

The Checkweighman (1857- 1873)

Aim of session

Using the Enquiry Approach

1. To show the importance of the Union in achieving change
2. Have an understanding of democracy (through the lodge delegate system) - **working together / citizenship**
3. Have an understanding of the working and living conditions in the Durham Coalfield at that time **Victorian Britain**
4. Know how The Miners' Hall, Redhills was used
5. Identify artefacts – Know and understand the mining terminology e.g. checkweighman, lodge, delegate, coal owner, hewer, colliery, seam, pick **literacy**
6. Use equipment to weigh coal and calculate payments and living costs **numeracy**
7. Learn a new mining song and write their own verse **music/creativity**

At the end of the day the children should be able to answer the following:

Why did the Durham miners need a union?

How was the union organised at every colliery?

Why is the Lodge banner important?

Resource Pack

This will provide the background information schools could use to develop their learning programme

We aim to provide each participating school with links to an online pack of materials to include:

- Coal- uses of coal in 19th century
- How coal is formed
- Map of the Durham coalfield
- Importance to the local economy
- Links to the Durham Mining Museum website- info on local collieries, seams worked, men employed, fatalities.
- Newspaper articles Gala
- Population data for Durham 1820 - 2018
- Migration details for Durham – immigration and emigration 19th Century
- Wage rates in coalfield
- Cost of living for staple foods and comparison with today
- The Workhouse – personal testimonies (fear of)
- Children’s Commission 1840

Links to

Durham Miners Association- www.durhamminers.org.uk photos, banners, videos, history, Friends of the DMG

Durham Mining Museum www.dmm.org.uk - info on local collieries, seams worked, maps, men employed, fatalities.

National Coal Mining Museum for England – www.ncm.org.uk schools resources

ACTIVITY

Adults to take on role, in costume and speak in first person. (Hats off - now, Hats on - then)

Stage 1 09:30 – 10:00

Children gather in council chamber if possible in costume and old clothes.

Set Scene Durham in 1868 **150 years ago**

Tommy Ramsey – there's a painting of me upstairs. Let me tell yas about mysel.
Attempts to establish a union. Northumberland men better off.

My name is Mary Young let me tell you about our family - bond, coal owner, working conditions, fair day's pay, children working, accidents, wages, living conditions, limited schooling, tommy shops.

What do we hope to find today? Why the miners needed a union, how the union operated in the Durham villages, and the need for a banner?

Stage 2 10:00 - 12:30

<p>10:00 - 10:40</p>	<p>AT THE COLLIERY Outside</p> <p>Bosses man weighman – set the scene of boys working underground filling the corves tell them how much is paid for each full basket /baskets of coal, weighing the coal, rejecting some too much stone, too small etc. Handling the tools. Bond. Dangers working underground. Different jobs Agitator/ union man highlight the unfairness of this -</p> <p>IN THE COLLIERY VILLAGE Committee Room</p> <p>Using backdrop of cottage from Beamish, poss tub, tin bath, mixing bowl, rolling pin , scrubbing brush . Talk about the working day, need to make meals for all shifts. Big families Girls to look after babies and toddlers. Cost of food, adulterated /poor food from tommy shops. Need for all boys to go down the pit as soon as. Agitator/highlight the need for better wages, good quality food</p>
<p>10:40 - 10:50</p>	<p>COME TOGETHER Committee Room</p> <p>What did the men earn from their day's work? - what are the implications for the rent and food? Pennies for school? Shoes?</p> <p>You should understand what we are up against-Can you do any better ?</p>

<p>10:50 - 11:30</p>	<p>CHANGE ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Girls to colliery Boys to Colliery Village</p>
<p>11:30 - 12:00</p>	<p>PLENARY</p> <p>Council Chamber</p> <p>What do we need? How are we going to get it? Need to stick together – banner and sticks. Elect a delegate to go to Durham- why do we need to stick together in Durham</p> <p>Sit in delegates seats and call out the name of their lodge.</p>
<p>12:00 - 12: 30</p>	<p>LUNCH</p>

Stage 3 12.30pm – 2.00pm
Committee Room

Music Session- Learn the song first two verses with actions 'The checkweighman', children sing this.

Split into smaller groups to write a verse (ALL Volunteers to help)

Come together to sing completed version

Stage 4 2.00pm- 2.30pm
Council Chamber

Plenary – Open Questions Please

What have we learnt today? – select from below

Who was Tommy Ramsey? Why is he remembered?

The hated bond – what was this?

Go through how were miners paid? was this fair ? Why do you think they were they not paid a fair wage?

Was it easy work?

Was it dangerous – why?

What about life at home? Was it easy for the women and what about the children?

Why do you think so few went to school?

If they couldn't read or write what kind of jobs do you think the girls/boys could do?

What about these words- what did they mean : Checkweighman, hewer, trapper, putter, pick, posstub, tin bath, etc

Would it be better now they had a Union- why/why not?

Performance of their song on stage in Council Chamber

CLOSE