

Mining Childhood

Grade 7-8 Lesson: Unions and Strikes & Conflict Resolution

Essential Question: How did Butte unions both unify and divide people?

Learning Targets:

1. I can analyze a historical photograph.
2. I can define concept vocabulary words.
3. I can summarize information from a secondary text.
4. I can describe the extent of the hostility toward “scabs” during a union strike.
5. I can offer alternative solutions to violence of mobs.

Common Core Connection:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1](#) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2](#) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7](#) Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Length of Lesson:

Three sixty-minute periods

Materials Needed:

Day One

1. Photo from Miners’ Union Day: <https://flic.kr/p/m3nG3M>.
2. Photo of the Miner’s Union Hall, after it was ransacked: <https://flic.kr/p/m3fdwi>
3. Library of Congress Teacher’s Tool for Analyzing Photographs: https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Charts_and_Graphs.pdf
4. Form for analyzing photographs and prints, copied double-sided so there’s a blank form on each side of the page. https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool_LOC.pdf
5. Concept vocabulary words written on sticky notes, a complete set for each small group in the class (3-4 students each): *production, fatality, working, conditions, union, capitalism, radical, socialism, unfair labor practice, workers’ rights, freedom of expression*
6. Chart paper, one sheet per group
7. Markers, 2-3 per group

8. *Montana: Stories from the Land* pp. 296-297; 300-302 (You can download the chapter here:
<https://mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/chapter15/Chapter15.pdf>)

Day Two

9. Quotes of Kay Antonetti and Betty Matesich (p. 100)
10. *Mining Childhood* pp. 100-102
11. Frayer charts (double-sided so there's one blank chart on each side of the paper) <https://mhs.mt.gov/education/MiningChildhood/7AFrayerChart.pdf>

Day Three

12. *Mining Childhood* pp. 103-5
13. Photo of house damaged during the 1946 strike (see page 7 of this lesson)
14. Printed and cut-apart selections from
<http://listverse.com/2013/07/28/top-10-instances-of-mob-mentality/>

Day One

Hook:

1. Project the parade photo (or provide copies if you lack a projector) from <https://flic.kr/p/m3nG3M>.
2. Ask students to conduct a careful examination of the photo before sharing ideas. Use the Library of Congress Teacher's Tool for Analyzing Photographs with students. Begin by modeling some of the analysis procedures (use the questions on the teacher's tool, for example).
3. Then facilitate a discussion of the photograph, telling students the year, location, and event.
4. Repeat this process with the photo from the World Museum of Mining that depicts people looking at the Miners' Union Hall after it had been ransacked. <https://flic.kr/p/m3fdwi>. This time ask students to make connections between the two pictures verbally. Teachers: if you need some background information on the labor unions, read ahead the section from *Stories from the Land*. However, you may want more information about the bombing of the Union Hall. There are many sources of basic information on the internet. Here's one that might help: <https://web.archive.org/web/http://20210120231819/www.butteamerica.com/labor.htm> and scroll down about 5 sections.
5. Ask students to write 1-2 sentences on their sheet asking further questions about the photos and turn the sheet in. These questions will help you know whether they understand the photos and the analysis/discussion. (15 mins.)
← meets Learning Target 1.

Activities:

1. Share the Learning Targets with students. The purpose of sharing these is to help students understand what you want them to learn by the end of the lesson and to keep the lesson on track.

2. Conduct a list-group-label activity with students. For this, you will need your words (see material list) written on sticky notes and large chart paper, one set of words and one sheet for each small group (3-4 students).
 - Explain that they will be organizing the words into categories. They may not know the words, or they may have only a vague idea about them. They can use each other or a dictionary if they need help, but it's not supposed to be a dictionary exercise.
 - Students should separate the sticky notes and spread them across a work surface.
 - Discuss and decide how to assemble categories. Words with positive connotations? Negative? Or how about parts of speech? Or words about work and words about other things? If students are totally stuck (which could happen if they've done little group work or little work like this with words), give them the positive/negative connotation.
 - Now, on the chart paper, they should transfer their sticky notes and use markers to label the categories.
 - Conduct a group display opportunity: each group has 30 seconds to share the categories they chose and explain why. Post the chart paper on the wall. (20 mins.)
3. Provide copies of the pages 296-97 and 300-302 from *Montana: Stories from the Land* in preparation for SQ2R: Survey, question, read, respond.
 - Have students make a two-column chart on notebook paper.
 - They will use the headings to make questions. For example, the heading "Labor Reform: Workers Unite for Better Conditions" on page 296 could be reworded into the following question: "What were the working conditions and how did reform help?" Write the question and the page number in the left-hand column. The intended outcome is for students to have a focus for their reading.
 - As they read each section, they should look for the answers to the questions and write a brief summary of those answers in the right-hand column. Encourage students to avoid writing long sentences or copying out of the book. Model the first one for them, if you need to.
 - There should be one heading from page 296 and three from pages 300-302 (don't include the first one, "Getting Radical"; this introductory section is too short to be useful in this activity).
 - When students finish these sections, they should use what they wrote in the right-hand column to write a summary of both sections. Remind students that a summary is supposed to be brief, accurate, and logical (and that they should use transition words and ideas to connect parts of the summary).
 - Facilitate a brief whole-group discussion about the information, possibly asking 3-4 students to read their summaries and answering questions that arise. ←meets Learning Target 3 (25 mins.)

