

The Progressive Movement—what was its impact?

Lesson 1

Day 1

Title: Introduction to Unit on Progressives: Build on What Students Know

Objectives

Students will:

1. Recall, discuss and build on what they have studied about immigration, the growth of cities and the rise of big business—all problems facing Progressives.
2. Examine a set of photographs of New York City in the early 1900s to begin to describe life at this time using primary sources.
3. Be able to define primary and secondary sources.

Materials (online primary sources, student reading, activity sheets, supplies):

- Flip chart and markers
- **Talking points** for teacher reference on Immigration, Growth of Cities, and Rise of Big Business
- Photo Collage of New York City in Early 1900s with six photos
- Three-column worksheet for note taking
- Overhead projector and transparencies

Strategies (include opening or hook and closing)

1. **Hook:** Use the Photo Collage of New York City in Early 1900s. Either use a computer at this website to project pictures on a screen or make photos into transparencies and use overhead projector to show students.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/features/timeline/progress/cities/nycphoto.html>

2. Have students answer these questions about the photos:
 - What do you see in these photos? Focusing on one photo at a time, have students describe what they actually see.
 - Based on what you see in these photos, what can you infer or conclude about life in New York City in the early 1900s?
 - What questions do these photos raise in your mind?
3. Write “Progressives” on the center of a flip chart page and ask students to brainstorm their associations with this word. Write their associations as a web around the central word. Save this flip chart web to compare it to the one at the end of this unit.
4. Briefly describe this unit to students noting that they will be creating exhibits at the end. Explain that they will soon hear more details.
5. Ask students to think back to what they have learned about immigration, the growth of cities, and the rise of big business.
 - To do this, have students work in pairs and divide the class so that one-third of students will be working one each of the three topics.
 - Give students five minutes in their pairs to discuss and write what they recall about their topic *without* using their textbook or notes.
 - Have students report out their findings, and as they do, teacher records basic information on overhead projector transparencies. Correct students as necessary.

- Direct students to create and take notes in three-columns on: Immigration/ Cities/ Big Business.
 - At this point, teacher uses Talking Points for Teacher Reference to expand on what students remembered. Tell students that the Talking Points come from reference books and websites that provide background information.
 - Explain to students that these conditions served as the context for the Progressive movement.
6. Finish this lesson by explaining the difference between primary and secondary sources
- A **primary source** is material that is contemporary to the events being examined. Primary sources can be letters, contemporary newspaper accounts including political cartoons, or photographs. They can also be oral histories, memoirs, or autobiographies, later recollections of the time by someone who was there.
 - **Secondary sources** are books or articles written about an event or aspects of a past event, using primary sources. Secondary sources interpret original documents and are often historical narratives that give you background information about the topic you want to research.
- Ask students what examples from today's lesson are primary sources (the photos) and which are secondary sources (the Talking Points sources).
7. **Homework:** Assign students to find and bring in an example of a primary source.

Differentiation

This lesson accounts for visual learners and those who might have trouble working with challenging documents by beginning with having students examine the photos. It accommodates several learning styles including whole class activities and paired student work.

Lesson 2

Day 2

Title: Practice Working with Primary Sources from the Progressive Era and Provide Students with a Timeline of this Period

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Analyze and interpret Progressive Era primary sources—written documents and political cartoons—noting different perspectives on urban political machines.
2. Examine a timeline of this period to understand the historical context in which the Progressives lived.
3. Begin to define the problems faced, identify who Progressives were, note how they got people to care about these problems, and what solutions they advocated.

Materials (online primary sources, student reading, activity sheets, supplies)

- Overhead projector and transparencies [or LCD projector]
- Primary sources on **Urban Political Machines** from Lincoln Steffens and George Washington Plunkitt; and Thomas Nast political cartoon on political bosses

- **Progressive Unit Timeline**—one copy for teacher reference and a copy with pages enlarged to post in three parts around the classroom
- **Progressive timeline worksheet/chart**
- Copies for each student of the **Progressive Unit Timeline**

Strategies (include opening or hook and closing)

