Unit Title: The Growth of Cities and Industry

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<th>Author: Lynn Dille</th>
<th>Grade Level: 7th</th>
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<td>School: Francis Hammond Middle</td>
<td>Time Estimated: 10 days</td>
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Overview: The “Growth of Cities” unit will cover the inventions and technology that led to industrialization. Students will also study the immigrants who would supply the labor for industrialization. Finally, students will learn about some of the people who would create the “big business” financing and industrial infrastructure. Students will be exposed to some of the problems that the rapid expansion of cities and industry created, however, the next unit of study will delve more deeply into reforms and the progressive movement. Following this unit, students will examine the US role in World War I.

Our 7th grade students at Hammond are from many different cultures and backgrounds. Many speak more than 1 language. About 30% of the students’ parents are from Latin America, however, we have many students from Africa, Afghanistan, India, and other countries as well. Few have the resources or background at home that provide a fundamental common base of knowledge in US culture and history. Another factor I consider when teaching is that my students have not yet had any world history or world cultures courses. They will get World History in the 9th and 10th grades and then study US History again in the 11th grade. Finally, given the large number of English as a Second Language students in our classes, vocabulary and writing are challenges for many.

Our students will have just begun their 7th grade year with a review of the outcome of the Civil War and the impact of Reconstruction on the South. Their first unit of new material covered the resumption of the drive to settle the West and the new technologies and adaptations that made this possible after the Civil War. As part of that unit they explored the impact of western settlement on Native American (First Americans) Tribes. Since the unit below will be taught quite early in the school year, it will be used to teach fundamental historical skills for internet use, primary source analysis, and graphing as well as the basic history of the period. This unit on the Growth of Cities will be followed by a study of the problems that industrialization and rapid growth brought and the reforms that began to address these problems.
Historical Background: With the end of the Civil War, the expansion and industrialization that had begun in the first half of the 19th century resumed. The completion of the Transcontinental Railroad and an ever-expanding railroad network in the East allowed the nation to utilize the abundant raw materials of the country. Miles of railroad track went from about 30,000 in 1860 to 254,000 in 1910. The availability of cheap labor in the form of immigrants also fueled the industrial growth of the nation. For example, the potato famine in Ireland in 1845 would bring millions of Irish to the United States between 1845 and 1850. The passage by Congress of the “Contract Labor Act” in 1864 legalizing the importation of contract labor would bring millions more. In 1880, political instability, economic depression and crop failures would bring about 4 million Italians to the United States. The 1882 May Laws restricting the rights of Jews in Russia will cause about 3 million Russians to immigrate.

Plentiful raw materials, labor, and transportation united with the capitalization of industry provided by corporate financing. Corporate financing created the venture capital needed to build the urban and industrial infrastructure necessary for rapid industrial growth. Industrialists such as John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and Cornelius Vanderbilt would develop the huge monopolies and corporate organizations capable of linking and developing national production and marketing.

Finally, while railroads provided transportation, new inventions like the telephone, the process of refining oil, and electric power supplied the technology and power. The transformation of our cities was dramatic. Skylines showed the changes in the smokestacks of the factories, the sweeping lines of bridges, and the towers of the skyscrapers. Population statistics show the huge growth of cities in size and density. Chicago, for example, grew from a population of about 100 in 1830 to 1,100,000 in 1890 to 2,185,000 in 1920.

Such growth did not come without problems. In the cities immigrants worked in sweatshop conditions for subsistence wages. Due to the low wages, sometimes young children were forced to work long hours to help the family survive. Working conditions were unsafe. Living conditions in the tenement neighborhoods were crowded, leading to dangerous fires, as well as outbreaks of diseases such as influenza, TB, and typhus. Political bosses took advantage of the immigrant’s need for aid, trading help for votes and support. This would lead to corrupt and inefficient city services, hampered by bribery and kickback schemes, cronyism, and graft.

Efforts to improve conditions in the cities would begin as early as 1830. However, the energy of these movements would focus on slavery, suffrage and temperance until after the Civil War and Reconstruction’s end in 1877. Reform efforts would gain new energy in the late 19th century and continue into the 20th century under the label of Progressivism. “Battling Bob” LaFollette, Wisconsin’s feisty senator, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson, among others, would work to break up large monopolies, promote fair trade, protect consumers, and reduce cronyism in government. The reform movement’s momentum would culminate in the passage of the 18th Amendment prohibiting the sale, transport or
manufacture of alcoholic beverages and the passage of the 19th Amendment giving women the vote.

**Major Understanding:**
Following the Civil War the United States industrialized rapidly, which transformed the economic and social structure of America. Cities grew dramatically as immigrants flooded into the United States taking advantage of the freedom and opportunities here. Immigrants would provide the cheap labor needed by a growing industry. Advances in transportation and communication created national markets. New methods of production produced goods more cheaply and efficiently. Abundant natural resources provided the raw materials for the industrialization. Financing and organization resources were provided by “big business” in the form of monopolies, corporations, and trusts.

**Objectives: Students will:**
Understand how rapid industrialization following the Civil War transformed the economic and social structure of America by examining primary sources including maps, photographs, early films, letters, tables, and documents.

**Standards of Learning:**

**Skills**

USII.1 The students will demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis, including the ability to
a) analyze and interpret primary and secondary source documents to increase understanding of events and life in United States history from 1877 to the present;

**Content**

USII.2 The student will use maps, globes photographs, pictures, and tables for
b) explaining relationships among natural resources, transportation, and industrial development after 1877

USII.3 The students will demonstrate knowledge of how life changed after the Civil War by
b) explaining the reasons for the increase in immigration, growth of cities, new inventions, and challenges arising from this expansion;
d) explaining the rise of big business, the growth of industry and life on American farms.