

David Marr

Teaching American History: 20th Century Heroes of Equality HIS-6710 C15

Date: April 12, 2010

Final Proposal

Title: “Get the Picture?” – Child Labor Seen Through the Eyes of Lewis Hine

Proposal Abstract:

Reading history is stimulating, but actually “seeing” history can be a visceral and powerful experience. This is the case with the early 20th century photographs of Lewis Hine. His photos of children laboring at dangerous jobs with no regard for safety, and with little pay, stirred the hearts of the American people. The age of industrialization had moved workers from farms and workshops to factories in the cities. Factory owners preferred hiring children because they were cheaper and less likely to strike. In 1908 the National Child Labor Committee assigned Hine to photograph child labor practices. Hine traveled the United States photographing children working in textile mills, factories, mines, canneries, and agricultural industries. His stark, black and white photos publicized the fact that children workers were being deprived of their health, education, and their childhood. This project will explore the world of child workers in the early 1900’s and the heroes who fought to change their lives. These heroes like Hine were the driving force to enact federal laws that protected children and gave them rights.

The unit will focus on the injustices to children in the workplace. It will be accomplished through the language arts time slot and will include activities that address a number of multiple intelligences. At the core of this unit will be three grade appropriate history books that contain primary source writing and photographs. The books are *Kids on Strike* by Susan Bartoletti, *Kids at Work* by Russell Freedman, and *Counting on Grace* by Elizabeth Winthrop. This project will attempt to open the eyes of my third graders as to the material wealth and opportunities they possess (including basic human rights which we all take for granted today) in contrast to the harsh times of the working children 100 years ago.

Grade Level: 3 – 6

Seminar impact:

This summer seminar provided me with rich historic content through presenters and our readings. Because of the knowledge gained, I was able to make solid connections with the random bits of history I had gathered over the years. The many new links of history gave me a new perspective in how I interpret the United States in the 20th century. My web of connections for American history in the 20th century is still incomplete but expanding nicely.

William Chafe’s presentation on his book *Civilities and Civil Rights* was a no-nonsense look at race relations in Greensboro, North Carolina in the early to mid 1900’s. Chafe spoke of the end of the “greatest biracial democracy in North Carolina” in 1898 and the struggle for equality up and through the 1960’s. His lecture emphasized

the many avenues taken by black citizens to gain civil rights, always “moving forward, but always differing.” I was intrigued by the blacks’ approach to dealing with the injustice of segregation. Although they pushed unceasingly for equal rights, the black population also viewed separation as an opportunity – “segregation meant congregation.” It provided for a “gathering of blacks working for a common cause.” The common cause always happened “in the heart of the community; the church.” There were no whites to deal with and blacks spoke freely. The four black freshmen from North Carolina A&T who defied the Jim Crow laws by sitting at a whites-only Woolworth counter in Greensboro accelerated the civil rights movement. The times they were a changing.

Nancy Lynch from the Peace and Justice Center hit home literally and figuratively. She spoke of “Equality in Vermont” not only from a civil rights point of view but also economically too. Ms. Lynch made excellent points about developing and maintaining the “interconnectedness” in Vermont. She stressed buying locally and avoiding the “leaky bucket: syndrome where Vermonters’ money is sent out of state to buy products.

I greatly appreciated the lecture given by Kathleen Balutansky on the Haitian Revolution. It was interesting to see the impact that our own revolution had upon other parts of the world, especially those islands that dealt with European oppression. Dr. Balutansky’s knowledge and insight into Haiti and the Caribbean was extremely interesting because it is her country of origin. She ended her presentation by speaking of Haiti in 2009, pointing out that 85% of the population suffers in severe poverty. Haitians don’t have hospitals or roads, but they all have cell phones. “Cell phones and texting cross all social classes.” My thoughts were of the world being flat. The access and ownership of technology is not always an indicator of prosperity.

Having been a young person during the turbulent 60’s, I am discovering many fascinating connections of the 20th century that are becoming integrated into an ever-growing web of knowledge for a 21st century teacher.

Central Questions:

- What were the causes of child labor in the early 20th century?
- Why did Hine’s photographs create such a stir in Americans throughout the country?
- What hardships did young workers face?
- What protections for children did Lewis Hine, Mother Jones, and kids on strike gain in the early 20th century?
- In your opinion what were the 5 worst jobs children could work?
- What changes occurred on small farms and workshops during the age of industrialization?
- Why are the years 1836 and 1938 important in Massachusetts and the United States?

- What are social reformers?

