

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT
Introduction to Reform Movements of the 1800s
From Taylor Lebovich

Grade – 11th

Length of class period – 2 day lesson, 1 hour each

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

What were the most significant 19th century reforms?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

Students will explain the general messages of the reform movements and opposition to the reform movements through analyzing a variety of primary sources.

Students will analyze the *way* the source got the message across and evaluate which sources did so the most powerfully.

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson?) – (please attach)

Women’s Suffrage:

- 2 cartoons- Election Day!, Tea Party
- amhist.ist.unomaha.edu, harpweek.com,

Prohibition:

- 3 cartoons- The Bar of Destruction, The Evils of Booze
- harpweek.com, nebraskastudies.org

Labor Reform:

- Fiction- “The Spirit of Discontent”, Editorial- “Female Workers of Lowell”
- <http://www.historytools.org/sources/lowell-discontent.pdf>,
<http://www.learner.org/workshops/primarysources/lowell/activities01.html>

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

Day 1:

- **Opener:** Students will answer the questions individually then share with a partner, then discuss as a class to review what was learned the previous day.
 - What was the Second Great Awakening?

- How did the ideals of the Second Great Awakening coincide with what Andrew Jackson believed in?
- Have students **define REFORM**. What comes to mind? Have students predict possible reforms that may have been of public concern during the antebellum time period. Brainstorm on board.
 - Reform: To form again; to change into an improved form or condition
 - Point out the prefix “re” and its uses in other words as well
- Break students up into **three groups** and give them each an envelope. Each envelope has primary sources from a particular reform movement (**Prohibition, Labor reform, Women suffrage**) with 2 sources. Groups should break up into **partners** and look at separate documents and then trade. Students will have 15 minutes for each envelope and then pass their envelope to the group to their right. Students will fill out a worksheet for each envelope.
- **Closure:** Tell students to jot think about for class tomorrow: How are the values of the Second Great Awakening reflected in the reform movements of the time?

Day 2:

- **Discuss** each reform movement separately in their groups then as a class:
- What did the sources tell you about the reform movement? - People write down a sentence or two, share with group, share with class
 - How did the sources differ in message or persuasive technique? How did people support their views/persuade people?- Students write down a sentence or two, share with group, share with class
 - What were the most persuasive sources? Why?- Students write down a sentence or two, share with group, share with class
 - What sources were hard to understand? Why?- Students write down a sentence or two, share with group, share with class --- and peers/myself will help with confusion
- **Discuss the question from the closure the day before:** How are the values of the Second Great Awakening reflected in the reform movements of the time? Students jot something down individually, then discuss as class (Second Great Awakening emphasized individual responsibility for seeking salvation and insisted that people could improve themselves and society- promoted the power of the individual and emphasized individualism and responsibility)

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?

-Observing of students during group work (listening what each of the members were contributing) and during the class discussion later

- Through discussion and participation
- Each person had to hand in their packet to make sure it was completed

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

Standard 1.2- Trace the evolution of citizens' rights

Standard 1.6- Compare and contrast various American beliefs, values, and political ideologies

Standard 2.5- Interpret social/political messages of cartoons.

“Election Day!”



“This is the Most Magnificent Movement of All”



January 3, 1874, Thomas Nast

Station 1: Women Suffrage

Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

Election Day!

Level 1

Visuals

-List objects or people seen

Words

-Identify the cartoon caption or title

-Locate any words or dates used in cartoon

Level 2

Which of the objects are symbols?

-Which words are important? Why?

What do you think each symbol means?
portrayed.

-List adjectives that describe the emotions

Level 3

Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.

Explain the message of the cartoon.

What special interest groups would agree or disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?

Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

This is the Most Magnificent Movement of All

Level 1

Visuals

-List objects or people seen

Words

-Identify the cartoon caption or title

-Locate any words or dates used in cartoon

Level 2

Which of the objects are symbols?

