

TEACHER GUIDE TO STUDENT WORKSHEET 2- UNDERSTANDING A PATENT

Example: Primary Source 12: Drawbaugh Magnetic Clock Patent

Part 1: Drawings

1. How does the inventor label his invention? **With “Fig. 1” (meaning “figure 1”) and with letters of the alphabet.**
2. How many different views of the invention are shown? **7 figures**
3. Notice the four signatures at the bottom of each page. What are the roles of these people? **witnesses (2), inventor, inventor’s attorney (lawyer)**
4. Why do you think a patent would need witnesses to sign it? **To make sure the inventor’s drawings and written descriptions are the truth.**

Part 2: Written Description

1. What is this part called? (Hint: it “specifically” describes the details of the invention.) **Specification**
2. Who is the inventor? **Daniel Drawbaugh**
3. Where is he from? **Eberly’s Mill, PA**
4. What is the title of the invention? **Magnetic Clock**
5. Is the patent for the entire object, or a specific improvement of the design of the object? (Hint: look in the second paragraph.) **“improved construction” (found on line 17)**
6. When was the patent issued? **August 9, 1887**
7. When was the patent application filed? About how long did it take for the patent to be issued after the application was filed? **May 29, 1878; about 9 years**
8. What is the patent number? **367,898; this number is unique – no other patent has it. You can search for patents on the USPTO website with just the patent number.**
9. The claims are at the end of the patent. This is perhaps the most important part of the whole document, where the inventor specifically declares what is unique about his invention. If there is every any dispute or legal question about who owns the idea behind the invention, the claim of a patent is looked at carefully. How many claims are listed for the clock? **13 claims**

Example: Primary Source 13: Allen Sled Patent

Part 1: Drawings

1. How does the inventor label his invention? **With “Fig. 1” (meaning “figure 1”) and with letters of the alphabet.**
2. How many different views of the invention are shown? **13 figures**
3. Notice the four signatures at the bottom of each page. What are the roles of these people? **witnesses (2), inventor, inventor’s attorney (lawyer)**

Part 2: Written Description

1. Who is the inventor? **Samuel L. Allen**
2. Where is he from? **Cinnaminson, NJ**
3. What is the title of the invention? **Sled**
4. Is the patent for the entire object, or a specific improvement of the design of the object? (Hint: look in the third paragraph.) **“improved sled” (found on line 26)**
5. When was the patent issued? **August 13, 1889**
6. When was the patent application filed? About how long did it take for the patent to be issued after the application was filed? **February 14, 1889; about 6 months**
7. What is the patent number? **408,681**
8. How many claims are listed for this sled? **13**

Extra information about Samuel L. Allen

Samuel Leeds Allen lived in Downingtown, PA in the late 1800s. He owned a successful farm implement business, but he had a lifelong love of sledding. He invented the “Flexible Flyer” sled, which had flexible steel runners that could be bent, making the sleds easier to steer. For most of the 1900s the Flexible Flyer was a popular toy for American boys and girls. Its success spawned the invention of similar sleds, such as the Lightning Guider, which was produced in Duncannon, PA from 1904 to 1990.