

Student Worksheet

With your help, have students fill in the accompanying “Then and Now” worksheet. There are no really wrong answers to the “then” part of the worksheet. However, here are a few comments to help as the children fill this out.

How long does it take you to get to school?

The students might time themselves by checking a clock or watch when they leave home and again when they get to school (or vice versa.) During the nineteenth century, it might have taken children an hour or so to reach school, but it naturally depended on their proximity to the school.

How do you get there?

This will vary with the child. In the past, most children walked to school every day.

How old is the oldest/youngest person in your class?

You can do this by comparing birthdays for the present-day part. In the past, children in one classroom might range in age from about 3 to their late teens or early 20's.

What is on the playground of your school?

Schools of the late 1800's probably had little “playground” beyond grass, dirt, and trees.

How are you punished for doing something wrong in school?

You might make the comparison between the past schools' physical punishments and the present method, which doesn't allow the striking of a child.

Is religion important in your classroom?

During the past century, religion was essential to the daily routine of the class, with readings from the Scriptures, prayers, and moralistic reading lessons. Have any of the children heard debates over prayer in the schools?

How is your classroom heated?

Are the children aware of radiators or other heating fixtures in their classroom? In schools of the 1800's, they would have been very much aware of them by sitting near or far from them and either roasting or freezing.

Who makes sure it's warm enough?

Rather than letting someone else tend to the heat, such as a janitor, custodian, or other person, the children themselves were responsible for keeping the fire going, for splitting and bringing kindling and firewood into the classroom.

	Then	Now
How long does it take you to get to school?		
How do you get there?		
How old is the oldest person in your class?		
How old is the youngest person in your class?		
What is on the playground of your school?		
How are you punished for doing something wrong in your school?		
Is religion important in your classroom?		
How is your classroom heated?		
Who makes sure it's warm enough?		