



Classroom role play – Teacher notes

The character profiles illustrate the lives of people in a North East England colliery village in 1913. They are fictional, but based on life at the time.

They are set within Beamish Colliery Village and relate to the pit cottages, chapel, mine and school. Photographs and items from the paper archive can be used to support the characters.

Pupils can research an individual using the profile, supporting information and images, and information gathered on a museum visit. They can then play this role within a class activity.

Panel from the past

Six pupils represent the characters from 1913. Students can put questions to the panel to find out about life in the colliery village in the past. Questioning pupils can be directed to find out about particular aspects of the past e.g. The role of the Methodist chapel in people's lives.

To move or not to move?

Pupils represent characters from 1913. The panel is questioned by a pupil in the role of an Irish worker, visiting the village to decide whether to move his family to the area. After their questions are answered, they must decide whether or not to move.

Colliery characters

All pupils are in character role. The teacher asks pupils to say how important different aspects of life are to them, on a scale of 1 to 10. The similarities and differences between scores can then be discussed. Students opt out if the question doesn't relate to their character.

- ◆ How important is attending church or chapel every week?
- ◆ How important is it to teach people not to drink alcohol?
- ◆ How important is it to be careful with money?
- ◆ How important is it that the mine stays open?
- ◆ How important are safe working practices in the mine?



Supporting resources

These resources can be used to help build up a picture of the characters.

The Child

Paper archive

- ◆ Bible colouring book
- ◆ Sunday School outing ticket
- ◆ Sunday School certificate

Images

- ◆ Sunday School outing
- ◆ Sunday School certificate
- ◆ Francis Street, the colliery village

Oral history

- ◆ Sunday School by John Trueman



The Widow

Paper archive

- ◆ Card celebrating the centenary of the Primitive Methodist Church

Images

- ◆ Gentleman playing the harmonium
- ◆ Lady washing clothes
- ◆ Band of Hope certificate
- ◆ Rug making
- ◆ The parlour of Number 4
- ◆ Francis Street, The Colliery Village

Oral history

- ◆ Chapel life by Mr Cawson





The Miner's Wife

Paper archive

- ◆ Sunday School teacher training certificate
- ◆ Advert for Primitive Methodist Christmas social event

Images

- ◆ Beamish Wesleyan Methodist Church
- ◆ Wesleyan tea tent at the Egglestone Show
- ◆ Children and teachers on a Sunday School outing
- ◆ The kitchen at Number 2 Francis Street
- ◆ Table set for tea, Number 2 Francis Street

Oral history

- ◆ Chapel life by Mr Cawson



The Winding Engineman

Paper archive

- ◆ Collecting book front cover
- ◆ Temperance certificate

Images

- ◆ Inside the chapel at Beamish Museum
- ◆ Miners crossing the colliery yard
- ◆ Winding engineman at the controls of a winder (circa 1913)
- ◆ Coal yard workers listening to a preacher
- ◆ Durham Miners' Association certificate

Oral history

- ◆ Chapel life by Mr Cawson



community culture & religion

in a colliery village



The Putter

Images

- ◆ Carol singers
- ◆ Man and his dog outside a pigeon loft
- ◆ Miners crossing the colliery yard
- ◆ Miner in the drift mine
- ◆ Putter pushing a coal tub, watched by a deputy

The Hewer

Images

- ◆ Man with his pet whippet
- ◆ The parlour at Number 3 Francis Street
- ◆ Baking day at Number 3 Francis Street
- ◆ Miner in the drift mine
- ◆ Miner filling a coal tub
- ◆ Hewer at the coal face

