



# INTEGRATED SOCIAL STUDIES UNIT

## TEACHER GUIDE

### ANIMATING LABOR HISTORY

DIGITAL MEDIA ARTS

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HISTORY

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**DIGITAL/MEDIA/ARTS: U.S. HISTORY  
ANIMATING LABOR HISTORY**

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# Contents

<b>Unit Overview .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Unit Project Description .....	2
Assessment .....	2
Framing Questions .....	3
Understandings .....	3
Where the Unit Fits In .....	3
Table of Activities .....	6
Advance Preparation .....	8
<b>Part 1: A History of Work .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Activity 1A: Whose Work Is This, Anyway? .....	10
Activity 1B: There Ought to Be a Law .....	34
<b>Part 2: Working for Their Lives .....</b>	<b>50</b>
Activity 2A: The Scope of a Movement .....	51
Activity 2B: Creating Historical Characters .....	69
Appendix A: “I Hear America Singing” .....	80
Appendix B: Manufacturing Conflict: Simulation .....	81
Appendix C: Who’s Right? .....	83
Appendix D: Annotated Labor History Milestones .....	86
Materials Needed .....	90
Media & Resources .....	93
Additional Resources for Teachers .....	99
Standards .....	102
Bibliography .....	104

## Unit Overview

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*Ever since the first European settlers sought labor for their colonies, our country's history has been largely defined by the dynamics of workers and wealth. This unit exposes students to an overview of American labor history, focusing on the kinds of challenges workers faced and the tools and institutions they used to achieve their goals. With an emphasis on the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century, particularly on the effects of the Great Depression and the policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, students learn about unions, contracts, and regulations, as well as about the courageous actions of individuals.*

*The topic of labor history offers students an opportunity to focus on the roles that individuals and groups play in shaping history. For their unit projects, students analyze a labor event of their choice to understand how the actions of individuals and groups helped bring about significant change. They work in teams to identify and research key stakeholders from their event in order to create character biographies for an animated movie. Through their unit work, students learn about workers' historical struggle for the right to work for a living wage, under safe and humane conditions, free from discrimination. The knowledge students acquire about the history of labor will prove valuable as they enter the world of work to begin their own careers.*

### Unit Length

10 50-minute sessions

## Unit Project Description

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For their unit project, students act as researchers working on an animated movie about an event in labor history. Working in teams, they create biographies to inform character designers about the appearance, clothing, actions, and daily lives of the main characters. Each team gathers information about individuals and stakeholder groups for a significant event in labor history, as a way of documenting the issues, perspectives, and achievements of the period.

The character biographies consist of:

- Primary source documents, including first person narratives
- Photographs of people and their surroundings in everyday life
- An information sheet with detailed background and traits, and a summary of the character's role in the event
- A letter or diary entry written in the voice of the character

In addition, each team:

- Creates an annotated timeline of their chosen event
- Presents their annotated timelines and character biographies

As students work on these projects, they discuss how individuals are affected by historical events and how individuals shape the course of history.

## Assessment

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Unit activities can serve as formative assessment tools. Use student work to gather information about progress and identify concepts or skills to reinforce within your instructional practice. The following activities are particularly useful for formative assessment:

- Written response to workplace simulation (Journal 2, Activity 1A.2)
- Report on labor milestone by students pairs (**Handout 6: Milestone Data**, Activity 1B.2)
- Team research on chosen event (**Handout 13: A Summary View**, Activity 2A.2)

The project-based nature of the unit allows students to demonstrate their learning through authentic and relevant applications. This unit's summative assessment includes:

- An annotated timeline of a team's chosen labor event
- A character biography on a major figure or representative of a group involved in the chosen event (one per team member)
- A team presentation to the class that includes the event timeline and character biographies

The Assessment Checklist provides criteria for assessment and a suggested weight for each. If you wish to use a rubric, work with same-grade-level or subject-area teachers to develop a tool that is consistent with your school's assessment system.

## Framing Questions



- What is labor history?
- How do the actions and decisions of everyday people shape history?
- How has government's role in economic policy changed since the beginning of the Great Depression?

## Understandings



- U.S. labor history looks at the development of the United States from the perspective of people who work in all sectors of the economy.
- Historically, individuals and groups have achieved more rights when they are able to work together toward common goals.
- Beginning during the Great Depression, the government has played a greater, but not always consistent, role in issues related to labor and workers' rights.
- Movies, television, and literature are effective tools for portraying the drama of working people's lives.

## Where the Unit Fits In

*Animating Labor History* is a two-week unit designed to provide students with an overview of major movements that secured fundamental rights for American workers. The unit focuses on events leading up to, during, and in the aftermath of the Great Depression, with particular attention to the growth of government involvement in the economy through the New Deal and its legacy.

## Integration with Foundation Courses

This unit integrates history-social sciences content and career and technical education (CTE) knowledge and skills. It can be taught before, at the same time as, or after the related units in *Foundations in Media and Digital Design* and *Foundations in Visual Arts*.



***Foundations in Media and Digital Design, Animation & Game Design: The Animated World.*** In this unit, students learn first-hand the techniques and principles of animation, starting with hand-drawn pencil-and-paper animation and moving to computer-generated 2-D animation. For their unit project, students develop an idea for an animated movie based on a fairy tale, myth, folktale, or short story and then create animations of a character in a moment



from the film. Work with the Foundations teacher to modify the unit to have students use the character biographies they create in Animating Labor History as the basis for their character drawings and short animations.

**Foundations in Visual Arts, Unit 5: Creating Characters.** Students analyze the visual qualities of characters in television and movies and learn about the character development process. The unit project is to create a visually distinctive character for an animated movie or television show. Discuss with the Foundations teacher ways to collaborate in the creation of characters for a television series. Suggest that students use representative individuals from the labor movement as the basis for their characters. Students can include visual character studies with their character biographies.

## Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Use the following integrated units and integration suggestions for a school- or pathway-wide multi-disciplinary project.

**Casting a Novel Character (English Language Arts).** Students analyze characters and their development in a work of fiction. For the unit project, students imagine that the main character from the novel has been cast in a television series. Each student writes an opening monologue for the series. Students then work in teams to write a key scene, in the form of a dialogue in script format, to be used in an episode of the series. Work with English teachers to have students choose a novel related to labor history, such as John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, as the basis for their monologues and dialogues.

**Transforming Figures (Algebra I, Geometry).** The unit presents the mathematics behind animation, deepening students' understanding of the illusion of motion. Students create flipbooks by applying transformations to geometric objects as they create the appearance of motion from one frame to the next. Coordinate with Geometry and Foundations teachers so that students can learn the mathematical basis for animation.

**Proportion Matters (Algebra I, Geometry).** Students explore the head-to-body and facial feature proportions of humans and animated characters to understand the effect of these proportions on how we perceive a character's personality. Students learn to use proportions to create an animated character with specific characteristics. Students taking this unit could create a character for Proportion Matters that is based on a character biography.



## Adapting the Unit

**Staging Their Research.** Have teams develop short skits based on their characters and present a key moment in their labor event.

## Pacing and Sequencing

The unit is designed to take two weeks, but if you are having students develop skits or conduct more extensive research, you will need to adjust activity times accordingly. If you decide to use the optional Activity 1A.3: All in a Day's Work?, this will also add time to the unit.

# Table of Activities

## Part 1: A History of Work (4 sessions)

Students consider the roles that individuals and groups play in historical events. They learn about labor history in the United States and are introduced to the unit project—creating character biographies for an animated movie focused on an event in labor history.

### Activity 1A: Whose Work Is This, Anyway?

<b>1A.1:</b> <i>Actors in the Labor Drama</i>	Students view clips from two feature films and/or television shows with labor themes to gain an appreciation of the dramatic stories and struggles of working people in their everyday lives. Students are introduced to the unit project.
<b>1A.2:</b> <i>Workplace Simulation</i>	Students participate in a simulation that pits a “Gilded Age” factory owner against assembly workers and the unemployed. As they role-play, students become familiar with the terms used in discussing labor issues.
<b>1A.3:</b> <i>(Optional) All in a Day’s Work?</i>	Students work in pairs to examine the rights of employers and employees in workplace situations.

### Activity 1B: There Ought to Be a Law

<b>1B.1:</b> <i>Labor History Overview</i>	Student pairs research a milestone in U.S. labor history, locate it on a timeline, and present their research to the class.
<b>1B.2:</b> <i>The Great Depression and the New Deal</i>	Students view images of the Great Depression, read an excerpt from one of Roosevelt’s Fireside speeches, and relate New Deal provisions to their timeline.

## Part 2: Working for Their Lives (6 sessions)

Students role-play characters and events based on the 1936–1937 autoworkers’ strike in Flint, Michigan—an example of a Depression-era labor movement with diverse players and concerns. Student teams choose and research their own event, create an annotated timeline, create character biographies, and present to the class.

### Activity 2A: The Scope of a Movement

<b>2A.1:</b> <i>Sitting Down in Flint: A Case Study</i>	Students form teams to take on the role of an individual or group in the 1936–1937 autoworkers’ strike. They stage a Labor Review Hearing in which students representing each role argue for or against labor demands.
<b>2A.2:</b> <i>Choosing a Labor Event</i>	Teams choose the event that forms the basis for their unit projects. Drawing on what they’ve learned during their role-playing of the Flint, Michigan strike, teams research their event, create a timeline, and identify stakeholders.

### Activity 2B: Creating Historical Characters

<b>2B.1:</b> <i>Assembling Character Biographies</i>	Team members create their character biographies, identifying and annotating related historical images and primary source materials. Students research and document their characters’ background, traits, and role in their team’s chosen event.
<b>2B.2:</b> <i>Presenting Characters for Animation</i>	Using their timelines and character biographies, teams present their characters and events to the class.

## Advance Preparation



- Internet resources, provided as links in *Media & Resources*, are recommended throughout the unit for student or in-class use. These Web sites have been checked for availability and for advertising and other inappropriate content. Because Web site policies and content change frequently, however, we suggest that you preview the sites shortly before using them.
- Address any issues, such as firewalls, related to accessing Web sites or other Internet links at your school.
- Look at **Materials Needed** at the end of the unit, and order or prepare any needed equipment or supplies. For example, a projector, chart paper and markers, or board and writing implements are used throughout the unit.



# Part 1: A History of Work

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Students consider the roles that individuals and groups play in historical events. They learn about labor history in the United States and are introduced to the unit project—creating character biographies for an animated movie focused on an event in labor history.

## Length

4 50-minute sessions

## Advance Preparation

- For Activity 1A, select two video clips from movies and/or TV that portray worker situations or struggles. Ideally, one clip should be from an animated movie or TV show and at least one clip should relate to a labor movement or event listed on **Handout 12: Events in Labor History**. The clips used as examples in the unit are from the movies *Spirited Away* and *On the Waterfront*. See *Media & Resources* for additional suggestions.
- Before Activity 1B.1, copy **Handout 5: Labor History Milestones** and cut it into strips with each milestone on a separate strip of paper. Place the strips in a container so that student pairs can randomly select a strip.
- For Activity 1B.1, create a blank timeline to post on the classroom wall. The timeline should begin at 1820 and end at the current date, and it should be large enough to post labor events studied throughout the unit.
- For Activity 1B.2, locate an image of a graph that shows U.S. unemployment before, during, and after the Great Depression. (See *Media & Resources*.)



## Activity 1A: Whose Work Is This, Anyway?



### Sequence

<b>1A.1:</b> <i>Actors in the Labor Drama</i>	Students view clips from two feature films and/or television shows with labor themes to gain an appreciation of the dramatic stories and struggles of working people in their everyday lives. Students are introduced to the unit project.
<b>1A.2:</b> <i>Workplace Simulation</i>	Students participate in a simulation that pits a “Gilded Age” factory owner against assembly workers and the unemployed. As they role-play, students become familiar with the terms used in discussing labor issues.
<b>1A.3:</b> <i>(Optional) All in a Day’s Work?</i>	Students work in pairs to examine the rights of employers and employees in workplace situations.

### Understandings

- Movies, television, and literature are effective tools for portraying the drama of working people’s lives.
- Conflicts in the workplace often result from differing perspectives of employee and employer.



### Materials Needed

- Video clips from movie and TV portrayals of workers (see *Advance Preparation*)
- Equipment for displaying video clips
- **Handout 1: Worker Portrayal in Media**
- **Handout 2: Unit Overview**
- **Assessment Checklist: Character Biographies**
- **Handout 3: Journal Assignments**
- (Optional) **Appendix A: “I Hear America Singing”**
- **Handout 4A: Workplace Simulation: Introduction**
- **Handout 4B: Workplace Simulation: Employer**
- Play money (\$1 and \$5 denominations)
- (Optional) **Appendix B: Manufacturing Conflict: Simulation**
- (Optional) **Appendix C: Who’s Right?**



## 1A.1: Actors in the Labor Drama



### 1. Introduce the idea of labor history.

Display the following quotation by labor historian William Cahn:

“The history of America has been largely created by the deeds of its working people and their organizations.”

Ask students:

- What does this statement mean to you?
- How do you believe working people might contribute to history?

***Possible answers:** helping to build and create things of importance, voting and organizing voters, protesting, improving their communities*

Tell students that in this unit they are going to look at a period of history from the perspective of working people, along with the issues that affect people in their daily lives.

Write the word *labor* on the board. Explain that *labor* is another word for work and that the history of work and of working people is known as labor history. Explain that studying labor history will help students to understand the role of individuals and groups in shaping history.

### 2. Have students examine the portrayal of workers in movies and TV.

Tell students that they are going to watch two clips from movies and/or TV that portray people working. Distribute **Handout 1: Worker Portrayal in Media**. Explain that students will answer a set of questions for each clip.

Show the clips and have students write their responses on the handout.

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**Note:** You may want to define *blue collar* and *white collar workers* before students view the clips. You can use the definitions given on **Handout 2: Unit Overview**.

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### 3. Discuss the two portrayals.

Discuss student responses to the questions on Handout 1 for each video clip.

Begin a list titled “Workplace Issues” and post it prominently in the classroom. Write on it the issues students identify from the clips. Tell students the class will add to this list over the course of the unit.

### Teacher's Notes: Sample Analyses of Video Clips

The following are sample analyses of worker portrayals in the animated film *Spirited Away* and the classic film *On the Waterfront*. Time codes are given for each scene.

#### *Spirited Away* ("Finding Work at the Bathhouse": 22:30–34:12)

- ***What is the dramatic action? Describe it in a sentence or two.***  
Chihiro comes to the boiler room to ask for a job. A strange-looking four-armed man is running the boiler, while dozens of tiny creatures scurry around throwing coal into the boiler.
- ***What is the workplace environment where the action takes place? How is it portrayed? (For example, fair, safe, dangerous, relaxed, tense)***  
The workplace is dark and sinister, with lots of shadows. The boiler is spewing fire and steam. The walls and ceilings are high and ominous looking.
- ***What workplace roles can you identify? (For example, blue collar or white collar worker, manager, boss, owner, police)***  
The four-armed character runs the boiler and functions as a sort of manager. He has cast a spell on dozens of pieces of soot, who are the workers bringing coal to the boiler. There are also the patrons of the bath, who drop tickets down into the boiler room.
- ***Is there a particular issue or issues related to the workplace that is being confronted in the clip? If so, what is it?***  
Chihiro asks for a job and is refused because the manager has all the workers he needs at his command. The workers look frightened and overworked, and the working conditions look very unsafe. At one point, a worker gets trapped under the piece of coal it is carrying, and the worker is crushed. Chihiro rescues the worker.

#### *On the Waterfront* (12:14–20:05)

- ***What is the dramatic action? Describe it in a sentence or two.***  
Workers hoping to get work are congregating on a dock at the waterfront. Someone is writing on a board the number of work gangs that are needed for the day. A foreman calls out the names of people who will be allowed to work. A large number of workers are left without work, and a fight breaks out.



- ***What is the workplace environment where the action takes place? How is it portrayed? (For example, fair, safe, dangerous, relaxed, tense)***

The environment is hostile and tense. The scene shows the loading dock where workers are gathering, and a ship in the distance.

- ***What workplace roles can you identify? (For example, blue collar or white collar worker, manager, boss, owner, police)***

Most of the characters portrayed are longshoremen, workers who unload the ships. There is also the man whose job it is to write the work order on the board and the foreman who calls out the names. A priest talks about forming a union.

- ***Is there a particular issue or issues related to the workplace that is being confronted in the clip? If so, what is it?***

One issue is fairness over who has the right to work. The process is shown to be arbitrary, with the suggestion that a worker has to please the boss in order to work. One worker has come to the dock for five straight mornings looking for work—the workers are powerless. Another issue is tension related to control of the union by organized crime.

#### 4. Introduce the unit project.

Tell students that for their unit project they will create characters for an animated movie based on working people from a particular period in history. Explain that students are going to portray characters that are historically accurate, well rounded, and engaging.

Distribute **Handout 2: Unit Overview and Assessment Checklist: Character Biographies**. Have students read the overview and answer any questions they may have. Point out the vocabulary terms and tell students they can refer to this list whenever they encounter unfamiliar terms in the unit.

