

Teacher Guide to Student Worksheet 2-People of One-Room Schoolhouses



Courtesy of the Birchardville School Educational and Historical Association, Birchardville, PA

Last Day of School, April 27, 1917

Pictured (left to right) Front row: Mortimer Rhinevault, Harry Maynard, Arthur Brink.

Second row: Paul Brink, Milton Smith, Lelia Smith, Lula Shelp, Mildred Shelp, Ruth Groover, Helen Birchard, Mabel Seiber, Dayton Birchard.

Back row: Richard Seiber, Florence Warner, Mabel Griffis, William Owen, Blanche Maynard, Lena Ball, Beatrice Seiber, William Burr, Leo Flynn, Don Birchard, Dorothy Brink, Kathryn Warner, Guy Canfield, William Seiber, Herman Seiber, Gerald Flynn, Emma Owens, Mrs. Aubrey Brink, Ruth Brink, Carlton Birchard, Pearl Hibbard, Irma Owens, Pauline Seiber.

Behind Flag: Mrs. Edna Birchard, Edna Owens, Louise Owens, Albert O'Brien, Mrs. D. Fred Birchard, Ruth Ella Wilcox, Mrs. Milton Warner, Margaret Maynard, Mrs. Frank Smith.

1. This is a picture of what school?

Birchardville Schoolhouse (Note there are people in the picture whose last name is Birchard. Are these relatives of the person who founded the community?)

2. Who might the people behind the flag be?

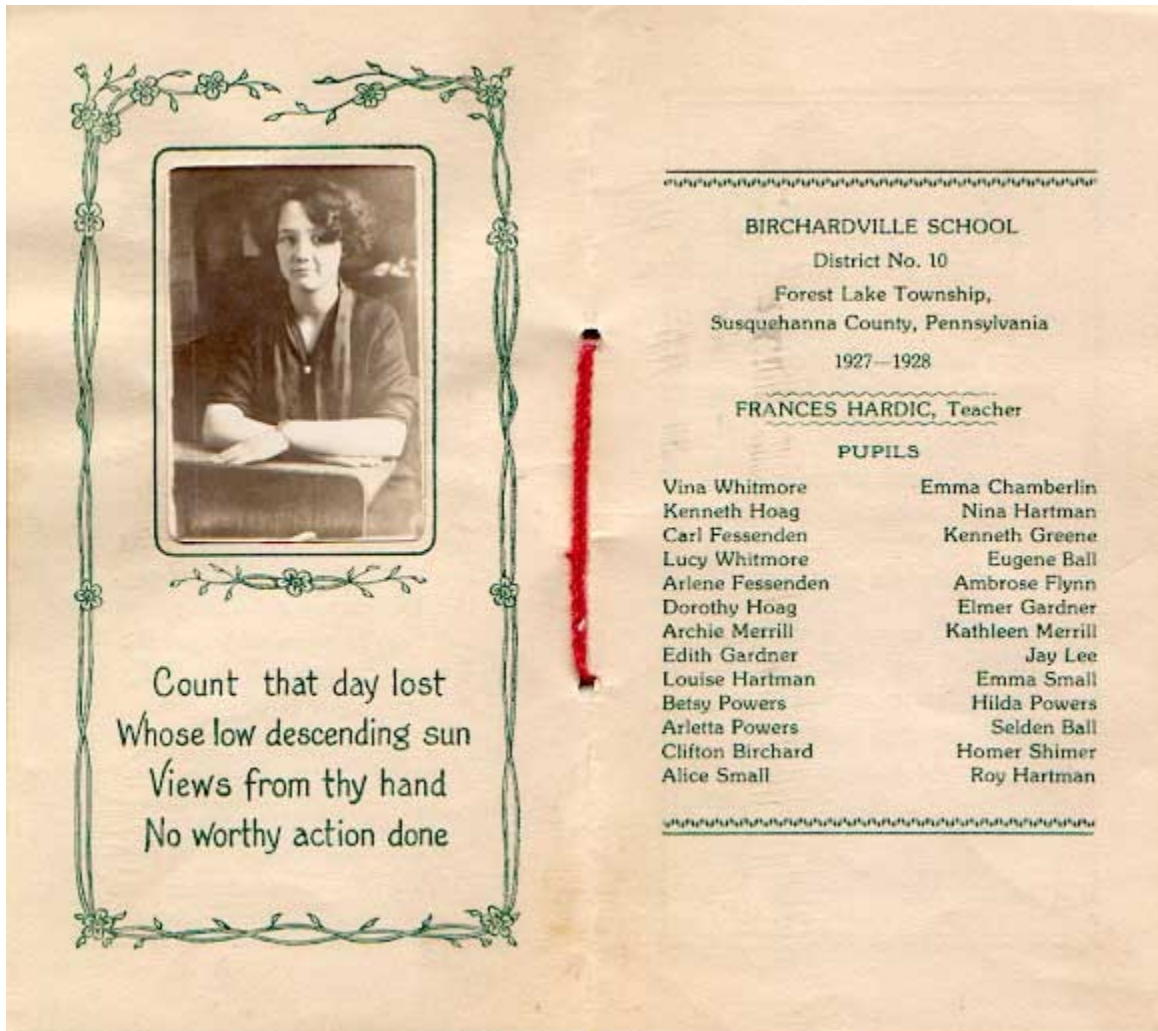
They could be the people who organize and pay for the school. They could also be parents of the students who attend.

