



Lesson 15.1 “Impact of Unemployment”

Unit 15: Forging a Modern Identity

Lesson Objectives

- Students will use images and secondary source text to identify the factors of production of a historic industry and infer why that industry declined.
- Students will evaluate the effects of unemployment, during the Great Depression, on a family and community.
- Students will graph the unemployment rate from 1900 – 1950 and interpret the data.

Lesson Competencies

- I can use sources (pictures, primary and secondary sources, discussion) to expand my understanding of the topic/text and locate information to support my point of view. (ELA 6)
- I can analyze and explain changes in society and how they impact people in the past and present. (Moose SS)
- I can identify and describe variations in data, and describe and compare shapes of distribution (e.g., using line plot, scaled pictograph). (Math 8)

Essential Questions

How has New Hampshire come to be the way it is?
How has New Hampshire impacted the nation?

Focus Questions

What economic changes did New Hampshire experience during this time?
How did New Hampshire’s people adapt to changes in the 20th century?

Estimated Time

Two or three 40-minute class sessions

Materials & Equipment

“Textile Mills in NH Image Set” for posting in classroom
Class set of “A Booming Industry”
Access to Unit 15, Learn It! “[The Great Depression](#),” pages 1-7
Class set of “The Great Depression in New Hampshire”
Class set of “Graphing Unemployment 1900–1950”
Enlarged copy of “Impact of Unemployment”
“Factory Images” for projection



Educator Introduction & Rationale

Although New Hampshire's economy did well during World War I, it suffered in the decades that followed. While the American textile industry grew in the first decades of the 20th century, most of those gains were in the South, not New Hampshire, where it still formed the backbone of the state's economy. New sources of energy, like petroleum and electricity, replaced water and steam power and meant that cotton could be processed and woven where it grew instead of transported north. Southern states also paid lower wages and had lower fuel and power costs, prompting manufacturers to relocate their businesses there. New Hampshire's textile manufacturers could not compete with these southern advantages and were further hampered by outdated machinery, overproduction, changing fashions, and a decline in labor relations.

As textiles declined, the shoe industry filled in some of the gaps in New Hampshire's industrial cities, though the advent of the Great Depression undermined that industry as well. While the national unemployment rate hit 16% in 1931, it reached 33% in the Granite State. Thousands were out of work and in need of food and other necessities, half the state's farms shut down, and those who still had jobs saw their wages slashed. To make matters worse, New Hampshire was beset by a number of natural disasters in the 1930s which devastated some communities. See the [Educator Overview](#) for more information.

This lesson is the first in Unit 15: Forging a Modern Identity. It covers a difficult time in the state's history, the economic decline leading up to and through the Great Depression. Before completing this lesson, students should have a basic understanding of the four factors of production (labor, land, capital, and entrepreneurship) and how they contribute to economic success or decline. It is recommended that students complete the learning activities in Lesson 11.3 "New Hampshire's Industries" before moving through the activities in this lesson. This background will support students as they make use of primary source images and selections from the [Learn It!](#) component of Unit 15 to infer why New Hampshire's textile industry declined and how that economic failure impacted the lives of people in the state. A graphing activity challenges students to interpret data about unemployment trends and a whole group discussion about unemployment in the early 20th century uses a graphic organizer to sort its impacts on families and the wider community. The lesson concludes with a reflection on the physical structures that continue to remind us today of the New Hampshire textile industry's boom and bust: old mill buildings.

There are two reinforcement activities that support understanding of the factors of production and unemployment in New Hampshire today. Extension activities investigate the Student's Desk at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and local buildings which may have been repurposed or abandoned. Please adapt all the material in this lesson, as necessary, to meet the needs of the students in your classroom. Please note, lesson vocabulary and definitions are at the end of this document. You may wish to preview these with your students.

Teaching tip: Take care talking about unemployment and how it affects families and communities as students may have personal experience with job loss.