Explain that the Assessment Checklist includes the criteria for their unit project.

#### Teacher's Notes: Why Animation?

You may wish to point out that animated portrayals of working people, particularly realistic portrayals, are rare. Based on their observations of the media clips, ask students what learning opportunities the medium of animation opens up for a young audience. Some possible points of discussion are given below.

- Animated stories are accessible and engaging for younger audiences.

- Situations can be exaggerated to make them more dramatic and exciting.
- Characters can look any way you want them to.
- The animation can be visually exciting.
- Animation offers the opportunity to deal with real-world issues in fantastical situations.
- Young people are also used to seeing animated realism in video games.

**5. Have students write about a portrayal of work in a TV show or movie.**

Distribute **Handout 3: Journal Assignments**. Have students complete Journal 1.

### Journal 1

Choose a TV show that you regularly watch or a movie (different from the clips seen in class) that shows characters in a situation involving workplace issues.

Respond to the following questions:

- What workplace conflict or controversy do the characters face?
- Who are the major characters or groups affected by this conflict or controversy? List them.
- How and why do their perspectives on this issue differ? Write a sentence or two describing the situation from the point of view of each character or group and why you think each feels that way.
- How do the actions of each of these major characters or groups reflect their perspectives and interests as employers or employees?

Have students share their journal entries with the class.

#### Teacher's Notes: Optional Extension—The Poetry of Work

To give students a different perspective on media portrayals of workers, have them read poems that describe a person or people at work. Walt Whitman and Martín Espada have written poems about working people. **Appendix A: "I Hear America Singing"** gives the text of one of Whitman's poems. You can find other poetry suggestions in *Additional Resources for Teachers*.

Ask students to write a poem from the perspective of someone they know or have seen working in a modern-day profession. Alternatively, you can have students find photographs of people at work and then speak in the voice of a person in the photo. You may wish to collaborate with English teachers for this activity.



## Handout 1: Worker Portrayal in Media

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Answer the questions below as you watch each video clip shown by your teacher.

### Clip 1:

- What is the dramatic action? Describe it in a sentence or two.
- What is the workplace environment where the action takes place? How is it portrayed? (For example, *fair, safe, dangerous, relaxed, tense*)
- What workplace roles can you identify? (For example, *blue collar* or *white collar worker, manager, boss, owner, police*)
- Is there a particular issue or issues related to the workplace that is being confronted in the clip? If so, what is it?

### Clip 2:

- What is the dramatic action? Describe it in a sentence or two.
- What is the workplace environment where the action takes place? How is it portrayed? (For example, *fair, safe, dangerous, relaxed, tense*)
- What workplace roles can you identify? (For example, *blue collar* or *white collar worker, manager, boss, owner, police*)
- Is there a particular issue or issues related to the workplace that is being confronted in the clip? If so, what is it?



## Handout 2: Unit Overview

### Animating Labor History

*Throughout most of U.S. history, workers had no guaranteed rights. People had to fight for fair wages, limits on the number of work hours, time off, and safe working conditions. When industrialization swept the country in the nineteenth century, workers in some industries began to organize and exercise power, using methods such as strikes and boycotts. Eventually, large labor groups emerged and became powerful and influential forces in society. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the federal government took on a greater role in the lives of American workers. Today, the government continues to remain involved in the workplace and the economy.*

*In this unit, you will work as part of a team to develop characters for an animated movie set during an important event in labor history. You will research the challenges that workers faced and the tools and institutions workers used to achieve their goals. You will learn about the roles of unions, contracts, and regulations, as well as the courageous actions of individuals. The knowledge you gain about the history of labor will be a valuable tool as you enter the world of work to begin your own career.*

*Your work in this unit will revolve around the following questions:*

- *What is labor history?*
- *How do the actions and decisions of everyday people shape history?*
- *How has government's role in economic policy changed since the beginning of the Great Depression?*

### What You Will Do in This Unit

**Examine portrayals of workers and the workplace in media.** Analyze how working people are portrayed in movies and TV.

**Simulate conflicts of interest between workers, employers, and the unemployed.** Participate in a role-playing game that parallels working conditions in an early twentieth-century factory.

**Explore the case history of the autoworkers' strike in Flint, Michigan.** Take the parts of characters in a pivotal strike case and argue your point of view in court.

**Develop character biographies for an animated movie.** Choose a significant event in labor history and explore the attitudes and actions of the individuals who were involved.

**Present your character research.** Present character biographies and an event timeline to your classmates.





## Unit Project Description: Developing Character Biographies

You are a member of a research team for an animated movie based on an event in labor history. Your movie is aimed at young people. Your team will follow the steps below:

- Step 1.** As a team, choose an event in labor history as the basis for your movie.
- Step 2.** Research your event, identifying all major roles, including both historical characters and character types who represent key stakeholders in the event.
- Step 3.** Create character biographies to inform character designers about the appearance, dress, actions, and daily lives of the main characters.

Each character biography should include:

- Primary source documents, including first person narratives
- Annotated photos of events and people in everyday life
- An information sheet summarizing the character's background, traits, and role in the event
- A letter or diary entry written in the voice of the character

In addition, your team will:

- Create an annotated timeline of your chosen event
- Present your annotated timeline and character biographies to the class

## Vocabulary Used in This Unit

**AFL (American Federation of Labor):** One of the first federations of unions, founded in 1886 to organize workers by craft or trade. Samuel Gompers was its first president. A rivalry between the AFL and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which organized workers by industry, ended in their joining together as the AFL-CIO in 1955.

**Blue collar workers:** A term used to refer to a class of workers whose duties often require manual labor and the wearing of a uniform or protective clothing. The term originated from the fact that the color of many workers' shirts and coveralls was blue.

**Boycott:** To refuse to have dealings with a person, business, or organization, usually to express disapproval or to force acceptance of certain conditions.

**Braceros:** Mexican workers who were brought into the U.S. to fulfill a demand for manual labor under a 1942 agreement between the U.S. and Mexico. This sometimes controversial program continued until the 1960s. Labor unions saw the Bracero program as an obstacle to improving wages for domestic farm workers.

**CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations):** A federation of unions founded in 1935 by John L. Lewis to organize workers in mass production by industry rather than by trade. For example, the entire auto industry was organized, rather than separately organizing specific crafts, such as welders and machinists. CIO supporters believed industry-wide organization would give workers more leverage. Originally composed of eight industrial unions within the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the CIO became independent of the AFL in 1938, then rejoined to form the AFL-CIO in 1955.





**Collective bargaining:** The negotiations between an employer and a labor union, usually regarding wages, hours, or other aspects of work conditions. The term refers to the fact that when unions negotiate or *bargain* for all of the workers collectively, workers have more power—and thus a greater chance of achieving their goals—than when workers negotiate individually.

**Contract:** A legally binding agreement between two people or groups. A contract between an employee and an employer specifies the work to be performed and the compensation that is provided.

**Gilded Age:** The period of rapid economic and industrial growth in the U.S. during the late nineteenth century. Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner first used the term in their 1873 book, *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today*. The term refers to the class of people who accumulated such wealth as to appear to be living lives that were “gilded,” or coated with gold.

**Great Depression:** A decade-long period of extreme economic hardship and poverty following the 1929 stock market crash. At the height of the Depression, unemployment rose to 25 percent, and the government started to regulate and provide poverty relief to a greater extent than at any previous time in U.S. history.

**Laissez-faire:** The practice of allowing business to operate free from government regulation or control. The term comes from the French verbs, *laissez* and *faire*, meaning “to leave” and “to do,” respectively.

**Longshoreman:** A person who loads and unloads ships in port.

**Migrant worker:** An agricultural worker who makes a living picking seasonal crops so that he or she must move with the harvest to pick produce.

**New Deal:** A series of federal laws and programs started by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in response to the economic collapse and poverty of the Great Depression.

**Oral history:** Spoken memories or personal recollections of historical significance, usually obtained through recorded interviews.

**Organize:** To get together with other workers in order to attain common workplace goals, such as better pay, shorter hours, or safer working conditions. Organized workers form what is known as a union.

**Picket line:** A group of striking workers who form a line around the outside of a workplace or place of business. The purpose of a picket line is to keep people from working at the workplace or from patronizing the business.

**Primary sources:** Original materials from a time period or event which have not been compiled or interpreted. Examples of primary sources include letters, diaries, newspaper articles, original objects or artifacts from a place or time, songs, photographs, and live video recordings.

**Progressive Era:** The decades from 1890 to 1920, in which social reformers, including President Theodore Roosevelt, worked to respond to the economic and social problems brought on by unchecked industrialization and corporate growth.

**Reform:** An improvement to a previous situation, often brought about by making laws.

**Scab:** A derogatory term for a strikebreaker, someone who continues to work or who replaces regular workers during a strike.

**Secondary sources:** Compilations or interpretations of primary sources written after the fact. Examples of secondary sources include textbooks, journal articles, Web sites, and biographies. Historians often use secondary sources for an overview of a topic and to find references to primary sources or people to interview.





**Sit-down strike:** A strike tactic in which employees stop work but stay at their jobs and occupy the place of business. Sit-down strikes are more difficult to end because the business is reluctant to use force that might damage its own equipment or property.

**Stakeholder:** A person, group, or organization that is affected by an action or situation.

**Strike:** A form of workplace protest in which employees stop work in order to express grievances and bargain for better working conditions.

**Strikebreaker:** A person who continues to work after a strike has been called. An employer may hire temporary or replacement strikebreakers if the number of regular employees on strike interferes with the ability to continue business.

**Teamster:** A person who drives a truck as an occupation. The term derives from its original use for a person who drove a *team* of horses or other livestock to haul loads.

**Union:** An organization formed by workers to advance the goals of its members with respect to working conditions such as safety, wages, hours, or other benefits.

**Wages:** Money paid in return for work.

**White collar workers:** A term used to refer to a class of workers who perform office jobs rather than manual labor and whose duties do not require specialized work clothes. The term originated from the fact that office workers traditionally dressed more formally, wearing white shirts as well as ties.

**Wildcat strike:** A strike conducted independently of the authority of the union.



## Assessment Checklist: Character Biographies

Use this assessment to help you develop the character biographies for your animated movie. Make sure to include all the requirements. Your teacher will use this assessment to evaluate your work.

Requirements	Percentage of Total Grade	Comments	
Character Biographies (Individual)		Student Comments	Teacher Comments
Includes at least one excerpt from primary source documents or one oral history audio clip with explanatory paragraph.	15%		
Includes two annotated photos of events and people in everyday life.	15%		
Includes character information sheet with background, traits, and the character's role in the event.	30%		
Includes a letter or diary entry written in the character's voice.	10%		
<b>Individual subtotal</b>	<b>70%</b>		
Character Biographies (Team)		Student Comments	Teacher Comments
Annotated timeline includes significant occurrences for the chosen event.	20%		
Team presentation clearly explains the annotated timeline and all character biographies related to the event.	10%		
<b>Team subtotal</b>	<b>30%</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>		







## Handout 3: Journal Assignments

### Journal 1

Choose a TV show that you regularly watch or a movie (different from the clips seen in class) that shows characters in a dramatic situation involving workplace issues.

Respond to the following questions:

- What workplace conflict or controversy do the characters face?
- Who are the major characters or groups affected by this conflict or controversy? List them.
- How and why do their perspectives on this issue differ? Write a sentence or two describing the situation from the point of view of each character or group and why you think each feels that way.
- How do the actions of each of these major characters or groups reflect their perspectives and interests as employers or employees?

### Journal 2

Consider the workplace simulation you just completed. Answer the questions below.

- What power did the employees have? What rights did they have?
- What power/rights did the Employer have?
- What power or rights do you think each group should have?
- What, if anything, do you think this simulation has in common with real work situations?

Read the quotation below. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your views.

"It seems to me to be equally plain that no business which depends for existence on paying less than living wages to its workers has any right to continue in this country. By 'business' I mean the whole of commerce as well as the whole of industry; by workers I mean all workers, the white collar class as well as the men in overalls; and by living wages I mean more than a bare subsistence level—I mean the wages of decent living."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

### Journal 3

You have learned about some of the laws governing employers and employees and how the laws were established. Think about how labor laws might apply to a job that you or a family member have worked or are working now.

- Which aspects of the job, if any, are regulated? Consider such issues as pay, age requirements, safety, hours, time off, or other benefits.
- How do you think the job conditions might be different if there were no laws regulating the workplace?
- If you think that no aspects of the job are regulated, explain why that is so.
- Is there anything about the job that you think should be regulated, but, as far as you know, isn't? Explain.





## Journal 4

Think about the voice of Phil Stallings in "The Maker" from *Working* by Studs Terkel, as he told about a specific incident at his factory and what he thought about it.

Now write in the voice of your own character. Choose a date along your team's event timeline. Write a diary entry or a letter to a family member or friend on that date. Write from your character's perspective. Before you write, think about the following questions:

- How do you feel about your situation at this point in time?
- What do you hope for?
- What do you fear?
- Who might take advantage of you and whom do you trust?

Include appropriate and accurate historical details, such as where you live, where you work and what you do (if applicable), what you wear, what you eat, what you read, and what was actually happening at the time.

## 1A.2: Workplace Simulation

### 1. Introduce the workplace simulation.

Distribute **Handout 4A: Workplace Simulation: Introduction**. Have students read and complete Part 1. Ask volunteers to share their responses with the class.



#### Teacher's Notes: Possible Answers for Part 1 of Handout 4A

Explain that the ideas represented by the quotations are just two of many attitudes toward labor held by workers and employers.

What assumptions are made by the quotation's author?

***"The rights of the laboring man will be protected, and cared for, not by the labor agitator but by the Christian men to whom God has given control of the property in this country, and upon the successful management of which so much depends."***

George Frederick Baer, President of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad and spokesman for Anthracite Coal, 1902 letter

George Baer assumes that owners and managers were given their wealth and power by God, and thus they have the divine right to manage things in what they believe are the best interests of the country. Baer believes in a fundamental difference in rights between the class of laborers and the class of property owners.

***"We want a better America, an America that will give its citizens, first of all, a higher and higher standard of living so that no child will cry for food in the midst of plenty."***

Sidney Hillman, union leader and first president of Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (1914–1946)

Sidney Hillman believes that it is the responsibility of everyone in the country to improve the lives of all citizens. He believes that every citizen deserves to be treated in the best possible way.

Tell students that now they are going to participate in a simulation that shows how an employer/employee relationship might have operated in the absence of labor laws. This simulation mimics what happened at many factories during the Gilded Age.

## 2. Set up the game play.

**Note:** For a variation on this simulation, see **Appendix B: Manufacturing Conflict: Simulation**. This simulation shows what can happen when two companies are in a situation of unregulated competition. You can use Appendix B as an alternative or an extension to the simulation in this activity.

Select one student to be the Employer and tell the other students that they are potential employees. Have students imagine that the only work available is at a factory owned by the Employer. Give students these additional details:

- The factory makes “blodgets,” which are in high demand.
- Blodgets sell for \$1 each.
- The Employer owns company housing where employees can live and a company store where employees can buy their food and other needs.

Place a large box or other object at the front of the classroom. Tell students that this represents the factory’s blodget machine.

Explain that the role of each potential employee is to get and keep a job at the blodget factory, while being paid the highest wage possible.

### Teacher’s Notes: (Optional) Potential Employee Roles

To help students get into character, you can have them choose an identity and situation, such as the following:

- You are young and single and want to earn enough money to start your own business someday.
- You are married with five children and are the only person working in your family.
- You are an older person living alone.
- You are a recent immigrant. You have experienced discrimination and have had trouble getting a job.

Provide the student who is acting as Employer with **Handout 4B: Workplace Simulation: Employer** and a stack of play money. Have the student read over the handout and answer any questions he or she may have.

**Note:** You may wish to meet with the Employer separately to make sure the student understands the role. Alternatively, you may choose to play the role of the Employer yourself.

### 3. Clarify the economics of the game.

Review Part 2 of Handout 4A with students and explain the economics at the start of the simulation.

Ask students:

- Suppose there are ten employees and no unemployed workers. How much money will the owner earn in a week?

**Answer:** *There are 10 employees who each make 10 blodgets in a week. The Employer has a total of 100 blodgets ( $10 \times 10 = 100$ ), which he sells for \$100. He pays employee wages of \$60 ( $10 \times \$6 = \$60$ ), leaving him with \$40. He subtracts another \$1 per employee for tax ( $10 \times \$1 = \$10$ ), leaving him with \$30. Then he subtracts another \$6 for his own consumption, leaving him with \$24 earned in a week.*

Ask students whether they have any questions about the simulation.

#### Teacher's Notes: Students' Questions About the Simulation

As an alternative to answering students' questions yourself, you may want to have the student who is acting as Employer answer questions. Below are some examples of questions students might ask and possible answers.