Challenge Questions:

- How do you know factory owners were greedy? What evidence can you give to show that?
- Why did Hine's photographs create such a stir in Americans throughout the country?
- Why did people feel that child labor was like child slavery?
- Why might Lewis Hine be considered a hero of freedom and equality?
- There is a saying that "a picture is worth a 1000 words." Do you agree and why?
- Why did families let their children work at dangerous jobs? Did this mean that they didn't care about their children?
- Where in the world today does child labor still exist and why is it tolerated? Compare the situations of working children today to those in Lewis Hine's time.

Lesson Length:

- 16 lessons
- 1 hour 15 minutes each day through language arts

Key Ideas:

- Even when the Civil War has ended and all men are equal, women and children are not.
- Lewis Hine was the driving force behind changing the public's attitude toward child labor and was instrumental in changing child labor laws.
- Thousands of children worked long hours at dangerous jobs in unhealthy conditions for little money.
- Children were deprived of the privileges of childhood and education that could change their future.
- Laws banning child labor in the United States were made through the efforts of special individuals and labor unions.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

- Students will understand primary source materials such as photographs, diaries, and journals.
- Students will know the chronology of major historical events in the first part of the 20th century.
- Students will understand the lives of working children.
- Students will know key vocabulary of the child labor era such as strike, industrialization, textile, wages, indentured servant, urban, rural.

- Students will understand that labor practices have changed over time, and gain awareness of child labor, unsafe working conditions, work-related illnesses, length of work day, and unfair pay.
- Students will be aware of places in the world where child labor exists in the world today and will discuss possible reasons for this occurring.
- Students will be aware of the rights and privileges they possess by living in America in 2009.

National Standards for History:

- **Standard 1** The student thinks chronologically:
The student is able to distinguish between past and present, interpret data in timelines, create time lines, and explain change over time.
- **Standard 2** The student comprehends a variety of historical sources:
The student is able to understand a variety of historical sources and draw upon the visual data presented in photographs, paintings, and cartoons.
- **Standard 4** The student conducts historical research:
The student is able to formulate historical questions from using eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, photos, art, and other records from the past.
- **Standard 5** The student engages in historical issues analysis:
The student identifies the causes of the problem and proposes alternate ways of resolving the problem, and evaluates if it is fair or just.

Vermont Grade Expectations:

- **H+SS 3-4: 1**
Students initiate an inquiry by asking relevant and focusing questions based on what they have seen, what they have read, what they have listened to, and/or what they have researched.
- **H+SS 3-4: 9**
Students show understanding of how humans interpret history by identifying and using various sources for reconstructing the past, such as documents, letters, diaries, maps, textbooks, photos, and others.
- **H+SS 3-4: 11**
Students interpret geography and solve geographic problems by observing, comparing, and analyzing patterns of local and state land use to understand why particular locations are used for certain human activities.

- **H+SS 3-4: 15**
Students show understanding of various forms of government by explaining what makes a just rule or law.
- **H+SS 3-4: 16**
Students examine how different societies address issues of human interdependence by defining their own rights and needs – and the rights and needs of others, in the classroom, school, and community.

Preparation for teaching:

Materials needed for teaching are explained in the 16 Lessons

Activities:

- Read *Child Labor in America* aloud
- Read *The Bobbin Girl* together
- Create vocabulary journals with pictures or symbols
- See Lewis Hine's photos
- A taste of child labor – counting beans
- Read portions of *Kids at Work* aloud
- Research child labor character
- Write child labor character narratives
- Interpret political child labor cartoons
- Create child labor cartoons
- Read *So Far from Home*
- Child labor character dress-up and photo shoot
- Record narratives
- Learn "Babies in the Mill" song and record it
- Learn about making the movie – "Audacity and Roxio Creator"
- Read articles in *Faces* magazine
- Write letter to Senator Sanders
- Vocabulary crossword test

Lesson 1: Introduction

I introduce the concept of child labor through a discussion. Our class studies history by putting ourselves in a specific time period focusing on sense of place, events, and culture. We of course talk about the kids in this historical period. How were most of the children dressed? What were they thinking about? Did they go to school? What were their hobbies? How were they treated by adults? Did they have laws protecting them? How are children the same and different today?

Child labor was a hot topic - kids their own age working dangerous jobs with long hours, and little pay. We discussed the fairness of children being used like this for adults to profit. It riled every student to hear about kids a century ago being treated this way.

I read aloud from *Child Labor in America*. It is a short, concise book that contains many examples of how ill treated children were in the work place one hundred years ago.

