

## Let's imagine: smock

Each week the Museum is going to publish a 'Let's Imagine' activity sheet. This activity sheet will include a picture of an object in the Museum. It will tell you about the object and then it will be up to you to imagine a story, poem and/or picture inspired by this object. The sheet will include at least three questions or statements to help get you started and inspired.

This week's object is a **smock**, more than one of which can be found in the museum collection and one is on display in the permanent exhibition. Read the information in blue (below) to find out more about this type of smock.



You have to describe the smock to a friend. What do you say?

Draw a picture of you or a member of your family wearing a smock.

Write a story or poem about meeting a smock-wearing farmer in 19<sup>th</sup> century. What was farming like then? You might like to research online rural life and farming in 19<sup>th</sup> century.



This smock is from the museum collection. It is a man's smock (over-garment) made out of white linen. Smocks were worn by farm labourers, including shepherds (who would look after a flock of sheep). It would have been worn every day, but most farmers would have had a fancier and smarter smock to wear to church – their 'Sunday Best'. It is called a smock due to the type of stitching used to decorate it, called smocking. The garment and smocking were stitched by hand and not a machine. The purpose of the smock was to protect the wearer from the weather and to keep their clothes (underneath) clean; it was also comfortable and loose so allowing freedom of movement.

This smock has fancy buttons and double pockets so may have been a 'Sunday Best' smock. The donor, Mrs Stone, remembers her mother's uncle wearing it in the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and that he was a farmer.

The smock was popular throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, only dying out in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when farm machinery made it too dangerous to wear as a work garment.