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Level 3

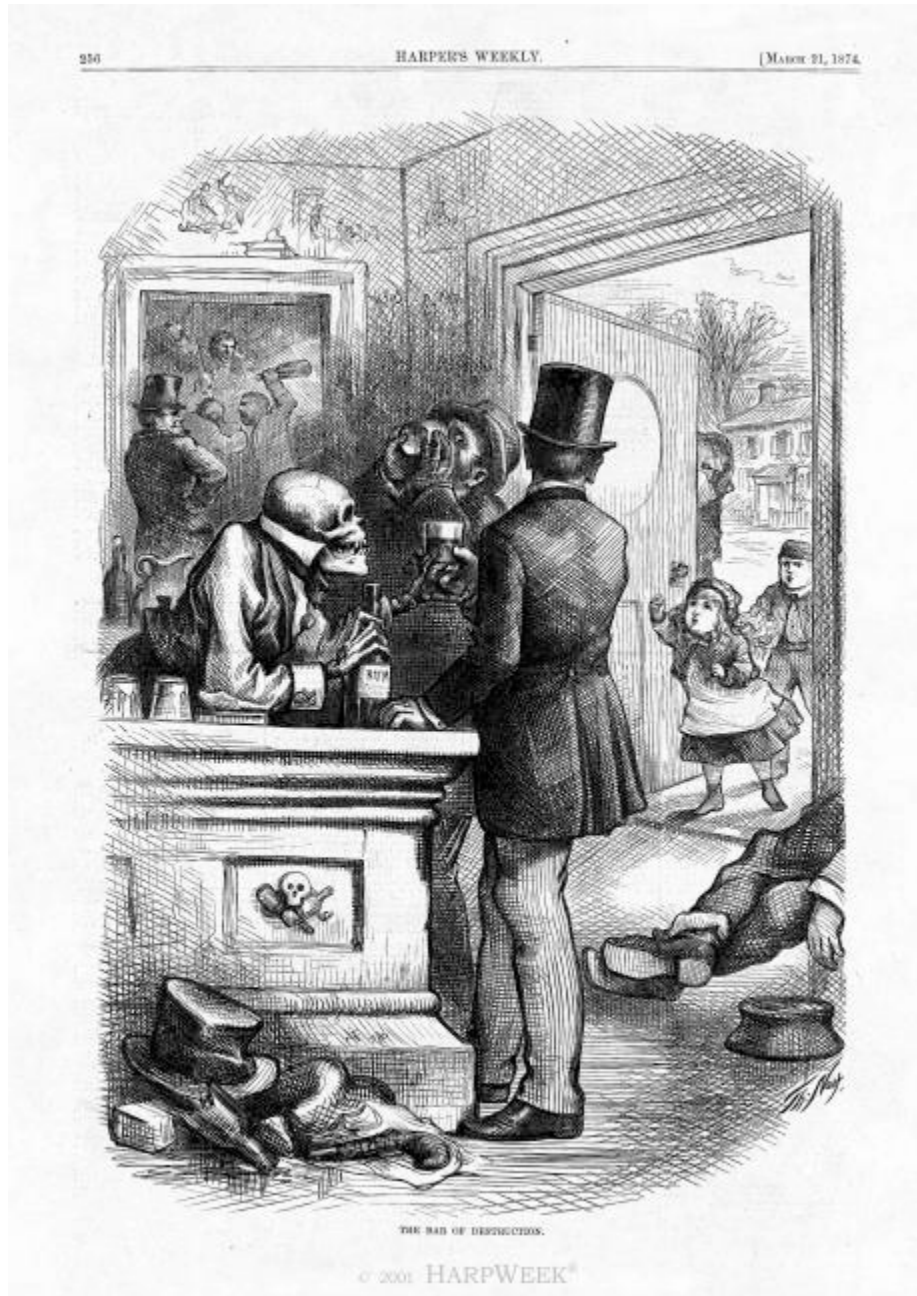
Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.

Explain the message of the cartoon.

What special interest groups would agree or disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?

“The Bar of Destruction”



March 21, 1874, Thomas Nast

“The Evils of Booze”



Station 2: Prohibition

Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

The Bar of Destruction

Level 1

Visuals

-List objects or people seen

Words

-Identify the cartoon caption or title

-Locate any words or dates used in cartoon

Level 2

Which of the objects are symbols?

-Which words are important? Why?

What do you think each symbol means?
portrayed.

-List adjectives that describe the emotions

Level 3

Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.

Explain the message of the cartoon.

What special interest groups would agree or disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?

Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

The Evils of Booze

Level 1

Visuals

-List objects or people seen

Words

-Identify the cartoon caption or title

-Locate any words or dates used in cartoon

Level 2

Which of the objects are symbols?

-Which words are important? Why?

What do you think each symbol means?
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Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

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THE SPIRIT OF DISCONTENT [fiction from from the *Lowell Offering* ca1840]

"I will not stay in Lowell any longer; I am determined to give my notice this very day," said Ellen Collins, as the earliest bell was tolling to remind us of the hour for labor.