I am teaching my unit through language arts. The first book we will read is *The Bobbin Girl*, an illustrated story about the mills at Lowell. The students are asked to browse the book looking at the pictures for any details we had discussed earlier. **(I send home a parent letter explaining our project and requesting clothes for dressing up for our child labor photos.)**

Lesson 2: The Bobbin Girl, Vocabulary Journals

I continue reading some pages from *Child Labor in America*. I then give some background knowledge on mill work and the girls and women who labored at it. We read *The Bobbin Girl* in one day. My students focus on the young ages of many of the girls and boys that work there. We discuss the disadvantages of being a kid and having to work a full time job. We talk about what a typical day is like for them. School isn't seeming so bad by the end of our talk. My students will begin entering daily vocabulary words with definitions into 20 page composition journals. They will leave space under each to draw a picture or symbol to help them remember meanings. We will have about 30 vocabulary words pertinent to our unit for which they will be responsible. The class will add key vocabulary to preface a unit, or add the words as we encounter them. Our first important vocabulary words are: Industrial Revolution, wages, labor, rural, urban, greed, profit.

Lesson 3: A Taste of Child Labor – Bean Counters

I keep reading from *Child Labor in America*. I have not shown any photos of child laborers. We discuss the types of jobs children might work back then.

It is now time for some hands-on fun. Our class now experiences the taste of child labor, the boring kind. Desks are separated and silence is demanded by the overseer. I have previously purchased a large container of dried lentil beans from the grocery store. The lentils are very tiny and difficult to count. Each student has a cup full of beans on his/her desk and plastic sandwich bags. The lights are turned off and complete silence is maintained. The workers must count out 50 beans and seal them in a bag. They must work in this dim light "counting and bagging" for 15 minutes until the timer rings. My class is able to accomplish this task. However, they constantly glanced at the clock and were scolded by the overseer to "work faster". By the end of 15 minutes they wore faces of grimness and squinty eyes. My students were groaning and whining also. I think they grasped the idea of a day of boring child labor.

Lesson: 4 Lewis Hine and His Photos

I continue to read for 20 minutes from *Child Labor in America*. I read “Crusader with a Camera” from *Kids at Work*. This chapter introduces Lewis Hine the photographer who is famous for his child labor photos in the beginning of the 20th century. Our class goes to the computer lab to see his pictures for the first time. Our site is “The History Place – Child Labor in America 1908-1912. My class is bowled over by the power of the pictures – real kids doing real work in horrible conditions. My students were chilled to the bone by some of the photos, like the “Breaker Boys and the oyster shuckers.” What startles them the most are the young ages (as young as five), working around machinery with bare feet, and the dangerous tools kids used, like the hooked knife for turnips.

Lesson 5: Research for Child Labor Narratives

I finish reading *Child Labor in America* and continue reading *Kids at Work*. I read and describe the spinners, doffers, newsies, breaker boys, street kids, farm kids, cannery kids, greasers, cotton pickers, and coal miners. We always bring our discussion around to their lives. How fortunate they are to live today and to be an American child. By lottery drawing, I pick the names of the students. First drawn gets first choice of a child labor job. All fifteen seem happy with their choices. Next, we research the jobs using my books and internet (see bibliography). They are getting background information so they will be able to write a narrative in the character of the child laborer. Each student has a primary source photo taken by Hine of a child involved in child labor. My students see the expressions on the children’s faces as well as the scruffy clothes they wear. Their portrayal of the child laborers is mostly based on the stark, black and white photos taken by Hine.

Lesson 6: The Narrative

I read “Breaker Boys” from *Kids at Work*. This chapter deals with the danger of having to separate bits of slate and debris from the coal. Many injuries and death resulted. We begin to write our narratives which are to be 3 or 4 paragraphs. We write these at the beginning of third grade, possessing mostly 2nd grade skills. I am impressed with their writing, and especially their voices. My students’ narratives sound a bit fantastic unless you know the factual history of child labor. Truth is more outrageous than fiction, even third graders’ historical fiction. (For an example see attachment.) **They take their narratives home to practice their lines for our project.**

Lesson 7: Child Labor Vocabulary and Cartoons

Students will catch up with their pictures and symbols in our vocabulary journals. The vocabulary words and meanings will appear as an assessment, in the form of a crossword puzzle, at the end of our project.

Our next activity involves political cartoons of this era. If you search “child labor art cartoons” you will discover a terrific site. There are many child labor cartoons that are

artistically drawn containing a meaning that young people can grasp. My favorite is the spider web full of children workers and the wealthy employer. My class's favorite was the wheel of profit turned by exhausted children. I explain what a political cartoon is and how effective they are. They understand, having studied Hine's photos, that a picture truly is worth 1000 words. I picked 3 cartoons that I enlarge and mount on the wall. Students choose one and write what they think the artist is trying to convey. They will try to explain the reason why the artist drew a giant hand smothering children, or the wheel or the spider web cartoon.