1. Do a quick check of the homework primary sources that students have brought in, asking for examples of various categories, and correcting as necessary.
2. Model working with primary sources to learn more about the problem of Urban Political Machines, using excerpts from Lincoln Steffens and George Washington Plunkitt and a political cartoon by Thomas Nast. Do this using an overhead projector with transparencies for each source. [or LCD projector]
3. Begin with the cartoon, “Let Us Prey” by Thomas Nast. Have students answer these questions:
 - What do you see in the cartoon, including objects and people, as well as caption and words in the cartoon.
 - Which of the things in the cartoons are symbols? What do you think the symbols mean?
 - Explain the message of the cartoon.
 - What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon’s message? Why?
4. Next read each document excerpt aloud, starting with Steffens, then Plunkitt. Define words as necessary.
5. For each document excerpt have students answer these questions:
 - Who is the author? When was it written?
 - What are two things the author said that you think are important?
 - Why do you think this document was written?
 - What question(s) does this document raise in your mind?
6. Using these three sources, how would you describe urban political machines?
7. Next, have students work in pairs circulating around three learning stations to examine a timeline (divided in three pieces) of this period to understand the historical context in which the Progressives lived.
8. Set this up as a carousel with learning three stations around the classroom. The enlarged copy of the timeline will be in three sections:
 - 1879-1899
 - 1900-1910
 - 1911-1920
9. Students working in pairs will stop at each station and, using the Progressive timeline chart to answer the following questions:
 - What problems do Progressives seem to be trying to solve?
 - Who—individuals and organizations—were the Progressives?
 - How did Progressives get people to care about their problems?
 - What solutions did they advocate?
10. Have students go from one station to the next, examining and discussing the timeline and answering the questions. Circulate to support and direct as necessary.
11. Leave five to ten minutes at the end of the period for pairs to sort out what they have found and ask students to share out voluntarily, trying to get many involved.
12. **Homework:** To be sure that all students get the big picture before they divide up into groups and work on one of five topics, distribute copies of the Progressive Unit Timeline at the end of class so that they can take it home with them to complete the chart on their own.

Differentiation

This lesson builds on and enhances both visual literacy skills (with a focus on the

cartoon) and close reading of documents by providing a structure or scaffolding. It also accommodates kinesthetic learners by providing an opportunity to walk around and learn (learning stations).

Lesson 3

Days 3, 4 and 5

Title: Students work in groups using primary source packets on one of five topics to identify and describe their Progressive topic in exhibit form.

NOTE: Suggested time frame might be:

- Day 3: Understand guidelines, expectations and rubric, get into groups and select a topic, receive their packets with sources and questions, and begin work individually on primary sources.
- Day 4: Finish work individually on primary sources, pool findings on primary sources as a group and decide what they've learned about the problems, people, methods and solutions of their topic.
- Day 5: Select the photos, cartoons and documents they want to exhibit and write captions for each in their own words, decide who will "be" historical figures and plan what they will say to visitors, and begin to put the exhibit together.

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Use what they have learned about working with photos, cartoons and documents and apply this to additional sources not yet seen.
2. Share their findings from the primary sources with their group and problem-solve in order to make sense of their sources.
3. Work with their group to put together their group's exhibit—selecting primary sources to exhibit, writing captions for their primary sources, and arranging and presenting this in an accurate and attractive presentation.
4. Select two group members to "be" Progressives and/or opponents to speak with visitors about their roles.
5. Work effectively in these small groups to produce their portion of the class exhibit on the Progressive Movement.

Materials (online primary sources, student reading, activity sheets, supplies)

- **Rubric** for the exhibit that includes criteria for selection and use of primary sources, grasp of the connection to the Progressives, organization, presentation, and group work skills
 - Five packets with sources on each of the five topics: each packet to include selected photos, cartoons and documents, **questions on analyzing primary sources and questions on problems, people, methods and solutions of Progressives**. Primary sources from the five topic categories
1. **Child labor:** Lewis Hine photos (assortment from mills, mines, and factories) as well as background info on Hine, excerpt from John Spargo on the work of a 12-year old boy in a coal mine, photos from the work at Hull House and a description of Jane Addams' contribution.