**Question:** Why doesn't the Employer have any wages?

**Answer:** *He or she can sell the surplus product to get money.*

**Question:** Why should the Employer be allowed to earn so much at the end of the week?

**Answer:** *The Employer had to spend money to buy the machine, maintain the factory and the machine, and hire and train workers.*

**Question:** Why does the Employer consume \$6 instead of \$5 for food and housing?

**Answer:** *The Employer deserves a little more than the workers since he set up the factory and gave the workers their employment.*

### 4. Run the simulation.

Have the student acting as Employer go through Steps 1–3 on **Handout 4B: Workplace Simulation: Employer**.

**Note:** After the Employer chooses employees and unemployed workers, you can have students arrange their seats so that the two groups face each other.



Tell the class that a week has gone by in the simulation. Have the Employer follow Step 4 on Handout 4B and pay the employees and the unemployed their wages and welfare. Explain that now the second week of the simulation begins. Have the Employer begin second-week negotiations using the strategies in Step 5 on Handout 4B.

Decide on the number of weeks you will use for the simulation and tell students. Have students simulate each week, with the Employer using whatever strategies he or she can to lower wages each week. Be sure the Employer pays wages and welfare at the end of each week.

As students do the simulation, encourage employees to act by asking questions such as:

- What do you plan to do about this situation?
- Are you going to let the situation continue as is?

You may want to occasionally distract the Employer so that the employees have an opportunity to talk among themselves.

#### **Teacher's Notes: Managing the Simulation**

If a student is acting as Employer, your role will be to provide prompting and support to keep the simulation moving. Try to be flexible as well as neutral in managing the simulation, without favoring either employees or the Employer.

Ideally, employees will come up with their own ideas about how they can gain power to stand up to the Employer. Be prepared to prompt employees or to help the Employer with strategies or tactics.

Below are some examples of situations that may develop:

- Employees may attempt to negotiate with the unemployed to try to convince them not to take a lower wage. This may result in all students organizing behind a set of compromised goals and forming a union (with or without students' explicit knowledge of the term). All students can then engage in collective bargaining with the Employer.
- Employee students may strike. The unemployed may strike in solidarity with employees or may become strikebreakers and take employees' jobs.
- The Employer may wait out a strike or give in to wage demands and then raise the price of housing and food. Alternatively, the Employer may negotiate in good faith and come up with an arrangement that satisfies everyone.

- Employed and unemployed students may work together to take over the blodget machine and gain control of the factory.
- Employees may become so demoralized that they stop producing blodgets.

### 5. Conclude the simulation and discuss the outcome.

After the students have done the simulation for the set number of weeks, “shut down” the factory. Ask:

- Did you accept the Employer’s original terms of employment? Why or why not?
- If you accepted the terms, at what point in the simulation did you change your mind? Why?
- How did the Employer try to divide you as potential workers?
- What were your greatest concerns at different points in the simulation?
- What actions did you take to try to change your situation? Which actions do you think might have had the greatest chance of success? Why?
- What problems or conflicts arose in the simulation?

Add any problems or conflicts that students identify to the list of Workplace Issues posted in the classroom.

#### Teacher’s Notes: Workplace Simulation Vocabulary

As students discuss the simulation, identify relevant vocabulary. Students may describe an idea but may not use the correct terminology. For example, students may talk about refusing to work without using the term *strike*.

Some terms that you should be able to introduce and define in the discussion include:

- Organize
- Strike
- Union
- Strikebreaker (or scab)
- Contract
- Collective bargaining

You can have students refer to Vocabulary on **Handout 2: Unit Overview** for definitions.

## 6. Have students complete Journal 2.

**Note:** Journal 2 offers a good opportunity for formative assessment.

### Journal 2

Consider the workplace simulation you just completed. Answer the questions below.

- What power did the employees have? What rights did they have?
- What power/rights did the Employer have?
- What power or rights do you think each group should have?
- What, if anything, do you think this simulation has in common with real work situations?

Read the quotation below. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your views.

"It seems to me to be equally plain that no business which depends for existence on paying less than living wages to its workers has any right to continue in this country. By 'business' I mean the whole of commerce as well as the whole of industry; by workers I mean all workers, the white collar class as well as the men in overalls; and by living wages I mean more than a bare subsistence level—I mean the wages of decent living."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Ask volunteers to share their journal responses with the class.

#### Teacher's Notes:

##### Possible Answers for Journal 2, Workplace Rights Discussion

##### ***What power did the employees have? What rights did they have?***

At first, the employees had no power or rights. If they refused work on the Employer's terms, they faced starvation. If, however, they were able to organize successfully, they could withhold their labor, so that the Employer could not operate the factory. Each individual employee had no power, but collectively they may have been able to bargain.

##### ***What power/rights did the Employer have?***

At first, the Employer had all of the power. The Employer decided who to hire and fire and how much to pay the employees. The Employer could also decide how much money to reserve for him- or herself. If the employees organized successfully, however, the Employer could lose the labor supply. In that case, the Employer would be unable to operate the factory and would face the loss of income.



***What power or rights do you think each group should have?***

Students' responses may vary based on what they believe are the limits of capitalism. Try to encourage expression of both points of view and take the part of devil's advocate if you feel one point of view is not fairly represented.

***What, if anything, do you think this simulation has in common with real work situations?***

Students may draw parallels with some working situations in which owners or managers set wages in low-wage jobs. Students should recognize, however, that people working legally today are protected by laws, such as a minimum wage law.

Students may express a variety of views about the Franklin Delano Roosevelt quotation. Some might believe that business owners have the right to run their business any way they like and unhappy workers can find work elsewhere. Others might believe that everyone in society is entitled to be paid enough money to live well and that business owners should share their accumulated wealth with their employees.



## Handout 4A: Workplace Simulation: Introduction

### Part 1

By the beginning of the twentieth century, industrialization had become a major force in the U.S. economy. Many people who had previously worked for themselves on family farms began to work for owners or managers of factories or businesses.

Few workplace regulations existed at that time. The income gap between owners and managers and people they hired as workers began to widen. Author Mark Twain called this period the Gilded Age, referring to the immense wealth of the newly rich businessmen.

The quotations in the chart below represent two views of workers' rights during the Gilded Age. Read each quotation. Then write your response to the question in the chart.

Quotation	What assumptions are made by the quotation's author?
<p>"The rights of the laboring man will be protected, and cared for, not by the labor agitator but by the Christian men to whom God has given control of the property in this country, and upon the successful management of which so much depends."</p> <p>—George Frederick Baer, President of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad and spokesman for Anthracite Coal, 1902 letter</p>	
<p>"We want a better America, an America that will give its citizens, first of all, a higher and higher standard of living so that no child will cry for food in the midst of plenty."</p> <p>—Sidney Hillman, union leader and first president of Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (1914–1946)</p>	





## Part 2

You and your classmates will participate in a simulation about employment practices during the Gilded Age. Your teacher will explain the simulation. The chart below summarizes the information you will use during the simulation.

### Economics of the Workplace Simulation

	Employee	Unemployed	Employer
<b>Wages</b>	\$6 per week	No wages	No wages
<b>Taxes/Welfare payments</b>	– \$1 tax per week	+ \$2 welfare payment per week	– \$1 tax multiplied by number of employees
<b>Amount of Product Made</b>	10 blodgets per week  (Each blodget sells for \$1)	None	None
<b>Consumption (Food and Housing)</b>	– \$5 per week	– \$2 per week	– \$6 per week
<b>Surplus (Wages or Product left over)</b>	None (Wages <i>minus</i> taxes <i>minus</i> consumption = \$6 – \$1 – \$5 = \$0)	None (Wages <i>plus</i> welfare payments <i>minus</i> consumption = \$0 + \$2 – \$2 = \$0)	\$10 (selling price of 10 blodgets) multiplied by number of employees  <i>minus</i> employee wages (\$6 multiplied by number of employees)  <i>minus</i> taxes (\$1 multiplied by number of employees)  <i>minus</i> personal consumption (\$6)



## Handout 4B:

# Workplace Simulation: Employer

Your role as the Employer is to decrease employee wages as much as possible in order to increase your profits. Follow the steps below to begin the simulation.

### Step 1: Gather potential employees.

Ask your classmates who would like to work at the blodget factory and why. Listen to their responses and reasoning.

### Step 2: Hire employees.

Select half the students in the class as employees. Congratulate them on getting the job. Tell the remaining students that they are unemployed.

### Step 3: Explain wages and welfare payments.

- Wages are \$6 per week minus \$1 for tax, so take-home wages are \$5 per week.
- Employees make 10 blodgets per week.
- Company housing and food is provided to employees at a cost of \$5 per week.

Tell the unemployed that they receive welfare payments of \$2 per week. Explain that this is enough money to buy food, but not housing, so it's important for them to get a job as soon as possible.

### Step 4: Distribute wages for the first week.

Your teacher will announce that a week has passed. Pay each employee \$5 and each unemployed person \$2.

### Step 5: Work to increase profits.

Try to lower your employees' wages by \$1 each week. Offer reasons such as your competitors are pressuring you, you need to invest more money in the factory, or blodget prices have fallen. Here are some strategies you can use:

- Offer an unemployed worker wages of \$5 a week (take-home pay of \$4).
- If the unemployed worker agrees, see if an employee is willing to take a pay cut.
- Fire anyone who argues with you about decreased wages.
- Pay one of the employees \$1 more each week to be a Manager. Have the Manager report any troublemakers to you so that you can fire them.
- Secretly hire an employee as a police officer to guard the machine in case employees try to take over the machine.



### 1A.3: (Optional) All in a Day's Work?



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**Note:** If time allows, have students do this activity, in which they consider the employee and employer rights in the modern workplace. This provides background before students look at an overview of labor history in Activity 1B.

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#### 1. Have students make decisions about workplace situations.

Pair students and distribute **Appendix C: Who's Right?** Tell students that the handout asks them to consider a series of workplace situations. Explain that many of the situations are governed by labor laws, but people may be unaware of the laws. Even if aware, workers may be afraid to confront an employer for fear of being fired.

Have students read each scenario and decide with their partner who is right.

#### 2. Discuss laws applicable to each situation.

Have students share their responses and add any new issues to the master list of Workplace Issues. Then help students understand how current labor laws apply to each scenario.

Tell students that in the next activity they will learn more about the history of labor laws.

## Activity 1B: There Ought to Be a Law



### Sequence

<b>1B.1:</b> <i>Labor History Overview</i>	Student pairs research a milestone in U.S. labor history, locate it on a timeline, and present their research to the class.
<b>1B.2:</b> <i>The Great Depression and the New Deal</i>	Students view images of the Great Depression, read an excerpt from one of Roosevelt's Fireside speeches, and relate New Deal provisions to their timeline.

### Understandings

- Government rarely intervened in workplace issues and the economy before the twentieth century, and when it did it was generally pro-business. The work of Progressive Era reformers initiated many reforms to aid and assist workers, which President Roosevelt built upon with his New Deal to relieve the unprecedented hardships of the Great Depression.
- When workers organize according to shared interests, they have in the past been able to achieve more favorable conditions.



### Materials Needed

- Blank timeline from 1820 to the present (see *Advance Preparation*)
- Paper strips cut from **Handout 5: Labor History Milestones** (see *Advance Preparation*)
- (Optional) **Handout 5: Labor History Milestones**
- **Handout 6: Milestone Data**
- Graph that shows U.S. unemployment before, during, and after the Great Depression (see *Advance Preparation*)
- **Handout 7: Images of the Great Depression**
- **Handout 8: Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal**

## 1B.1: Labor History Overview



### 1. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of organizing workers.

Have students recall the workplace simulation. Ask:

- What were the advantages of organizing with other workers? What were the disadvantages?

#### Teacher's Notes:

#### Advantages and Disadvantages of Organizing Workers

##### *Advantages:*

- When workers band together, owners have more difficulty replacing them.
- Workers have strength in numbers; others are more likely to listen.
- Workers realize they are not alone; they can help each other when they're out of work.

##### *Disadvantages:*

- If a worker has a job, he or she risks losing it.
- Not all workers have the same interests; compromise may be necessary.
- Owners may grant short-term demands but still punish instigators.

Point out that for workers in the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries, one of the greatest disadvantages to organizing was the risk of company retaliation—workers could be fired, demoted, or treated more harshly. The right to organize was not guaranteed by law.

### 2. Have students research milestones in labor history.

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**Note:** Handout 6, on which students collect information about their milestone, is a good opportunity for formative assessment.

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Tell students that they will pair up to research important milestones in labor history that safeguarded workers' rights, such as the right to organize without fear of punishment.

Post the blank timeline you prepared in advance.

Place the paper strips cut from **Handout 5: Labor History Milestones** into a container and have pairs pick a milestone. Explain that many of the milestones occurred during the Progressive Era, a period of reform from the 1890s to the 1920s.



Distribute **Handout 6: Milestone Data**. Explain to students that they will research their milestone and write their findings on the handout. Tell them that they can summarize their milestone by answering each question on the handout in one or two sentences.

Provide class time and access to the Internet or other resources or assign Handout 6 as homework.

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**Note:** If you would like students to see all of the milestones, distribute copies of Handout 5. **Appendix D: Annotated Labor History Milestones** gives information about each milestone for your reference.

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### 3. Have pairs report on their milestone.

Have students present their research findings and post their milestones on the timeline.

Discuss how individuals and groups worked hard to bring about these labor reforms.

#### **Teacher's Notes: Optional Extension—Enrichment with Other Media**

If time allows, you can have students watch documentary films or images that show worker struggles and labor reforms.

- The American Social History project's film *Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl* explores the role of women in the labor movement during the Progressive Era.
- The photographs of Lewis W. Hines provide a revealing look at children, both boys and girls, at work in the early twentieth century.

See *Media & Resources* for information on documentary films and a link to Hines's photographic archive.



#### 4. Have students consider current workplace issues.

Tell students to complete Journal 3 in class or as a homework assignment.

### Journal 3

You have learned about some of the laws governing employers and employees and how the laws were established. Think about how labor laws might apply to a job that you or a family member have worked or are working now.

- Which aspects of the job, if any, are regulated? Consider such issues as pay, age requirements, safety, hours, time off, or other benefits.
- How do you think the job conditions might be different if there were no laws regulating the workplace?
- If you think that no aspects of the job are regulated, explain why that is so.
- Is there anything about the job that you think should be regulated, but, as far as you know, isn't? Explain.

Encourage students to share their journal responses. Add any new issues that the class discusses to the master list of Workplace Issues.



## Handout 5: Labor History Milestones

**1827:** Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations formed, first U.S. labor organization that encompassed several trades.

**1836:** Female mill workers in Lowell, Massachusetts, organized with public support.

**1866:** National Labor Union founded.

**1881:** Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions formed.

**1886:** American Federation of Labor (AFL) founded.

**1890:** Photographer Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives* published.

**1903:** Women's Trade Union League founded.

**1905:** Industrial Workers of the World founded.

**1906:** Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* published.

**1915:** Child labor laws passed.

**1925:** Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters created.

**1929:** Stock market crashed, beginning of the Great Depression.

**1933:** President Franklin Roosevelt proposes New Deal programs to Congress.

**1934:** The National Industrial Recovery Act passed.

**1935:** National Labor Relations Act (or Wagner Act) passed.

**1935:** Social Security Act passed.

**1935:** Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) formed within AFL.

**1938:** Fair Labor Standards Act passed.

**1938:** CIO forms as an independent entity.

**1955:** AFL and CIO merge.

**1966:** United Farm Workers union formed.

**1970:** Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) passed.





## Handout 6: Milestone Data

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In the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries, workers began to achieve more power and rights in response to certain events and to their own organizing abilities.

With your partner, research your milestone event using the questions below.

When did the milestone occur?

Describe the milestone in one or two sentences.

What was the significance of the milestone?

What circumstances contributed to the milestone's occurrence?

Who gained and who lost as a result of the milestone, if anyone? Briefly explain.



## Activity 1B.2: The Great Depression and the New Deal



### 1. Discuss unemployment during the Great Depression.

Draw students' attention to the year 1929 on the timeline and the milestone "Stock market crashed, beginning of the Great Depression." Review with students that a period of high-risk business speculation and investment culminated in the collapse of the stock market, which affected every sector of the U.S. economy.

Display the image of the graph that shows unemployment before, during, and after the Great Depression. Ask:

- In what year was U.S. unemployment the highest? What percentage of people were unemployed?
- How long did it take for employment to return to pre-crash levels?

Tell students that the Great Depression was a turning point in labor history.

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**Note:** You may wish to connect these statistics to current unemployment levels as a comparison.

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### 2. Discuss images of the Great Depression.

Distribute **Handout 7: Images of the Great Depression** and have students read it. Tell students that the two photographs show situations typical of the experience of working people during the Great Depression.

Have students respond to the questions about the first image on the handout.

- What structures do you see in the picture? What are they made of?  
*Possible answer: The photograph shows one of the shanty towns that were built in cities by people who could no longer afford rent. The makeshift shelters are built out of discarded boards, cardboard, and other rubble.*
- What are the people in the photograph doing?  
*Possible answer: People are sitting in front of their houses in despair. They probably have little or no work and have nothing to do.*
- What does the photograph suggest about living conditions during the Great Depression?  
*Possible answer: Many people were so poor that they had to resort to living on the streets.*

Have students read the description of the second image and respond to the questions.