Learning Activity

Activation	A booming industry. Set out the "Textile Mills in NH" image set. Without telling students what they are looking at, give them time to examine the images. Then, complete the "A Booming Industry" together. Discuss what students noticed about the images. Were they able to determine the industry shown?
Direct Instruction	Textile factories in New Hampshire. Remind students that during the 1800s, New Hampshire developed several key industries, but the largest one was textile production. Project "Award-winning Amoskeag Cloth" and tell students that New Hampshire's cloth won awards internationally in the late 1800s. Amoskeag Manufacturing Company was the largest in the state (and in the world at one point!), and there were other textile businesses in towns like Nashua and Dover. Show students "One Day's Production of Amoskeag Cloth" and inform them that the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company in Manchester at its largest: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• had around 40 buildings• had about 15,000 employees• produced 500 miles of cloth every day If needed for your class, use the student readings from Unit 11: New Industries and Big Factories. Learn It! " New Hampshire's Main Industries ," pages 2-7 ("Textiles") gives more information about the establishment of this industry in New Hampshire.
Student Reading	The Great Depression. Direct students to read Unit 15: Learn It! " The Great Depression ," pages 1 to 7 and complete the graphic organizer as described in Guided Practice.
Guided Practice	The Great Depression in New Hampshire. Explain to students that by the 1930s, the powerhouse textile industry was in shambles. After the collapse of the textile industry, the rate of unemployment was high and the Great Depression only made it worse. Provide them with "The Great Depression in New Hampshire." Preview the graphic organizer together and explain that they will fill the graphic organizer with supporting details as they read.
Independent Practice	Graphing unemployment. For more than a decade, unemployment in the United States was a serious problem. President Franklin D. Roosevelt aimed to aid citizens with his New Deal policies, but it was the advent of World War II and the jobs that came with it that truly brought the nation out of the Great Depression. Review directions carefully with students, then have them complete "Graphing Unemployment 1900–1950."

Discussion

Impact of Unemployment. Explain to students that unemployment has ripple effects on families and communities. Consider projecting “Textile Mills in NH Image Set (2)” and begin a discussion about what happens to all the people in that image if their factory closes and they no longer have jobs. What if other factories close? Project or print an enlarged copy of “Impact of Unemployment” and use the prompts to expand the discussion beyond how individuals and their families are impacted by unemployment to how that situation impacts the wider community.

Teaching tip: Some students may be personally affected by the unemployment of family or community members. Take care to discuss the topic seriously but gently.

Reflection

Repurposing the mills. Project “Factory Images.” Identify the mill buildings. Tell students that although the textile mills in most towns and cities in New Hampshire closed down in the 1930s, there is opportunity here. The buildings are solid, spacious, and at the center of towns, so what could communities do with these spaces? Brainstorm together as a class how to repurpose the mills and strengthen the community.

See these articles for actual repurposing of mill buildings in New Hampshire and Massachusetts:

- Keith Eddings, *Inside Long-abandoned Mills, the Lights Are Coming On*.
www.eagletribune.com/news/merrimack_valley/inside-long-abandoned-mills-the-lights-are-coming-on/article_d41048fc-921f-573c-83c5-3e3b8d18788f.html
- Amanda Loder, *Developer Sees Affordable Housing Opportunity In Old Mill*. stateimpact.npr.org/new-hampshire/2012/12/26/developer-sees-affordable-housing-opportunity-in-old-mill/
- Colin Woodard, *How a 19th-Century Town Became a New Millennium Marvel*.
www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/02/what-works-manchester-new-hampshire-renaissance-213639/

Reinforcement

1. **Mason's Marvelous Ice Cream Market.** Ask students what is necessary for a business to be successful? How do they make money? Mason the Moose is starting up an ice cream market (a marvelous one) and he needs help making sure he does well. Economists, or people who study the production and distribution of goods and services in the world, have four categories of features that are needed for a successful business. Project and distribute "Factors of Production: Mason's Marvelous Ice Cream Market." Review the factors of production with students, then put them in small groups or pairs to brainstorm the factors of production for Mason's market. When students are ready, discuss together as a class.
2. **Unemployment today in New Hampshire.** New Hampshire Employment Security provides a monthly newsletter, *New Hampshire Economic Conditions*, giving current information about the state's unemployment statistics and economy at www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/ec.htm. The website additionally provides current employment statistics at www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/statistics/ces-data.htm. Neither are student-friendly but provide a wealth of data students can manipulate.

Extension

1. **Bureau of Labor Statistics.** Explore the *Student's Desk* at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It includes maps, charts, and a career resource guide, as well as "Economy at a Glance." www.bls.gov/k12/students/
2. **Local factories.** Are there any factories in your town that have been repurposed or have been abandoned? Visit the local historical society to learn about these buildings. If possible, take a trip to walk around them!

Supporting Materials

New Hampshire Historical Society Resources

1. Amoskeag Manufacturing Company, circa 1939
1. Award-winning Amoskeag Cloth, circa 1870
2. Bird's-Eye View of Manchester, 1876
3. Dover Factories, circa 1828–1830

Other Resources

- Aerial View of Manchester, 1967; Courtesy of the Library of Congress
- Amoskeag Manufacturing Company Upriver, 1911; Source: Wikimedia Commons
- Amoskeag Manufacturing Company Workers, circa 1899; Courtesy of the Manchester (NH) Historic Association
- The Bobbin Girl, circa 1860s–1880s; Courtesy of the Lowell National Historical Park, National Park Service
- Children Working in a Textile Mill, 1909; Source: National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress
- Cocheco Mill Company Drivers, undated; Courtesy of the Dover Public Library
- One Day's Production of Amoskeag Cloth, undated; Courtesy of the Manchester (NH) Historic Association

Sources for unemployment data:

