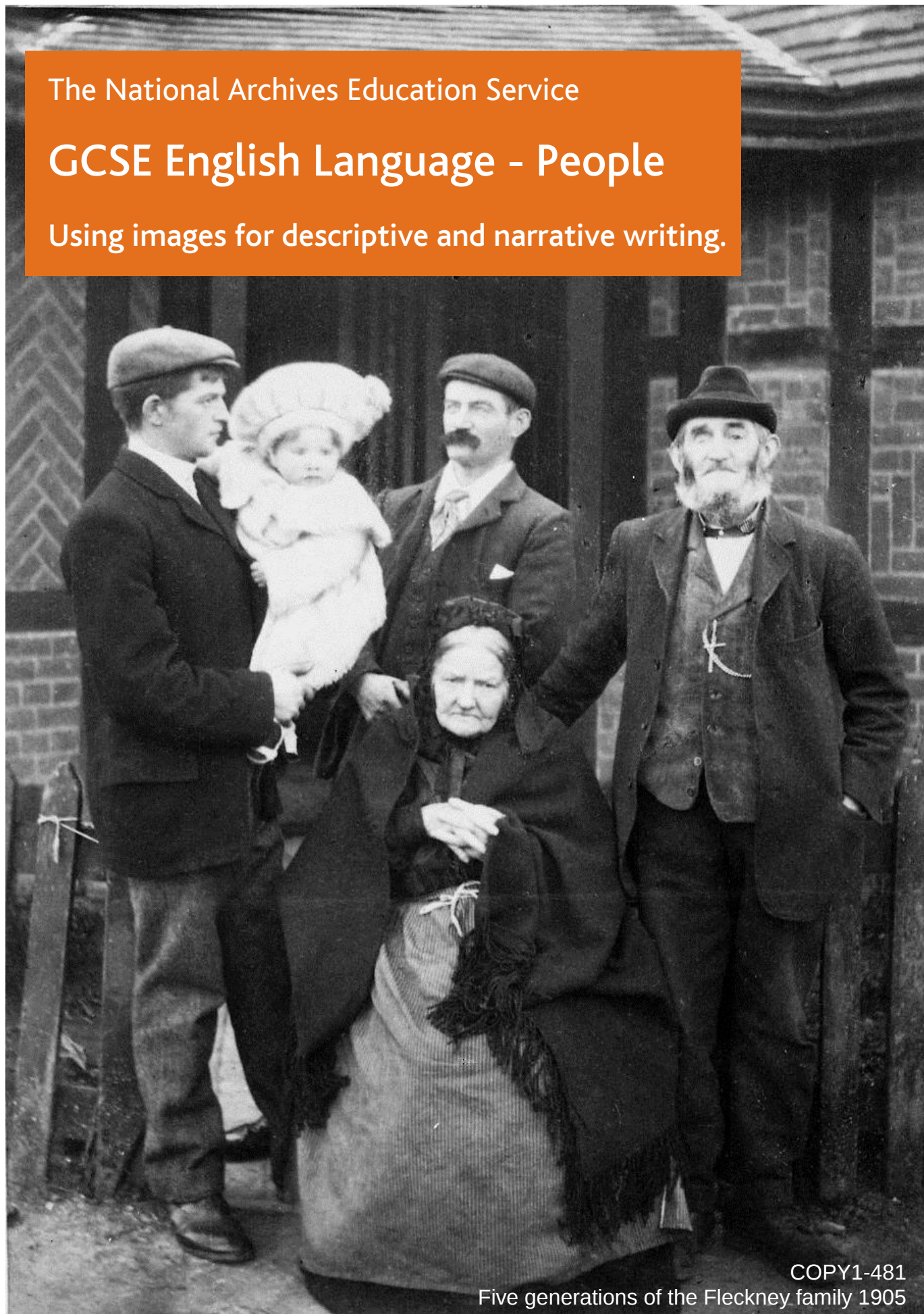


The National Archives Education Service

GCSE English Language - People

Using images for descriptive and narrative writing.



COPY1-481

Five generations of the Fleckney family 1905

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Teacher's notes

This collection of photographs from The National Archives' image library has been collated to provide a resource for English Language GCSE. The images can be used as descriptive or narrative creative writing prompts, allowing students to consider a variety of historical scenes as inspiration for their writing.

