

Kansas Historical Society Lesson Plans

Middle School/High School

A Milestone in Reform: *The Jungle* and Political Change

Overview

In 1906, Upton Sinclair published *The Jungle* with the intention of enraging Americans about the unfair treatment of immigrants working in Packingtown, Chicago. His revolting description of the meat packing process in packing plants, however, caused a public outcry for government regulation of meat inspection and production. This lesson explores the history of a reform movement that started with a book and ended with congressional legislation. Students will examine this reform movement from multiple perspectives using primary sources and evaluate the role of government in the safety and well-being of its citizens.

Students will work in groups to analyze primary sources including newspaper accounts, editorial cartoons, letters, and government reports from the period of time between the first publishing of *The Jungle* in the Socialist newspaper, *Appeal to Reason*, in Girard, Kansas, until the passing of both the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act in 1906. Students will source and analyze the primary sources and then summarize what they have read. They will present their summaries to the class and develop a timeline tracking the events as they occurred. To expand the lesson each student will investigate a recent situation in which the government has expanded its role by setting regulations to protect consumers or investigate job opportunities in the various divisions of the Food and Drug Administration. If your students study *The Jungle* in language arts, this would be a time for cross-curricular collaboration.

Many reform issues started or had connections with Kansas, i.e., the Populists or People's Party, prohibition, public health, etc. Use *Kansas Memory*, kansasmemory.org, to obtain primary sources related to these movements. For selected items browse this bookbag in *Kansas Memory*: KSHSK12EducationResource/bookbag.

**This lesson was developed to complement a special exhibit at the Kansas Museum of History, *What's Cooking, Uncle Sam? The Government's Effect on the American Diet*. It is on exhibit from January 28 to May 1, 2016. This exhibition was created by the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. with support from the foundation of the National Archives. The national tour of *What's Cooking, Uncle Sam?* is made possible by Mars, Incorporated. Information about the exhibit is online at: kshs.org/19154.

Kansas History, Government and Social Studies Standards

Standard #4: Societies experience continuity and change over time.

Benchmark 4.2: The student will analyze the context of continuity and change and the vehicles of reform, drawing conclusions about past change and potential future change.

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Benchmark 4.3: The student will investigate an example of continuity and/or change and connect that continuity and/or change to a contemporary issue.

Class/Course Expectations

Kansas High School United States History Era: International Expansion to the Present

Unit: Immigration, Industrialization, Progressives

- Ideas: progressive reforms, socialism
- People/roles: muckrakers, consumers, President Theodore Roosevelt. *Appeal to Reason*, Upton Sinclair
- Places/Institutions: Packing plants of Chicago, Congress
- Events: *The Jungle*, Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, Meat Inspection Act of 1906

Discipline Integration:

History: Socialism, reform era, capitalism, mass immigration, industrialization

Geography: Effect on purchases of American products by foreign countries

Economics: Wealthy vs. poor; prohibitive cost of inspection/inspectors

Civics/Government: Additional laws passed related to either the Meat Inspection Act or the Food and Drug Act; recalls of tainted food today

HGSS Skills by Grade and Discipline Grade 9 – 12

History

- Collect, organize, categorize, and construct understanding of relevant information for a particular event.

Civics/Government

- Discuss the role government plays in the lives of citizens.
- Identify and evaluate causes for actions and potential consequences of those actions.
- Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary issues and develop a claim using evidence and argument to support it.

Economics

- Discuss the role governments and other organizations and interests play in economic systems.

General Skills

- Comprehend, analyze and interpret difficult, complex discipline specific text.

Kansas College and Career Ready Standards:

Reading

RH.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

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RH.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

Writing

WHST.1 (a-e): Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

WHST.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem (including a self-generated question); narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate, synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Speaking and Listening

SL.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Essential Questions:

1. What role, if any, does the federal government have in ensuring the safety and well-being of its citizens?
2. How can the actions of one group of people working against a perceived wrong bring about reform?

Lesson Plan

Prior to the lesson:

1. Review the **A Milestone in Reform: *The Jungle* and Political Change—Resource Chart** kshs.org/19590 to get an overview of all the materials needed for the lesson.
2. Copy appropriate number of worksheets and primary source materials: **A Milestone in Reform: *The Jungle* and Political Change—Readings** kshs.org/19590 and **A Milestone in Reform: *The Jungle* and Political Change —Templates and Keys** kshs.org/19590.
3. For students with access to tablets or laptops the primary source materials can be obtained electronically from A Milestone in Reform: *The Jungle* and Political Change—Readings.
4. Make a large timeline beginning with 1904 and ending with 1907. Each year segment should be the same with enough space in between for segments representing the twelve months of each year.
5. Ask students to each have three highlighters of different colors.
6. Have a pack of 3-inch Post-its or index size cards available for use with the timeline. Students will be using these to post article titles and dates of publication. This will provide a visual of the progression of events beginning in 1904 through 1906.

