The Life of a Miner’s Child

**Objectives**

Students will:

- Compare their life to that of a turn-of-the-century miner’s child by completing a Venn Diagram and drawing pictures.

**Student Instruction**

Show Clue 30, *Kids in Park City* photo. Ask students to describe what they see in this picture. Explain that this photo shows kids who lived in Park City at the turn of the century. Their fathers may have worked in the mines. Ask: *What things in these children’s lives look similar to your life? What things look different?*

Remind students that Jennie Kearns was very concerned about the children of miners. *Why was she worried about them? What did she do to help them?* Review information on Kearns St. Ann’s Orphanage in *Kearns Mansion Mystery History* Case Report from Lesson 2 if necessary.

**Explain:** Most children of miners did not become orphans, but their lives were different from yours. *Let’s compare the life of child in Park City at the turn of the century to your life today.*

Pass out a copy of Clue 31, *The Life of a Miner’s Child* description sheet to each student. As a class, read the description sheet.

**Materials**

- *Kids in Park City* photo
- *The Life of a Miner’s Child* Description Sheet
- *Same or Different?* Activity Sheet
- Drawing paper and crayons or markers

**Note**

This lesson is based on a lesson in the Utah State Historical Society’s *Mining Teaching Kit*. This kit is filled with great resources for teaching about Utah’s mining industry. For information on checking out the *Mining Teaching Kit*, call (801) 533-3500. Used with permission of the Utah State Historical Society.
Student Activity/Product

1. Pass out one Same or Different? Activity Sheet to each student. Review instructions with students. Do an example if necessary. Students complete the diagram.

2. As a class, compare William’s life to those of students today. Ask: What foods did William eat that you have never tried? What games did William play that you would like to play? How is your life similar to William’s? How is it different?

3. Distribute drawing paper to students. Students fold paper in half. On one half of the page they draw a picture of William and/or his sisters doing something on the description sheet that is similar to their lives. On the other half, they draw a picture of William and/or his sisters doing something on the description sheet that is very different from their lives.

Links

Lesson 4: What Does Your House Say About You? Pre-Tour
Lesson 11: The Daily Grind in Park City Post-Tour
William Hurley was the youngest son of Joseph and Christina Hurley. He grew up in Park City at the turn-of-the-century. William had four sisters and one brother. The Hurley family was Catholic and the children attended St. Mary’s school from first to sixth grade. William’s father, Joseph, operated the Cornish Pump at the Ontario Silver Mine in Park City. The Cornish Pump drained the water out of the mine so people could work in it.

Below are lists of some of the activities and foods that were a part of William’s everyday life.

**Jobs**
- Pass out flyers for a movie theater owner
- Build a fire in the coal stove around 5:00 in the morning
- Shovel snow from the house to the road before school in the morning
- Carry water from a well to the house
- Use a sleigh to haul the wash tubs and copper boilers to the city pump across the street and fill them with water
- Collect beer bottles from the boarding houses and the mines to sell back to the saloons
- Collect old copper from the mines to sell to the junk man
- Sell ice cream cones at holiday parades
- Whitewash the outdoor toilet at St. Mary’s school for not having lessons prepared or misbehaving
- William’s sisters helped their mother cook meals on the coal stove
- Sisters helped sew and repair clothes
- Sisters helped clean the house
- William and his sisters turned the washing machine by hand

**Food**
- Cornish pasty (a single-serving meat pie made at home)
- Saffron bread
- Oatmeal (a pot was always on the stove)
- Apples
- Homemade soups
- Raisin bread
- Cookies
- Root Beer

**Games and Recreation**
- Walk the trail over Guardsman’s Pass to swim (*dog paddle*) in Lake Bonanza Flat
- Slide down the hills on corrugated sheets of tin to the frozen lake
- Ride bob sleigh
- Skate on the frozen reservoir
- Play baseball in an old sand dump with a baseball made from an old sock or sweater sewn around a rubber ball
- Ski on homemade skis made from barrel staves
- Watch stereoscope slides
- Watch the movies either by exchange of work or sneaking in
- Picnic at Snyder’s Hot Pots (*now called the Homestead*) on the Fourth of July
On this side of the circle, list some jobs, food, and games from William Hurley’s life that are not part of your life today.

Where the circles overlap, list some jobs, food, and games that you and William Hurley have in common.

On this side of the circle, list some jobs, food, and games that are part of your life, but were not part of William Hurley’s life.