"Why, what is the matter, Ellen? It seems to me you have dreamed out a new idea! Where do you think of going? and what for?"

"I am going home, where I shall not be obliged to rise so early in the morning, nor be dragged about by the ringing of the bell, nor confined in a close noisy room from morning till night. I will not stay here; I am determined to go home in a fortnight."

Such was our brief morning's conversation.

In the evening, as I sat alone, reading, my companions having gone out to public lectures or social meetings, Ellen entered. I

saw that she still wore the same gloomy expression of countenance, which had been manifested in the morning; and I was disposed to remove from her mind the evil influence, by a plain common-sense conversation.

"And so, Ellen," said I, "you think it unpleasant to rise so early in the morning, and be confined in the noisy mill so many hours in the day. And I think so, too. All this, and much more, is very annoying, no doubt. But we must not forget that there are advantages, as well as disadvantages, in this employment, as in ever other. If we expect to find all sun-shine and flowers in any station in life, we shall most surely be disappointed. We are very busily engaged during the day; but then we have the evening to ourselves, with no one to dictate to or control us. I have frequently heard you say that you would not be confined to house-hold duties and that you disliked the millinery business altogether, because you could not have your evenings for leisure. You know that in Lowell we have schools, lectures, and meetings of every description, for moral and intellectual improvement."

"All that is very true," replied Ellen, "but if we were to attend every public institution, and every evening school which offers itself for our improvement, we might spend every farthing of our earnings, and even more. Then if sickness should overtake us, what are the probable consequences? Here we are, far from kindred and home; and if we have an empty purse, we shall be destitute of *friends* also."

"I do not think so, Ellen. I believe there is no place where there are so many advantages within the reach of the laboring class of people, as exist here; where there is so much equality, so few aristocratic distinctions, and such good fellowship, as may be found in this community. A person has only to be honest, industrious, and moral, to secure the respect of the virtuous and good, though he may not be worth a dollar; while on the other hand, an immoral person, though he should possess wealth, is not respected."

"As to the morality of the place," returned Ellen, "I have no fault to find. I object to the constant hurry of every thing. We cannot have time to eat, drink or sleep; we have only thirty minutes, or at most three quarters of an hour, allowed us, to go from our work, partake of our food, and return to the noisy clat-

ter of machinery. Up before day, at the clang of the bell--and out of the mill by the clang of the bell--into the mill, and at work, in obedience to that ding-dong of a bell--just as though we were so many living machines. I will give my notice to-morrow: go, I will -- I won't stay here and be a white slave."

"Ellen," said I, "do you remember what is said of the bee, that it gathers honey even in a poisonous flower? May we not, in like manner, if our hearts are rightly attuned, find many pleasures connected with our employment? Why is it, then, that you so obstinately look altogether on the dark side of a factory life? I think you thought differently while you were at home, on a visit, last summer -- for you were glad to come back to the mill, in less than four weeks. Tell me, now -- why were you so glad to return to the ringing of the bell, the clatter of the machinery, the early rising, the half-hour dinner, and so on?"

I saw that my discontented friend was not in a humour to give me an answer -- and I therefore went on with my talk.

"You are fully aware, Ellen, that a country life does not exclude people from labor -- to say nothing of the inferior privileges of attending public worship -- that people have often to go a distance to meeting of any kind -- that books cannot be so easily obtained as they can here -- that you cannot always have just such society as you wish -- that you"--

She interrupted me, by saying, "We have no bell, with its everlasting ding-dong."

"What difference does it make," said I, "whether you shall be awaked [sic] by a bell, or the noisy bustle of a farm-house? For, you know, farmers are generally up as early in the morning as we are obliged to rise."

"But then," said Ellen, "country people have none of the clattering of machinery constantly dinning in their ears."

"True, " I replied, "but they have what is worse -- and that is, a dull, lifeless silence all around them. The hens may cackle sometimes, and the geese gabble, and the pigs squeal "--

Ellen's hearty laugh interrupted my description -- and presently we proceeded, very pleasantly, to compare a country life with a factory life in Lowell. Her scowl of discontent had departed, and she was prepared to consider the subject candidly. We agreed, that since we must work for a living, the mill, all things considered, is the most pleasant, and best calculated to promote our welfare; that we will work diligently during the hours of labor; improve our leisure to the best advantage, in the cultivation of the mind, -- hoping thereby not only to increase our own

pleasure, but also to add to the happiness of those around us.

ALMIRA.

