



The Story of My Day

READ:

Historians learn about life in the past from people who took the time to share details of their daily lives. The Chicago History Museum has 20,000 linear feet of diaries, letters, business records, scrapbooks, and speeches. That is almost 67 football fields, or nearly 14 Willis (Sears) Towers. Some people in the past wrote letters, others drew pictures, and still others kept diaries where they wrote about their lives each day. Families often save these things to share their history from generation to generation. Every day tells a story about you and your family. Take the time to save your story today. Now it's your turn to share the story of your day.

DO:

What is the story of my day?

- **Read** Justin's letter. Justin and his family lived through the Great Chicago Fire. When the fire ended, Justin wrote a letter and drew a picture which he sent to a friend describing his experiences.
- **Tell** you story with the "My Day Story Starter" sheet to talk, write, or draw your day.
- **Record** your story with a phone or other mobile device (optional). Send your recording to a friend or relative and ask them to tell you about their day.

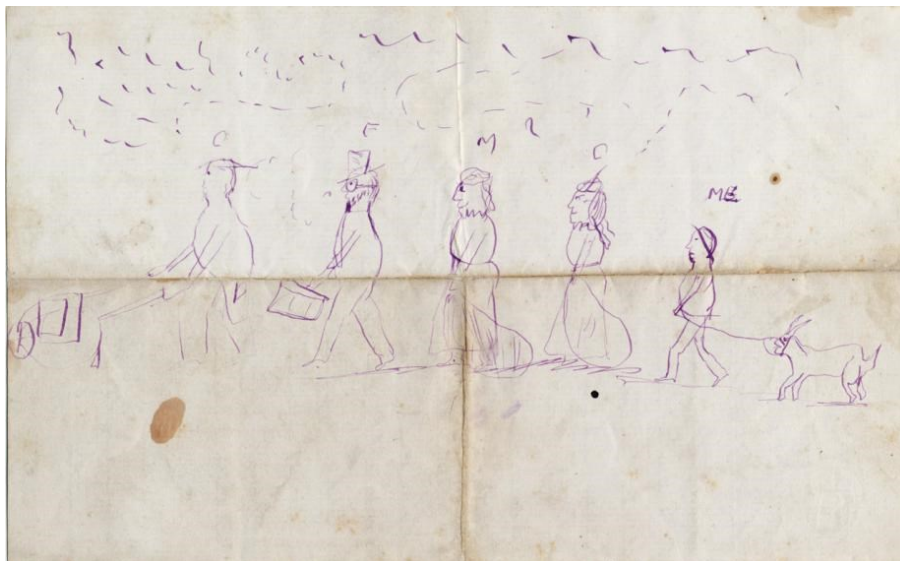
Approx. Time: 30—45 minutes

Materials:

- ⇒ Photograph
- ⇒ What I See Page
- ⇒ Pencil or pen
- ⇒ Drawing materials
- ⇒ Camera/Phone (Optional)

SHARE:

