

Impact of Industrialization on Workers

The Industrial Revolution

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Grade Level	8th Grade	**Time Frame**	2 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	100 minutes
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

How did the early industrialization of the American economy impact workers in the 19th and 20th centuries? Should governments regulate businesses to protect the rights of workers?

Summary

In this lesson about the Industrial Revolution, students will begin by observing photographs of factory workers and analyzing primary sources to make inferences about working conditions during the Industrial Revolution. Based on the information they gather, students will write a letter protesting working conditions they feel are unjust. As an extension, students will view a video interview with Oklahoma State AFL-CIO President Jimmy Curry and explain how labor organizations have historically advocated for workers' rights and continue to do so. This lesson includes optional modifications for distance learning. Resources for use in Google Classroom are included.

Snapshot

Engage

Students observe real photographs of factory workers and make inferences about working conditions during the Industrial Revolution.

Explore

Students analyze a real report describing working conditions in the Lowell Mills from 1845.

Explain

Based on the information they gathered, students use the RAFT strategy to write letters protesting working conditions they feel are unjust. Next, as a class, students make a list of the major issues that workers protested in their letters.

Extend

Students view a video interview with Oklahoma State AFL-CIO President Jimmy Curry, learning about how labor organizations and unions have protected workers throughout history. Based on the interview, students identify how the concerns they learned about in the previous section have been addressed.

Evaluate

The Paint a Picture activity responses and RAFT strategy serve as assessments for this lesson.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR301: Locate simple details at the sentence and paragraph level in somewhat challenging passages
CLR302: Draw simple logical conclusions in somewhat challenging passages
IDT201: Identify the topic of passages and distinguish the topic from the central idea or theme
IDT402: Identify a clear central idea or theme in somewhat challenging passages or their paragraphs

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Writing (6-12)

I&A 201: Understanding the task and writing with purpose. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Generate a thesis that is unclear or not entirely related to the given issue -Respond weakly to other perspectives on the issue
I&A 402: Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Establish and employ a relevant context for analysis -Recognize implications, complexities and tensions, and/or underlying values and assumptions
D&S 301: Building and strengthening the argument. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Make use of mostly relevant reasoning and examples to support the thesis and arrive at a general or simplistic understanding of the issue -Offer a rationale that largely clarifies the argument -Provide elaboration of ideas and analysis that is somewhat repetitive or imprecise
ORG 402: A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Make use of an emergent controlling idea or purpose to shape the argument

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies Practices (8th Grade))

8.9: The student will analyze the social and economic transformations of the early nineteenth century.
8.9.1: Explain the impact of the Industrial Revolution in the North including the concentration of population, manufacturing,and transportation.

Attachments

- Lesson Slides—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.pptx
- Massachusetts Lawmakers Investigate Working Conditions in Lowell—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.docx
- Massachusetts Lawmakers Investigate Working Conditions in Lowell—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.pdf
- Massachusetts Lawmakers Investigate Working Conditions in Lowell—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.docx
- Massachusetts Lawmakers Investigate Working Conditions in Lowell—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.pdf
- Paint a Picture Chart—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.docx
- Paint a Picture Chart—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.pdf
- Paint a Picture Chart—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.docx
- Paint a Picture Chart—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.pdf
- Paint a Picture Photo Set—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.docx
- Paint a Picture Photo Set—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.pdf
- Paint a Picture Photo Set—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.docx
- Paint a Picture Photo Set—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.pdf
- Workers' Protested Issues—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.docx
- Workers' Protested Issues—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers - Spanish.pdf
- Workers' Protested Issues—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.docx
- Workers' Protested Issues—Impacts of Industrialization on Workers.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Workers' Protested Issues (attached; one per student)

- Paint a Picture Chart (attached; one per student)
- Paint a Picture Photo Set (attached; one per group of 3–4 students)
- Massachusetts Lawmakers Investigate Working Conditions in Lowell (attached; one per student)
- Highlighters (one per student)
- Paper (optional)
- Device (optional)

40 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Lesson Context

It is suggested that this lesson be taught after students have some background knowledge of the Industrial Revolution and how it changed the economies of the northern and southern regions of the United States. Students should have an awareness of the growth of industry and manufacturing during this time period and its impact on cities, especially in the North.