**"Female Workers of Lowell," *The Harbinger*
November 14, 1836**

We have lately visited the cities of Lowell [MA] and Manchester [NH] and have had an opportunity of examining the factory system more closely than before. We had distrusted the accounts which we had heard from persons engaged in the labor reform now beginning to agitate New England. We could scarcely credit the statements made in relation to the exhausting nature of the labor in the mills, and to the manner in which the young women -- the operatives -- lived in their boardinghouses, six sleeping in a room, poorly ventilated.

We went through many of the mills, talked particularly to a large number of the operatives, and ate at their boardinghouses, on purpose to ascertain by personal inspection the facts of the case. We assure our readers that very little information is possessed, and no correct judgments formed, by the public at large, of our factory system, which is the first germ of the industrial or commercial feudalism that is to spread over our land. . . .

In Lowell live between seven and eight thousand young women, who are generally daughters of farmers of the different states of New England. Some of them are members of families that were rich in the generation before. . . .

The operatives work thirteen hours a day in the summer time, and from daylight to dark in the winter. At half past four in the morning the factory bell rings, and at five the girls must be in the mills. A clerk, placed as a watch, observes those who are a few minutes behind the time, and effectual means are taken to stimulate to punctuality. This is the morning commencement of the industrial discipline (should we not rather say industrial tyranny?) which is established in these associations of this moral and Christian community.

At seven the girls are allowed thirty minutes for breakfast, and at noon thirty minutes more for dinner, except during the first quarter of the year, when the time is extended to forty-five minutes. But within this time they must hurry to their boardinghouses and return to the factory, and that through the hot sun or the rain or the cold. A meal eaten under such circumstances must be quite unfavorable to digestion and health, as any medical man will inform us. After seven o'clock in the evening the factory bell sounds the close of the day's work.

Thus thirteen hours per day of close attention and monotonous labor are extracted from the young women in these manufactories. . . . So fatigued -- we should say, exhausted and worn out, but we wish to speak of the system in the simplest language -- are numbers of girls that they go to bed soon after their evening meal, and endeavor by a comparatively long sleep to resuscitate their weakened frames for the toil of the coming day.

When capital has got thirteen hours of labor daily out of a being, it can get nothing more. It would be a poor speculation in an industrial point of view to own the operative; for the trouble and expense of providing for times of sickness and old age would more than counterbalance the difference between the price of wages and the expenses of board and clothing. The far greater number of fortunes accumulated by the North in comparison with the South shows that hiring labor is more profitable for capital than slave labor.

Now let us examine the nature of the labor itself, and the conditions under which it is performed. Enter with us into the large rooms, when the looms are at work. The largest that we saw is in the Amoskeag Mills at Manchester. . . . The din and clatter of these five hundred looms, under full operation, struck us on first entering as something frightful and infernal, for it seemed such an atrocious violation of one of the faculties of the human soul, the sense of hearing. After a while we became somewhat used to it, and by speaking quite close to the ear of an operative and quite loud, we could hold a conversation and make the inquiries we wished.

The girls attended upon an average three looms; many attended four, but this requires a very active person, and the most unremitting care. However, a great many do it. Attention to two is as much as should be demanded of an operative. This gives us some idea of the application required during the thirteen hours of daily labor. The atmosphere of such a room cannot of course be pure; on the contrary, it is charged with cotton filaments and dust, which, we are told, are very injurious to the lungs.

On entering the room, although the day was warm, we remarked that the windows were down. We asked the reason, and a young woman answered very naively, and without seeming to be in the least aware that this privation of fresh air was anything else than perfectly natural, that "when the wind blew, the threads did not work well." After we had been in the room for fifteen or twenty minutes, we found ourselves, as did the persons who accompanied us, in quite a perspiration, produced by a certain moisture which we observed in the air, as well as by the heat.
...

The young women sleep upon an average six in a room, three beds to a room. There is no privacy, no retirement, here. It is almost impossible to read or write alone, as the parlor is full and so many sleep in the same chamber. A young woman remarked to us that if she had a letter to write, she did it on the head of a bandbox, sitting on a trunk, as there was no space for a table.

So live and toil the young women of our country in the boardinghouses and manufactories which the rich and influential of our land have built for them.

Station 3: Labor Reform

“Female Workers of Lowell” Editorial

When was this piece written? For what?

What is the message of the author?

Give three of the most convincing pieces of evidence of this message.

“The Spirit of Discontent” Fiction

Compare life in the mill and in the country.

What message are you left with?

What type of writing is it? (Hint: look at the top of the page) Is that important?

Who is the intended audience?