

Dress Up for the 1800s!

Times change, but you can stay fashionable in any era. Each of the dolls is wearing underwear from the late 1800s (including tops and bottoms that button together!), and there are clothing options for each doll on the other pages.

How are these clothes different than yours? What do you think the kids who wore them would think of your clothes today?



Name: _____

What should I dress up for today?: _____



Name: _____

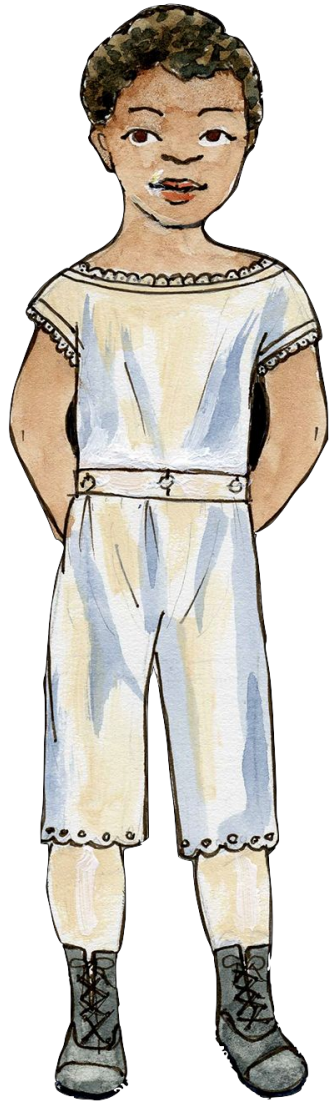
Should I wear pants or a dress?: _____



Name: _____

What's something I really don't like wearing?: _____

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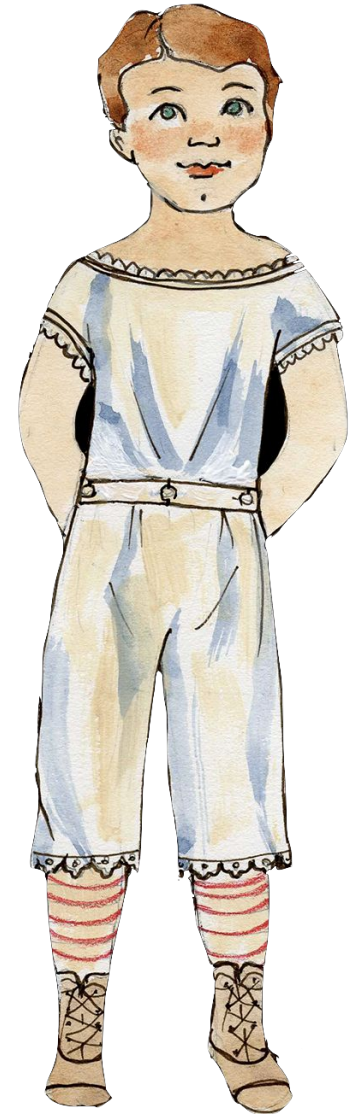
Name: _____

What's my favorite outfit?: _____



Name: _____

What is my least favorite thing to dress up for?: _____



Name: _____

What's my favorite thing to wear?: _____

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Before this dress was used by a kid, its special silk fabric was used to make a dress for a grown up. Then it was taken apart and put back together in a smaller size so that a kid could wear it. This still was a fancy dress, and the girl who wore this dress probably wore it to parties, or visiting neighbors in Northampton.



This suit was worn by a Northampton boy in the 1800s. The style of uniform is from a country called Algeria. French soldiers took the Algerian style as their own, and then Americans saw the French uniforms and copied them as well. This style of clothes became popular during the American Civil War and some children wore them when they pretended to be like the soldiers.



In the 1860s, when this outfit was made, pink was the color for boys. It was considered a “strong” color, and that was a quality that people at the time associated with boys.. The four-year-old boy who wore it would probably have been going to a fancy event, but no matter where he went, he would have been looking his best.

Dress Up for the 1800s!



The young owner of this dress would have saved it for a fancy party or an important event and worn a special piece of underwear called a bustle to puff out the back. Though this dress was sewn between 1867 and 1870, the silk fabric is from the 1850s, and visible stitch lines show that it used to be part of a completely different dress!



This dress would have been too nice for its seven or eight-year-old owner to play outside in, but it wasn't nice enough to wear to a party where she wanted to show off. She might have worn it to school. The maker of this cotton dress used a store-bought trim to give it a little extra flair.



This dress would have been appropriate for any gender, and the wool twill fabric would have kept a toddler warm in winter. What would an 1800s toddler have worn under it? The answer is the same as for a 21st century child: a diaper. However, 1800s diapers were not the disposable ones of today: they were layers of cloth with a diamond weave pattern. In the spring, the toddler who wore this dress might have been allowed to play outside with no diaper at all!