- U.S. Bureau and Labor Statistics, Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject
Go to data.bls.gov/timeseries/LFU21000100&series_id=LFU22000100&from_year=1929&to_year=1939&periods_option=specific_period&periods=Annual+Data to access annual unemployment data for 1929–1939.
Go to data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNU04023554&series_id=LNU04000000&series_id=LNU03023554&series_id=LNU03000000&years_option=all_years&periods_option=specific_periods&periods=Annual+Data to access annual unemployment data from 1940 to the present. At the top, next to “change output options,” you can adjust the dates in the boxes as you wish; click “go.” The data will be displayed as both a graph and a table and can be downloaded as an Excel file. See also “Help Finding the Unemployment Rate Over Time,” from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics at www.bls.gov/cps/prev_yrs.htm for more information.
- *Annual Estimates of Unemployment in the United States, 1900–1954* at www.nber.org/system/files/chapters/c2644/c2644.pdf.

Standards

“Moose on the Loose” Content:

- ✓ Students will understand that improved technology such as the steam engine and telegraph made transportation and communication faster and easier. They will understand that this led to rapid industrialization in the state and the world and the growth of various industries and manufacturing. (3-5.T5.1)
- ✓ Students will understand that throughout the 20th century, New Hampshire’s economic and political life evolved and modernized. They will understand that communities responded to economic cycles, and new immigration began. (3-5.T7.2)

“Moose on the Loose” Skills:

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

New Hampshire Social Studies Frameworks:

- ✓ Economics: Economics and the Individual (SS:EC:4:1.1, SS:EC:4:1.2, SS:EC:4:1.3)
- ✓ Economics: Basic Economic Concepts (SS:EC:4:2.2, SS:EC:4:2.3)
- ✓ Economics: Cycles in the Economy (SS:EC:4:3.1, SS:EC:4:3.2)
- ✓ Geography: Environment and Society (SS:GE:4:5.2)
- ✓ US / NH History: Economic Systems & Technology (SS:HI:4:4.1, SS:HI:4:4.3)

NCSS Themes:

- ✓ Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- ✓ Theme 7: Production, Distribution, and Governance

C3 Frameworks:

- ✓ Determining Helpful Sources (D1.5.3-5)
- ✓ Economic Decision Making (D2.Eco.2.3-5)
- ✓ Exchange and Markets (D2.Eco.8.3-5)
- ✓ The National Economy (D2.Eco.11.3-5)
- ✓ Causation and Argumentation (D2.His.14.3-5, D2.His.16.3-5, D2.His.17.3-5)
- ✓ Developing Claims and Using Evidence (D3.3.3-5)

Common Core ELA Grade 3:

- ✓ Key Ideas and Details in Informational Text (RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.3)
- ✓ Craft and Structure in Informational Text (RI.4.4)
- ✓ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas in Informational Text (RI.3.7, RI.3.9)
- ✓ Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity in Informational Text (RI.3.10)

Common Core ELA Grade 4:

- ✓ Key Ideas and Details in Informational Text (RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.3)
- ✓ Craft and Structure in Informational Text (RI.4.4)
- ✓ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas in Informational Text (RI.4.9)
- ✓ Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity in Informational Text (RI.4.10)
- ✓ Research to Build and Present Knowledge (W.4.8)

Common Core ELA Grade 5:

- ✓ Key Ideas and Details in Informational Text (RI.5.1, RI.5.2, RI.5.3)
- ✓ Craft and Structure in Informational Text (RI.5.4)
- ✓ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas in Informational Text (RI.5.7, RI.5.9)
- ✓ Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity in Informational Text (RI.5.10)
- ✓ Research to Build and Present Knowledge (W.5.8)

Common Core Math:

- ✓ Represent and interpret data in measurement and data (3.MD.3)

Lesson Vocabulary

bobbin	(noun) A cylinder on which is wound thread or yarn, usually for sewing or weaving
capital	(noun) 1 The money and goods that a person owns 2 One of the four factors of production; the human-made items used to make a product, like factories and machines
economy	(noun) Relating to the system by which goods and services are made, bought, and sold
entrepreneurship	(noun) 1 Setting up a business 2 One of the four factors of production; the people and systems that connect the other three factors and help them grow
factors of production	(noun) Four economic resources necessary to create a successful product: capital, entrepreneurship, labor, land
Great Depression	(noun) The time from 1929 to 1939 when there was a severe economic crisis all over the world and especially in the United States; at the worst, almost 25% of workers were unemployed
labor	(noun) 1 Work, especially hard physical work 2 One of the four factors of production; the human workers needed to make a product
land	(noun) One of the four factors of production; the natural resources needed to make a product
manufacturing	(noun) Making products, especially with machines in factories
mill	(noun) A building with machines that do specific work
textiles	(noun) Types of cloth or fabric
unemployment	(noun) When a person does not have a job but is available to work