2. **Working Conditions:** Excerpt from Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*, excerpt from Annie Daniel document on work done in tenements, excerpt from Florence Kelley on women workers, and photos, cartoons and document excerpts from Triangle Fire website.
3. **Rise of Organized Labor:** two excerpts on the Knights of Labor, a political cartoon on “the labor question,” a political cartoon about the American Federation of Labor, a bar graph on membership of the American Federation of Labor, and an excerpt from AFL appeal in 1893 to provide relief for workers.
4. **Women’s Suffrage:** pro and anti suffrage cartoons and a photo and arguments, and an excerpt from the N.Y. Times about the leadership of Carrie C. Catt.
5. **Temperance Movement:** an excerpt from Frances Willard on battling alcohol in the late 19th century, prohibitionist political cartoons from *The Ram’s Horn*, and excerpts from documents of the Anti Saloon League.
 - Five flip chart pages and markers
 - Five three-panel display boards, colored paper, glue or tape and scissors

Strategies (include opening or hook and closing)

1. Explain that students will be working in small groups each on one topic of importance to Progressives—child labor, working conditions, the rise of organized labor, women’s suffrage or the temperance movement. Each group will be expected to:
 - Work together fairly and cooperatively
 - Examine, read and discuss the primary sources in their packet practicing the skills they have learned in the last few days to make sense of these sources.
 - Put their findings on a three-panel display board selecting political cartoons, photographs and documents and writing their own captions.
 - Use the Progressive Unit Timeline to correctly sequence the events for their topic.
 - Select two students from their group to “be” people they have learned about—including Progressives. These two will speak in character with visitors to the exhibit. The other students will also speak with visitors, pointing out key parts of their exhibit and answering questions that visitors might have.

NOTE: Your audience or visitors can be students and teachers from another class or classes at the same grade level or from a different grade level, and/or parents and families of the students in your class. Or, you might consider working with your school librarian to set up your exhibition in the school library either for the live visit or afterwards to post students work there.

2. Share the Assessment Rubric with students so that they will know what is expected.
3. Divide students into five groups so that each group contains students with varied skills—in reading, focusing on task, being creative and getting along.
4. Write each topic on a small piece of paper, fold it and put it in a container. Then ask one representative from each group to come up and pick out a piece of paper. This will be the group’s topic.
5. Once groups are settled, distribute to each a packet of sources on their topic. Each group’s task is to use their sources to answer these questions:
 - What problems do Progressives seem to be trying to solve?
 - Who—individuals and organizations—were the Progressives?
 - How did Progressives get people to care about their problems?
 - What solutions did they advocate?
6. Students in each group can decide how to proceed—as long as each member gets a chance to work with each source.
7. Once that has been accomplished, the group should decide on three or four sources they will use for their exhibit. This should be a mixture of photos, political cartoons, and documents.
8. Students in each group will then create a caption of two or three sentences that explains what the source says and means, and why it is important to understanding the Progressives.

9. Students in each group should use the flip chart paper to practice how they will set up their exhibit board.
10. Each exhibit board should tell the story of their topic in the Progressive Era—and use their selected primary sources to explain or illustrate
 - The problem as they saw it
 - Who the Progressives and their opponents were
 - Their methods and solutions
 - Their connections to today’s world.
11. Tell students to look for dates and use the timeline included in their packet to create a timeline on their exhibit board.
12. Once each group has planned their exhibit and practiced it on a flip chart, give them a three-panel display board and materials to create their exhibit.
13. Ask each group to select two members who will “be” Progressive reformers—or a Progressive reformer and an opponent. Have these students meet with you to plan what they will say on exhibit day to visitors. See Tips for “being” a historical figure at the exhibit.
14. Best to complete all these steps by the end of Day 5’s lesson in order to give students a weekend to catch up with and complete the parts of their group’s exhibit.
15. **Homework** for Days 3, 4 and 5 will be to work on the sources in their packets. Allow students to take these home but the **MUST** bring them to class each day. At the end of Day 5, if not completed in class, the homework will be to write the captions for their selected primary sources—consisting of three to five sentences using their own words to explain the significance of the primary source. Students who will “be” historical characters will be required to prepare on note cards the main points they want visitors to understand about their historical person.

Differentiation

Best to accommodate various reading levels as follows:

- Assist lower ability readers by selecting and defining more challenging words ahead of time and providing more guidance and attention to check for understanding.
- Provide higher level readers with more challenging materials such as larger excerpts and showing them how to check the websites for additional information.

The exhibit provides a variety of options for multiple intelligences such as: verbal work developing and revising captions, artistic/creative work on the layout and arrangement of the exhibit, and dramatic by “being” or role playing an historical figure.

Lesson 4

Day 6

Title: Dress Rehearsal and Consider Progressives’ Success

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Identify the impact that Progressives had/ to what extent they succeeded in solving the problems they worked on. Students then use this information in their presentations.