Day Two

Hook:

Read the quotes from Kay Antonetti and Betty Matesich (p. 100) describing their fathers' very different approaches to strikes, managers, and scabs. Ask students to note the differences as they listen. Discuss as a group what they noticed and what questions they have. (10 mins.)

Activity:

1. Remind students of Learning Targets.
2. Provide copies of *Mining Childhood*, pp. 100-102 along with a copy of the concept vocabulary Frayer chart. Students will be working with partners to complete these, but for now they are blank. Tell students they'll be reading the section about strikes that includes the material they just heard. Their goal is to define the words they've got on their Frayer charts. (Teachers: If your students have never worked with Frayer charts, you may want to hand out the sample provided [here, page 2](#)) and discuss it.
 - Assign partners or trios and give each student a double-sided Frayer chart; that is, there is a blank Frayer chart on each side of the paper. Assign each group one pair of words. Pair the words like this: *divisive & strike; salaried & scab; union & hostility; alliance & picket line*. Have them write the first word of their pairing in the center bubble of one Frayer chart. Ask them to turn the paper over and write the second word of their pairing in the center bubble of that Frayer chart.
 - As students read, they should mark the text where they see their two words and look for clues that help them understand the word better. If they find other words that they need to know to understand the text, they should circle those.
 - After reading, ask students to work together in their partnerships to complete their Frayer charts. They may use the dictionary as a last resort.
 - In a quick panel-style presentation, each partnership presents each word to the rest of the class.
3. Lead a whole-group discussion with the purpose of describing the strikes, explaining any unknown concepts (such as strikes themselves, the scabs, and reasons behind the hostility). (30 mins.)

Assessment:

1. Put both pictures from yesterday back on the overhead, or show them around the room. Ask students to consider what they've learned about unions, strikes, and the hostility that sometimes existed.
2. Make sure all the concept words are visible to all students. Ask them to write a sentence about this topic of unions and strikes, using at least three of the words. They may change the form of the word if necessary as long as it preserves the basic meaning. These sentences will be excellent formative assessment for you. ← meets Learning Targets 2 and 3 (10 mins.)

Day Three

Hook:

Project photo of house damaged in the 1946 strike and study it for a minute. Without discussing the girl in the photo, ask students to share what they notice in the photo, and what they wonder. Then ask students to write a short journal from the perspective of the girl in the photo, if this were her house. Ask if some wish to share what they wrote. (15 mins.)

Activities:

1. Read aloud the account of Sarah Massey (pp. 103-5). As students listen, they should consider the fears of a five-year-old in this situation. Stop at “four days before my sixth birthday.” What words does Massey use that reveal her feelings at the time, even 65 years later when she wrote this account? (5 mins.)
2. Discuss Sarah’s feelings. What did she indicate that she felt and what words showed that? (5 mins.)
3. Give each student a short selection to read about “mob mentality.” This website provides examples of “mob mentality,” but be sure you read through it first to decide on appropriateness for your group – both content and reading level. (<http://listverse.com/2013/07/28/top-10-instances-of-mob-mentality/>) You could use other examples or reading selections to help the class understand what “mob mentality” is. After they read, ask students to give examples of negative “mob mentality” either from what they read or from other knowledge they have. Be sure their examples are really about a large group of people and not a single bully. Then ask about positive examples of “mob mentality.” (15 mins.)
4. Now discuss: what actions could have shown Sarah that not everybody was bad or disliked her family? Follow this up by reading the rest of the page, including the paragraph starting with “Sarah and her family moved to an apartment...” and ending with her final words: “I certainly hope so.” Do you think the Butte community helped allay her fears and change her perspective on the world?

Assessment:

Ask students to answer these questions in writing:

1. What role did “mob mentality” play in Sarah Massey’s experience? Use examples from the text as well as the photo to help answer the question fully.
2. How can you be a part of positive “mob mentality”? ← meets Learning Targets 1 & 2

Extension Ideas:

- Students can investigate the dangers of mining. Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 students and assign each one a topic related to mining risks, including the Granite Mountain disaster, miners’ consumption, cave-ins, and underground fires. A poster gallery or panel presentation could serve as the culminating product.

- Conduct a panel on unions in American history and contemporary times. Each small group could research a particular union and present its origin, important historical events and achievements, and contemporary issues or demise.
- Conduct a short project that allows students to research contemporary examples of “mob mentality” in our society, both positive and negative.
- Go further in depth with a unit that addresses the union strikes, scabs, and violent outcomes of hostility between labor and management or salaried workers.
- Present an addition lesson on the psychology of childhood trauma, if this is an appropriate topic for your class/population.



Photo courtesy Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives, PC 096 F11