

Document 2 – Miners at Ramsleigh Copper Mine, South Tawton, c.1905



Questions for discussion

A. Observation

1. What range of ages would you guess the people in the photo to be?
2. How many different types of tool are there?
3. How many different types of hat are there?

B. Thinking about the evidence and making deductions

4. 5 or 6 boys in the photo look quite young. Why do you think they were not at school?
5. Looking at the different types of tools in the photo, what sorts of activities did the workers do?
6. Where are the railway lines going?

C. Interpretation

7. Find out what copper is used for and where else it was mined at the time.
8. What would it have been like to be a miner in South Tawton in 1905? Think about your working day, including getting up, making a packed lunch, walking to work, joking with your workmates, going into the mine, breaking up stone, feeling tired and aching, walking home. Write your story.

Teachers' Notes

B5. The museum has examples of tools for many different activities including mining, farming, ironworking and woodworking. Many of them were made at [Finch Foundry](#) in Sticklepath.

B6. The people in this photo are surface workers, ready to break up and process the copper ore brought out of the mine. The railway lines go into an adit (horizontal passage) in the mine. Underground, shafts were dug into the seams and copper ore loaded into trucks. The process is similar for other types of mining around Dartmoor – tin, silver, zinc and lead.

C7. One of the best known copper mines was on the west side of Dartmoor at [Morwellham Quay](#).