- What do you notice about the people in the photograph?

***Possible answer:** Men and women of all ages, and even children, are standing in line. They look like they are having to wait a long time to get their money. They are crowded together and many look like they are still in their work clothes.*

- What does the situation shown in the photograph suggest about economic conditions in the Great Depression?

***Possible answer:** It looks as if people are desperate for work and that many people, even children, are competing for jobs that require manual labor.*

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**Note:** If you would like to discuss the causes and conditions of the Great Depression in more detail, refer to your textbook or other materials. See suggestions in Additional Resources for Teachers.

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### 3. Introduce the New Deal.

Direct students' attention to the year 1933 on the timeline and point to the event "President Franklin Roosevelt proposes New Deal programs." Distribute

**Handout 8: Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal** and have students read the introductory text.

Ask:

- Why do you think most Americans welcomed government involvement in the economy?

***Possible answers:** People were desperately poor and hungry, with few job prospects. For the first time in U.S. history, the Great Depression had created conditions of poverty and unemployment that were so great, the federal government was compelled to step in to reform aspects of the economy.*

- Do you think that anyone might have been opposed to the idea of government involvement in the economy? Why?

***Possible answers:** Business owners and managers might not have wanted to have their freedoms restricted; wealthy people might not want to give up any wealth; politicians might worry about losing the support of their rich constituents.*

### Teacher's Notes: Roosevelt's Fireside Chat, July 24, 1933

President Franklin Roosevelt's original speech can be viewed in its entirety on the National Archives Web site. See *Media & Resources* for a link.

#### 4. Have students learn about specific New Deal programs.

Pair students and have them read the excerpts in Part 1 from Roosevelt's Fireside Chat that outline some of his first New Deal programs. Tell students to work together to match the proposed New Deal program in each numbered paragraph with its corresponding law in Part 2, New Deal Legislation.

Have pairs write the name of the act next to each numbered paragraph in Part 1 and be prepared to explain the significance of the law to the class.

Tell students to use the Vocabulary list on Handout 8 or a dictionary to help with any unfamiliar terms.

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**Note:** As an alternative, you can assign each pair one excerpt from the Fireside Chat to match with a corresponding New Deal program.

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#### 5. Conduct a concluding discussion.

Have a volunteer from each pair read a numbered paragraph aloud and name the corresponding law enacted under the New Deal.

Ask:

- How did each law provide American workers with relief during the Depression?
- Which reforms do you think were most important for the future of American workers over the long term? Why?

**Possible answers:** *The Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the Tennessee Valley Authority Act all provide for work and fair working conditions into the future. The Civilian Conservation Corps, Farm Credit Act, and Federal Emergency Relief Act seem more designed to provide immediate jobs and financial relief in the near term.*

### Teacher's Notes: New Deal Programs

The New Deal programs represented a radical change in the relationship between government and industry. For the first time, the federal government recognized that unchecked business did not necessarily result in prosperity for all, and in fact, businessmen could make mistakes that had disastrous consequences for the country.

The first wave of New Deal legislation was passed as much to prevent another Great Depression as to improve conditions for the average American worker.

Tell students that, in the next activity, they will learn about a pivotal Depression-era event that focused national attention on factory working conditions and led to the government's recognition of fundamental workers' rights.

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**Note:** Students may be familiar with some of these laws from research on their labor history milestones. The Fair Labor Standards Act was not passed in the first 100 days, as were the other Acts in Part 2 on Handout 8, but Roosevelt introduced the underlying ideas in the first wave of New Deal legislation.

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## Handout 7: Images of the Great Depression

Many people attributed the Great Depression to the collapse of stock market prices on October 29, 1929, a day that came to be known as Black Tuesday. The loss of confidence in the market caused people to decrease borrowing, spending, and investing. All these factors contributed to the continuing downward spiral, leading to tremendous job losses and poverty.

Other factors, however, also contributed to the economic downturn, including a severe drought in 1930 that crippled U.S. agriculture. The Great Depression affected almost everyone, but it hit the working poor and the middle class the hardest.

The photograph below was taken on October 25, 1935, at the height of the Great Depression.

- What structures do you see in the picture? What are they made of?
- What are the people in the photograph doing?
- What does the photograph suggest about living conditions during the Great Depression?



*Changing New York*, Berenice Abbott. In the collection of the New York Public Library.





The photograph below was taken in February 1939. It shows migrant vegetable pickers waiting to be paid.

- What do you notice about the people in the photograph?
- What does the situation shown in the photograph tell you about economic conditions in the Great Depression?



Farm Security Administration Collection, photography by Marion Post Walcott.  
In the collection of the New York Public Library.



## Handout 8: Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal

### Introduction

Herbert Hoover, U.S. president at the time of the stock market crash in 1929, felt the government should play a laissez-faire role in the economy. The phrase comes from the French verbs *laisser*, meaning "to leave alone," and *faire*, meaning "to do." Hoover believed in leaving banks and large corporations alone, to operate as they thought best. He believed that, without interference, businesses would do what was right for their employees and the economy.

The benefits of corporate success would eventually "trickle down" to all citizens. Rather than provide government assistance to the needy, Hoover encouraged businesses and wealthy citizens to voluntarily adopt fair practices and donate to the poor.

When things did not improve by the time of the next presidential election, however, citizens demanded change. They were ready for government to step in and help solve some of their problems. They elected Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who promised a "new deal" for the American people.

Soon after Roosevelt took office on March 4, 1933, he began to implement the "New Deal" reforms that would improve the lives of working people. In his first 100 days, he introduced 15 new laws that established government agencies and programs.

In the summer of 1935, Roosevelt enacted another series of reforms, sometimes called "the Second New Deal." To communicate his activities, Roosevelt began a series of weekly radio addresses to the nation, called Fireside Chats.

In Part 1 below are excerpts from the Fireside Chat in which Roosevelt first outlined his ambitious government program. Part 2 contains a table describing the New Deal laws that were enacted.

Read Parts 1 and 2. Work with a partner to match the reform described in each numbered paragraph in Part 1 with the New Deal legislation described in Part 2.





## Part 1

### Fireside Chat, July 24, 1933

The legislation which has been passed or is in the process of enactment can properly be considered as part of a well-grounded plan.

#### 1. *Civilian Conservation Corps Act*

First, we are giving opportunity of employment to one-quarter of a million of the unemployed, especially the young men who have **dependents**, to go into the forestry and flood prevention work. This is a big task because it means feeding, clothing and caring for nearly twice as many men as we have in the regular army itself. In creating this civilian conservation corps we are killing two birds with one stone. We are clearly enhancing the value of our natural resources and second, we are relieving an appreciable amount of actual distress. This great group of men have entered upon their work on a purely voluntary basis, no military training is involved and we are conserving not only our natural resources but our human resources. . . .

#### 2. *Tennessee Valley Authority Act*

Second, I have requested the Congress and have secured action upon a proposal to put the great properties owned by our Government at **Muscle Shoals** to work after long years of wasteful inaction, and with this a broad plan for the improvement of a vast area in the Tennessee Valley. It will add to the comfort and happiness of hundreds of thousands of people and the incident benefits will reach the entire nation.

#### 3. *Farm Credit Act*

Next, the Congress is about to pass legislation that will greatly ease the **mortgage** distress among the farmers and the home owners of the nation, by providing for the easing of the burden of debt now bearing so heavily upon millions of our people.

#### 4. *Federal Emergency Relief Act*

Our next step in seeking immediate relief is a grant of half a billion dollars to help the states, counties and **municipalities** in their duty to care for those who need direct and immediate relief.

#### 5. *Beer-Wine Revenue Act*

In addition to all this, the Congress also passed legislation authorizing the sale of beer in such states as desired. This has already resulted in considerable reemployment and, incidentally, has provided much needed tax revenue.





Now as to the future.

#### 6. *National Industrial Recovery Act*

We are planning to ask the Congress for legislation to enable the Government to undertake **public works**, thus stimulating directly and indirectly the employment of many others in well-considered projects.

#### 7. *Agricultural Adjustment Act*

Further legislation has been taken up which goes much more fundamentally into our economic problems. The Farm Relief Bill seeks by the use of several methods, alone or together, to bring about an increased **return** to farmers for their major farm products, seeking at the same time to prevent in the days to come disastrous over-production which so often in the past has kept farm **commodity** prices far below a reasonable return. This measure provides wide powers for emergencies. The extent of its use will depend entirely upon what the future has in store.

#### 8. *Fair Labor Standards Act*

Well-considered and conservative measures will likewise be proposed which will attempt to give to the industrial workers of the country a more fair wage return, prevent cut-throat competition and unduly long hours for labor, and at the same time to encourage each industry to prevent over-production.

#### 9. *Emergency Railroad Transportation Act*

One of our bills falls into the same class, the Railroad Bill. It seeks to provide and make certain definite planning by the railroads themselves, with the assistance of the Government, to eliminate the duplication and waste that now results in railroad **receiverships** and in continuing operating **deficits**.

I feel very certain that the people of this country understand and approve the broad purposes behind these new governmental policies relating to agriculture and industry and transportation. . . .

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

### Vocabulary

**Commodity:** A good or material that can be bought and sold freely.

**Deficit:** A lack; spending more than one earns.

**Dependents:** Family members who depend on a wage earner for their living.

**Enactment:** Passage, as of a law.

**Mortgage:** A loan to enable the purchase of a house or other property.

**Municipalities:** Cities, towns, or villages, under self-government.





**Muscle Shoals:** A region in Alabama owned by the government and developed by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

**Public works:** Construction projects, such as roads and bridges, that benefit the general population.

**Receivership:** Authority given to a person to take over a property or business that is bankrupt.

**Return:** Income or profit.

## Part 2

### New Deal Legislation

<b>Civilian Conservation Corps Act</b> March 1933	Established the Civilian Conservation Corps, which provided work for 3 million men, ages 18 to 25, in federal work projects that included road building, flood control measures, and forestry.
<b>Beer-Wine Revenue Act</b> March 1933	Legalized wine and beer, ending Prohibition. Taxed wine and beer to provide additional government revenue.
<b>Federal Emergency Relief Act</b> May 1933	Established the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, which distributed \$500 million to state and local governments to pay wages for public employees and maintain government operations.
<b>Agricultural Adjustment Act</b> May 1933	Established the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, which paid farmers to voluntarily reduce production to cut down on crop surpluses.
<b>Tennessee Valley Authority Act</b> May 1933	Authorized federal government involvement in the industrial and agricultural development of the Tennessee Valley, including the construction of dams for power generation.
<b>Farm Credit Act</b> June 1933	Helped farmers refinance farm mortgages.
<b>Emergency Railroad Transportation Act</b> June 1933	Increased federal regulation of railroads.
<b>National Industrial Recovery Act</b> June 1933	Provided for federal powers to regulate industry and stimulate economic recovery. Established the Public Works Administration, which funded public works projects.
<b>Fair Labor Standards Act</b> June 1938	Established a minimum wage, 40-hour work week, overtime pay rates, and regulations for employing minors.



## Part 2: Working for Their Lives

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Students role-play characters and events based on the 1936–1937 autoworkers’ strike in Flint, Michigan—an example of a Depression-era labor movement with diverse players and concerns. Student teams choose and research their own event, create an annotated timeline, create character biographies, and present to the class.

**Length:**

6 50-minute sessions

### Advance Preparation

- For Activity 2A.1, find audio clips of oral history and historical photographs from the Flint, Michigan autoworkers’ strike. Have equipment available to play the audio clips and print out the photos for display. See *Media & Resources* for suggestions.
- Before Activity 2B.1, prepare a list of resources to help students locate primary sources for their character biographies. See *Media & Resources* for suggestions.
- Before Activity 2B.2, check with students to arrange for any equipment that teams may need for their presentations.



## Activity 2A: The Scope of a Movement



### Sequence

**2A.1:**  
***Sitting Down in Flint:***  
***A Case Study***

Students form teams to take on the role of an individual or group in the 1936–1937 autoworkers’ strike. They stage a Labor Review Hearing in which students representing each role argue for or against labor demands.



**2A.2:**  
***Choosing a Labor***  
***Event***

Teams choose the event that forms the basis for their unit projects. Drawing on what they’ve learned during their role-playing of the Flint, Michigan strike, teams research their event, create a timeline, and identify stakeholders.

### Understandings

- In any labor scenario, there are different groups of people, or stakeholders, who have different goals.
- Unions are formed to represent the interests of workers.



### Materials Needed

- **Handout 9: The Flint Sit-Down Strike**
- **Handout 10: Flint Stakeholders**
- Oral history audio clips of Flint autoworkers’ strike (see *Advance Preparation*)
- Historical photographs of Flint autoworkers’ strike (see *Advance Preparation*)
- Equipment for playing audio clips, such as a computer or audio player
- **Handout 11: Flint Sit-Down Strike Timeline**
- **Handout 12: Events in Labor History**
- **Handout 13: A Summary View**



## 2A.1: Sitting Down in Flint: A Case Study

### 1. Introduce the role-playing.

Tell students that they are going to role-play characters and events during a pivotal moment in a labor struggle during the Depression.

Distribute **Handout 9: The Flint Sit-Down Strike** and have students read it. Tell students that the Battle of Bulls' Run was a mocking reference to the Civil War Battle of Bull Run in 1861.

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**Note:** Emphasize to students that in real life the conflict was not resolved in a Labor Review Hearing. Tell them they will learn how the strike was actually resolved after the role-playing.

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### 2. Have student teams prepare their role.

Distribute **Handout 10: Flint Stakeholders** and display historical photographs that correspond to the stakeholder groups. Play the oral history audio clips about the Flint autoworkers' strike in order to give students a feel for the event.

Form six teams of students and assign each team to a stakeholder group. Have teams read their group's character biography on Handout 10, as well as the character biographies of the other stakeholder groups.

#### Teacher's Notes: Team Member Assignments

Instead of having the whole team read all other character biographies, you may wish to have teams assign each member to be responsible for one of the other groups' character biographies. In this way, each team will be better prepared to counter arguments from the opposition during the Labor Review Hearing.

Tell teams to review the role-play instructions on Handout 9 and then follow the steps to prepare for the Labor Review Hearing.

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**Note:** If time allows, you may wish to have students research their roles in more depth by providing class time or assigning as homework. See *Additional Resources for Teachers* for research suggestions.

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### 3. Hold the Labor Review Hearing.

Set up the classroom so that students can hold the Labor Review Hearing. Allow each group to make opening arguments. Then provide time for groups to challenge and debate each other's arguments.

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**Note:** You may choose to moderate the hearing as the Judge or select a student whose job it is to be unbiased and unaffiliated with any group. The Judge should be familiar with all of the stakeholder group roles.

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Encourage students to come to consensus or to formulate a plan of action, with the Judge's help as needed.

### 4. Review and discuss the role-play.

After groups come to an agreement, ask:

- What did you decide to do? Is everyone pleased with the outcome?

**Possible responses:** *Elicit opinions from at least one representative for each group. Discuss relative gains and losses among the groups.*

- How did the description of your role help you formulate your position on the strike and its outcome? Which arguments did you personally agree with and which did you disagree with?
- Why do you think the sit-down strike was such a powerful tactic?

**Possible answers:** *Management couldn't hire strikebreakers because the striking workers were actually in the factory at their machines. Factory owners were limited in what they could do to stop the strike because they didn't want to damage their own property and equipment.*

- Why do you think the National Labor Board, created under Roosevelt's New Deal legislation, was an important institution?

**Possible answers:** *It provided a forum for workers and management to discuss and work out their grievances. Prior to its formation, most labor disputes were settled privately behind closed doors, with no guarantee of a fair hearing.*

### 5. Review and discuss actual events in Flint.

Distribute **Handout 11: Flint Sit-Down Strike Timeline**. Review the events that actually occurred in 1936–1937. Point out that the timeline includes events both leading up to the strike and the strike's outcome. Post this timeline along the master timeline from Activity 1B.1.

Explain to students that the Flint sit-down strike was a landmark event in labor history.

### Teacher's Notes: Importance of the Flint Sit-Down Strike

For the first time, employees of a large industry won the legal right to organize and be represented by a union.

General Motors would no longer be able to negotiate with individual employees regarding hiring, firing, or wages. Instead, GM management had to negotiate with the United Auto Workers union.

Largely due to this victory, many other industries were forced to recognize union authority, and unions became a major force in the U.S. economy for the next 50 years.



## Handout 9: The Flint Sit-Down Strike

### Introduction

It is 1936, and General Motors (GM) is one of the wealthiest corporations in the world. It controls nearly half of the automotive market in the United States and more than a third of the world market.

In GM's Flint, Michigan, auto body plants, Fisher 1 and 2, both skilled and unskilled workers had been relatively well paid. But pressure from plant owners has resulted in a series of wage cuts and increased work demands, eroding many of the gains that workers had won through the United Auto Workers (UAW) union.

