

Jacob Riis – *How the Other Half Lives* (1890)

1. Image



Pure Opinion: **Discuss with partner, and then answer on Notebook paper.**

- How do you feel when you look at this photograph?
- What do you think might have happened before or after the picture was taken?
- Have you ever witnessed a similar situation? Why or why not?

2. Excerpt

"Be careful, please! The hall is dark and you might stumble over the children pitching pennies back there. Not that it would hurt them; kicks and cuffs are their daily diet. They have little else. Here where the hall turns and dives into utter darkness is a step, and another, another. A flight of stairs. You can feel your way, if you cannot see it."

"Here is a door. Listen! That short hacking cough, that tiny, helpless wail, what do they mean? They mean that the soiled bow of white [a sign of mourning] you saw on the door downstairs will have another story to tell – Oh! a sadly familiar story – before the day is at an end. The child is dying with measles. With half a chance it might have lived; but it had none. That dark bedroom killed it."

"Come over here. Step carefully over this baby – it is a baby, spite of its rags and dirt – under these iron bridges called fire escapes, but loaded down, despite the incessant watchfulness of the firemen, with broken household goods, with washtubs and barrels, over which no man could climb from a fire. This gap between dingy brick walls is the yard. That strip of smoke-colored sky up there is the heaven of these people."

Simple Factual: **Discuss with partner when done reading, and then answer on Notebook paper.**

- What type of building is being described in this passage?
- During this time period, who tended to live in these conditions?
- Why were children living here at risk?

3. Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAColbokOcc>

Complex Factual: **Answer on Notebook paper as you watch the video.**

What factors made Jacob Riis a successful and important muckraker?