

Pitheid
Patter
Education
Resource
Pack

**Suggestions of
things to do with
your class**

See Topic 1

Working at the Barony

Going underground

It is hard to imagine just how dark it is in a mine and how difficult it is to move about in this darkness. This is an attempt to recreate the experience of coming to terms with the darkness and the small spaces within the mine through role play.

- Recreate a mine shaft by arranging school desks in a row.
- Close the blinds in your classroom.
- Use a scarf as a blindfold.
- Everyone must be as quiet as possible.
- Imagine you are being lowered down in the “cage” into the mine for the first time.
- Once you have created this scene with your class, get the pupils to describe their feelings. Think about words which describe being in the dark. Think about why this “darkness” in the mine would be different from the darkness of the night.
- Now get the class to take turns to crawl through the “mine shaft” you have created with the desks - you may want the pupils to keep their blindfold on.
- Again get your pupils to talk about their feelings after they have all completed the activity. Have any of them experienced feelings of claustrophobia?

This role playing exercise can be used to generate creative writing e.g.

Pretend this is your first day...down the mine ... working as a supply boy...working at the face.

Write a letter to a friend who has left the village to work in a factory in the town. Describe what your working day at the mine is like.

Piece time

Look at the foods the miners ate at their break and think about whether these are considered as a healthy option today.

Investigate what kind of high energy foods people would eat today.

Underground training

Dungavel was the centre used for underground training.

Dungavel has a very different use today - get your class to investigate the changing uses of this place which started out as a hunting lodge for the Duke of Hamilton.

Topic 2 Life in the Mining Community

The Rows

Look at the diagram of the house in Dalsalloch Row.

- Draw a plan of your house.
- Think about how your home is different / the same as the house in Dalsalloch Row.
- Be a time traveller - pretend you have travelled back in time and write a story comparing life in Dalsalloch Row to your home in the “future”.

I remember an old pay line for six and three quarter shifts on the pithead - 36 shillings. I got 1 bob pocket money from that and if you got a wee bit more money, you got half a crown. A loaf would be about fourpence then. I think a pint was a tanner. The pictures was thrupence, ninepence and a shilling - the price to get in. So you could do 2 or 3 things with your shilling.

Jim Bryden

The money that Jim is talking about is what is sometimes referred to as the “old money”. This is what it looked like.



penny - 1d



thrupence - 3d



tanner - 6d



a bob or shilling
1s or 1/-



half a crown
2s 6d or 2/6

Using this website: www.eh.net find out how much a loaf of bread would cost at today's monetary value. Use 1945 as your “old” date at this website.

Social Life

There are many different games that children used to play, usually they were outside games.

- Think about why the children would play outside and be encouraged by their mothers to do so.
- Peevers: this game is sometimes called “beds” or “hopscotch” - find out how to play the game. You may need to ask grandparents how to play!
- The gird was a large metal ring and the cleek was a long piece of metal used to push the gird along as fast as possible. Every year a gird and cleek race is held at the Alternative Games in south west Scotland. See if you can find out about these. Your local museum may have a gird and cleek which you can borrow.
- Look at the picture of the men playing at quoiting. What other games does this remind you of?
- Find out how to play the card game, Newmarket, that Arthur played with his family on Saturday nights.

Today we watch “Strictly Come Dancing” on television. The programme was originally called “Come Dancing” and was to teach people dancing steps. In the 1950s it became a competition with dancers competing for the “Come Dancing” trophy. The miners also enjoyed going to the dances at Auchinleck community centre.

Your class has become the Barony Social Committee and are going to organise a “social night”.

- Find out about the music played by the groups that came to Auchinleck.
- What kind of dances would they have done?
- Organise your own “come dancing” competition.

Invite another class to join in or hold a fundraising event for your school - make a night of it!

Auchinleck Shops

Organise a walking tour of Auchinleck. Look at old photographs of the area. Compare and contrast how the village has changed over the years.

Think about how we shop today. Get your class to list the different ways we can get shopping now and think about the way people did this in the past.

Think about how long it would take to do the shopping in the old days and whether people had much choice available to them then.

Barony Poets

Are there any budding poets in your class?

Choose a theme from the education pack about the Barony and get your class to try out their skills.

Visitors to the Barony and Auchinleck - the Eton Boys

Eton College is the school that Prince William and Prince Harry went to and has always been a very exclusive school, very different from the schools of East Ayrshire both now and in the past.

Although some aspects of life at Eton College will have changed since the 1960s, many of the traditions of the school remain unaltered. Get your class to investigate what life is like at Eton and why it is so remarkable that the Eton boys visited the Barony in 1961 and were accepted by their hosts.

See if you can find out anything about the boys who visited the Barony and Auchinleck in 1961.

Topic 3 Industrial Unrest

This activity can either be conducted as a debate or role playing exercise.

Divide the class into 2 groups - supporters of the 1984 strike and those against strike action.

Brainstorm ideas about how each group will feel about the other. Remember that family members may not always support the same cause. Think about how this would affect family life.

Use this to produce creative writing in your class. It could be a play, a poem or a piece of individual writing.

Topic 4 The End of the Barony

Investigate the long term effects of the closure of the Barony and other pits on the villages and towns of East Ayrshire.

Look at what employment there is in the area.

In the past people liked to work near where they lived - how have people's attitudes changed about travelling to work?

Talk to your grandparents about how they feel about changes in the community.

The use of oral history

Most of the information about the Barony is based on the oral testament of the men who worked there. While this information is very relevant and valuable as they were the ones in the mine, this source has its flaws.

There are two occasions in the education pack where oral history as the only source reveals its flaws. In Topic 1, the Safety Lamp used by miners in Scotland has been known as the Glennie for many years, supposedly after the name of the person who invented this particular model. However, the man's name was Clanny.

Play a game of Chinese Whispers with your class and this will show them how easily things can change.

In Topic 2 when John "Tug" Wilson remembers the Eton Boys visit, he believes that Cripps stayed with him. It was Jonathan Aitken who stayed with the Wilson family.

To get your pupils to understand the difficulties of using memories as the only source of evidence, pick an event of local or national significance and get them to write down what they remember of this event. It is important that they include details about the weather and time of day as these are non-variables in the account and can be checked.

It will be interesting to see how many variations there will be of the same event and this will help your pupils to put the use of oral testament into historical context. It is also important to see how many similarities there are as this is confirmation of accuracy.

Ask your pupils to think about why oral history may not always be accurate, but equally why it is still an important source.