



Jute Baron and working conditions

Learning Outcome:

To understand how mill workers were mistreated and to write a newspaper report about an incident in the Mill.

Curriculum for Excellence Links:

Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through drama. **EXA 2-13a**

I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in an appropriate way for my purpose and use suitable vocabulary for my audience. **LIT 2-06a**

I can convey information, describe events, explain processes or combine ideas in different ways. **LIT 2-28a**

What to do:

Activity One:

Teacher reads out the following:

“Take one greedy Jute Baron, add in a pinch of underpaid workers and beat in some 14 hour working days. Add 4 children killed in accidents and 5 fingers lost last week, and cook until the noise is so loud you can’t hear. Add in 5 ounces of dust, 1 break a day and old machinery. Serve up as a Dundee Jute Mill.”

Discuss with the class why they think this is a ‘recipe for disaster’/ Why did people put up with such awful working conditions? Did they have a choice?

Groups have 15 minutes to write their own recipe for disaster, based on what they know about the Mills. The recipes are then shared with the rest of the class.

Line by line, each group turns their recipe into a short mime, with one pupil acting as a narrator, or each pupil taking it in turns to say one line.

Encourage the pupils to freeze after each line, holding their mime for a few seconds to allow the audience to try and guess what is happening.

Whole class discussion –can you think of anywhere else in the world where people have to work in such conditions? Why do you think such problems are still happening today?

Pupils could then write a recipe for success, showing how the poor working conditions could be improved.

Activity Two:

Research and show clips featuring the working conditions in the mills.

The children should then be shown newspaper articles and lead a discussion about the type of writing involved.

The children will then choose an incident to report on. They should then complete the planning sheet and newspaper article.

The children could word-process their work and produce a picture to go along with their writing.