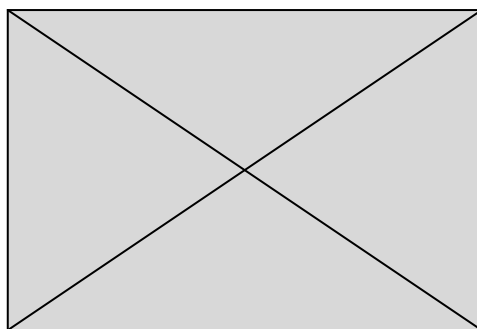
Each image has been presented as a full page spread before key areas have been extracted for close detail description and prompts for the imagination. These pages can be used as a ready-made resource or adapted to suit your own classroom purposes. A generic question page has also been provided to allow students to focus on their own details within the photographs, rather than those pre-selected.

Whilst the resources have been designed with the English Language GCSE in mind, they can be used for other age groups to develop imagination when considering character and description.

Each image has been provided with its original document reference and description to offer some context to the image if desired, such as time period and location. However, the descriptions are deliberately brief and there are no correct answers required in creative writing. The photographs are presented as prompts only and students are not required to write creatively about actual historical figures.

Viewfinders

Some students may find a viewfinder useful when trying to describe an image. Cut out a piece of paper or card in a shape similar to the one below. Students can then move this around the photograph to discover smaller interesting scenes to describe without the distraction of the rest of the detail. Only when they feel they have described the smaller scene in depth should they move on to select another area of the image.



Questions

What can you see?

Who might the figure(s) be?

What kind of life do they have?

What happened just before the photograph was taken?

What happened just after the photograph was taken?

COPY1-420 Cottage at Itchen Abbas 1895



COPY1-420 Cottage at Itchen Abbas 1895



How could you describe this woman? First look at what you can see: what is she wearing? What is she doing?

Now think about what inferences we can make – does she seem happy or sad? Rich or poor?

Now focus on the other senses – what might her voice sound like? Does the water in the bucket smell? Is the temperature hot or cold?



The little boy is stood beside the bucket. What does he look like? What is he wearing?

How old does he look? Does he look rich or poor? What do you think he's doing?

What relationship does he have to the woman? How are they interacting?



The window above them is open. Can you describe it and the thatched roof around it? What does it look like?

COPY1-417-500 S J Celestine Edwards 1894



COPY1-417-500 S J Celestine Edwards 1894

How could you describe this man? What can you tell about him from his face and his clothes? How does he present himself?



Why are there palm trees in the background of his photograph? What does he want to say about his past?



He wears flowers, a pocket-handkerchief and a fob watch. What does this suggest about his social status?

Who do you think this man was? What did he do?

COPY1-497 Irish spinning wheel, 1906



COPY1-497 Irish spinning wheel, 1906



What can you tell about this woman? Describe her face, what kind of life might she have had?

What kind of noise do you think the spinning wheel would make? How hard was it to use? Can you describe its motion or how using it feels?



What is the structure behind the woman? What is it made from? What might this suggest about her life?

INF2-44-2685 Children's tea in post-war kitchen, 1945



INF2-44-2685 Childrens' tea in post-war kitchen, 1945



What can you see in this family scene? What is specific to the time period? What is missing from the image?

What is the boy doing? Why would they want to take a picture of this event?



What would they think of their house? Is it very modern or quite old-fashioned?

COPY1-522 (274) Ali Bin Hamoud, Sultan of Zanzibar 1908



COPY1-522 (274) Ali Bin Hamoud, Sultan of Zanzibar 1908



How would you describe this man? What is the expression on his face?

The chair he sits on is intricately carved – what symbolism might the lions behind him show?



He wears a uniform and has many 'decorations' on his chest. What might this tell you about his character?



