



Lesson 11.4 “Children in the Factories”

Unit 11: Big Factories and New Industries

Lesson Objectives

- Students will analyze primary and secondary sources to examine child labor during the Industrial Revolution.
- Students will work cooperatively with a group to negotiate mock working conditions.
- Students will identify and communicate about real-world problems and solutions through illustrations and discussion.

Lesson Competencies

- I can analyze primary and secondary sources and draw appropriate conclusions. (Moose SS)
- I can initiate and sustain a focused discussion. (ELA 7)
- I can integrate information, distinguish relevant-irrelevant information (e.g., fact/opinion), and (visually, orally, in writing) present what was learned. (ELA 8)

Essential Questions

How has New Hampshire been shaped by many voices?
How have New Hampshire’s people shaped its government?

Focus Questions

How did industrialization change the way people worked in New Hampshire?

Estimated Time

Three 40-minute class sessions

Materials & Equipment

“Amoskeag Mill Timetable, 1855” for projection
Class set of “Daily Schedule” worksheet
“Quick Connect” for projection
“Children in the Factories” Image Set
“Mason Explains: Changing Ideas of Childhood” video and “Children in the Factories in the Industrial Revolution” fact sheet for projection
Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers’ Strike of 1909
Class set of “Brave Girl Vocabulary Match” worksheet
“Factory Strike Simulation Directions” for reference
Group copies of “Negotiation Tips for Factory Workers” worksheet with “Factory Strike Simulation: Factory Worker Conditions & Demands” worksheet on the reverse
Group copies of “Negotiation Tips for Factory Bosses” worksheet with “Factory Strike Simulation: Factory Boss Conditions & Demands” worksheet on the reverse
One poster board and several markers per group
Class set of “Problem-Solving Comic Strip” worksheet



Educator Introduction & Rationale

Factory work in New Hampshire was initially done by young women from farm towns, but as the factories expanded, this labor source became insufficient. Beginning in the 1840s, the farm girls were replaced by immigrant labor. Given the poverty of many of these new arrivals, it was not uncommon for entire immigrant families to work in the factories. In New Hampshire, many children worked in mills and factories, particularly in the textile industry. Timetables produced by factories told workers when to get up, when to eat, when to be at work, and when the work day was over. This work was dangerous for adult men and women and even more so for child workers. Their size allowed them to crawl under the looms and into machinery to make minor repairs, but many children lost fingers, hands, or arms in the high-powered machinery. There were also health dangers from breathing in the lint floating in the air in most textile factories, which caused a host of lung ailments.

In 1846, New Hampshire became one of the first states to pass a child labor law. The legislation required that child workers complete a certain amount of schooling each year, and subsequent laws regulated the minimum age of employment and maximum working hours for children. However, there were no enforcement mechanisms and no systematic inspection of factories to ensure that companies were complying with the laws. Many young children continued to work long hours in dangerous conditions, including overnight shifts, at the expense of their health, education, and well-being. Reference the Educator Overview for more information.

This is the fourth lesson in Unit 11: Big Factories and New Industries. This lesson can stand alone from the unit; however, completion of the learning objectives in Lesson 11.2 "Bells and Conveyor Belts" is recommended before students move through the activities in this lesson so that they have an understanding of factory work. Unit vocabulary and definitions are at the end of this document. You may wish to preview these with your students.

This lesson explores the experiences of children working in factories in New Hampshire. Students learn about life working in a factory and the conditions that caused factory workers in the Industrial Revolution to strike. They then simulate their own strike and mock negotiation for better working conditions. After reflecting on a time they had to solve a personal problem and writing a comic strip about it, the class considers how to take informed action about modern-day child labor. Please adapt all material in this lesson, as necessary, to meet the needs of the students in your classroom.

A reinforcement activity is suggested for students who will benefit from more time with the concepts of teamwork. Two extension activities are suggested for students who would like to interact creatively with primary sources or explore the laws surrounding teenage labor in New Hampshire today.

Learning Activity

Activation

Student daily schedule. Distribute a copy of the “Daily Schedule” worksheet to each student and instruct them to fill in the chart to reflect what activity they are engaged in for each hour of a typical Monday.

Mill daily schedule. Tell the students that they will now pretend they have gone to work in the shoe factory, where they can make money for their families. Project “Amoskeag Mill Timetable, 1855.” Inform students that this is a real schedule for mills in Manchester and was used for adults and children who worked there. Examine the timetable together.

- What do you notice about this timetable in general?
- What do you notice about the mealtimes?
- What do you notice about the work day? How long were people at work? How many days did people have to go to work?
- What do you notice about the bell times? Note that lunchtime used to be called dinner.

Now compare students’ daily schedules and the mill schedule. What are the similarities and differences?

Guided Practice & Discussion

Jobs for children in factories. Divide students into four groups. If this makes groups of more than four students, consider having more groups and duplicating pictures. Project “Quick Connect” directions and tell students that groups will select one activity from each of the columns to analyze their image. Give each group one image from the “Children in the Factories” image set and about 3–5 minutes to discuss their ideas.

