

## Joseph Ryan Mystery – Pupils’ Statement Cards (2 pages)

Cut out the 27 cards, one set per group in the class.

Mix each set up then give out the sets.

Ask pupils to sort the cards into a story, revealing how Joseph Ryan died.

All the cards can be used. However not all need to be, as long as the final result is a logical progression (see the Xtra Teachers crib).

Joseph Ryan was a miner.	Miners were also called pitmen.	Joseph Ryan worked at Montague Colliery's View Pit, also called Montagu Old Pit.
Montague View Pit was in Scotswood, west of Newcastle.	Joseph's job title was 'rolleyway man'.	Joseph's job was to look after the underground railway in the colliery.
Coal mines often have gas trapped below ground.	'Caution boards' were put at points where there could be danger, like trapped gas.	If gas comes into contact with a naked flame it can cause an explosion.
A 'naked flame' means a light not separated from the air around, by glass for example.	It is very dangerous to go underground with a naked flame.	Pitmen were told to use a safety lamp if they were going beyond a caution board.

Safety lamps have glass protecting the flame from coming into contact with gas.	On 9 <sup>th</sup> December 1891 Joseph was asked to bring some old rails out of the pit to the surface.	The rails had been left in an unused tunnel, beyond a caution board.
Gas had collected in the tunnel where the rails were, but no-one knew about it.	Joseph went to collect the rails with Thomas Halliday, who was 17 years old.	Joseph carried a safety lamp and Thomas a midgy lamp, which had a naked flame.
Joseph had done his job long enough to know how to protect himself.	Joseph should have tested the air when he went beyond the caution board.	It seems Joseph did not check the area was free from gas before he let Thomas follow.
Soon after 7 p.m. the men working above ground felt a sudden shock.	When they went to investigate, they found there had been an explosion underground.	The explosion had killed Thomas right away. Joseph was badly hurt. He died next day.
The verdict at the inquest was 'accidental death'.	The accident showed how important it is to observe safety rules.	We will never know why Joseph did not do an inspection to make sure there was no gas.