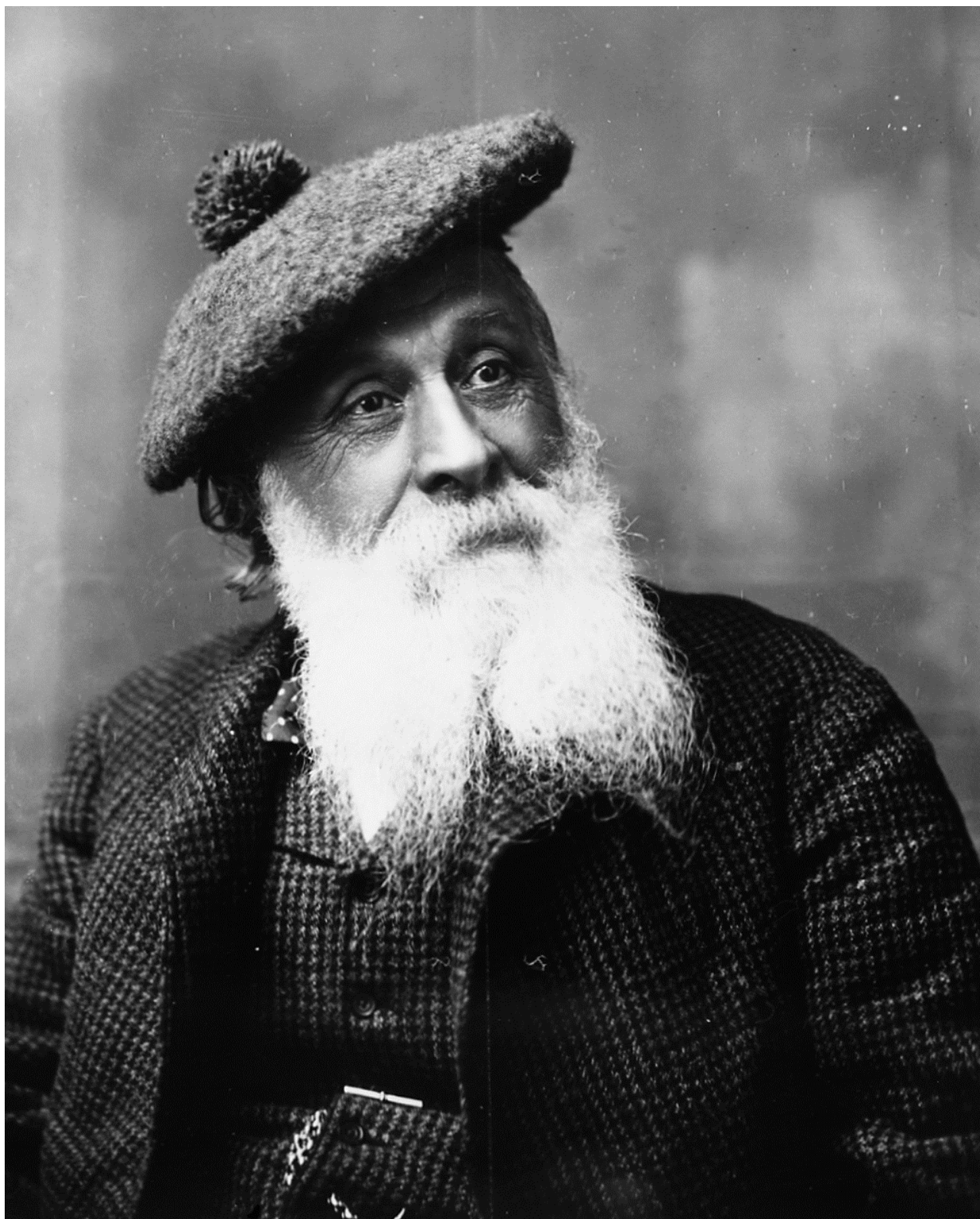
He holds a sword in his hand, what might this suggest?

The carpet and wallpaper within the room are highly decorative. Does this tell us anything about his personality or status?



His other hand rests on the table, pointing to a document on the desk. What might this show about his personality or role?

