

Photo Analysis: Jacob Riis - "Five Cents A Spot"

Look carefully at the Jacob Riis photo "Five Cents a Spot". Write in details from the photo in the following three areas.

People	Objects	Activities

Based on the details you wrote down above, list two things that you might **infer** from this photograph. **Infer** means to make an educated guess based on evidence.

1.

2.

The title of the photo is "Five Cents a Spot." Make a guess as to what this title might mean or signify.

How does this photo make you feel? What might have been Riis' motivation for taking and showing this photo?

“Photography Changes our Awareness of Poverty”

By Bonnie Yochelson

What was the meaning of the title, “Five Cents a Spot?” Did you guess correctly?

When and how did Riis take the photograph?

What gave Riis empathy for the people in his photographs? (*Empathy means to have the same feelings or an understanding of other people’s feelings.*)

What did Felix Adler mean when he said, “it is not the squalid people that make squalid houses, but the squalid houses that make the squalid people?”

What did Riis do with his photographs? Did you guess correctly on Riis’ reasons for taking the photos?

According to the article, in addition to his photographs, what other ways did Riis try to get his message out about the problems facing the poor?

What do you think the author of the article meant at the end when she said, “Riis showed middle class audiences what they preferred not to see?”