

# *A Day at Pit School*

*A Short Play set at Kiveton Park Colliery School  
in 1877*

*Written by members of Kiveton Meadows Year Five (Mr Barber's Class)  
June 2007*



**Setting**

Kiveton Park Colliery School, Kiveton Park,

**Date**

January 1877

**Narrator**

Matthew

**Headteacher (Mr. Emmerson)**

Regan

**School Teacher (Miss. Evans)**

Antonia

**Pupils**

Elizabeth Smith: Samantha

Victoria Edwards: Ashley

Mary Stevenson: Chloe

Rosie Carter: Emily

Elsie Carter: Kendal

Nellie Carter: Rebecca

Arthur Mansfield: Kyle

Gwen Jones: Rhianna

**Props**

School Bell

Cane

Ruler

Boiled Sweets

Handheld Blackboards

Apples

Flowers

A register for Antonia to have her script in

## Scene One

*Outside at Kiveton Park Colliery Pit School. Children are playing, running around making lots of noise. Their teacher and headteacher are stood watching over them.*

*After a few seconds, Miss. Evans walks in and rings the school bell – very loudly!*  
**DING DONG DING DONG DING DONG DING DONG**

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Quiet everybody, and line up so I can check your hands.

*The pupils go very quiet and get into a line. Miss Evans walks to the start of the line and looks at the first pupil's hands – everybody freezes*

**Narrator (Matthew):** It is 1877. It is June, but it is a cold dark morning. We are stood at Kiveton Park Pit School. For ten years, since this mine was sunk, miners have flocked to Kiveton Park from across Britain. Today, you will meet some of their children.

*Everybody unfreezes. Miss Evans continues checking each child's hands. Some children are told they will have to go to wash them. Others have very clean hands and the teacher seems proud of them.*

*Mr. Emmerson walks in and follows Miss Evans down the line.*

**Mr. Emmerson (Regan):** How are the children this morning, Miss Evans?

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** They're all here fine Mr. Emmerson, apart from the triplets – they've got mucky hands again.

**Mr. Emmerson (Regan):** Oh well, they'll have to learn. Keep an eye on them Miss. Evans.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Yes Mr. Emmerson.

*The Narrator begins to speak as the pupils are led by Miss Evans from one side of the stage to the other and back again. They take their places as if they are in a classroom.*

**Narrator (Matthew):** The pupils are now making their way inside. They have gone into this building. The Colliery Offices at Kiveton were the only suitable place to have a school. Imagine it now, as our actors show you what some lessons might have been like.

## Scene Two

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Morning Boys and Girls.

**All the pupils:** Good morning Miss. Evans!

**Mr. Emmerson (Regan):** Good Morning Children.

**All the pupils:** Good morning Mr Emmerson!

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Now it is time for the register. Everybody speak up brightly please children. GWEN JONES!

**Gwen (Rhianna):** YES MISS.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** How is your brother doing Gwen?

**Gwen (Rhianna):** He's fine Miss. Finding it a bit difficult to get used to working in the pit, he's only 13.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** ARTHUR MANSFIELD!

**Arthur:** YES MISS.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** How is your father Arthur, the village was very sorry to hear about his accident.

**Arthur:** He's getting much better. Thank you miss.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** ROSIE, ELSIE and NELLIE CARTER

**Rosie (Emily), Elsie (Kendal) and Nellie (Rebecca) in unison:** YES MISS!

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** And how are you triplets?

**Rosie (Emily), Elsie (Kendal) and Nellie (Rebecca) in unison:** WE'RE FINE MISS.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** MARY STEVENSON

**Mary (Chloe):** HERE MISS. I've got an apple for you miss. It's from my father's garden miss. We've got lots Miss.

*Some of the children talk to each other. They don't think it is fair that Mary's family have a big garden. Most of them haven't got gardens at all.*

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Settle down children. VICTORIA EDWARDS!

**Victoria (Ashley):** Yes miss (*quietly and yawning*).

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Are you quite well Victoria?

**Victoria (Ashley):** Yes miss, just a little tired. I was up with my father at 4 o'clock this morning. His clogs make lots of noise when he goes to the pit.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** ELIZABETH SMITH!

**Elizabeth (Samantha):** Yes miss. Got some flowers for you. Real nice they are. Picked them myself on the way to school.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** They're lovely Elizabeth, thank you. Our first lesson for today is Mathematics!

*Pupils all groan together!*

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** All together now.

**Narrator (Matthew), speaking to the audience:** And our visitors may like to join in too!

*All the pupils, the narrator and the audience recite their five times table out loud, led by Miss Evans.*

One's five is five.

Two fives are ten.

Three fives are fifteen.

Four fives are twenty.

Five fives are twenty five.

Six fives are thirty.

Seven fives are thirty five.

Eight fives are forty – *but the triplets all say forty eight very loudly!!!!!!!!!!*

*All the children laugh and shout things, but the triplets laugh at their mistake too.*

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Geography now everyone. Tell me what these capital cities are, all together. ROME?

**Pupils all together:** Italy!

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Berlin?

**Pupils all together:** Germany! *They all boooo and hissssss.*

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** London?

**Pupils all together:** England. *They all cheer.*

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Lisbon?

*Pupils are very confused and whisper to each other because they don't know the answer to this question.*

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Now children, perhaps you'll do better at handwriting. Here are your blackboards. *(Gives their blackboards out to the children at the front.)* Write the following letters after me with your chalk.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** A is for Alphabet

**Pupils all together quietly, concentrating on their writing:** A is for Alphabet

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** B is for Ball

**Pupils all together quietly, concentrating on their writing:** B is for Ball.

*Then Nellie Carter flings a piece of paper towards Miss Evans – all the pupils laugh and shout excitedly. Mr. Emmerson walks in.*

**Mr. Emmerson (Regan):** What is happening here everybody?

**Miss Evans (Antonia - looking embarrassed):** Sorry Mr. Emmerson, they are a little excited today. I don't know why.

**Mr. Emmerson (Regan):** Send them out to the playground Miss Evans.

**Miss Evans (Antonia):** Yes Mr. Emmerson. Line up everybody. Those who have been well behaved will get a boiled sweet.

The children walk off the stage, given sweets if they have deserved them.

**Mr. Emmerson (Regan):** I really don't know what will happen to some of these children Miss. Evans, I really don't.

**Narrator (Matthew):** Mr. Emmerson didn't know what happened to the pupils from Kiveton Pit School in 1876. We do and we can now find out.

### **Scene/Part Three**

At this point the children read out some poems, which show what happened to some of the pupils from the school.

They might have:

- Gone on to work in the pit too (male), maybe becoming a pit pony driver
- Moved to a different part of the country, maybe Sheffield to work in the steel works there (male or female)
- Joined the army and fought and died during a war in a far-off corner of the Empire (male)
- Gone into service (become a servant) and worked in a big house (female)
- Got married to a miner and had lots of children, perhaps living in the Rows in Kiveton (female)