COPY1-408 W Brand 1892

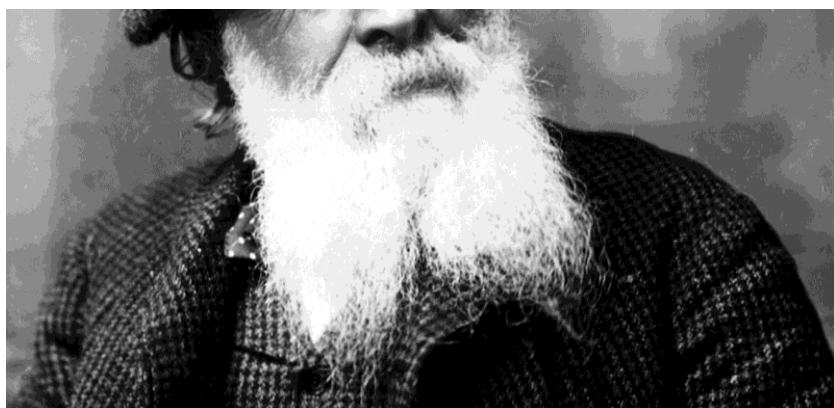


COPY1-408 W Brand 1892



Take a look at the gentleman's eyes – how old do you think he is? What might he have seen in his lifetime?

Look at the style of his hat – where do you think he is from? What kind of accent might he speak with?

