

Evanston History Center  
Lesson Plans for Teachers  
Grades 2-5

Meets District 65 Standard: Show awareness of the common needs of all people for food, shelter, and clothing.

### **Lesson: Living without lights**

#### **Materials:**

- Photos of stereoscope

#### **Procedure:**

- Explain to students that everyday life was very different in Evanston in the past. One big difference between Evanstonians today and Evanstonians 150 years ago is that many residents then did not have electricity. Ask students to name all the devices around the house that require electricity.
- Ask students, “What would you do for cooking and cleaning if you did not have electricity to power your oven, washing machine, vacuum cleaner, refrigerator, etc?”
- Ask students if they already know any tools or objects they know people used in the past in place of our modern objects.
- Hold up a photo of the stereoscope and ask students if they can guess what it was used for.
  - Point out clues to them:
    - What is it made out of?
    - Do you think it was used to clean, entertain, or make something?
    - Who do you think used it?
    - What do you think it was used for? (Teachers might want to hold the stereoscope up so that students can come up, one by one, and look at the picture. The two images, seen together through the stereoscope, give an image that looks alive and “three-dimensional.”)
    - Do we still use this? If so, what has changed? If not, what do we use instead? (to see pictures that look “alive” we use TV or movies.)
- When students have correctly guessed what the object is, discuss how life has changed today with the modern replacement.
- Continue the guessing game with some or all of the other recommended images.
  - Mason jar for storing preserved fruits and vegetables instead of a refrigerator
  - Milk would be delivered daily instead of refrigerators in stores
  - Rug beater instead of a vacuum
  - Washboard instead of a washing machine
  - Curling iron without a cord that is heated on a stove instead of an electric curling iron

#### **Extension:**

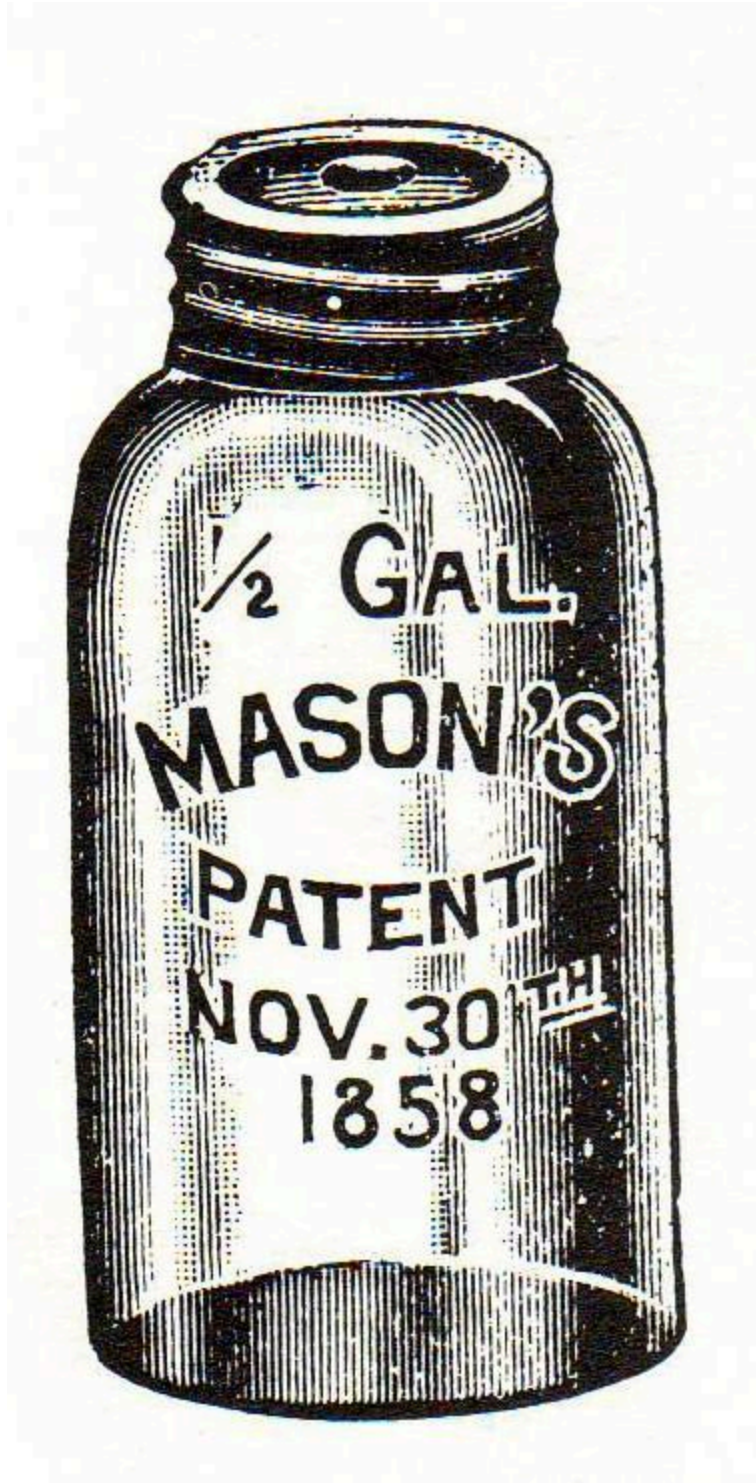
- Talk about changes in values and beliefs that have resulted from new technology today.  
We expect our clothes to be cleaner and our rugs less dusty.

**Images:**

*Note: These images are also available with the lesson plan on the Evanston History Center Digital Resources site.*



Stereoscope



Mason Jar



Milk Delivery



Rugbeater



Washboard



Curling iron