On December 28, wages are cut again, and a rumor spreads that some of the auto-making equipment is being shipped to another plant where the union is weaker. On December 30, union organizer Bob Travis confirms the rumor and calls an emergency meeting. Some workers leave the plant to collect food or to picket, but a number of workers remain inside.

Instead of using the traditional strike tactic of walking off the job, the autoworkers stop work but stay by their machines, effectively shutting down the plant. This tactic, called a *sit-down strike*, had recently been successful at auto plants in other cities. Thousands of workers in both Fisher plants join the strike.

On January 11, police surround the Fisher 2 plant in riot gear and fire tear gas at the workers. Striking workers resist by spraying police with fire hoses and hurling 2-pound car door hinges.

### Role-Play Instructions

The January 11 confrontation between police and striking autoworkers came to be known as the Battle of Bulls' Run. Imagine that participants on both sides have been asked to present their cases to the National Labor Board at a Labor Review Hearing. (This did not happen in real life.)

Your teacher will assign you and your teammates to be members of one of the stakeholder groups below:

- Assembly line worker
- Law enforcement (local police and National Guard)
- Women's Emergency Brigade
- Union of Auto Workers (UAW) representative
- GM President Alfred Sloan and other top GM managers
- Unemployed immigrant workers

Your teacher will also assign someone the role of Judge.

Follow the steps below to prepare for the Labor Review Hearing. The goal of the hearing is to have all parties agree on how to end the strike.





### Step 1: Read about stakeholder groups.

Read the character biography for your assigned group on **Handout 10: Flint Stakeholders**. Then read the character biographies for the other groups so that you are familiar with each group's point of view.

### Step 2: Prepare your case.

Focus on the best interests of your own group. What would you like to achieve: Dignity on the job? An orderly worker population? Job security for your husband? Higher profits to benefit all?

Use the questions below to help you organize and support your arguments:

- What are your grievances?
- What is the most important thing you want to achieve?
- Who opposes you and why?
- What common ground do you share with your opposition?
- What ideas do you have for compromise?
- What will you do if compromise cannot be achieved?

### Step 3: Present your argument.

Present your group's argument at the Labor Review Hearing.

### Step 4: Challenge your opponents.

Challenge the positions of the other stakeholder groups. Defend your group's position using details from your group's character biography on Handout 10.

### Step 5: Work out an agreement.

Come to a consensus with the other groups, either with the Judge's help or by deciding on a course of action among yourselves. Your agreement should bring an end to the strike.



## Handout 10: Flint Stakeholders

### Assembly Line Worker

#### Role

You are married with children and are the primary wage earner in your family. You have a job as a line worker at the Fisher 2 plant, which employs several thousand workers. You also consider yourself lucky to be relatively well paid by the standards of the day—you earn \$1,500 a year.

#### Background

Your job, however, is far from secure. Last year, several of your friends were laid off over the summer when work slowed down. The only reason you kept your job was because you helped the foreman out of a scrape or two. Your friends were rehired in the fall, but several workers with strong union ties were let go and replaced by new immigrants who don't speak English.

Another thing that bothers you is the constant "speed ups." In order to raise productivity and profits, the foreman increases the speed of the assembly line machines. You have to perform your work at faster and faster rates. The rapid motions strain your muscles, and the concentration it takes to avoid injury has given you headaches.

A fellow worker recently jammed a thumb that had to be amputated because he was working too fast. You've heard of other serious injuries as well.

#### Attitude

You have always been a good worker but are getting tired of being treated like part of a machine. If the plant was struggling financially, you might have a different attitude, but you know the plant is very profitable. In fact, you have heard rumors that the company president, Alfred Sloan, earns about 90 times what you do.

In the past, you were suspicious of union organizers, but now you realize the union offers you the only hope of improving your situation. You enthusiastically joined the strike and are shocked at the willingness of the plant owners to use police force and violence against you.





## Law Enforcement (Local Police and National Guard)

### Role

You don't like taking sides but strikers are clearly breaking the law. Picketing is a safety hazard because it causes fights and blocks traffic, and work stoppages cause hardship for all by disrupting the economy and the life of the city. You have seen strikers preventing replacement workers from entering the plant and even physically harming them. This clearly violates the rights of poor people who are just trying to earn a living.

### Background

Traditional strike methods are bad enough, but when strikers refuse to leave the plant during a sit-down strike, it is even worse. A sit-down strike violates the private property rights of the factory owners and is, literally, trespassing. It also makes it extremely difficult to stop the strike, as you have to be careful not to destroy company property or equipment.

You would never want to actually shoot anyone or resort to violence—but you feel that strike organizers can be desperate men. There are rumors that some organizers have come from Russia to try to start a Communist takeover here. They want to change the very nature of our economic system. You cannot condone such un-American activity.

Besides, the factory owners have always been upright citizens of Flint. They employ thousands of people.

### Attitude

If the strikers would just negotiate with their employers one on one, problems would be solved. Unions stir up trouble with their demands. You feel bad that it is often the poorest and weakest workers who are taken advantage of by the union.

In the latest instance of violence at the Fisher 2 plant, you had no choice but to enforce the court order to shut down the strike. You were shocked when the workers refused to leave the plant and forced you back with fire hoses. One of your fellow officers was hit with a car door hinge and had to go to the hospital. You wish the president would order the whole lot of them rounded up and thrown in jail.



## Women's Emergency Brigade

### Role

You are married to an assembly line worker at the plant and are very concerned for your husband's health and welfare. Ever since the speed-ups began, he has been coming home so exhausted that he can barely make it up the stairs to the apartment. All he has the energy to do each night is eat his dinner and fall into bed.

### Background

You have to admit, your husband's pay is higher than that of workers in other plants and, at least in the past, it has been enough to support your family. But last summer he was laid off for three months. In order to make ends meet, he renovated a plant manager's home, while you sold vegetables from your backyard garden.

There have been several wage cuts recently, and your husband fears another cut is coming. And now the factory owners want to ship out the equipment for manufacturing car bodies to another plant where there's no threat of union action.

### Attitude

You support your husband one hundred percent in his decision to join the sit-down strike. The workers have to show that they need to be treated like human beings. Not only your husband's life, but also yours and your children's are at stake.

Sometimes you join the picket line, even bringing your two young children along at times. You are grateful to Genora Dollinger Johnson, who organized the Women's Emergency Brigade. She has given you the task of baking bread to distribute to men in the picket line and to sneak in to the workers inside the plant.

When the guards sealed off the plant to prevent workers from receiving food, you were enraged. You couldn't help cheering on the workers as they fought off the police's tear-gas attacks with the fire hose.

Still, you worry where it will all end. What if your husband loses his job permanently, or worse, gets hurt or even killed in the escalating violence?





## Union of Auto Workers (UAW) Representative

### Role

You have been looking for an opportunity to rein in the power of auto companies for years. Companies like General Motors are extremely hostile to trade unions because they want to control wages, work procedures, and hiring and firing. Companies want to maximize profits and don't care a bit about the health and dignity of their workers. But the companies are so afraid of union power that they have hired people to spy on labor organizers.

### Background

During the fall of 1936, along with head labor organizers Victor and Roy Reuther and Bob Travis, you have been planning your strategy. Autoworkers in several cities have already staged strikes. Using the tactic of the "sit-down" strike, workers took over plants in Atlanta, Detroit, Kansas City, and South Bend, Indiana, by staying at their machines and refusing to leave the factories.

The GM plants in Flint, Michigan, are particularly important because they have the *dies*—equipment that stamps out the auto body parts—for most of GM's automobile models. So if workers strike in Flint, they can pretty much shut down the company's auto production. You'd like to take advantage of the strike wave sweeping the country. If you can establish union authority with GM, it will be a key victory.

Recent events in Flint, including a series of pay cuts and speed-ups, have helped gain union support among the workers. The company also disciplined several workers suspected of having union ties, which angered workers further.

Your biggest problem became holding the workers back; that is, keeping them from going on strike until the New Year, which is when you believed conditions would be optimum for a strike.

### Attitude

When Bob Travis realized that GM was actually going to ship the dies out to a nonunion plant, however, you all realized you had to act immediately. If the dies were moved to a plant with no union influence, your best chance of shutting down GM production would be lost!

The recent battle with law enforcement in the Fisher 2 plant has confirmed how committed the workers are to the change that only union recognition can bring. You're in this to win!





## GM President Alfred Sloan and Other Top Managers

### Role

You have worked hard to make General Motors the country's biggest company and are proud to be the employer of a quarter of a million people in 110 manufacturing and assembly plants. You have set your wages high for the industry standard, \$1,500 a year.

You feel your employees have little to complain about. If they think they can do a better job of running an industry, they're welcome to try it. In the meantime, you're the one who is handing out the jobs.

### Background

You believe that some of Roosevelt's New Deal policies, such as regulating industry, are unconstitutional and counterproductive to business. In order to remain profitable, you need the flexibility to reduce your work force when demand goes down and hire the best people for the job when business picks up again. How are you supposed to continue to pay employees if there isn't enough work?

Unions don't know anything about running a business. All they know is how to dig into other people's pockets for their dues. In your opinion, strikers prevent people from working who want to earn a wage to support their families. When the police try to break up picket lines, they are only enforcing people's constitutional right to work.

This new tactic—the sit-down strike—is infuriating. Judge Black has already declared it illegal, and ruled that the strikers are trespassing unlawfully on your property. That's why law enforcement was sent to drive them out on January 11. Unfortunately, that confrontation ended disastrously. The problem is that it's difficult to use force to get rid of the strikers without risking damage to your own buildings and equipment.

### Attitude

You have no intention of recognizing the union. If you do, there will be no end to their demands. The workers will believe they own the place!

You plan to continue to try to wait out the strike and find a way to shift production to nonunion plants in other parts of the country.





## Unemployed Immigrant Worker

### Role

You moved from Poland with your family after World War II because there was so little work there. You were told jobs in America were unlimited, but that has not been your experience. There is little work for someone like you who has not been educated in the United States.

You believe the reason you didn't get a job at the General Motors plant is because you don't speak English well. There is almost no other work in Flint. You have been surviving doing odd jobs, such as painting, construction, or cleaning streets.

### Background

A month or two ago, you heard that some men in your community did get hired to work at a GM auto body plant, after some assembly line workers quit over wage cuts.

Personally, you don't care what the wages are. Whatever they're paying has to be more than what you've been able to earn. Your family—a wife and three young children—are practically starving.

### Attitude

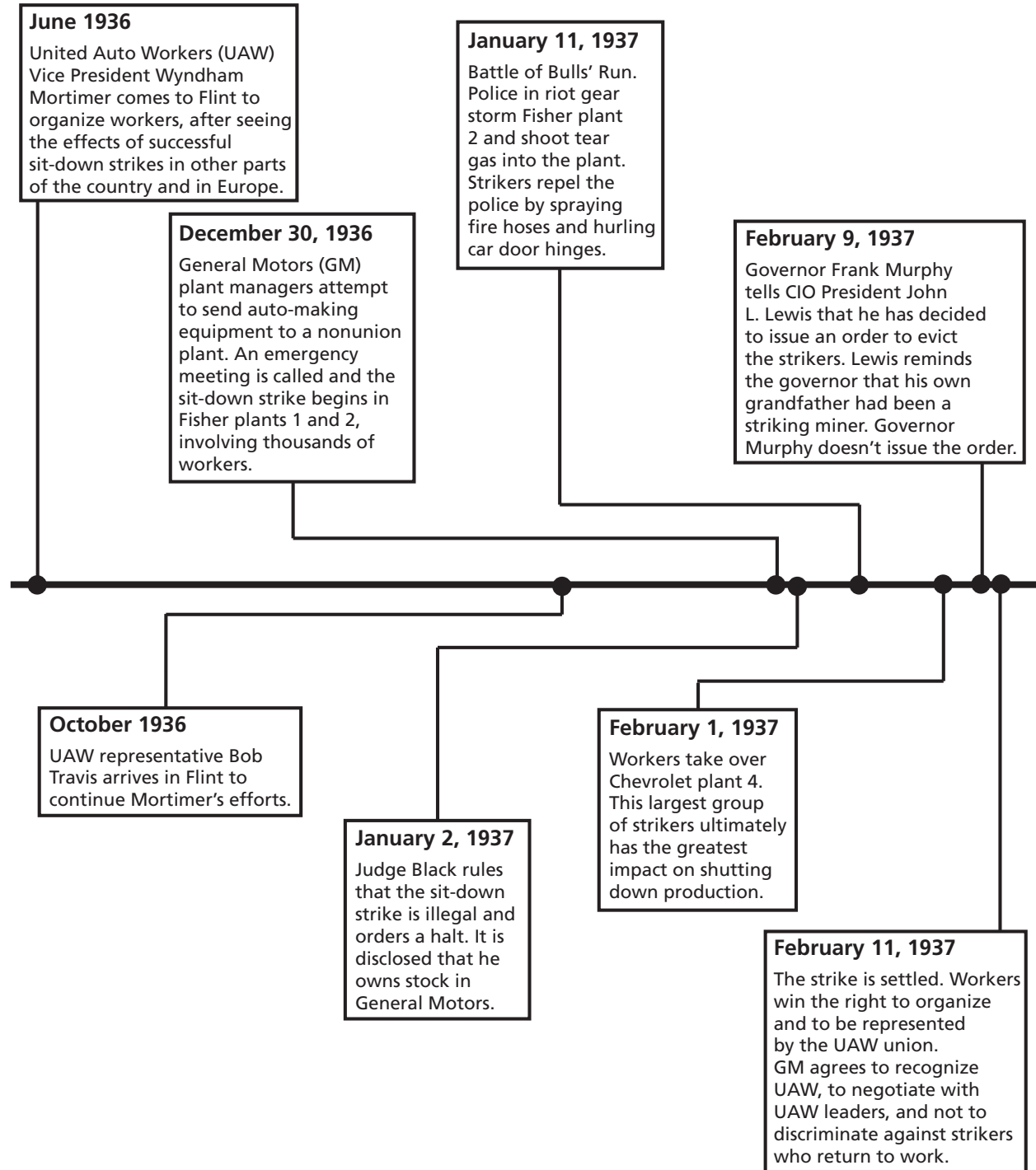
You hope that more workers at the plant quit. You feel sorry for anyone losing their job in these hard times, but you have to think of your family first. Until recently, you firmly believed that you would cross any picket line in order to improve your own life.

You're not sure what to make of the current strike, however. Yes, there are picket lines, but the workers are also staying by their machines in the plant. It's difficult to get close to the factory.

You have also heard rumors of violence—police using tear gas on workers, and workers fighting back. Now you're not sure what to do. You don't want to anger the workers at the plant because they might hurt you. But you also want to take advantage of any opportunity to get a job. Your wife is afraid for your life and wants you to stay far away from the factory until things calm down.



## Handout 11: Flint Sit-Down Strike Timeline



## 2A.2: Choosing a Labor Event



### 1. Introduce the activity.

Tell students that now they are going to start working on their unit projects.

Discuss how the events of 1936 and 1937 in Flint, Michigan, would make a dramatic setting for animated stories written from a number of different perspectives. Tell students that now they will choose an event from labor history to serve as the backdrop for their movies.

### 2. Have teams choose events.

Divide the class into teams of four or five students. These can be the same or different groups as those from the Flint role-play.

Distribute **Handout 12: Events in Labor History**. Point out the photograph and caption on the bottom of the second page. Ask students to look at the people in the photograph:

- What emotions do you see in their faces and in the way they are walking?

***Possible answers:** Pride; most carry their heads high and walk with determination.*

- Why do you think they look that way?

***Possible answers:** They are hopeful that by joining together they can improve their situation.*

Remind students to think about how they can use photographs to present character traits in their biographies.

Provide time for teams to read Handout 12. Have each team pick three events that they would like to use as the basis for their unit projects.

Ask one student on each team to write the names of all team members and their top three choices. Collect team papers and assign events from Handout 12 according to preferences.

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**Note:** If you would like to ensure that all events are covered, assign events or have teams pull them randomly, rather than allowing teams to choose.

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### 3. Have students perform summary research.

**Note:** Handout 13, in which students perform preliminary research for their event, offers a good opportunity for formative assessment.

Distribute **Handout 13: A Summary View**. Provide time and resources for teams to conduct initial research on their event, create their timelines, and complete the handout.

Remind students to draw on what they learned in the Flint, Michigan, role-play to identify highlights for their timelines and stakeholder groups for their event.

Have students place their completed timelines alongside the timeline from Activity 1B.1.

#### **Teacher's Notes: Presentation Alternative**

You may wish to have teams present their event summaries and timelines now, before they go on to research their character biographies. Alternatively, you can have them wait until they finish the character biographies and present their summaries and timelines as part of their completed unit projects.

If students present their stakeholder lists, invite the class to brainstorm any additional groups or individuals to add to the list.



## Handout 12: Events in Labor History

The Great Depression and the New Deal were pivotal points in labor history. Many other events before and after the stock market crash and initial New Deal legislation, however, had, and continue to have, significance for American workers.