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Part one: Setting the Stage

1. Begin by setting the stage with the **Student Poll**. Students answer four questions related to the power of government to regulate businesses to protect consumers. The results will be used at the end of the lesson.
2. The second piece is **Analyzing Political Cartoons**.
 - a. Divide the class into three sections. Students in each section receive one political cartoon **Watch the Professor, An Awful Case of June Odors**, or **The Meat Market**. Have each student complete the sourcing, analysis, and follow-up section of the worksheet.
 - b. Regroup the students into triads with each of the three cartoons represented to complete the group portion.
 - c. Choose one student to represent each of the political cartoons. Ask them to write the name of the political cartoon and the date of publication on a Post-it. At the end of the lesson these students will add their Post-it in the correct place on the timeline and provide a short summary.

Part Two: Building Background Knowledge

1. Ask the class if they can predict what this lesson will be about.
2. Provide each student with a copy and have them read the **Background Information**.
3. Conduct a short class discussion of the three questions.
4. Ask four students to use Post-its and record a brief summary and the correct answers to these questions, presenting them during the timeline section of the lesson:
 - a. In what year did Fred Warren commission Sinclair to investigate the meat packing houses and write an investigative piece? [1904]
 - b. When the first segment of *The Jungle* was made available to the public? [February 25, 1905]
 - c. When did President Roosevelt first inform Congress of a variety of reforms he wanted including cleaning up the packing plants? [December, 1905]
 - d. In what year did Doubleday Publishers agree to publish Sinclair's book? [1906]

Part Three: Analyzing Transcribed News Articles

These articles have been selected to illustrate the controversy caused by *The Jungle*, the reaction of President Roosevelt and Congress, the packing plants and even foreign reaction. In addition to completing an analysis of each article, students will record the date and title on a Post-it to be placed on the timeline.

1. Divide students into five heterogeneous groups. Each group will receive three to four transcribed articles pertaining to one of these categories: Upton Sinclair, President Roosevelt, the packers, Congress, and a fifth category which includes foreign reaction, previous incidents of spoiled meat, and the Neill-Reynolds government investigation. Be sure

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each person in the group has a paper or electronic copy of one of the articles assigned to the group and a copy of the **Analyzing Newspaper Articles** worksheet.

2. Each student completes the worksheet. In addition he/she will complete a Post-it by recording the name of the article and the date of first publication for the timeline.
3. Once students in each group have finished analyzing their own article, allow time for the group members to converse and collaborate about their findings. From their brief summaries they will be able to build on their knowledge and perspective of the reform movement.

Part Four: Timeline Activity

The timeline portion is designed to help students visualize the short period of time from the writing of *The Jungle* until the bill was passed. This activity allows the class to learn about all the articles used in this lesson from Sinclair's accusations, President Roosevelt's response, actions of the packing plants, Congress' response, and even the British reaction.

1. The student with the earliest date begins the timeline. He/she places the Post-it on the timeline, announces the date, the title, and provides a summary of the article, political cartoon, or event. Follow the same procedure in chronological order. Students should ask questions of the presenters if they desire more information.
2. Distribute to each student the article summarizing part of the three bills passed by Congress **The Leading Features of the Three Big Bills That Are Soon to Become Laws of the Land (Beef)**. Conduct a class discussion on the content of the final bill as summarized in the article:
 - a. Is this what they would have expected?
 - b. Does the law cover the issues?
 - c. What major changes have been implemented?
3. Conduct a class discussion or debate on one or both of the compelling questions:
 - a. What role, if any, does the federal government have in ensuring the safety and well-being of its citizens?
 - b. How can the actions of one group of people working against a perceived wrong bring about reform?
4. Revisit the **Student Poll**
 - a. Have your views changed after learning about the Meat Inspection Act? How?
 - b. What issues of the poll do you have the strongest feelings?
 - c. Discuss each of the questions as they relate to today.

Part Five: Extension of lesson

Overview

Students will investigate the impact of the Meat Inspection Act of 1906 on today's world.

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Benchmark 4.3: The student will investigate an example of continuity and/or change and connect that continuity and/or change to a contemporary issue.

Kansas College and Career Ready Standards

Writing

WHST.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem (including a self-generated question); narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate, synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

A Few Possibilities

1. Investigate the controversy over animals and/or plants that have been given antibiotics, growth hormones, or are genetically modified. Decide if you support or oppose the banning of one of these by the government. Write a short report beginning with a thesis statement that provides the reader with your beliefs regarding the controversy. Support your decision with information from several sources. End your investigation by explaining what you plan to do in the future to either support or oppose the government's ruling.
2. Using multiple sources argue the point "Government has overstepped its boundaries in the case of _____" or "Government regulations are beneficial to the public if the case of _____."
3. The United States has one of the world's most comprehensive and effective networks of public health and consumer protection due to the US Food and Drug Administration. Explore some of the divisions at fda.gov. Choose one that interests you and write a report explaining why you would be interested in working in this division, which part of it especially attracts your attention and what qualifications would you need to work in this division.