Optional: Scaffolding and Time Management

Students might benefit from analyzing Photograph #1 as a whole class. This would provide an opportunity to make sure students understand the difference between an observation and an inference. Students could then finish the remaining four photographs in their groups. Additionally, for the sake of time, you may choose to have students analyze fewer than five photographs. You could pick and choose which photos you would like them to look at, or you might divide the photos among student groups, having each group analyze one additional photo, then share their observations and inferences with the whole class.

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Begin by displaying **slide 3**, showing the lesson's essential questions. Explain to students that as part of their study of the Industrial Revolution, they will explore these questions:

- *How did the industrialization of the American economy in the 19th and 20th century impact workers?*
- *Should governments regulate businesses to protect the rights of workers?*

Display **slide 4** to share the learning objectives with the students.

To begin this exploration, display **slide 5** and invite students to participate in a Painting a Picture strategy. This activity will use a series of photographs to paint a figurative picture in the students' minds of working conditions during the Industrial Revolution. Place students in small groups of 3–4, then distribute a copy of the attached **Paint a Picture Photo Set** to each group and the **Paint a Picture Chart** to each student. Ask students to work with their groups to first write down in the "observations" column of their charts what they see. Start the 5-minute timer on the slide.

Next, display **slide 6** and ask students to continue working together to write down in the "inferences" column of their charts what they can infer or conclude about how industrialization impacted workers based on their observations.

Teacher's Note: Photograph Captions

Please note that the photographs in this section are part of a collection done by photographer Lewis Hine for the National Child Labor Committee. They were an effort to bring attention to child labor issues in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The titles included with the photos in the Lesson Slides and in the Photo Set include vivid and powerful details about the terrible conditions that workers had to endure. You may wish to discuss with students the benefits of reading captions.

As students finish their photo analyses, show the photos on **slides 7–11** and ask student groups to share their observations and inferences for each photograph with the whole class.

Optional Modification For Distance Learning

To make use of this lesson in an online or distance learning environment, consider downloading all attachments to use in Google Classroom or your school Learning Management System (LMS).

Explore

Display **slide 12**. Invite students to continue painting a picture of working conditions during the Industrial Revolution by exploring a primary source document—an excerpt from a report published by Massachusetts lawmakers after investigating the working conditions at the Lowell Mills, a 19th century textile mill in the city of Lowell, Massachusetts. Distribute a copy of the attached **Massachusetts Lawmakers Investigate Working Conditions in Lowell** to each student and ask them to read the text.

After reading, display **slide 13** and ask students to return to their original groups and use the Categorical Highlighting strategy to highlight any information that shows what the working conditions in the Lowell Mills were like. This strategy encourages students to read for and select information from a certain category or categories within a text. In this case, the category is "working conditions." Pass out a highlighter to each student.

After students have finished highlighting, invite student groups to share out some of the information they selected. This discussion should summarize major points that students have observed from the text about working conditions and experiences in the Lowell Mills.

Next, display **slide 14**. Using the back of their Paint a Picture chart or a new sheet of paper, have students work with their groups to use the information from their charts and the text to create a 2–3 sentence response to the following question:

How did industrialization of the American economy impact workers?

Students should use evidence from the photos and/or text to support their claims.

Possible Student Responses

The industrialization of the American economy negatively impacted many workers who had to work incredibly long hours with few breaks. They were paid very little, and young children were working. Additionally, workers were often exposed to dangerous and dirty work environments that posed risks to their health and safety.

Once student groups have finished, call on each group to share their responses. After students share, summarize major points about how workers of the Industrial Revolution were often oppressed by their working conditions.

