



## Filer's Corners Schoolhouse Activity Sheet

Have you ever wondered what school was like for students in the mid-1800s? What kinds of lessons did they do? What materials did they use? What was the school day like?

1. What subjects did students learn at school? How are the subjects the same or different from what you are learning? Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, morals, civics, spelling, penmanship, science. Answers may vary: many of the subjects are the same but with different methods of teaching
2. In a one room schoolhouse, students of different ages and grades were all in the class at the same time. How did the teacher organize the class? Why do you think she did it this way?

The teacher organized the class with the small children at the front and the larger children at the back. Students would also be organized according to ability. She organized them this way to make learning easier, allow the older students to help teach the younger students, and also to keep students who were about the same age together. Answers may vary.

3. What time do you go to school in the morning and what time do you finish for the day? Students in the mid-1800s went to school from 8am-5pm in the summer and 9am-3pm in the winter. Sometimes they didn't go to school in the spring or fall. Why do you think the school day depended on the season? It depended on the season because of farming. Many families were farm families, so children were needed to help on the farm. Also, in the winter, it was cold and dark. The only heat came from the woodstove, and the only light came from the windows. Students had to walk a long way to and from school.
4. Today, we use computers to type in our lessons and paper and pencil to write them out. In the mid-1800s, paper was very expensive, and students would use a slate and slate pencil to write their lessons out. They could then erase the lesson and start a new one. What school supplies do you need each year? Answers vary



5. Arithmetic or math was very important to students in the mid-1800s just as it is now. Here's a math game you can play with 2 dice. Roll your dice and use the two numbers that you roll to create math problems. Try addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Write your numbers and answers below. Answers vary depending on age.

6. Children in the mid-1800s loved conundrums or riddles. Try to solve this one: When is a door not a door?

When it's a jar.

7. Students in the mid-1800s usually did not have homework. Sounds great, right? That's because most of the children's families lived and worked on farms. Children had many chores to do before and after school. What kinds of chores do you think the children did? What kinds of chores do you do? Do you think you would enjoy doing the chores on the farm in the mid-1800s more or less than your chores now? Why do you feel that way?

Children had many chores including chopping wood, churning butter, gathering eggs, washing, cleaning, mending clothes, harvesting and planting, gathering fresh fruit and vegetables, caring for the animals, etc.

8. Lessons about good behavior were important in the mid-1800s. Read the following passage. What do you think the teacher wants the students to understand here? How do you know? Look up the definitions of any of the words you don't know to help you.

Be not vain, and boast of what you say or do. Don't be rude; don't announce how great you are or brag about what you have done.

A proud heart and a high look shall be brought low. Pride goes before a fall

Strive not with your mates, but live in peace with all. Don't fight with your friends or classmates

A wise child will speak the truth at all times. Always tell the truth; it's the smart thing to do

Conundrum Answer: When it's ajar