- See if you can answer any of the questions following it on the next page.

6

Wash Day

Boot Brushes

'On a Saturday night, my father used to lie a sheet of newspaper down on the floor to prepare to polish his boots. It was his weekly ritual ready for church on a Sunday. He took a great pride in his appearance and always wore smart leather shoes to church on a Sunday. He'd used to clean any dirt off the boots using a floor cloth. Then he'd use a small soft brush to apply the jet-black polish to the boots. He'd leave the polish to soak in while he put the kettle on the hob. Then he'd come back a while later after his cuppa and use another larger brush to polish them up. They would be so shiny that you could almost see your own reflection!'

Housework



Boot Brushes

1. Did you own a pair of leather boots?
2. Which brand of shoe polish did you use?
3. Did you use a cloth or a brush to apply and buff?
4. What other types of brush did you use?
5. Did you have an outfit you kept for 'Sunday best'?

Boot Brushes



Housework

Activity: Using the senses

8

- Think about how you can relate housework to all your different senses.
- Gather some materials like *Brasso*, window cleaner, scented soap and furniture polish.
- Have a smell of the products – what do they remind you of?
- Feel the weight of a flat iron, feel the roughness of a wash board or listen to the texture of a scrubbing brush.
- Think of these objects as a way to trigger memories.



Figure 3: Images of cleaning products. Copyright free image.

Housework



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Visual Resources

Watch our short Housework film here for more ideas and support: <https://youtu.be/ezOOZCYfRok>

10



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