Choose one of the labor events below on which to base your animated movie.

Date	Event	Description
1877	Great Railroad Strike	Railroad workers protested a series of wage cuts and increased work demands in a national uprising. First national strike in the nation's history.
1876–1897	Trial of the Molly Maguires	Coal miners in Pennsylvania were tried for acts of violent protest. Dangerous conditions had resulted in the deaths of over 500 miners.
1892	Homestead Lockout	Iron and steel workers at a plant owned by Andrew Carnegie fought slashed wages by staging a strike. Carnegie responded by closing the plant and locking workers out.
1894	Pullman Boycott	Trains with cars made by the Pullman company were boycotted. American Railway Union workers struck but the ARU excluded African American workers, a fact believed to be a reason for the strike's failure.
1909	Shirtwaist Strike	Approximately 20,000 shirtwaist factory workers throughout New York City, primarily Jewish women, struck for shorter hours and better working conditions.
1911	Triangle Shirtwaist Fire	A fire in the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in New York City kills 150 workers, mostly women.
1912	Bread and Roses Strike	In Lawrence, Massachusetts, 23,000 textile workers (men, women, and children of all nationalities) struck together against low wages and unsafe working conditions.
1914	Ludlow Massacre	Workers at the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company owned by John D. Rockefeller struck for better wages, improved conditions, and union recognition. Tens of workers, including children, were killed.
1934	Waterfront Workers' Strike	Waterfront workers across the West Coast struck for control over the hiring process and union recognition. The strike closed West Coast ports.







1968	Sanitation Workers' Demonstration	In Memphis, sanitation workers organized a strike and demonstration to protest unfair conditions. Martin Luther King supported them and was assassinated as he prepared to join the march.
1968–1970	Delano Grape Boycott	The United Farm Workers, representing California agricultural workers, organized a national boycott of grapes to protest unfair wages and hiring, resulting in contracts between growers and UFW.
1981	Air Traffic Controllers' Strike	13,000 workers struck after unsuccessful contract negotiations. President Reagan ordered the controllers back to work.
1990	Pittston Coal Worker Strike	Pittston Coal Company workers in West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky used civil disobedience tactics and won pension and health benefit concessions.



Union leader Bill Haywood leads a strike parade in Lowell, Massachusetts.  
Library of Congress. George Grantham Bain Collection.



## Handout 13: A Summary View

Work with your teammates to research the labor history event your team chose.

### Step 1: Conduct research.

- Summarize your event in three or four sentences. What kind of event was it? (strike, boycott, negotiation, other?) What happened?
- Refer to the list of Workplace Issues posted in the classroom. Which workplace issues did your event attempt to address? Did it address any issues that are not on the list? If so, what are the issues?
- What things happened leading up to your event that helped bring it about, and when did they happen?
- What were the highlights or notable occurrences during your event, and when did they happen?
- What was the result or significance of your event? (Were reforms achieved? Was there a setback for workers? Did your event pave the way for later achievements?)

### Step 2: Create a timeline.

As a team, discuss what is most important about your event. Then create a timeline, including all essential information, to place alongside your class's master timeline.

### Step 3: Identify stakeholders.

List the key stakeholder groups who were involved in your event. Be sure to include the names of any important movement leaders.





## Activity 2B: Creating Historical Characters



### Sequence

**2B.1:**  
***Assembling Character Biographies*** Team members create their character biographies, identifying and annotating related historical images and primary source materials. They research and document their characters' background, traits, and role in their team's chosen event.

**2B.2:**  
***Presenting Characters for Animation*** Using their timelines and character biographies, teams present their characters and events to the class.

### Understandings

- Primary sources, including oral histories, allow historians to learn about what life was like in the past for individuals.
- Character designers can refer to character biographies developed by movie writers and producers to learn details of film characters.



### Materials Needed

- Students' copies of **Handout 13: A Summary View**
- Students' copies of **Assessment Checklist: Character Biographies**
- **Handout 14: Character Biographies**
- **Handout 15: Character Information Sheet**
- List of resources for primary sources (see *Advance Preparation*)
- **Handout 16: A Voice from the Line**



## 2B.1: Assembling Character Biographies

### 1. Have teams choose or assign character biographies.

Tell students to look at the list of stakeholders they identified in Step 3 on Handout 13. Have teams decide which roles they will develop into character biographies for their animated movie. They should choose the same number of roles as they have team members. Each team member can choose one character biography to develop.

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**Note:** Teams may not have the same number of members as the number of roles they've identified. Work with teams, as necessary, to make sure that the most critical roles are covered.

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### 2. Introduce the process of developing character biographies.

Distribute **Handout 14: Character Biographies** and **Handout 15: Character Information Sheet**. Go over the handouts with students and answer any questions they may have.

### 3. Discuss the use of primary sources.

Direct students to Step 2 on Handout 14. Ask:

- What types of primary sources might provide insight into your character and event?

**Possible answers:** *Personal diaries or journals, letters, audio interviews or transcripts, speeches, posters, newspaper articles, other original documents*

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**Note:** Songs, symbols, flags, or slogans are other primary sources that would enhance character biographies.

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- Where might you find these primary sources?

**Possible answers:** *Oral history Web sites, libraries, historical societies, government archives or record offices*

#### Teacher's Notes: Primary Sources

You may wish to provide students with lists of resources, including Internet links and/or books and other print resources in the classroom. See *Media & Resources* for suggestions.

If your students need a more in-depth introduction to research using primary sources or a refresher, the U.S. History unit *Podcasting the Past* includes activities and handouts related to working with primary sources. See, in particular, Activities 1A.1: A World of Sources and 2A: Conducting and Documenting Research.

#### 4. Discuss the character information sheet.

Direct students to Step 5 on Handout 14. Explain that character designers will use the character information sheet as a guide to developing the characters in the animated movie. Tell students to provide as much information as possible on **Handout 15: Character Information Sheet**.

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**Note:** You may want to show students a completed character information sheet. You can use the example given on the teacher's version of **Handout 15: Character Information Sheet**.

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#### 5. Have students research their character.

Provide time for students to complete Steps 1–5 on Handout 14.

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**Note:** See *Media & Resources* for links to character biographies for film and television.

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#### 6. Have students write a letter or diary entry for their character.

Direct students to Step 6 on Handout 14. Then distribute **Handout 16: A Voice from the Line**. Explain that the excerpt on Handout 16 is from the book *Working* by Studs Terkel.

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**Note:** *Working* includes the voices of dozens of workers in all kinds of professions. Phil Stallings was a welder at an auto body plant in the early 1970s.

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Have students read Handout 16 and complete Journal 4.

### Journal 4

Think about the voice of Phil Stallings in “The Maker” from *Working* by Studs Terkel, as he told about a specific incident at his factory and what he thought about it.

Now write in the voice of your own character. Choose a date along your team's event timeline. Write a diary entry or a letter to a family member or friend on that date. Write from your character's perspective. Before you write, think about the following questions:

- How do you feel about your situation at this point in time?
- What do you hope for?
- What do you fear?
- Who might take advantage of you and whom do you trust?

Include appropriate and accurate historical details, such as where you live, where you work and what you do (if applicable), what you wear, what you eat, what you read, and what was actually happening at the time.

Have volunteers share their journal responses.

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**Note:** If you want to have students read alternate or additional excerpts from letters, diaries, or oral histories, see *Media & Resources* for suggestions.

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**7. Have students assemble their character biographies.**

Have students review and revise their character information sheets and put them together with their annotated photographic images, primary source document excerpt or audiotape, and their letter or diary entry.



## Handout 14: Character Biographies

Now it's time to develop a character biography that designers can use to create your animated film character.

Your character might be an individual, such as a company president or union leader, or a representative of a group, such as a striking assembly line worker or an unemployed worker hired to take a striker's place.

Follow the steps below to build your character biography.

### Step 1: Review criteria.

Your character biography should consist of:

- At least one annotated primary source document or oral history audio clip
- At least two annotated photographic images
- Completed **Handout 15: Character Information Sheet**
- Your response to Journal 4, a letter or diary entry in the voice of your character

### Step 2: Identify three primary sources.

Your teacher will provide you with suggestions for resources that you can use to find primary sources. Locate at least three primary sources that you will use.

Complete the table below with information about your primary sources.

Type of Primary Source (for example, oral history transcription, audio recording, photograph)	Bibliographic Information	Description

Have your teacher review the primary sources you've chosen.





### Step 3: Prepare an annotated primary source document or audio clip.

Review your primary source materials and locate at least one original document (such as a diary entry or a letter) or audiotaped interview that offers insight into your character.

Prepare an excerpt from your primary source. If your character is based on a real person, your excerpt can be something the person said or wrote. If your character represents a group, such as women working in a shirtwaist factory, your excerpt can be from a real person in that group.

Write a short paragraph describing what the primary source reveals about your character and his or her role in your team's event.

Prepare your annotated document or audio clip for presentation.

### Step 4: Prepare annotated historical images.

Review your primary sources and choose at least two photographic images:

- One image of your character or someone in your representative character group
- One image about how your character lives—the exterior or interior of a home, workplace, or other environment

Write one or two sentences describing what each photographic image reveals about your character. Prepare the annotated images for presentation.

### Step 5: Complete Handout 15: Character Information Sheet.

Research your character's background or the background of the group your character belongs to, as well as the role that individual or group played in the event.

Write your findings on **Handout 15**. Try to collect as much information as possible. You can use the back of the handout and/or additional sheets of paper if you need to. Include (and reference) source materials where relevant.

### Step 6: Include your response to Journal 4.

Now that you have researched your character in depth, you should have a good sense of his or her attitudes and motivations. Use this insight as you write your response to Journal 4.

### Step 7: Assemble the materials for your character biography.

Review and revise **Handout 15: Character Information Sheet**. Gather your primary source document excerpt or audio clip, your annotated photographic images, and your letter or diary entry.

Meet with your team and make sure all biography materials are complete.





## Handout 15:

# Character Information Sheet

### Short Description of Event (one or two sentences):

*In 1894, the American Railway Union (ARU) called a boycott and strike against all trains with sleeper cars made by the Pullman company. The response was a wage cut of a third of a salary and massive layoffs.*

### Character Role (name and short description):

*My character, an African American named Dawson, is a Pullman porter. A Pullman porter is the name given to people hired to provide for the needs and desires of passengers on Pullman train sleeper cars. Porters carried luggage, made beds, cleaned berths, brought food and drink, and otherwise tended to all a passenger's needs. In the beginning, the Pullman Palace Car Company hired only African Americans as porters.*

### Economic Status:

*Paid a good salary, but by no means well off.*

### Gender:

*Male*

### Approximate age:

*About 30 years old*

### Clothing:

*Porter uniform with hats and dark pants and jackets with buttons (see photograph)*

### Background, including national origin, if known:

*Freed slave from a plantation house in Alabama (or other state in the Deep South)*

### Home life (if applicable):

*On the road with his job most of the time, no family*





**Attitude toward unions (or attitude toward other characters):**

*Dawson would have liked to be part of a union, but the American Railway Union (ARU) excluded African Americans. Therefore, he has a bitter attitude about unions.*

**Description of role in the event (three- to five-sentence paragraph):**

*Because Pullman porters were African American, and African Americans were not allowed to join the ARU, they did not participate in the strike. Angry at being excluded from the union, many other African Americans did not hesitate to enlist as strikebreakers. Union leader Eugene Debs speculated that if the ARU had not been such a racist organization, the strikers may have prevailed and won concessions instead of eventually having to give in to their employers.*





## Handout 16: A Voice from the Line

Excerpts from "The Maker" by Phil Stallings, Spot-Welder

From *Working* by Studs Terkel, pp. 160–163

... You really begin to wonder. What price do they put on me? Look at the price they put on the machine. If that machine breaks down, there's somebody out there to fix it right away. If I break down, I'm just pushed over to the other side till another man takes my place. The only thing they have on their mind is to keep that line running. ...

... The only way I get involved is when it affects me or it affects a man on the line in a condition that could be me. I don't believe in lost causes, but when it all happened ... (He pauses, appears bewildered.)

The foreman was riding the guy. The guy told him to go away or pushed him, grabbed him . . . You can't blame the guy—Jim Grayson. I don't want nobody stickin' their finger in my face. I'd've probably hit him beside the head. The whole thing was: Damn it, it's about time we took a stand. Let's stick up for the guy. We stopped the line . . . (He pauses, grins.) Ford lost about twenty units. I'd figure about five grand a unit—whattya got. (Laughs.)

I said, "Let's all go home." When the line's down like that, you can go up to one man and say, "You gonna work?" If he says no, they can fire him. See what I mean? But if nobody was there, who the hell were they gonna walk up to and say, "Are you gonna work?" Man, there woulda been nobody there! If it were up to me, we'd gone home.

Jim Grayson, the guy I work next to, he's colored. Absolutely. That's the first time I've seen unity on that line. Now it's happened once, it'll happen again. Because everybody just sat down. Believe you me. (Laughs.) It stopped at eight and it didn't start till twenty after eight. Everybody and his brother were down there. It was really nice to see, it really was.

## 2B.2: Presenting Characters for Animation



### 1. Have teams plan their presentations.

Tell students that as part of the unit project, teams will present the characters for their animated movies in the context of their chosen labor history event.

Each team is responsible for presenting:

- An annotated timeline for their event
- Character biographies for the major characters in their animated movie

Have students refer to their Assessment Checklists or Handout 14, if they have any questions about what to present for their character biographies.

Emphasize to students that each team member must play a role in both parts of the presentation, the timeline and the character biography. Provide class time for teams to work together.

#### Teacher's Notes: Presentation Options

Encourage students to be creative in developing their presentations. They may take the parts of movie directors or producers, or speak in the voice of their own characters, using costumes or props. Teams may even wish to stage a conversation between two of the characters to show the contrast between them.

Decide how much time to allow each team to present. Ten minutes per team would allow two minutes for presentation of the timeline and one to two minutes each for four or five character biographies.

If teams need any specialized equipment or room arrangements, provide assistance as necessary.

### 2. Have students conduct their presentations.

Provide time for teams to present. Following each presentation, encourage students in the audience to ask questions of teams as though they were potential character designers. Tell them to think about any relevant character information that may not have been included.

You may wish to prompt the audience with questions such as:

- What is the relationship between the factory owner and the police chief (or between any specific characters)?
- What would a picket sign for this event look like, and what might it say? (Or what might an appropriate slogan or news headline be?)
- How would the overall appearance of the worker contrast with that of the factory foreman? With the owner?

### 3. Have students complete the Assessment Checklist.

Have students fill out the Student Comment section of the Assessment Checklist, and turn in their projects for evaluation.

As a wrap-up, conduct a class discussion with the following questions:

- How did this unit change your understanding of the ways individuals and groups shape history?
- What was the most interesting or surprising thing you learned in conducting research into the individuals and groups involved in your labor event?
- What was one interesting or surprising thing you learned from a classmate's presentation?
- Consider the labor milestones and events you learned about in the unit. How are gains in workers' rights and conditions reflected in today's economy? What new issues, if any, have emerged?
- What do you see as the value of historical research and authentic detail in the movie industry?

## Appendix A: “I Hear America Singing”

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I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,  
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,  
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,  
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,  
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand  
    singing on the steamboat deck,  
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,  
The wood-cutter’s song, the ploughboy’s on his way in the morning, or  
    at noon intermission or at sundown,  
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of  
    the girl sewing or washing,  
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,  
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows,  
    robust, friendly,  
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

Whitman, Walt (1993). *Leaves of Grass*. New York: Modern Library.

## Appendix B: Manufacturing Conflict: Simulation

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1. Tell students to imagine that they are workers in a town where everyone works at the Product Star factory. Wages at Product Star are \$5 per week. One dollar goes to taxes to provide food for the unemployed, so each employee nets \$4. The minimum necessary to pay for food and housing is \$4, so Product Star employees cannot save any money. Product Star does, however, offer benefits so employees don't have to worry about illness or injuries.
2. Explain that a new factory, Best Products, has just been built and they are hiring. Best Products is offering wages almost twice as high as Product Star: \$8 per week. A \$1 tax goes to welfare for the unemployed so workers net \$7, still considerably more than at Product Star. Best Products doesn't offer benefits, but that's not a problem because workers can purchase the benefits available through Product Star for just \$1 and still have \$6 left. Best Products will hire exactly half the number of people employed by Product Star. Ask:
  - Would you like to switch jobs and join Best Products?
3. Arbitrarily choose half the class to employ at Best Products, leaving the others to stay at Product Star. Ask both groups how they feel about what happened and what they intend to do.
4. Take new Best Products employees aside and tell them that they will have to work much harder and faster than they did at Product Star. Tell them that should be okay because they're getting higher wages.
5. Explain that because Best Products only has to pay half the number of workers, they are able to lower their product prices. Product Star tries lowering its prices, too, to compete with Best Products, but has to cut wages in order to do so. Now Product Star workers make only \$3/week. However, they are given the option to give up their benefits and apply it toward their salary, so they can still make \$4/week. Ask:
  - How do Product Star workers feel and what do you plan to do?
6. Now explain that Best Products decides to lower its prices still further, but it has to lower its workers' wages as well. Best Products workers will now make \$6 per week, with \$1 going to taxes, for a net of \$5 (\$4 if they choose to purchase the benefit). Ask:
  - How do Best Products workers feel and what do you plan to do?