When groups have finished discussions, have each group share out. Discuss their reactions to the pictures and share information about child labor in the factories. Use the explainer video “Mason Explains: Changing Ideas of Childhood” and the fact sheet “Children in the Factories in the Industrial Revolution” to aid your discussion. Find the explainer video in the Media Library on the “Moose on the Loose” website.

Teaching Tip: As students explore the primary source images of child labor, take care to include historical perspective in your discussion. Help students understand that children, other than children of the very wealthy, have had to work for most of history. Particularly for families who came from farming backgrounds, child labor was an accepted fact of life. Farms required all members of the family to contribute to the household economy. For factory workers, economic necessity often forced parents to send their children to work in the mills. These families also lacked the social safety nets that many have today, such as after-school care, unemployment insurance, and other social welfare programs. Additionally, factory bosses and owners were concerned with profits and survival in a difficult marketplace, and children were economically a good choice. Ideas about childhood only started to change in the mid-19th century which then developed into protections we support today.



Teaching tip: This is a good spot to pause if you will divide the lesson between teaching periods.

**Direct
Instruction &
Discussion**

Demonstrating against child labor. Ask students how they think conditions at factories changed, since child labor isn't legal in the United States today. What can workers do against powerful owners and bosses? Introduce the historical fiction book *Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909* by Michelle Markel. Distribute the "Brave Girl Vocabulary Match" worksheet and instruct the students to match vocabulary with their meanings as you read.

When you have finished the book, check for understanding of the vocabulary words. Discuss as a class:

- What is a union? What is a strike? Why are these both important for Clara and her fellow workers?
- The small strikes did not change conditions for the girls. Why not?
- If you were Clara, would you have spoken up and protested like she did? Why or why not?

Teaching tip: If *Brave Girl* is unavailable to you, *The Bobbin Girl* by Emily Arnold McCully would be a good substitute. You can also find on YouTube a video of a librarian reading *Brave Girl*.

**Guided
Practice**

Factory strike simulation. Conduct your own classroom factory strike simulation. See "Factory Work Simulation Directions" for activity instructions. Ensure students understand that if they cannot come to an agreement, the workers will strike, the factory might then close, and all could lose their jobs.

When the simulation has run its course, bring the class together for discussion:

- How did you feel during the simulation? Why? How did the other side treat you during negotiations?
- Which of your demands were most important to your group? Did you succeed in your goals?
- Is there a large variation in outcomes among factory groups or are the results similar between groups? Why do you think that is?
- What would you have done differently the next time?

**Independent
Practice**

Create a problem-solving comic strip. Explain to students that in response to concerns about working conditions in the mills, many individuals and groups fought for child labor laws. It took many years and many people working together to bring about these changes, but they were eventually successful.

Ask students to think about a time they alone or with a group of their friends had to work together on a difficult problem. Take some time to brainstorm real problems that have concerned students in the past. Using the "Problem-Solving Comic Strip" worksheet, instruct each student to create a comic strip to show what the problem was they faced and the steps they or their group took to solve the problem.



Discussion & Reflection

Informed action. Ask the students to consider present-day circumstances. It is illegal for children under the age of 14 to work in New Hampshire. If they are under 16, there are many regulations for employers to follow so that work doesn't conflict with school or the teens' health.

However, almost one in ten children in the world is in child labor (un.org). Many are employed in conditions similar to and often far worse than New Hampshire children during the Industrial Revolution. They produce garments and shoes that people in the United States wear, farm products that people in the United States eat, and make goods that people in the United States purchase.

Help students understand the conditions under which children today work in the world and find ways for your class to take informed action against child labor using the websites below. Please screen information carefully, especially from the Human Rights Watch, as these websites also discuss the many issues surrounding child labor, including child soldiers and sex trafficking of children.

Special Note: Be aware that the social media hashtag #SaveTheChildren began as a fundraising campaign for a legitimate nonprofit organization that works to prevent child trafficking, but it has since been hijacked by adherents of the internet conspiracy theory known as QAnon to recruit followers. Please do not access the #SaveTheChildren hashtag with students as it includes disturbing and false claims.

Sources for informed action. The **International Labour Organization** has excellent educational resources as well as notable campaigns against child labor.

- June 12 is ILO's international day against child labor. They conduct both virtual and in person events yearly.
www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/lang--en/index.htm
- The SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media) curriculum has 14 educational modules that educate and promote action through awareness of children's rights.
www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/Scream/lang--en/index.htm
- The "Music Against Child Labour" Initiative encourage students to raise awareness about and inspire action against child labor by hosting a concert or dedicating a song.
www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/MusicInitiative/lang--en/index.htm

The **United Nations** calls on the global community through their Sustainable Development Goal #8 to end child labor in all its forms by 2025. Visit their website for current information, action items, and resources: www.un.org/en/events/childlabourday/

The **Human Rights Watch** works to end the worst forms of child labor and to ensure that all children are protected from jobs that interfere with their health, safety, and education. For more information on their efforts, visit hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/child-labor#.



