

Angelo's Saturdays

High School: Grades 9–12

Background Information

Immigration

After the Civil War, demand for labor due to rapid industrialization drew many immigrants to Chicago. By 1890, three out of four Chicagoans were immigrants or children of immigrants.

Progressive social reform movements bolstered the economic health of the city by helping immigrants—particularly second-wave immigrants from Eastern Europe, Italy, and Russia, who arrived in Chicago between 1870 and World War I—to find work and assimilate into American life.

Source: *The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*, www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org

Settlement House Movement

Social reformer Jane Adams applied her university degree (unique for a woman of the time) and her visit to Toynbee Hall in England to establish the best-known settlement house in the United States, Hull House. Located on Halsted Street on the Near West Side, Hull House provided classes, clubs, and entertainment for newly arrived immigrants.

Classes ran the gamut from infant care to English classes to an extensive drama and arts program and social dances. Hull House was instrumental in establishing the first public playground, the juvenile court system, and child labor laws as well. Settlement houses provided much-needed support to immigrants looking for economic stability and ways to learn about, fit into, and enjoy American culture.

Source: Addams, Jane. *Twenty Years at Hull-House*. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1912.