7. Best Products drives Product Star out of business by continually lowering product prices. Explain that Product Star employees are now unemployed, and can begin collecting a benefit of \$2 per week.
  - How do Product Star workers feel and what do you plan to do?
8. Best Products workers are now earning the same wages they originally earned at Product Star, but have to work much harder and faster. Ask:
  - How do Product Star workers feel and what do you plan to do?



## Appendix C: Who's Right?

Read each scenario below about today's workplace. Work with your partner to decide who is right in each scenario.

1. James is scheduled to work an 8-hour shift at the drugstore. Just as he is getting ready to leave, his supervisor tells him he needs to stay until closing. James has already made a date with a friend, so he tells his supervisor he can't stay. The supervisor tells James that if he doesn't stay for the extra shift, he shouldn't plan on showing up in the morning—or ever again. Does the supervisor have the right to fire James?

*It depends on what is in James's contract, and whether he is a salaried or shift worker.*

2. Serena works as a cashier at a local supermarket, which has a summer opening for a bagger. Serena's 13-year-old sister isn't doing anything for the summer, so Serena mentions to her boss that her sister is available. The boss tells Serena to have her sister start work the following Monday, but unlike Serena, who gets a weekly paycheck, her sister will be paid in cash. That sounds odd to Serena, but she doesn't say anything to her boss. Should she question the arrangement?

*Serena is right to be suspicious of her employer. The Fair Labor Standards Act requires the minimum age of 14 for all work except for agricultural work on a family farm owned by parents of the minor.*

3. Micah works at a big chain department store that employs hundreds of workers. One day while lifting heavy boxes he injures himself so severely that he has to go home. The company tells him to take the week off without pay, but to return to work the following Monday. After a week, however, Micah's back isn't any better, and he is still unable to work. The company tells Micah they're very sorry, but they're going to have to lay him off. Does the company owe Micah anything or did they do all they could be expected to do?

*If Micah is a full-time employee at a major company, he should be eligible for short-term disability insurance—meaning that the company must pay him for a specified period of time, even if he is unable to work.*



4. Darien's desk has recently been moved to a room where chemicals are stored. There is a strong smell in the room. No one has ever had to work in this room before, but since the company is expanding, every bit of space is being utilized. The first day in his new room, Darien has a headache that makes it difficult for him to work. He sees a symbol for toxicity on one of the storage containers, but when he voices his concerns to his boss, she says the symbol is just protocol and the chemicals are perfectly safe. Darien is afraid that he might lose his job if he complains any further. Does he have the right to insist on moving his desk?

*According to law, workers do have the right to refuse work they feel is dangerous, and may cause them serious and immediate harm. In practice, however, companies do sometimes fire workers for refusing such work. If fired, Darien would have to file a lawsuit in order to get the job back.*

5. Taylor works picking vegetables at a farm that pays her below minimum wage. When she complains, her supervisor raises her pay to the minimum. But when she talks to other workers, many of whom are adults raising families, she finds out that their wages have not been raised. She confronts her supervisor again, who tells her that the other workers are not U.S. citizens and the minimum wage doesn't apply to them. Is the supervisor right?

*Technically, it's against the law to hire someone who is in the country illegally, whether you pay them minimum wage or not. The law does not provide for two different wage scales: one for legal workers and one for illegal workers. But in fact, many companies take advantage of illegal immigrants' fear of being turned in, to get them to work for low wages and without benefits.*

6. Jayne notices that her assistant is using her office computer for his personal use. When Jayne speaks to him, he responds that he works more than his scheduled hours and always gets his work done. Jayne has to agree, but she still doesn't like him using office time and equipment for his personal correspondence. Can Jayne force him to stop or is it his right to do so as long as he meets his deadlines?

*This situation is entirely up to the employer; no law governs it. The employer has to decide whether the employee is a valuable enough worker to put up with him conducting personal business during work hours.*





7. Marc works at a construction company and until recently has ignored local union organizers. This year, however, his manager lowered his hourly wages, justifying the pay cut by saying the market for construction is down. Marc, however, has not seen any slowdown. What he has seen is the company hiring more workers, whom Marc suspects are accepting lower wages. In response, Marc has started attending union meetings. This morning, Marc's manager told him that if he joined the union, he would be fired. Can Marc's manager legally fire him?

*No, the National Labor Relations Act, passed in 1935, guarantees that employees have the right to strike, organize, and/or join a union without fear of being penalized.*

## Appendix D: Annotated Labor History Milestones

Date	Milestone	Significance	Precipitating Events	Long-Term Outcome
1827	Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations formed	First U.S. labor organization to form across crafts and as a class, recognized as the beginning of the labor movement.	Carpenters struck for a 10-hour day, and other crafts in the construction business joined them: glaziers, bricklayers, painters, etc.	Won 10-hour day, published a newspaper, represented themselves as a union.
1836	Female mill workers in Lowell, Massachusetts, organized with public support	First time a woman had spoken in public in Lowell, MA; called attention to female workers' plight.	Mill workers "turnout" or strike in 1834 failed, but aroused the public's awareness and sympathy.	Founded Lowell Female Labor Reform Association in 1845; continued to petition Massachusetts legislature for reform, including the 10-hour day.
1866	National Labor Union founded	Organized skilled and unskilled laborers; as many as 500,000 members.	Began with a convention in Baltimore to organize skilled and unskilled laborers in support of an 8-hour day.	Failed to win an 8-hour day.
1881	Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (FOTLU) formed	Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, at which 107 delegates from eight national unions gathered.	Samuel Gompers and other organizers advocated unions that cut across political and trade affiliations.	FOTLU became the precursor to the American Federation of Labor.
1886	American Federation of Labor (AFL) founded	Samuel Gompers invited all national trade unions to unite in a common cause.	AFL was formed as a result of differences between skilled craft unions and the Knights of Labor, a group formed to represent workers of all backgrounds and skill levels.	The AFL has since merged with the CIO and is still active today in promoting workers' rights.

<b>1890</b>	Photographer Jacob Riis's <i>How the Other Half Lives</i> published	Social documentary photographer depicted the poverty of New York City.	Riis was one of the early muckrakers, writers and photographers who exposed the social ills resulting from industrialization. Muckrakers were a hallmark of the Progressive Era.	Journalism such as that practiced by Riis and, later, Sinclair gained the attention of the public and of President Theodore Roosevelt.
<b>1903</b>	Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) founded	First union organization devoted to securing workers' rights for women.	Jane Addams, among others, formed WTUL at the 1903 AFL convention. Roots in British WTUL.	Achieved 8-hour working day, minimum wage, and abolition of child labor.
<b>1905</b>	Industrial Workers of the World founded	Organized both skilled and unskilled workers within certain industries such as mining, logging, and agriculture.	Created in response to AFL's focus on craft unionism for skilled workers only.	Influential strikes won concessions for workers. Membership declined after WWI but is still active.
<b>1906</b>	Upton Sinclair's <i>The Jungle</i> published	Novel written to expose harsh working conditions in industrial America, particularly the meatpacking industry.	Upton Sinclair was one of a number of writers and photographers, known as muckrakers, who exposed industrial abuses.	Public outrage led to the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act, which established the Food and Drug Administration.
<b>1915</b>	Child labor laws passed	Child Labor Act of 1915 established restrictions for, and regulations regarding, employment of children.	Child Labor Committees had sought to regulate or eliminate child labor since the early 1900s.	The Child Labor Act paved the way for further restrictions on child labor, although the most comprehensive laws weren't enacted until the Depression.
<b>1925</b>	Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters created	First national union for the 15,000 African American Pullman porters.	African Americans were excluded from the AFL.	AFL refused to recognize the union, and Pullman started hiring Filipino porters.

<b>1929</b>	Stock market crashed; beginning of the Great Depression	Unemployment climbed to 25 percent.	Rising prosperity in the 1920s among the upper class led to unchecked speculation in the stock market.	The Depression lasted a decade. Government started to regulate and provide poverty relief to a greater extent than at any previous time in U.S. history.
<b>1933</b>	President Franklin Roosevelt proposes New Deal programs to Congress	A series of programs for economic relief and recovery initiated by the 32nd president in his first 100 days.	Roosevelt referred to "a new deal" for the American people suffering unemployment and poverty during the Great Depression.	The New Deal redefined the role of government in the economy, increasing subsequent regulation and legislative action.
<b>1934</b>	The National Industrial Recovery Act passed	Law giving the president broad powers to regulate industry and stimulate economic recovery. Established the Public Works Administration, which funded public works projects.	Enacted at the end of Roosevelt's first 100 days as president, as part of his New Deal legislation to combat the Great Depression.	Precursor to the more successful National Labor Relations Act, which corrected many of the NIRA's shortcomings.
<b>1935</b>	National Labor Relations Act (or Wagner Act) passed	Law giving industrial workers the right to organize, join unions, and strike.	Arose out of the economic conditions of the Depression, as a way to protect workers from exploitation.	The NLRA is still an important worker protection.
<b>1935</b>	Social Security Act passed	Initiates social insurance program that pays out retirement benefits based on worker and employer contributions.	Part of New Deal legislation designed to protect the elderly from poverty.	Initial legislation excluded a large percentage of the population. Subsequent amendments covered dependent families and increased the number of workers covered.

<b>1935</b>	Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) formed within AFL	Federation of unions formed to include all categories of workers in an industry.	Formed to increase workers' bargaining power by aligning all workers in an industry instead of dividing them by skills.	Originally formed with the AFL, the CIO broke away from the AFL in 1938. The two organizations merged again in 1955.
<b>1938</b>	Fair Labor Standards Act passed	Law established a minimum wage, 40-hour work week, overtime pay rates, and regulations for employing minors.	Part of New Deal legislation arising out of the Great Depression to improve working conditions.	Subsequent amendments have raised minimum wages, increased groups covered, and guaranteed other workplace rights.
<b>1938</b>	CIO forms as an independent entity	Established a federation exclusively devoted to industrial unionism.	CIO breaks away from AFL after failing to change AFL policy of organizing by skill rather than by industry.	CIO merges with AFL in 1955.
<b>1955</b>	AFL and CIO merge	Created a stronger union federation with many more members.	Many of the differences between the two organizations had disappeared.	AFL-CIO today is made up of more than 50 national and international unions and supports more than 11 million workers.
<b>1966</b>	United Farm Workers (UFW) union formed	Offered the first union affiliation for farm workers within the AFL-CIO.	Cesar Chavez united farm workers in the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in 1962. Organized strikes and boycotts led to the first union contract for farm workers.	UFW is still active today in advocating for farm workers' rights.
<b>1970</b>	Occupational Safety and Health Act passed	Passed by Congress to ensure safe working conditions.	Increasing workplace fatalities during and following WW II; increasing concern over chemicals and other environmental hazards.	Creation of an agency to regulate workplace safety and health.

# Materials Needed

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## Throughout Unit

- Chart paper and markers
- (Optional): Computers with Internet access for student research

## Part 1: A History of Work

### *Supplies and Other Equipment*

- Equipment for playing video clips, such as a DVD player and monitor
- Play money (\$1 and \$5 denominations)
- Blank timeline from 1820 to the present (see *Advance Preparation*)
- Paper strips cut from **Handout 5: Labor History Milestones** (see *Advance Preparation*)

### *Handouts*

- **Handout 1: Worker Portrayal in Media**
- **Handout 2: Unit Overview**
- **Assessment Checklist: Character Biographies**
- **Handout 3: Journal Assignments**
- (Optional) **Appendix A: “I Hear America Singing”**
- **Handout 4A: Workplace Simulation: Introduction**
- **Handout 4B: Workplace Simulation: Employer**
- (Optional) **Appendix B: Manufacturing Conflict: Simulation**
- (Optional) **Appendix C: Who’s Right?**
- (Optional) **Handout 5: Labor History Milestones**
- **Handout 6: Milestone Data**
- **Handout 7: Images of the Great Depression**
- **Handout 8: Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal**

### *Examples of Media Resources*

- Video clips from movie and TV portrayals of workers (See *Advance Preparation*)
- Graph that shows U.S. unemployment before, during, and after the Great Depression (see *Advance Preparation*)

### *Advance Preparation*

- For Activity 1A, select two video clips from movies and/or TV portraying worker situations or struggles. Ideally, one clip should be from an animated movie or TV show and at least one clip should relate to a labor movement or event listed on **Handout 12: Events in Labor History**. The clips used as examples in the unit are from the movies *Spirited Away* and *On the Waterfront*. See *Media & Resources* for additional suggestions.

- Before Activity 1B.1, copy **Handout 5: Labor History Milestones** and cut it into strips with each milestone on a separate strip of paper. Place the strips in a container so that student pairs can randomly select a strip.

For Activity 1B.1, create a blank timeline to post on the classroom wall. The timeline should begin at 1820 and end at the current date, and it should be large enough to post labor events studied throughout the unit.

- For Activity 1B.2, locate an image of a graph showing U.S. unemployment before, during, and after the Great Depression. (See *Media & Resources*.)

## Part 2: Working for Their Lives

### *Supplies and Other Equipment*

- Equipment for playing audio clips, such as a computer or audio player
- List of resources for primary sources (see *Advance Preparation*)

### *Handouts*

- **Handout 9: The Flint Sit-Down Strike**
- **Handout 10: Flint Stakeholders**
- **Handout 11: Flint Sit-Down Strike Timeline**
- **Handout 12: Events in Labor History**
- **Handout 13: A Summary View**
- **Handout 14: Character Biographies**
- **Handout 15: Character Information Sheet**
- **Handout 16: A Voice from the Line**

### *Examples of Media Resources*

- Oral history audio clips of Flint autoworkers' strike (see *Advance Preparation*)
- Historical photographs of Flint autoworkers' strike (see *Advance Preparation*)

### *Items Students Need to Bring*

- Students' copies of **Assessment Checklist: Character Biographies** from Part 1

### *Advance Preparation*

- For Activity 2A.1, find audio clips of oral history and historical photographs from the Flint, Michigan autoworkers' strike. Have equipment available to play the audio clips and print out the photos for display. See *Media & Resources* for suggestions.

- Before Activity 2B.1, prepare a list of resources to help students locate primary sources for their character biographies. See *Media & Resources* for suggestions.
- Before Activity 2B.2, check with students to arrange for any equipment that teams may need for their presentations.



# Media & Resources

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These recommended Web sites have been checked for availability and for advertising and other inappropriate content. However, because Web site policies and content change frequently, we suggest that you preview the sites shortly before using them.

Media & Resources are also available at <http://dma.edc.org> and at <http://dmamediaandresources.pbworks.com>, a Wiki that allows users to add and edit content.

## Part 1: A History of Work

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### Activity 1.A.1: Actors in the Labor Drama

#### *Movies About Labor*

*And the Earth Did Not Swallow Him*, 1994

[www.imdb.com/title/tt0108999/plotsummary](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0108999/plotsummary)

*The Garment Jungle*, 1957

*The Grapes of Wrath*, 1940

*Hoffa*, 1992

*The Killing Floor*, 1985

*Matewan*, 1987—A labor leader seeking to organize the workers of a company town sets off a powderkeg of racial hostility, corruption and betrayal in this dramatic retelling of the bitter clash between unionist miners and the tyrannical coal company owners in West Virginia in the 1920s.

*Metropolis*, Germany, 1926 21st-century dystopia in which workers are enslaved underground

*Modern Times*, 1936, with Charlie Chaplin

*The Molly Maguires*, 1970

*Norma Rae*, 1975

*On the Waterfront*, 1954

Create Lesson Plans Based on Movies and Films

[www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/on-the-waterfront.html](http://www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/on-the-waterfront.html)

*The Devil Wears Prada*, 2006

*The Cradle Will Rock*, 2000

*Outsourced*, 2006 Man loses job, travels to India to train his replacement

*10,000 Black Men Named George*, 2002 Pullman Porter strike

*Salt of the Earth*, 1954 Strike against Empire Zinc Mine in New Mexico. Only film to be blacklisted.

*Spirited Away*, 2001, as a labor film

[www.brightlightsfilm.com/38/Spirited.php](http://www.brightlightsfilm.com/38/Spirited.php)

*The Triangle Shirt Factory Fire Scandal*, 1979

*Up in the Air*, 2009

### **Television Shows About the Workplace**

*Boston Legal*

*Mad Men*

*The Office*

*The Simpsons*

## **Activity 1.B.1: Labor History Overview**

### **Documentary Photographs and Movies**

#### **American Social History Project**

*Daughters of Free Men*. Lucy Hall leaves her New England farm to work in the Lowell textile mills of the 1830s and confronts a new world of opportunity and exploitation.

