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Title: Three Strikes--You're Out! of a job

Subject: US History 1877-Present

State: Ohio

Students will study three labor strikes through secondary and primary sources --two nationally known and one local--they will find similarities and differences, as well as look at causes and effects of all three strikes. The details of the local steel mill and its strike and ultimate demise won't mean much to students in different areas of the country, but in our district students pass the dead steel mill everyday on their way to and from school. If teachers have a local industry in their district, they can tailor this lesson to their own needs by finding sources [local newspapers and libraries are great resources] in their own districts.

- I. The Ohio End of Course tests not only content knowledge, but also social studies skills. It is important that the students understand how to discern whether materials are credible and how to use those materials to support or refute positions. Many of the questions on the test deal with cause and effect as well as comparison of two or more events.
- II. Students will use primary and secondary sources to study the rise of industrialization and labor movements as a part of the economic development of the country and see its effects locally.
- III. TOPIC: INDUSTRIALIZATION AND PROGRESSIVISM (1877-1920) Ignited by post-Civil War demand and fueled by technological advancements, large-scale industrialization began in the United States during the late 1800s. Growing industries enticed foreign immigration, fostered urbanization, gave rise to the American labor movement and developed the infrastructure that facilitated the settling of the West. A period of progressive reform emerged in response to political corruption and practices of big business.

Learning Standards:

8. The rise of corporations, heavy industry, mechanized farming and technological innovations transformed the American economy from an agrarian to an increasingly urban industrial society.
9. The rise of industrialization led to a rapidly expanding workforce. Labor organizations grew amidst unregulated working conditions, laissez-faire policies toward big business, and violence toward supporters of organized labor.
10. Immigration, internal migration and urbanization transformed American life.

- IV. This unit will cover five class periods including the formal assessment.

**Day 1:** Introduction into Industrialization and Labor using information from online textbooks. I divide the class into three groups and have each group read and take notes on the rise of the labor movement in American industry.

<https://www.americanyawp.com/text/16-capital-and-labor/>  
<https://www.ushistory.org/us/37.asp>  
<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5758863>

Have students report out on what they learned and then synthesize all the information to make one coherent body of text to use as a base. Exit ticket.

**Day 2:** Students will make a list of “wants” of workers. Of those “wants” the students will have to decide which of them would be worth calling a strike. Students will then have to decide what they would be willing to give up to avoid a strike. Give students the information on the Homestead Strike and the Pullman Strike. They are to read the material and then come to class the next day with a list of similarities and a list of differences between the two strikes. Exit ticket.

**Day 3:** Have students log into their Chromebooks and then log into the Viewsonic Board. They will begin to make a list of similarities and differences between the two strikes. They will then list the results of the strikes. They will have to decide whether the strikes were successful. Exit ticket.

**Day 4:** Give students the information about the Wheeling-Pitt Strike. They are to read it and then compare it to the other two strikes. Have the students brainstorm what affect the local strike had on the local area. Ask students what part of the bankruptcy and ultimate sale of the mill did the strike play? Were there other factors as well?

**Day 5:** Formal Assessment: Students will answer five short answer questions about the strikes and the effects on workers, companies and communities.

V: Each of the first four days the students will write an exit ticket answering the question: **Explain how unions benefit workers.** Giving them the same question each day allows for them to decide if their answer changes after additional study. Once they see what the consequences and benefits of strikes are they may change their minds. Most times an exit ticket is supposed to drive what the class will discuss in the next lesson; however, this exit ticket is to make the students think and rethink their position on Labor and Company Owners.

The last day they will write short answers to five questions about the effects of the strikes they looked at during the week as their formal assessment. Students should write a short paragraph to answer each question.

Questions:

1. Construct a timeline for each of the strikes. Make sure to include how long each strike lasted.
2. Discuss the causes of each of the strikes.
3. Explain the effects of each of the strikes.
4. Connect the three strikes through similarities and differences.
5. After analyzing each of the three labor strikes, explain whether unions benefit workers.

VI. Since we are a 1:1 school, students will use their Chromebooks for all assignments. They will also use the Viewsonic Board in the classroom to compose lists together as a class.

## VII. Sources for this lesson:

Background information on Labor and Management--

<https://www.americanyawp.com/text/16-capital-and-labor/>

<https://www.ushistory.org/us/37.asp>

<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5758863>

Information on Homestead Strike--Including primary documents and images  
Use any of the following sources for students to analyze primary documents

<https://pitt.libguides.com/c.php?g=12523&p=66317>

<https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/the-homestead-strike/teaching-guide>

<https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-homestead-strike>

Information on the Pullman Strike-- Including primary documents and images  
Use any of the following sources for students to analyze primary documents

<https://digital.lib.niu.edu/illinois/gildedage/pullman>

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5363/>

<http://www.illinoislaborhistory.org/pullman>

Information on Wheeling Pittsburgh [Severstal] Steel Strike

<http://www.digitalshoebox.org/digital/collection/books/id/64275/rec/5>

<http://www.digitalshoebox.org/digital/collection/books/id/64282/rec/5>

<http://www.digitalshoebox.org/digital/collection/books/id/64284/rec/5>

<http://www.digitalshoebox.org/digital/collection/books/id/64299/rec/5>

<http://www.digitalshoebox.org/digital/collection/books/id/64301/rec/5>

## VIII. Other sources to consider

As the local steel mill information really won't mean much to students who are from other areas of the country, teachers could find information on an industry in their local district. As many of my students had grandparents, uncles and aunts that worked in the local mill and walked the picket lines, they have heard stories about the downturn of the industry and how the mill finally went bankrupt.

The county library had many sources of information about the local mill. They also have something called the digital shoebox that had many sources about the mill. Teachers should be able to find resources in their own area if they want to bring the third part of this lesson to their district.

