

# Queen Victoria

Until recently, Queen Victoria was the longest-serving British monarch with nearly 64 years on the throne. She is the great-great-grandmother of Queen Elizabeth II, who is now the longest-serving British monarch. All the time that Victoria was queen is known as The Victorian Age.

## Early Life

Victoria was born on 24th May 1819 and lived at Kensington Palace in London, with her parents Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld and Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn. Her father was the fourth son of George III so this made Victoria fifth in line to the throne. In her early years, she had little freedom and she had very strict rules to live by, including sleeping in the same room as her mother. This was done by others to have control over her. Consequently, this made Victoria very stubborn. She also started writing a diary at this time which she carried on for most of her life.

Victoria was still young when she became Queen at just 18 years old. The first thing she did as Queen was have one hour to herself – something she had never had before! Her coronation was a year later on 28th June 1838 at Westminster Abbey.



## Did you know?

- She was only 4 feet 11 inches tall (approx. 150cm).
- Queen Elizabeth II is her great-great-granddaughter.
- She was christened 'Alexandrina Victoria' and was known as 'Her Royal Highness Princess Victoria of Kent'.
- Victoria survived seven assassination attempts during her reign.

## Victoria and Albert

Victoria is famous for having a long and happy marriage to her consort, Albert. They met when Victoria was just 16 years old and he was actually her cousin. Due to the fact that she was Queen, he was not allowed to propose to her, so she had to propose to him and did so on October 15th 1839. They were married the following year on 10th February and later she wrote in her diary, 'Without him everything loses its interest'. Together they had nine children and resided in Buckingham Palace. They also spent lots of joyful times at Balmoral in Scotland, where Albert built a castle for their residence.

They were happily married until Albert's death in 1861, after which she mourned, wearing black for the rest of her life.

### **End of an Era**

Victoria died on 22nd of January 1901 at her Osborne House Estate on the Isle of Wight. This then meant her son, Albert Edward, became King Edward VII. She had been a devoted queen and had overseen an important time of change in industry, travel and technologies. During her reign, Britain became the most powerful country in the world with the largest Empire (The British Empire) ruling over one quarter of the world's population. Even though she has been overtaken by Elizabeth II for the longest reign, she was still a formidable queen!

1. Write the relative clause from the second sentence?

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2. What was the name of her consort?

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3. In the **Did You Know?** section, why does the word 'approx.' have a full stop on the end?

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4. What was significant about her clothes after Albert died?

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5. In the **Victoria and Albert** section, why does 'without him everything loses its interest' have quotation marks around it?

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6. What was the name given to people who were alive during Victoria's reign?

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7. How old was Victoria when she died?

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8. Why has the author used an exclamation mark in the second paragraph of the **Early Life** section?

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9. Look up in the dictionary the word used in the final sentence, 'formidable'. What does it mean?

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10. Do you agree that she was 'formidable'? Explain your opinion.

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1. Write the relative clause from the second sentence?

**'who is now the longest-serving British monarch.'**

2. What was the name of her consort?

**Albert**

3. In the **Did You Know?** section, why does the word 'approx.' have a full stop on the end?

**It shows that the word is shortened. The full word is 'approximately'.**

4. What was significant about her clothes after Albert died?

**She wore only black to show she was in mourning for him.**

5. In the **Victoria and Albert** section, why does 'without him everything loses its interest' have quotation marks around it?

**It is an exact quote taken from her diary.**

6. What was the name given to people who were alive during Victoria's reign?

**Victorians**

7. How old was Victoria when she died?

**81 or eighty-one**

8. Why has the author used an exclamation mark in the second paragraph of the **Early Life** section?

**It is amazing/surprising that you could reach the age of 18 having not spent one hour on your own. It is hard to imagine.**

9. Look up in the dictionary the word used in the final sentence, 'formidable'. What does it mean?

**Feared or respected for being impressive, capable or powerful.**

10. Do you agree that she was 'a really important queen'? Explain your opinion.

**Open discussion: There is no evidence in the final paragraph that she was.**