3. Why do you think there are so many adults in the picture?

This picture is a good opportunity to discuss how education is a community effort, calling on the support of parents, the teacher, and other members of the community.

4. When was their last day of class? When is your last day of class? (Are they the same day, or different? If different, guess why this may be.)

Their last day is April 27. This is earlier than schools finish today. Perhaps students are needed to help with work at home.



School Souvenir from Teacher Frances Hardic to her students, Birchardville School

Courtesy of the Birchardville School Educational and Historical Association, Birchardville, PA

1. Who is the lady in the picture?

Frances Hardic, the teacher

2. Look at the list of names of students. What do their last names tell you?

Some of the students are siblings or are related.

3. Read the poem. Tell me what it means in your own words.

It means that the day is wasted if you failed to do meaningful deeds (with your hands).



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

1. From this picture, did African-Americans study with whites in early American schools?

No. They were forced to study separately. It is not until 1954 in *Brown vs. Board of Education* that the Supreme Court ruled that "separate was not equal".

2. What is the seating arrangement of the room? Where are the boys located and where are girls?

Boys are sitting on one side of the room. Girls are sitting on the other.

3. Are there a lot of students in this room?

Yes. It looks like students had to endure crowded conditions in the schoolhouse.



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

1. Tell me two things you notice about the people in this picture:

Accept varying responses:

Examples:

- (1) The children are different ages. It seems like children are grouped according to age. Different groups are working on different things.
- (2) These children seem to poor. (Lack of shoes)

Stewart Elliott Speaks about the School Board and Teachers:

"...A local school board ran the system and hired teachers. My father was sometimes a member of the board. That never bought us any favor. Teachers had to be of sterling character, for they were paid \$50 or \$60 per month, or even more. They were not allowed to use tobacco, but we had one male teacher who hid his pipe in the coal house behind the school. Most of our fathers chewed tobacco, and we boys dared each other to try chewing in front of the teacher without getting caught. I hated the taste and never used tobacco, but once got sick from trying to smoke a cigar." (Excerpt taken from Elliott, Stewart. *SitNews*, "Recalling days in a one-room schoolhouse" April 26, 2005. Online at http://www.sitnews.us/Columns/0405/042605_stewart_elliott.html)

1. According to Stewart Elliott, who hired the teachers?

A local school board hired the teachers.

2. How much were teachers paid?

They were paid \$50-\$60 per month.

3. When hiring a teacher, for what kind of person were they looking?

They were looking for a person who had good character (...integrity, highly moral, they were to be an example to the students).

4. What was one thing teachers were not allowed to do in this community?

Teachers were not allowed to use tobacco.

May Clayton Stover Remembers the “Fiery” Discipline of a Small Teacher:

“We usually had three 3-month terms, sometimes a different teacher every three months. When the winter term began on December 1, the big boys in the district came to school. They were really grown men 19 and 20 years old...

One of the favorite pastimes of the older boys in some communities was to see if they could ‘run the teacher out’. They were big and rowdy, wouldn’t pay any attention to the teacher, and otherwise cause so much disturbance that she couldn’t teach and she would finally quit. One district hired a small middle-aged lady to teach. She probably wouldn’t weigh over ninety pounds and the big boys decided they would run her out the first week of school. On the first day of school one of the big boys promptly put his feet on the desk in front of him and the teacher told him to put his feet down and sit up. He said he was comfortable that way and had no intention of putting his feet down. She didn’t say anything but went back to the stove and picked up the stove poker and started to stir up the fire. When the poker was red hot she turned around and told him to get his feet down and sit up. He put his feet on the floor and then she asked if anyone else felt like putting their feet on the desk -- of course, no one else did. She taught the rest of the school year and didn’t have any more trouble.”

[Excerpt taken from Stover, May Clayton. “By-Gone School Days” in *Buffalo Tales*, Buffalo County Historical Society (Vol. 5, No. 6): 1982. Online at http://bchs.kearney.net/BTales_198206.htm]

1. According to May Stover’s experience, how many teachers could their schoolhouse have in a year?

They could have as many as three teachers a year.

2. Do you think that would be difficult to have a different teacher every three months? Explain your answer.

Accept varied student response.

3. What students began in the winter time?

Older boys (19-20 year olds) began school in the winter.

4. What quality did the small teacher show in order to gain discipline in the school?

She showed strong discipline and lack of fear.