Games to Play

You’re never fully dressed without a smile

One person is selected to be “it”. That person is the only one in the group who is allowed to smile. He or she can do anything they want to try and get someone to smile. If the person smiles, he or she becomes it. The person who never smiles is declared the winner.

Please Mr. Crocodile, May We Cross the River?

One player is chosen as Mr. Crocodile, and stands in the middle of the yard or room. All the rest of the players stand side by side at one end of the yard or room. The players chant “Please Mr. Crocodile, may we cross the river? If not, why not, what’s your favorite color?” Mr. Crocodile calls out a color, and all the players wearing that color are safe to cross past Mr. Crocodile to the other side of the yard/room. Example: Mr. Crocodile calls out ‘blue’, so all those wearing blue cross the yard/room. Once the safe players are across the river, the rest of the players must try to run to the other side without being tagged or caught by Mr. Crocodile. If Mr. Crocodile doesn’t catch anyone, the game is replayed with the same Mr. Crocodile. If someone is caught, that player becomes the new crocodile.

I Have a Basket

Players form a circle, and the first player begins the game by announcing “I have a basket.” The person next to him/her asks “what’s inside?” the first person has to name something that begins with the first letter of the alphabet, “A”. The next person names something that begins with a “B”, and so forth. The game ends when a player cannot think of something that begins with the letter that falls on his/her turn.
Welcome to Ushers Ferry

As you spend time on the grounds today, this journal will help you record your impressions of the landscape, the school, and the Village. Talk about the questions and share your answers with your brothers and sisters in your family group.

What is a Township?

Use the Map on the opposite page to answer the following questions:

1. What section of land does Dyer Usher live on?

2. Dyer Usher’s ferry boat was located on Section 11. Find his ferry road and circle it on the map.

Scavenger Hunt

Did you spot any of these objects around the village today? Do you know what they are? What building did you find them in?
The Blacksmith Shop

The Blacksmith was an important business in any small town. He was able to heat and shape metal to make useful tools, and even repair metal tools that were broken. Match the tools to their correct names and then write down what you think the blacksmith used them for, and why they were important.

File

Vise

Hammer

Anvil

Tongs

3. Ushers Ferry Historic Village (where you are today) is located on the North East quarter of Section 13. Mark it on the map with a star.

4. Churches are marked as buildings with a cross on the roof. Which sections of the Township have churches?

5. School Houses are marked as buildings without crosses on the roof. How many school houses can you find in Clinton Township?
Townships and Ranges

In the Township Binder, you will find a copy of the Linn County Map from 1907. Notice that the Survey Township numbers and Ranges are marked on the edge of the Map.

The Business District

The Village of Ushers Ferry is a community made up of several different parts. As you look around the town, here are some questions to talk over with your brothers and sisters.

1. What are the different businesses represented in Ushers Ferry?

2. What kinds of important businesses and buildings does your town have that are missing from Ushers Ferry?

3. What businesses does Ushers Ferry have that your town does not?

4. What businesses do you think are the most important to have in your town so people will want to live there?

5. Look at the streets of Ushers Ferry. Do they look pretty much the same as an average town or city street today? What is different about them? What is the same?
The Saloon

At the time this Saloon was built, it was actually against the law to sell alcohol in Iowa, but the Iowa Legislature found a creative way to get around this problem when many communities protested the alcohol ban by passing the “Mulct Law.” Listen to the audio or video tour to learn more!

1. How much was the fine a Saloon owner had to pay if he wanted to sell alcohol under the Mulct Law?

2. Thinking through all the families represented here at Ushers Ferry, which families do you think would have favored the temperance laws (supported the alcohol ban)? Who do you think would have wanted to be able to buy alcohol? Why?

3. Why do you think people wanted to make the sale of alcohol illegal in Iowa?

4. What is the big brass container on the floor at the end of the bar called? What was it used for?

Township Meeting Minutes

1. Were you appointed to a Township Office? If so, what was it? What were your responsibilities?

2. (Small Group Activity) Did you serve on a Township committee to solve a problem for the Township? What was the problem? What did you decide? How did your decision make life better for the citizens of the Township?

3. (Large Group Activity) Who won in the case of the Naughty Goat? The Thompsons or The Ushers? Do you think the ruling was fair? Why or why not?
The Usher House

The land on which Ushers Ferry sits has not always been a town. Once it was river bottom forest. Henry Usher used those trees to build his home in 1855. Later it became farm land and cattle pasture. Take a few minutes to talk about the land around you with your brothers and sisters.

1. What important natural resources made the Ushers want to settle here? How did they use those resources to make a living?

2. What is a ferry boat?

3. Mr. Usher got a road built to his ferry by serving in one important office for Clinton Township. What was that position?

