

His Father's Namesake

Lesson 3: Newscast from the Past

Focus Questions

What are socialism, anarchism, and imperialism? What events and social conditions led to the Haymarket Affair? What role did German immigrants play in Chicago's late 19th-century labor movement? What role did Albert Parsons and August Spies play in organizing the labor movement?

Core Understandings

Students will understand that Chicago's social and economic conditions in the late 1800s provided uniquely fertile ground for American radicalism. They will understand the roles played by Albert Parsons and August Spies in Chicago's labor history. They will understand the impact of the McCormick Reaper Works strike in bringing about the Haymarket Affair.

Knowledge

Students will know the reasons behind the radicalization of Chicago's workers in the late 19th century. They will know the roles of key historical figures in the Haymarket Affair.

Skills

Students will use their language arts and research skills to uncover information about Chicago labor history. They will use their writing skills to summarize their interpretations while developing historical empathy for figures of the past.

Common Core ELA Standards

CCSSR3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
CCSSR7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
CCSSW7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSSW3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
CCSS.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively

ISBE Social Science Standards

Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the US.

Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the US, and other nations.

Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the US.

In This Lesson

By researching and writing a mock newscast of events surrounding the Haymarket bombing, students will become acquainted with the political and social backdrop of the Chicago's labor movement in the 19th century. The story elements of characters and setting are addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Jackson Potter.



Activity

As a bell-ringer activity, write the terms anarchism, socialism, and imperialism on the board along with their definitions. Have students write a one-sentence interpretation of each movement, explaining their understanding in their own words. Follow up with a group discussion, making sure to emphasize that during this period there tended to be little difference between socialists and anarchists. (For example, Albert Parsons started out as a socialist but later became an anarchist.)

Next, students will research and write a series of “special news reports” that explore the events surrounding Haymarket from the point of view of the various players involved. Break students into small groups of approximately three to six. Assign each group to “interview” one of the following: 1) the Parsons family 2) Mayor Harrison and the Chicago business moguls 3) Samuel Fielden 4) Mrs. Matthias Degan, wife of the slain police officer 5) Hans and Peter 6) a striking worker at McCormick Reaper Works 7) other figures/groups assigned at your discretion.

Students should begin by writing and storyboarding their scripts. The roles of news anchor, field reporter, and at least one historical figure should be included. Students should be sure to touch upon the who, what, why, where, when, and how of events. Students can use printouts of the *His Father's Namesake* artifact image set as evidence for their storyboards and all other resources distributed in the unit so far, including the story. Additional online resources are listed on page 3 under Materials & Resources.

Students should finish up by acting out their mock newscasts.

Materials & Resources

- **Printouts of *His Father's Namesake***
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/His_Fathers_Namesake_by_Katherine_San_Fratello.pdf
- **Printouts of the *His Father's Namesake* artifact image set**
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/artifacts/artifacts_namesake.pdf
- **Printouts of the Work in Chicago handout** (from Lesson 1)
- **Printouts of the Workplace Scenarios handout** (from Lesson 1)
- **Excerpt from *City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America*, by Donald L. Miller** (from Lesson 2)
- **“Labor Unrest in Chicago, April 25–May 4, 1886,” a rich map from the *Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*** (optional):
<http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/10002.html>
- ***The Dramas of Haymarket*, an online Chicago History Museum resource** (optional):
<http://www.chicagohistory.org/dramas>
- **Butcher-block paper and drawing supplies for storyboarding**

Instructional Notes

It's a good idea to model this activity for the class in a creative and enthusiastic way, perhaps including props that allow you to play all three roles.

Extension Activities

Volume 3 of the PBS video *Chicago: City of the Century*, based on Donald L. Miller's book, has some great footage and framework to help students visualize the clashes between labor and management. You will probably want to show only short clips to get students thinking more concretely about the unit. You can easily get this video series from PBS or the Harold Washington Library in the popular library section on the first floor. After watching, ask students to list five incidents that increased tensions between labor and capital leading up to the Haymarket Affair.

If you have computer access in the classroom or access to your school's computer lab, have students explore the interactive history map for another *Great Chicago Story*, *Angelo's Saturdays*. The tab entitled "Angelo's Neighborhood" vividly shows the squalid living conditions on the Near West Side in the late 19th century. Contrasted with the "Prairie Avenue" tab, this interactive provides evidence of the glaring disparity between rich and poor that led to the widespread labor unrest of the era.