2. Edit and improve their exhibits and practice interacting with visitors.
3. Try out “being” one of the Progressives or their opponents.
4. Practice giving and receiving feedback on exhibits.

Materials (online primary sources, student reading, activity sheets, supplies)

- Five exhibits that the students have created
- Paper for students to write down their feedback and take notes on what others have to say about their exhibits.

Strategies (include opening or hook and closing)

1. Remind students that the main purpose of today’s lesson is to practice and improve their presentations, including each group’s exhibit and the presentation of students who will “be” Progressives or opponents.
2. But before students begin this process, explain that they will first take a few minutes to examine the impact that Progressives had/to what extent they succeeded in solving the problems they worked on. Explain that students will need to include this piece in their exhibits. To do this, have students get into their groups to identify the evidence of success that Progressives had in their area. They can also consult the Progressive Unit Timeline (still on the classroom wall and each student should also have their own copy). Tip: have students look for state and federal laws passed in their topic, as well as Constitutional Amendments.
3. To support students in this process, the teacher can use the following points to provide a mini-lecture. Before giving the information under Questions and issues remain, **ask** students what they think, and use the points to supplement students’ contribution.
 - **Child Labor:** Progressives got laws passed first at the state level, then at the federal level—the 1916 Keating-Owen Act barred products manufactured by child labor from interstate commerce. This Act was declared unconstitutional in 1918, but this law and others paved the way for the final abolition of child labor by the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, during the New Deal. Questions and issues remain: the amount of money and number of people who enforce existing laws, current sweatshops with undocumented immigrants including children, and the lack of political will to enforce existing laws in conservative administrations. Also note US companies running factories in other countries that use child labor. See also [UNICEF website](#) that describes current world conditions and provides a useful distinction between child work, child labor and the worst forms of child labor.
 - **Working Conditions:** Progressives got laws passed first at the state level, then at the federal level, that limited hours and days worked for many workers, such as the 8-hour day and 40-hour week. In 1916, the Workmen’s Compensation Act gave accident and injury protection to federal workers. During the New Deal, this and other protections came under the Department of Labor. Later (after the New Deal), a minimum wage was established and it has steadily risen with the cost of living. Questions and issues remain: not all categories of workers were/are included under the federal laws, such as migrant workers and undocumented immigrants. Also, the amount of money and number of people who enforce existing laws has been limited.
 - **Rise of Organized Labor:** Progressives got laws passed first at the state level, then at the federal level that supported workers’ rights to organize unions and conduct union activities. In particular the Clayton Anti-Trust Act contained a clause that exempted strikes, boycotts, and peaceful picketing from the anti-trust laws. Questions and issues remain: Union membership rose during this period and again during the Great Depression. Workers rights to bargain collectively grew stronger, though limits were placed on these in some categories of work. Recently, as of 2005, a much lower percentage of workers are in unions—13% of industrial workers, and 9% of non-industrial workers (particularly service workers). Note that Virginia prohibits collective bargaining.
 - **Woman’s Suffrage:** Progressives got laws passed first at the state level, then at the federal

level to provide women the right to vote. The clearest gain was in 1920 with the 19th Amendment to the Constitution that stated: “the right of citizens of the U.S. to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S. or any state on account of sex.” Questions and issues remain: After 1920, many were disappointed with the number of women who chose to vote and with the impact of women’s vote on the issues the Progressives fought for. And, after a rise in the number of women working during American participation in WWI, those numbers dropped sharply when the men returned to these jobs. More recently (from the 1960s through the 90s) there has been a clear difference between the amount that women and men have been paid for the same or equivalent work.