4. Does this house seem big or small to you? How many people do you think could live here comfortably?

5. What very important room is missing from this house that we all have in our houses today?

6. Where did they wash their dishes?

The General Store

No town is complete without a place to purchase goods. The Ushers Ferry General Store is comparable to the Super Walmarts and Targets of today. Taped to the front door is the Grocer’s Commodity list and a Shopping List for 1900. Using these lists, answer the following questions:

1. Commodity prices are the “wholesale” prices, or what it costs the storekeeper to buy the goods he resells in his store. Sometimes he is willing to buy from you or trade with you in order to get the goods he needs to serve his other customers. What items on this list might you be even be able to raise in town if you had a back yard?

2. What items on the shopping list cannot be grown in Iowa that the storekeeper will likely have to import from somewhere else?

3. Compare the Commodity price list to the Shopping price list. If you sell a dozen eggs to the storekeeper, how much money will you make?

4. If the storekeeper in turn sells that dozen eggs to someone else, how much money will he make?
The Snoble House
The Snoble House was a real Czech immigrant’s house that used to stand at the intersection of 42nd St. and Morelle Road, in fact, you probably passed the place where it stood on your way to Ushers Ferry!

1. Why did the Snoble family decide to leave Bohemia and come to America? Can you think of a country today where life is so hard that people are willing to emigrate to a different country where they don’t even speak the same language?

2. Why did they decide to settle in Cedar Rapids?

3. Like many Czech immigrants, the Snoble family brought many traditional Czech and German foods, customs and entertainments with them. Can you identify the traditional Czech or European foods that you can now commonly find in Iowa thanks to the Czech immigrants who brought them here? Circle them!

   APPLE PIE   KOLACHES   SODA BREAD   SAUERKRAUT   HAMBURGERS
   POPPYSEED CAKE   CROISSANTS   HOT DOGS   BRATWURST   CHILI

The Hired Hand’s House
The Hired Hand’s house was a small house that some farmers would build on their farm as a place for the hired man to live. Taking care of a farm was lots of work, and if the farmer didn’t have children old enough to help with chores, he had to hire someone to do them. The hired man might be invited to take meals with you, but had private quarters elsewhere on the farm.

1. Do you think the hired man who lived in this house was married or single?

2. How many people do you think could live comfortably in this house?

3. Would you like to live in a house this small?

The Church
The Parsonage was the home to Rev. Warren C. Thompson of the Oak Hill Free Methodist Church and his wife. He was the Pastor of the church across the street.

1. What four “freedoms” did Free Methodists believe in?
   Freedom of ______________________
   Freedom from ____________________
   Freedom from ____________________
   Freedom for ____________________

2. Why was a church important to a community? What kinds of important services did Reverend Thompson offer?

3. How did Mrs. Thompson help out in the community?
The Tokheims

The Tokheim family has recently moved to the area, and Mr. Tokheim is getting ready to start his new business building gasoline pumps. Visit his office in the yellow house on the hillside to see his inventions and find the answers to the following questions!

1. What country did Mr. Tokheim immigrate to America from?

2. How did Mr. Tokheim teach himself to become an inventor and businessman? Where did he study? How did he learn the skills he needed to build his inventions?

3. There are pictures of many of Mr. Tokheim’s inventions on his desk or around the office. Name three things invented by Mr. Tokheim.

4. When Mr. Tokheim died, his daughter Agnes took over the company. Do you think it would have been common for women to own and run their own companies in that time? Or to run a factory that made the kind of industrial equipment Mr. Tokheim did?

The Telephone House

The Telephone House is home to the Ushers Ferry Telephone Cooperative. If you wanted to contact someone not included in your party line (most likely neighbors), you would be connected to the Operator who would then connect you to another Operator and so on. A phone call from Los Angeles to New York could take up to 23 minutes to connect!

1. Play a game of Operator/Telephone. Have an adult start the message. Did the message go through clearly? How long did the message take?

What you need: At least six players.

How to play: Players assemble in a straight line. The person at the beginning of the line thinks up a phrase and whispers it to the next person in line. That person whispers it to the next person, and so on, until everyone in the line has heard the phrase. The player at the end of the line calls out what he or she heard. Errors typically happen as the phrase goes down the line, so the statement announced by the last player could differ significantly, and often amusingly, from the one originally stated.

The rules: It is considered cheating if a player deliberately changes the phrase to something completely different.

How to win: This isn’t a win/lose game.

What else you need to know: This game is also called Gossip, and it can teach children how easily information can change by indirect communication. It also can teach children listening skills, as well as how to control the volume of their voices.

3. Would you have liked the job of Operator? Why or why not? What if you were able to listen to everyone’s phone conversations? Would that change your answer?!