

What's in a Photo Post-Visit Activity

Grades: 4 to 8

Subject: Social Studies

Historical photos can tell us many things about life in the past. They are a primary source of information, and along with archival documents that remain, are our biggest window into the Britannia Mines and the people that lived, worked and played there.

This activity encourages students to analyze a photograph to make observations about what they see. After this, there is opportunity to discuss their findings, and explore what reasonable assumptions and guesswork they can make. They can also use the information as a basis for their imagination.

Activity Suggestion

Have each student, or group of students, choose a photograph from the selection of images on our web site. The student worksheet on the next page breaks their observations into people, place, event and object. You may want them to do only one topic, or you may want them to do all four, though not all the photographs will cover all four topics.

Students should then study the photograph, answering the questions in the student worksheet as a guide, though encourage them to describe the photograph in as much detail as they can.

When they have completed this, lead them through their observations to see what assumptions they can make about life at the time of the photograph. Are they safe assumptions, or is it impossible to tell? For example, if an underground miner is not wearing a hard hat, does this mean hard hats were not being used then, or could he just be not wearing his that day? How else could the student find out if hard hats were in use then?

You can take this activity further by having the students create a short story, poster or role play drama based on their photograph.

Please note: if your students use any of the images to create a poster etc., they should use the credit line © Britannia Mine Museum Archives. This will give due credit to the BMM but will also introduce or instill in them the value of internet copyright.

What's In A Photo? – The Britannia Mines

Answer these questions below to fill in the boxes on the next page. Depending on your photo, you might not be to answer all of the questions. For example, if your photo doesn't have any people in it, you won't be able to answer the People questions.

Making Observations

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many people are there – men, women and children? - How old do they look? - What are they doing? - Are they at work, at home, or in leisure time? - What are they wearing? - Are they showing emotions such as – laughing, happy, sad, serious? - Are they posing for the camera, or is it a natural photo? - Do they look rich or poor? Can you tell? - What else can you say about them? | <p>Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is it indoors, outdoors or underground? - Are there buildings – can you tell what they are? - What natural features can you see such as – forest, sea, mountains? - What man-made features can you see such as – roads, telegraph poles, railway lines, gardens, dams, walls? - What else can you say about it? |
| <p>Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there people there and if so, how many of them? - When the photo has been taken, what has happened, or what is happening? - Is it a good or bad event, or is it impossible to tell? - Is it a planned event, or something that has happened unexpectedly? - What else can you say about it? | <p>Object</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the main object? - Is it natural or man-made? - Is it something people use, and if so, what for? - Is it working or broken? - What is it made of? - What other objects are there? - What else can you say about it/them? |



Name _____

BCMM photo number _____

Teacher Name _____

Date _____

What's In A Photo? – The Britannia Mines

1. Making Observations – Describe in the boxes what you see in the photo

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| People | Place |
| Event | Object |