*1877: The Grand Army of Starvation*. In the summer of 1877, eighty thousand railroad workers went on strike and hundreds of thousands soon followed. The Great Uprising began a new era of conflict about equality in the industrial age.

*Up South: African American Migration in the Era of the Great War*. Narrated by a Mississippi barber and a sharecropper woman, *Up South* tells the dramatic story of African American migration to industrial cities during World War I.

*Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl*. Framed by the 1909 shirtwaist strike, this program presents a panoramic portrait of immigrant working women in the turn-of-the-century city.

#### **Other Films**

*Union Maids*. Three women in the Communist Party who organized in Chicago's meatpacking district in the 1930s.

#### **Photographs**

The History Place: Child Labor in America 1908-1912: Photographs of Lewis W. Hines.

[www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/](http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/)

## Activity 1.B.2: The Great Depression and the New Deal

### *Graphs showing unemployment during the Great Depression*

Unemployment graph

[www.uri.edu/artsci/newecn/Classes/Art/INT1/Mac/Measure/Lab/LM1.U.html](http://www.uri.edu/artsci/newecn/Classes/Art/INT1/Mac/Measure/Lab/LM1.U.html)

U3 and U6 Unemployment During the Great Depression

[www.economicpopulist.org/content/u3-and-u6-unemployment-during-great-depression](http://www.economicpopulist.org/content/u3-and-u6-unemployment-during-great-depression)

United States Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics

[www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cm20030124ar03p1.htm](http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cm20030124ar03p1.htm)

### *The New Deal*

Original document of Fireside Chat, National Archives

[www.archives.gov/education/lessons/fdr-fireside/](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/fdr-fireside/)

Roosevelt, Franklin D. Outlining the New Deal Program. Roosevelt's Fireside Chats, May 7, 1933

<http://newdeal.feri.org/chat/chat02.htm>

Teaching with Documents: FDR's Fireside Chat on the Purposes and Foundations of the Recovery Program

[www.archives.gov/education/lessons/fdr-fireside/](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/fdr-fireside/)

Fireside Chat, Outlining the New Deal programs, May 7, 1933

<http://newdeal.feri.org/chat/chat02.htm>

Fireside Chat on the Purposes and Foundations of the Recovery Program, July 24, 1933

[www.archives.gov/education/lessons/fdr-fireside/](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/fdr-fireside/)

National Labor Relations Act

[www.nlrb.gov/about\\_us/overview/national\\_labor\\_relations\\_act.aspx](http://www.nlrb.gov/about_us/overview/national_labor_relations_act.aspx)

Social Security Act

[www.ssa.gov/OP\\_Home/ssact/comp-ssa.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/comp-ssa.htm)

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended

[www.osha.gov/pls/epub/wageindex.download?p\\_file=F15794/FairLaborStandAct.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/pls/epub/wageindex.download?p_file=F15794/FairLaborStandAct.pdf)

New Deal

[www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1851.html](http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1851.html)

## Part 2: Working for Their Lives

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### Activity 2A.1: Sitting Down in Flint: A Case Study

*Oral history audio clips of Flint, Michigan autoworkers' strike*

Flint Sit-Down Strike Audio Timeline

[www.historicalvoices.org/flint/timeline-main.html](http://www.historicalvoices.org/flint/timeline-main.html)

Flint Sit-Down Strike Audio Gallery

[www.historicalvoices.org/flint/organization.php](http://www.historicalvoices.org/flint/organization.php)

[www.historicalvoices.org/flint/#](http://www.historicalvoices.org/flint/#)

*Historical photographs of Flint, Michigan autoworkers' strike*

United Auto Workers (UAW). UAW History, including sit-down strikes at GM and Chrysler in Flint and Detroit.

[www.uaw.org/node/271](http://www.uaw.org/node/271)

Grevatt, Martha. "70 years ago workers won Flint sit-down strike." *Workers World*.

[www.workers.org/2007/us/flint-0308/](http://www.workers.org/2007/us/flint-0308/)

### Activity 2A.2: Choosing a Labor Event

The Great Railroad Strike of 1877

[www2.ucsc.edu/resnet/res-includes/hilte/results.php](http://www2.ucsc.edu/resnet/res-includes/hilte/results.php)

The Molly Maguires

[www.providence.edu/polisci/students/molly\\_maguires/](http://www.providence.edu/polisci/students/molly_maguires/)

The Homestead Strike

[www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/carnegie/peopleevents/pande04.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/carnegie/peopleevents/pande04.html)

The Triangle Factory Fire

[www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/](http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/)

Schneirov, Richard. The Pullman Strike and Boycott

<http://dig.lib.niu.edu/gildedage/pullman/events3.html>

A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum

[www.aphiliprandolphmuseum.com/index.html](http://www.aphiliprandolphmuseum.com/index.html)

Tye, Larry. (2004). *Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class*. New York: Henry Holt.

Neeley, Lyn. (1998, January 29). Bread & Roses: The Strike Led and Won by Women. *Workers World*.

[www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45b/073.html](http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45b/073.html)

Dublin, Thomas (Ed.). (1981). *Farm to Factory: Women's Letters, 1830-1860*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ehrlich, Matt, Cord Brundage, and Sylvia Gassaway. Ludlow Massacre.

<http://l3d.cs.colorado.edu/systems/agentsheets/New-Vista/ludlow/>

Andrews, Thomas G. (2008). *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Waterfront Workers' History Project

[http://depts.washington.edu/dock/34strike\\_intro.shtml](http://depts.washington.edu/dock/34strike_intro.shtml)

The Big Strike: Labor Unrest in the Great Depression

[www.ashp.cuny.edu/investigatinghistory/m10b.html](http://www.ashp.cuny.edu/investigatinghistory/m10b.html)

Teaching with Documents: Court Documents related to Martin Luther King, Jr., Memphis Sanitation Workers

[www.archives.gov/education/lessons/memphis-v-mlk/](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/memphis-v-mlk/)

Exploring the United Farm Workers' History

<http://l3d.cs.colorado.edu/systems/agentsheets/New-Vista/grape-boycott/History.html>

1981 Strike Leaves Legacy for American Workers

[www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5604656](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5604656)

The Pittston Coal Strike

[www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/mcbride/ws200/lee3-hold.htm](http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/mcbride/ws200/lee3-hold.htm)

"Time Trail" West Virginia Archives and History

[www.wvculture.org/history/timetr/ttfeb.html](http://www.wvculture.org/history/timetr/ttfeb.html)

## Activity 2B: Creating Historical Characters

### Activity 2B.1: Assembling Character Biographies

**Primary Sources: Diaries, Letters, Oral Histories of Workers**

Dublin, Thomas (Ed.). (1981). *Farm to Factory: Women's Letters, 1830-1860*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Terkel, Studs. (1972). *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*. New York: Random House.

Particularly Phil Stallings, spot-welder; Jim Grayson, spot-welder; Tom Brand, plant manager; Wheeler Stanley, general foreman; and Gary Bryner, president, Lordstown Local, UAW, from "The Making," pp. 159–194.

Waterfront Workers' History Project

[http://depts.washington.edu/dock/34strike\\_intro.shtml](http://depts.washington.edu/dock/34strike_intro.shtml)

**Television and Film Character Biographies**

Mulder, Fox William. The X-Files Lexicon

[www.x-fileslexicon.com/dossiers/fox\\_mulder.html](http://www.x-fileslexicon.com/dossiers/fox_mulder.html)

Priest, Michelangelo. Compelling Characters.

[www.m-priest.com/Novelist/character.dossier.html](http://www.m-priest.com/Novelist/character.dossier.html)

Lost/Characters. The TV IV

[http://tviv.org/Lost/Character\\_Dossiers](http://tviv.org/Lost/Character_Dossiers)

## Labor Songs and Symbols

Classic labor songs from Smithsonian Folkways.

[www.emusic.com/album/Various-Artists-Smithsonian-Folkways-Classic-Labor-Songs-from-Smithsonian-Folkways-MP3-Download/10921135.html](http://www.emusic.com/album/Various-Artists-Smithsonian-Folkways-Classic-Labor-Songs-from-Smithsonian-Folkways-MP3-Download/10921135.html)

Labor Songs. American Labor Studies Center.

[www.labor-studies.org/laborsongs.php](http://www.labor-studies.org/laborsongs.php)

Parker Sherwood, Susan. A Brief History of Labor Symbols.

Look for the Union Label: A Celebration of Union Logos and Emblems.

[www.library.sfsu.edu/exhibits/labels/default.php](http://www.library.sfsu.edu/exhibits/labels/default.php)

Photographs. American Labor Studies Center.

[www.labor-studies.org/photos.php](http://www.labor-studies.org/photos.php)

# Additional Resources for Teachers

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## Part 1: A History of Work

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### Activity 1A.1: Actors in the Labor Drama

#### Poetry

Espada, Martín. Alabanza (2003). *New and Selected Poems*. New York: W.W. Norton. ("Federico's Ghost," "Watch Me Swing," "Jorge the Church Janitor Finally Quits," or "I Burn for the Perfection of Paper")

"The Shirt" by Robert Pinsky (Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire)

*Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman. "I Hear America Singing"

"Chicago" by Carl Sandburg

### Activity 1.A.3: (Optional) All in a Day's Work?

U.S. Department of Labor: Find It! By Topic.

<http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/>

### Activity 1B.1: Labor History Overview

#### *Labor Themes in the Movies and on TV*

Media Resources Center. U.C. Berkeley.

[www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/labormovies.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/labormovies.html)

Videocassettes and Films about the Migrant Workers Experience. State University of New York, New Paltz.

[www.fachc.org/pdf/mig\\_Videocassettes%20and%20Films%20About%20the%20Migrant%20Experience.pdf](http://www.fachc.org/pdf/mig_Videocassettes%20and%20Films%20About%20the%20Migrant%20Experience.pdf)

### Activity 1B.2: The Great Depression and the New Deal

#### *Books*

American Social History Project. (2000). *Who Built America? Working People and the Nation's Economy, Politics, Culture, and Society*. Volume One to 1877 and Volume Two: 1877 to the Present.

Bigelow, W., & Diamond, N. (1988). *The Power in Our Hands: A Curriculum on the History of Work and Workers in the United States*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Collier, C., & Collier, J. L. (2001). *Progressivism, the Great Depression, and the New Deal, 1901–1941*. New York: Marshall Cavendish.

Murolo, P., & Chitty, A. B. Illustrated by Joe Sacco. (2001). *From the Folks Who Brought You the Weekend: A Short, Illustrated History of Labor in the United States*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Rauchway, Eric. (2008). *The Great Depression & the New Deal: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Terzian, J., & Cramer, K. (1970). *Mighty Hard Road: The Story of Cesar Chavez*. New York: Doubleday.

Zieger, R., & Full, G. (2002). *American Workers, American Unions: The Twentieth Century*, third edition. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

### Web sites

AFL-CIO Web site

[www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/history/timeline.cfm](http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/history/timeline.cfm)

American Labor Studies Center. Source of quotations, labor songs, resource links, lesson plans, and more.

[www.labor-studies.org/](http://www.labor-studies.org/)

American Social History Project Web site

<http://ashp.cuny.edu/>

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site. "The Progressive Era."

[www.nps.gov/archive/elro/glossary/progressive-era.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/glossary/progressive-era.htm)

History Matters. The U.S. Survey Course on the Web.

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

The New Deal Network. Source of transcribed documents, period photographs, and lesson plans.

<http://newdeal.feri.org/>

United Farm Workers

[www.ufw.org/](http://www.ufw.org/)

### Podcasts

What's New About the New Deal?

[ashp.cuny.edu/2009/05/whats-new-about-the-new-deal/](http://ashp.cuny.edu/2009/05/whats-new-about-the-new-deal/)



## Part 2: Working for Their Lives

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### Activity 2A.1: Sitting Down in Flint: A Case Study

The National Archives

[www.archives.gov/](http://www.archives.gov/)

Video simulation of the Flint sit-down strike:

Griffin, Ian, Griffin Kane, and Keith Littlefield. The Great Flint Sit-Down Strike.

Vista High School

<http://l3d.cs.colorado.edu/systems/agentsheets/New-Vista/flint-strikes/>

United Auto Workers (UAW). UAW History, including sit-down strikes at GM and Chrysler in Flint and Detroit.

[www.uaw.org/node/271](http://www.uaw.org/node/271)

Grevatt, Martha. "70 years ago workers won Flint sit-down strike." Workers World.

[www.workers.org/2007/us/flint-0308/](http://www.workers.org/2007/us/flint-0308/)

### Activity 2B.1: Assembling Character Biographies

How to research and build your character.

[www.musicaltheatreaudition.com/performance/acting/characterresearch.html](http://www.musicaltheatreaudition.com/performance/acting/characterresearch.html)

Kammen, C., & Prendergast, N. (2000). *Encyclopedia of Local History*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Kyvig, David E. (2002). *Daily Life in the United States. 1920-1940: How Americans Lived Through the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee.

The Epiguide.com Fiction Writer's Character Chart.

[www.epiguide.com/ep101/writing/charchart.html](http://www.epiguide.com/ep101/writing/charchart.html)

# Standards

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This unit was developed to meet the following standards.

## California Academic Content Standards for American History, Grades 9–12

### United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century

**11.2** Students analyze the relationship among the rise of industrialization, large-scale rural-to-urban migration, and massive immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe.

2. Describe the changing landscape, including the growth of cities linked by industry and trade, and the development of cities divided according to race, ethnicity, and class.
6. Trace the economic development of the United States and its emergence as a major industrial power, including its gains from trade and the advantages of its physical geography.

**11.6** Students analyze the different explanations for the Great Depression and how the New Deal fundamentally changed the role of the federal government.

3. Discuss the human toll of the Depression, natural disasters, and unwise agricultural practices and their effects on the depopulation of rural regions and on political movements of the left and right, with particular attention to the Dust Bowl refugees and their social and economic impacts in California.
5. Trace the advances and retreats of organized labor, from the creation of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations to current issues of a postindustrial, multinational economy, including the United Farm Workers in California.

**11.8** Students analyze the economic boom and social transformation of post–World War II America.

2. Describe the significance of Mexican immigration and its relationship to the agricultural economy, especially in California.

## CTE AME Industry Sector Foundation Standards

### 1.3 History–Social Science

Specific applications of Historical Interpretation standards:

- (1) Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.
- (2) Students recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, including the limitations on determining cause and effect.

Specific applications of United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century standards:

- (11.2) Students analyze the major political, social, economic, technological, and cultural developments of the 1920s.
- (11.5.7) Discuss the rise of mass production techniques, the growth of cities, the impact of new technologies (e.g., the automobile, electricity), and the resulting prosperity and effect on the American landscape.

Specific applications of Principles of Economics standards:

- (12.4.1) Understand the operations of the labor market, including the circumstances surrounding the establishment of principal American labor unions, procedures that unions use to gain benefits for their members, the effects of unionization, the minimum wage, and unemployment insurance.

### 3.0 Career Planning and Management

- 3.4 Understand the role and function of professional organizations, industry associations, and organized labor in a productive society.

### 4.0 Technology

Students know how to use contemporary and emerging technological resources in diverse and changing personal, community, and workplace environments:

- 4.2 Understand the use of technological resources to gain access to, manipulate, and produce information, products, and services.

# Bibliography

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## **Activity 1A.2: Workplace Simulation**

Source of William Cahn quotation:

Labor Quotes. American Labor Studies Center.

[www.labor-studies.org/laborquotes.php](http://www.labor-studies.org/laborquotes.php)

Source of activity from which the Workplace Simulation was adapted:

"The Organic Goodie Simulation," Bigelow, W., & Diamond, N. (1988). *The Power in Our Hands: A Curriculum on the History of Work and Workers in the United States*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Source of George Baer and Sidney Hillman quotations on **Handout 4A:**

**Workplace Simulation: Introduction:**

Labor Quotes. American Labor Studies Center.

[www.labor-studies.org/laborquotes.php](http://www.labor-studies.org/laborquotes.php)

Source of Franklin Delano Roosevelt quote in Journal 2:

Our Documents: National Industrial Recovery Act. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library.

<http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/odnirast.html>

## **Photographs for Handout 7: Images of the Depression**

Men sitting in front of huts made from salvaged materials, October 25, 1935.

Changing New York, Berenice Abbott.

[www.flickr.com/photos/nypl/3109787567/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/nypl/3109787567/)

Vegetable workers, migrants, waiting to be paid, Homestead, Florida, February 1939. Farm Security Administration Collection. Marion Post Walcott.

[www.flickr.com/photos/nypl/3109745513/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/nypl/3109745513/)

## **Photograph for Handout 12: Events in Labor History**

Union leader Bill Haywood leads a strike parade in Lowell, Massachusetts. Library of Congress. George Grantham Bain Collection.

[www.flickr.com/photos/library\\_of\\_congress/2163883868/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress/2163883868/)

## **Excerpt for Handout 16: A Voice from the Line**

Terkel, Studs. (1972). *Working*. Excerpts from "The Maker" by Phil Stallings, Spot-Welder. New York: Random House, pp. 160–163.