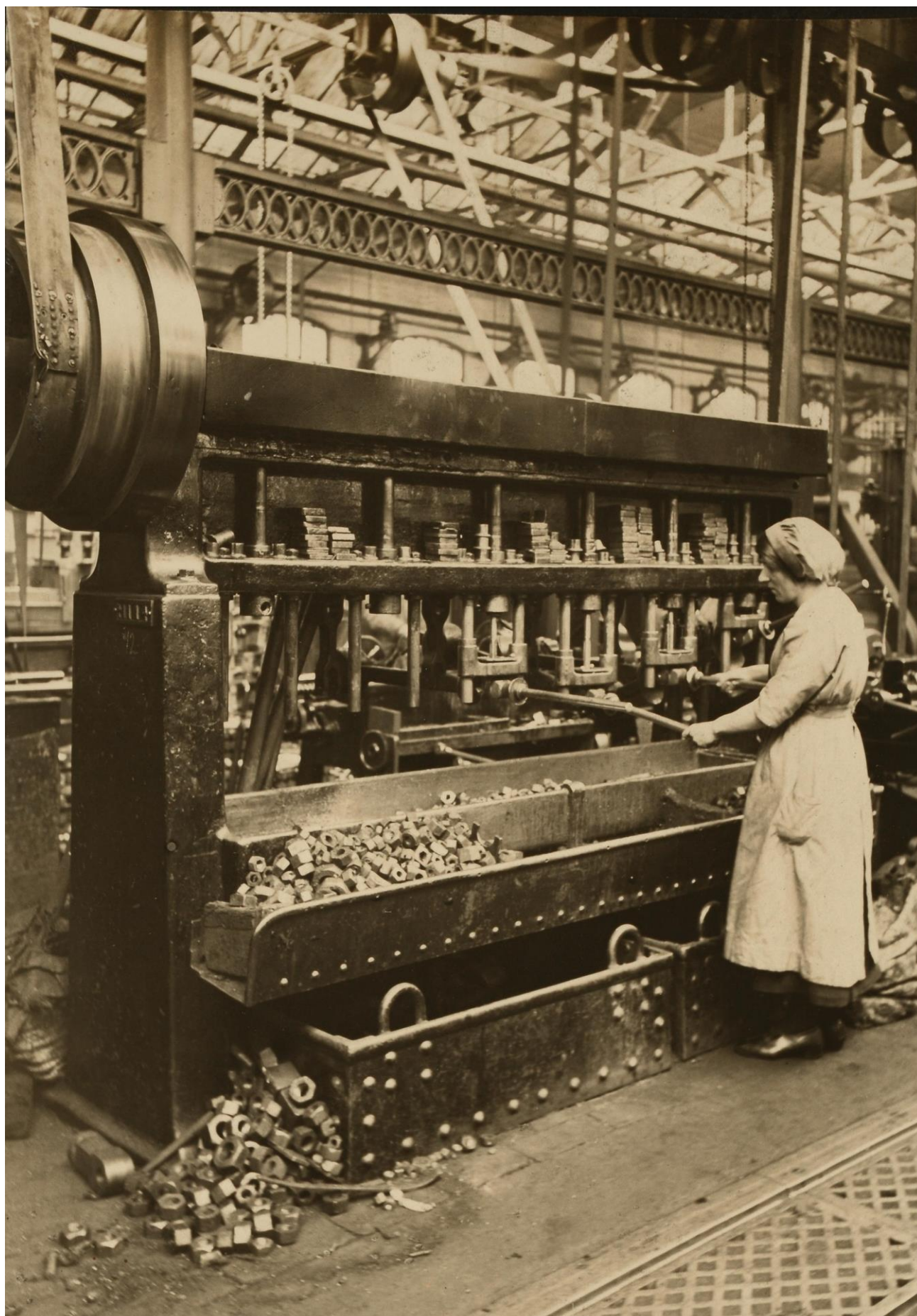


Is his beard styled or dishevelled? What might this say about how he would like to present himself?



How comfortable is his outfit? What kind of weather does it seem suitable for? How might he feel wearing it?

RAIL 343-725 (14a) Female workers on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway



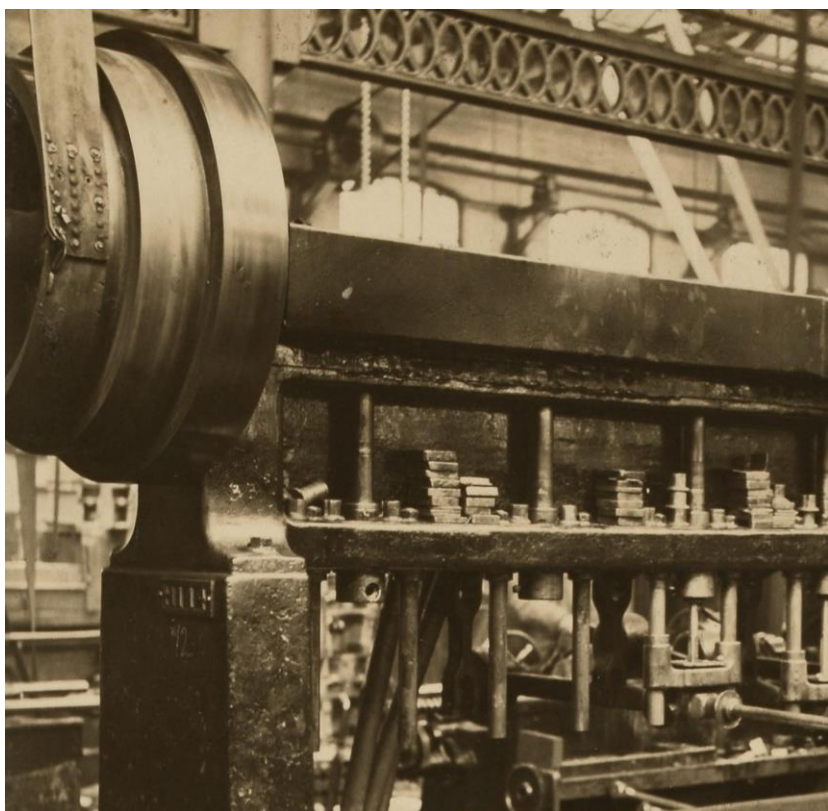
RAIL 343-725 (14a) Female workers on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway



What can you see? What is the expression on the woman's face? How might she be feeling?



What is she making? How hard is it to operate the machine? How might she feel working there?



How does the machine move? Can you describe it? What kind of noise might it make?

This picture was taken in 1917. Why might she have worked here at this time? How might she feel about life at this time?

INF14-147 Carnaby Street, London, 1969



INF14-147 Carnaby Street, London, 1969



What can you see? How old do you think the people in the photograph are? How do they want to present themselves?

How would you describe the boys' clothes and accessories compared to the girls'?



The people are on a popular shopping street – what might their day be like? What can they see and hear?



COPY1-481 Five generations of the Fleckney family 1905



COPY1-481 Five generations of the Fleckney family 1905



Look at the style of clothing these people are wearing. What time period do you think this is? What might these people have done for a living?

Look at this gentleman's stance. What would he like you to think about him?

Look at his accessories; he wears a hat, bow-tie, fob-watch and a cross. What does he want to show by wearing these?



Look at this lady's expression. What might she be feeling at this moment?