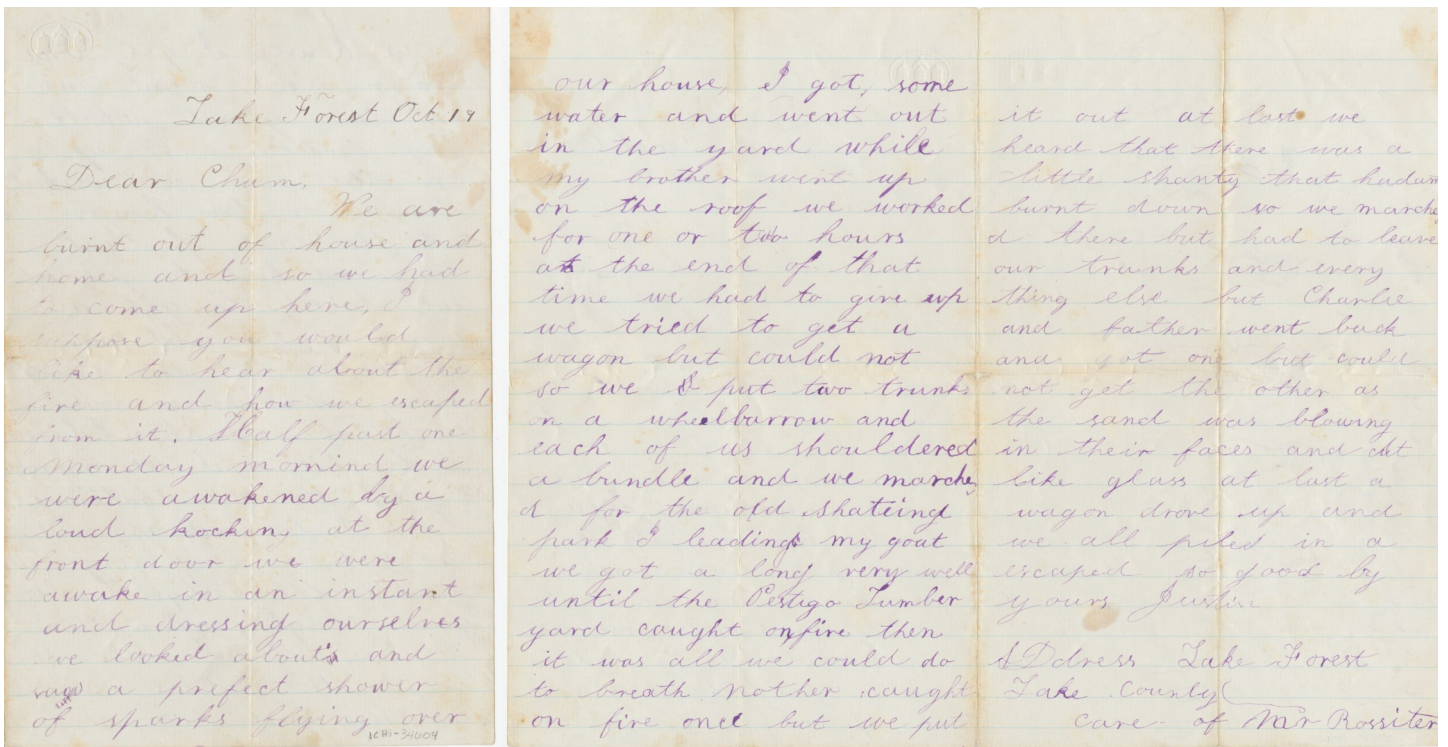
- **Post** your writing, drawing, or recording on Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #CHMatHomeFamilies.



Picture by Justin showing his family during the Great Chicago Fire. ICHI-063792

Justin's Letter

Justin, whose last name was likely Butterfield, sent a letter and drawing of his family fleeing (see the first page) to his "chum" Philip Prescott on October 19, 1871.



Dear Chum,

We are burnt out of house and home and so we had to come up here. I suppose you would like to hear about the fire and how we escaped from it. Half past one Monday morning we were awakened by a loud knocking at the front door we were awake in an instant and dressing ourselves we looked about and saw a perfect shower of sparks flying over our house. I got some water and went out in the yard while my brother went up on the roof we worked for one or two hours at the end of that time we had to give up. We tried to get a wagon but could not so we put two trunks on a wheelbarrow and each of us shouldered a bundle and we marched for the old skating park I leading my goat. We got along very well until the Pes[h]tigo Lumber yard caught on fire then it was all we could do to breathe. Mother caught on fire once but we put it out at last we heard that there was a little shanty that hadn't burnt down so we marched there but had to leave our trunks and everything else but Charlie and father went back and got one but could not get the other as the sand was blowing in their faces and cut like glass at last a wagon drove up and we all piled in and escaped so good by

yours Justin



My Day Story Starter

Date: _____

In the morning I: _____

In the afternoon I: _____

In the evening I: _____

Today I Saw/Helped/Watched/Made (choose one) : _____

My Day Story Starter

Date: _____

My favorite part of my day was: _____

Tomorrow I hope: _____

Draw a picture showing part of your day!