For the Teacher

Note about transcriptions: Due to the age of these newspapers and the physical size of the articles it was impossible to provide you with a copy of the actual article. The transcriptions have been done as accurately as possible. Many of the articles came from two principal newspapers of the time: *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Daily Tribune*. Some articles have been chosen to illustrate how smaller newspapers around the country had access to news through syndication. Transcriptions and other student readings are available at **A Milestone in Reform: The Jungle and Political Change—Readings** kshs.org/19590. To help organize the sources used by the five groups the identification of the article and the number of pages involved has been added at the bottom right of each page.

Using newspaper articles to conduct research: Sample keys have been provided for each article along with analysis templates will be found at **A Milestone in Reform: The Jungle and Political Change—Templates and Keys** kshs.org/19590.

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Overview of materials included with the lesson can be found at **A Milestone in Reform: The Jungle and Political Change—Resource Chart** kshs.org/19590

Sources of the Newspaper Articles:

All of these articles were from either: *Chronicling America* or *Newspapers.com*.

Chronicling America is part of Library of Congress. Its collection has millions of pages of newspapers from across America dating from 1836 to 1922. Their collection includes issues from 46 Kansas towns digitized from the Kansas Historical Society collections. *Chronicling America* is a free service. chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers

Newspapers.com is a subscription service. In 2013, Kansas Digital Newspaper, managed by the Kansas Historical Society, partnered with *Newspapers.com* to digitize additional pre-1923 papers from the Historical Society's vast newspaper archive. Access to these digitized Kansas newspapers is free to Kansans who verify their residence via driver's license or state ID card information. Since KSHS is not saving any of the data you provide to gain access to Kansas papers on *Newspapers.com*, you will need to register each time you want to access the site. More than **3 million** pages are now available. To access only historic Kansas newspapers on *Newspapers.com* verify your Kansas Driver's license at kshs.org/ancestry/drivers/dlverify. To access the collection of all digitized newspapers from *Newspapers.com* you can visit the research library at the Kansas Historical Society or have access to a full membership of ancestry.com which includes all digitized newspapers on *newspapers.com*.

Selected vocabulary found throughout the newspaper articles:

- abattoir: slaughterhouse
- adulterated—to debase or make impure by adding inferior materials or elements; use cheaper, inferior, or less desirable goods in the production of meat products
- affidavit—a declaration in writing made upon oath before a person authorized to administer oaths, especially for use as evidence in court
- ante-mortem—before death
- *Appeal to Reason*—a popular Socialist weekly newspaper printed in Girard, Kansas. First printing of *The Jungle* was serialized in this newspaper
- appropriation—an act of a legislature authorizing money to be paid from the treasury for a specified use
- Chamberlianite organs—newspapers supporting British Chancellor Joseph Chamberlain or his policies particularly on imperial policy of colonial preference
- cholera-smitten hogs—swine infected with an acute, usually fatal, highly contagious disease
- Cobdenite—a person supporting the economic theory that focuses on international free market and free trade
- consumption—tuberculosis of the lungs
- cuspidors—a large bowl, often of metal, serving as a receptacle for spit, especially from chewing tobacco

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- debilitated—weakened
- embalmed—to treat meat so as to preserve it, as with chemicals, drugs, or balsams.
- expectorated—spit
- graft—the acquisition of money, gain, or advantage by dishonest, unfair, or illegal means, especially through the abuse of one’s position or influence in politics, business, etc.
- lard—the rendered fat of hogs, especially the internal fat of the abdomen, used in cooking
- lesions—any localized, abnormal structural change in the body
- libel—defamation by written or printed words
- lumpy jaw cattle—a large lump on the jaw often caused by bacteria or virus
- Meat Inspection Act of 1906—a law which works to prevent adulterated or misbranded meat and meat products from being sold as food and to ensure that meat and meat products are slaughtered and processed under sanitary conditions
- “Men with the Muck Rakes” (muckrakers)—writers who search for and expose real or alleged corruption, scandal, or the like, especially in politics
- Muck-rake—to search for and expose real or alleged corruption, scandal, or the like, especially in politics
- Notary Public—a public officer or other person authorized to authenticate contracts, acknowledge deeds, take affidavits, protest bills of exchange, take depositions, etc.
- offal—parts of a butchered animal that are considered inedible by human beings; carrion
- omnivorous—taking in everything, as with the mind
- post-mortem—after death
- Progressivism—favoring or advocating progress, change, improvement, or reform, as opposed to wishing to maintain things as they are, especially in political matters
- ptomaines—any of a class of foul-smelling nitrogenous substances produced by bacteria during putrefaction of animal or plant protein: formerly thought to be toxic
- Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906—a law passed to remove harmful and misrepresented foods and drugs from the market and regulate the manufacture and sale of drugs and food involved in interstate trade
- recrudescence—breaking out afresh or into renewed activity; revival or reappearance in active existence
- reforms—improvements or amendments of what is wrong, corrupt, unsatisfactory, etc.
- Socialism—a theory or system of social organization that advocates the vesting of the ownership and control of the means of production and distribution, of capital, land, etc. in the community as a whole
- solicitor—an officer having charge of the legal business of a city, town, etc.
- viscera—the organs in the cavities of the body, especially those in the abdominal cavity
- volition—the act of willing, choosing, or resolving

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- whitewashing—to cover up or gloss over the faults or errors of; absolve from blame