40 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 15**. Explain to students that workers began organizing to protest working conditions they felt were unjust. Students can work individually or as a group to use the RAFT strategy. Introduce the instructional strategy and explain that in this RAFT, the **"role"** is a factory worker, the **"audience"** is a business owner or Congress, the **"format"** is a letter, and the **"topic"** is working conditions. Inform students that they are writing a letter and answering the following question:

If you were a factory worker during the 1800s, what issues regarding your working conditions would you protest or fight to change?

Display **slide 16** and explain that students should compose a letter of complaint in the voice of a worker and should include at least three specific issues they are protesting, with explanations of how to improve their working conditions. Students can write this letter on notebook paper, in a composition book, or on a Google Doc.

Once students have finished their letters, display **slide 17**. Pass out a copy of the **Workers' Protested Issues** to each student. Ask students to share out the issues they discussed in their letters. As students share, make a class list. Consider typing students' issues into the chart on the slide or on the board. Have students write these issues down on their charts in the "Issues" column.

Use **slide 18** to show examples that students may mention. Before moving on to the next section of the lesson, make sure students have filled in the "Issues" column on their charts.

50 minutes

Extend

Continue to **slide 19.** Show students the ICAP - Impacts of Industrialization on Workers with Oklahoma State AFL-CIO president Jimmy Curry. AFL–CIO stands for the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. In the video, Mr. Curry explains the influence of labor organizations, how labor organizations have worked throughout history, and how they continue protecting workers. As students watch the interview, ask them to take notes in the right-hand column of their chart titled "Resolutions" about how labor organizations have addressed the issues recorded on the left side.

Additional Information On The AFL-CIO

According to the AFL-CIO website: "The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) works tirelessly to improve the lives of working people. We are the democratic, voluntary federation of 55 national and international labor unions that represent 12.5 million working men and women. We strive to ensure all working people are treated fairly with decent paychecks and benefits, safe jobs, dignity, and equal opportunities." For more background information on the Oklahoma State AFL-CIO, visit their website here. Full URLs for both sites can be found in the Resources below. After the video, display **slide 16.** Ask for volunteers to share their notes on how labor organizations helped to fight each issue. Sample responses can be seen on **slide 17.**

After the video, display **slide 20.** Ask for volunteers to share their notes on how labor organizations helped to fight each issue. Sample responses can be seen on **slide 21.**

Evaluate

Display **slide 22.** Review the I Think, We Think instructional strategy. Ask students to take out a piece of paper and divide it into two columns one titled "I Think" and the other titled "We Think."

Pose the question: Should governments regulate businesses to protect the rights of workers?

Start the 3-minute timer and instruct students to individually respond to the prompt in the "I Think" column. Remind students that there is not a right answer, but they need to support their answers with evidence and reasoning.

Once time is up, move to **slide 23**. Pair students up and have them discuss their initial responses with each other. After discussing, instruct students to complete the "We Think" column with their partner. Start the 3-minute timer and allow students to discuss and record their thoughts.

After the timer ends, facilitate a whole class discussion having students share their responses.

Conclude the discussion by noting that many of the protections we take for granted on entering the workforce exist only because those who came before us fought for those rights to be secured through the creation of new laws.

Teacher's Note: Grades

Consider having students write down their response to the last question for an assignment. You can also have students turn in the Paint a Picture activity responses from the Engage and Explore sections and the RAFT strategy from the Explain section. These can serve as assessments for this lesson.

Resources

- AFL-CIO. (n.d.). About Us. AFL-CIO. https://aflcio.org/about-us
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Categorical highlighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/192
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google classroom. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628
- K20 Center. (n.d.). RAFT. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/158
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Painting a picture. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1331
- K20 Center. (2020, March 3). ICAP-Impacts of industrialization on workers [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/XPpiKKsClTY
- Oklahoma State AFL-CIO (2016, August 23). Oklahoma State AFL-CIO. Oklahoma State AFL-CIO. https://unionhall.aflcio.org/oklahoma-state-afl-cio