Reinforcement

1. **Power in numbers.** Workers often form unions because people can have more power in a group than they might as individuals. Encourage students to think of other things that are stronger as a group and to illustrate or write a scenario that shows that strength. Examples of things that are stronger as a group:
 - Sports teams
 - Families
 - Herd animals
 - Ropes with many strands
 - A stand of trees

Extension

1. **Tell a story.** Script a conversation that students from today might have with one of the workers shown in the “Young Workers at Amoskeag Mills” photograph. Questions to spark ideas:
 - What job do you have in this factory?
 - How old are you?
 - What is working there like? Do you enjoy working there?
 - Do you have family members who also work in this mill?
 - How many other children work in the mill with you?
2. **Labor in New Hampshire today.** At what age can students today work in New Hampshire? What are the rules and regulations around their work? Have students brainstorm what they think should be the law today and then reference www.nh.gov/labor/faq/youth-employment.htm for the facts.

Supporting Materials

- Amoskeag Mill Timetable, 1855; Manchester (NH) Historic Association
- Children Working in a Textile Mill, 1909; Library of Congress
- Girl Working at Amoskeag Manufacturing Company, 1909; Library of Congress
- Girls Running Machines in a Textile Mill, 1908; Library of Congress
- Boy Sweeper in a Textile Mill, 1908; Library of Congress
- Young Workers at Amoskeag Mills, 1909; Library of Congress
- Michelle Markel, *Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909* (2013)

International Labour Organization's information and activism on child labor:

- International day against child labor
www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/lang--en/index.htm
- SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media) curriculum www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/Scream/lang--en/index.htm
- The "Music Against Child Labour" Initiative:
www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/MusicInitiative/lang--en/index.htm

United Nations' current information, action items, and resources:

www.un.org/en/events/childlabourday/

Human Rights Watch's information on child labor:

hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/child-labor#

Standards

“Moose on the Loose” Content:

- ✓ Students will understand that industrialization in the 19th century changed patterns of settlement as well as the way people lived in New Hampshire (Key Idea 3-5.T5.3)

“Moose on the Loose” Skills:

- ✓ Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence (3-5.S1.1)
- ✓ Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions (3-5.S2.2)
- ✓ Effective Historical Thinking (3-5.S3.1, 3-5.S3.2)
- ✓ Understanding Economics and Economic Systems (3-5.S5.1)

New Hampshire Social Studies Frameworks:

- ✓ Economics: Basic Economic Concepts (SS:EC:4:2.3, SS:EC:4:2.5)
- ✓ US / NH History: Economic Systems & Technology (SS:HI:4:4.1, SS:HI:4:4.2, SS:HI:4:4.3)
- ✓ US / NH History: Social/Cultural (SS:HI:4:5.3)

National Council for Social Studies Themes:

- ✓ Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- ✓ Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- ✓ Theme 7: Production, Distribution, and Governance

C3 Frameworks:

- ✓ Civic and Political Institutions (D2.Civ.2.3-5, D2.Civ.4.3-5, D2.Civ.6.3-5)
- ✓ Participation and Deliberation (D2.Civ.9.3-5)
- ✓ Processes, Rules, and Laws (D2.Civ.11.3-5, D2.Civ.12.3-5, D2.Civ.14.3-5)
- ✓ Exchange and Markets (D2.Eco.3.3-5, D2.Eco.7.3-5)
- ✓ Change, Continuity, and Context (D2.His.2.3-5)
- ✓ Gathering and Evaluating Sources (D3.1.3-5)
- ✓ Taking Informed Action (D4.6.3-5, D4.8.3-5)

Common Core ELA:

- ✓ Craft and Structure in Reading Literature (RL.4.4, RL 4.6)
- ✓ Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity in Literature (RL.4.10)
- ✓ Research to Build and Present Knowledge (W.4.9)
- ✓ Comprehension and Collaboration in Speaking and Listening (SL.4.1, SL.4.1a, SL.4.1b, SL.4.1c, SL.4.1d)

Lesson Vocabulary

child labor	(noun) Children working in ways that are physically, mentally, or socially dangerous and limit their education
factory	(noun) A building designed to house machines and other technology
garment worker	(noun) A person who works making items of clothing
Industrial Revolution	(noun) A period of major change in the economy focusing on the change from making things at home to making things in factories
immigrant	(noun) A person who moves from one country to live in another country
labor union	(noun) An organization that workers join to protect their rights and interests
picket	(verb) To protest or demonstrate outside a location
product	(noun) An object made by labor, either by hand or by machine
strike	(noun) When a group of workers organize together and stop working in order to force their employer to agree to their demands, usually for higher pay, shorter hours, or safer working conditions
tenement house	(noun) Crowded living apartments, usually unsafe with poor sanitation
textiles	(noun) Types of cloth or fabric