- **Temperance/Prohibition:** Progressives got laws passed first at the state level, then at the federal level to prohibit the use of alcohol. The clearest gain was in 1919 with the 18th Amendment to the Constitution that prohibited the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquor or its export. However, within a year this “noble experiment” was not working well. While Prohibition did reduce drinking in some regions, there were conspicuous and growing violations and this led to disillusionment and controversy. There was not enough money or support to enforce the law and it became easy to acquire illegal liquor. This stimulated organized crime (such as Al Capone’s gang). But it was not until 1933, during the Great Depression, that Congress repealed the 18th Amendment—with the 21st Amendment. Questions and issues remain: Many people would argue that the problem of alcoholism and alcohol abuse is very much still with us—particularly among young people. The toll this takes on families, work places and public health indicates this problem has not been solved. Drunk driving: in 2003, 17,013 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes - an average of one almost every half-hour. These deaths constituted approximately 40 percent of the 42,642 total traffic fatalities—from MADD website.
4. Once each group has created an entry for their exhibit about the impact or success of their topic, have each group of students set up their exhibit on desks or a table around the outside of the classroom, leaving space for visitors to walk around to look at the exhibits and interact with exhibitors.
 5. Sequence for the dress rehearsal:
 - First have groups exhibiting on child labor, working conditions, and the rise of organized labor stay with their exhibits while the other students—and you—circulate.
 - Then for the second round, have groups in women’s suffrage and temperance stay with their exhibits while the other students—and you—circulate.
 6. Inform students that their tasks as visitors will be to:
 - Look carefully at the exhibits
 - Ask courteous questions
 - Interact with the “historic figures”
 - Provide useful feedback when asked at the end
 7. Feedback should be specific and constructive and they should write it down. Basically, the feedback providers should answer these questions:
 - What did you like about each exhibit?
 - What suggestions can you give that will help improve the exhibit?
 8. After all groups have had a chance to both stay with their exhibit and see the others, facilitate the feedback process by asking for the “likes” and “suggestions for improvement” at each exhibit. Let each group know they should take notes on the feedback so they can make the improvements for homework.
 9. **Homework:** Assign students to revise, edit, and polish all exhibits and presentations as necessary—being sure to make use of the feedback they received.

Differentiation

Provide additional support for students who have not yet met the requirements at this point and for those who just want the extra help/attention. Offer/require an

after school “clinic” at which you will work individually with those who need it on caption creation, revising and editing, arranging and presenting exhibits, and practice “being” a historical figure.

Lesson 5

Day 7

Title: Exhibit for Visitors, Debrief and Complete End-of-Unit Web

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Present their exhibits to visitors in which they have selected and explained primary sources.
2. Interact with visitors about the connections between the Progressives concerns and those of today.
3. Reflect on their collective and individual work.
4. Use what they have learned to provide associations with the word “Progressive” and compare this to the web they began with.
5. Write a letter from the point of view of one of the Progressives they have studied to people visiting their exhibit today about the progress and/or lack of progress in solving problems that Progressives faced.

Materials (online primary sources, student reading, activity sheets, supplies)

- Five exhibits that the students have created ready for visitors
- Flip chart pages, markers and masking tape
- Web that students completed on Day 1
- Rubrics on this culminating assessment for teacher to complete
- A digital camera or video camera to capture the exhibit for later viewing.

Strategies (include opening or hook and closing)

1. Allow short time for students to set up their exhibits and get themselves ready to interact with visitors.
2. Welcome visitors to your class’s Progressive Era exhibit, and let them know that they are welcome to ask the exhibitors questions about what they see. Be sure to let visitors know about the students playing historical figures and invite them to speak with them.
3. To avoid bottlenecks direct visitors to visit all exhibits and avoid standing in lines.
4. Circulate to support and assist students as necessary.
5. Take pictures.
6. Bid good-bye to visitors and thank them for coming—be sure to allow for 15 to 20 minutes left in the period.
7. As soon as visitors leave, ask students to step out of their roles so that they can be themselves to debrief and reflect on their experience. Have students share out popcorn style about what they liked and what they would change about their own work/exhibit/performance.
8. Applaud them all!
9. To help students appreciate what they have learned, have students brainstorm their associations now with the word “Progressive”—and record their associations on the web.
10. Last, compare students’ pre- and post-Progressive Unit webs—and note areas of

particular growth and detail. Ask them what questions they still have about the Progressives.

11. After class, complete a rubric for each group—with copies for all group members—of the culminating assessment and return to students.
12. **Homework:** To complete this unit on the Progressives, assign students to write a letter *from* the point of view of one of the Progressives they have studied to people visiting their exhibit today about the progress and/or lack of progress in solving problems that Progressives faced. Ask students to discuss at least three of the following topics—connecting the period from 1889-1920 to today:
 - Child labor
 - Working conditions
 - Public health
 - Substance abuse
 - Political participation by all groups in America.

Differentiation

This lesson provides students an opportunity to share with visitors their strengths (including oral and visual presentation), and supports them in making the cognitive connections back to where they started with the unit—to acknowledge and appreciate what they learned.