Lesson 8: Cartoon Critical Writing, Create our own Cartoons

Each student reads his/her interpretation of the chosen child labor cartoon. My class chooses 5 different cartoons, and their understanding of them was unique but also deep. They get the gist of the greedy factory owners taking advantage of the kids. Many of my students took it a step further, advocating jail and punishment for owners. We decide to create our own child labor cartoons. There are no rules except that they are drawings that include enough words to get their points across. Oh, yes the cartoons must be appropriate. My students brainstorm ideas and I write them on the smartboard. We have lots of creative ideas such as a dungeon, a factory pit with only a slide to go down and no ladder to go up, and work place with beds. We only use pencils to keep the visual effect of being printed in a newspaper. I hang them on the bulletin board with old mastheads I found online. (The site was Engraver's Art: Newspaper Mastheads.) The kids enjoy puzzling over all the different cartoons and trying to figure out the point of each.

Lesson 9: Mary Driscoll intro, Dress-up and Act

We begin language arts with the introduction of our new historical fiction novel *So Far from Home – The Diary of Mary Driscoll an Irish Mill Girl*. The book is over 160 pages and will take us beyond our child labor unit. However, it's a good book and focuses on many aspects of child labor in the linen mills. I spend 30 minutes explaining Ireland, the potato famine, and immigration. We talk about why the Irish would leave their home forever.

Having sent a parent letter home, most of the kids came prepared for their acting part – having a dress-up and able to read their narratives fluently. I brought random clothes from my daughters at home, and porkpie hats, rope belts, knickers and scarves.

With help from two parents, we are all set to shoot. To practice for their photo-ops my students are making "poor pitiful me" faces in the mirror and at their classmates. The parents have also applied charcoal to faces, pinned up hair, and other things to make the kids look real scruffy. They **are** helpless urchins. Each child has props for the photo shoot. For example, the shoeshine boy has a rag and polish, the mill girl has a bobbin and cloth. We used various places inside the school and out to take pictures. Inside shots were made in the school kitchen, a stairwell, and storerooms. Outside pictures were against a brick wall, in the garden, and in front of the composter. This activity took an hour and a half. While we took pictures individually, the rest of the class watched *Newsies*, a 1992 Disney musical of the New York City newspaper strike of

1899. The digital camera was given to our very talented technology coordinator who showed us the steps of producing and antiquing the photos in sepia on the computer using "Adobe Photoshop Elements". (See attachment of "Get the Picture" which was compiled by Lisa Cacciatore, our technology coordinator.)

Lesson 10: Mary Driscoll, Record Narratives

We continue our reading of *So Far from Home*. We then pair up and read our narratives repeatedly to a partner. I had scheduled a block of time with Lisa to record my students' narratives down in the computer center. In pairs they take turns visiting Lisa and recording their parts. Their narratives were recorded using "Audacity". (See attachment of "Get the Picture".)

Lesson 11: Labor Songs

The next part of our project is our song. Jan Jones, our enrichment teacher, came in to teach us labor songs, including a terrific child labor song, "Babies in the Mill," that I found online by Dorsey Dixon. (*YouTube - US Child Labor, Dorsey Dixon.*) It is a very catchy song with great lyrics. We sing "Pick a Bale of Cotton" and "Babies in the Mill" over and over again after talking about the lyrics. My students really get into singing, and they listen to Mr. Dixon sing "Babies in the Mill" on YouTube. Learning the songs becomes part of their homework.

Lesson 12: Mary Driscoll, Vocabulary, Record Babies in the Mill

We spend 45 minutes reading and discussing *So Far from Home* and catching up on vocabulary pictures. We follow Mary Driscoll from Ireland to the "Acre" in Lowell, Massachusetts as she begins work in the mill. Our class then practices singing "Babies in the Mill" before we head down to the computer center to record our version. Lisa is prepared and waiting for us. Using "Audacity" she captures our song on the second try.

Lesson 13: Putting the Movie Together

Our project is a collaborative effort. Our music teacher Leslie Klami composed and played sad child labor music on his keyboard. Lisa was able to underscore his music throughout much of the 25 minute show. Jan Jones, our enrichment teacher, narrated an introduction and a piece on contemporary child labor in the world. We had Linda Corliss portray Jane Addams, Liz McClure as Mother Jones, and I play the factory owner Maximus Greed. Our parts consisted of photos and narratives, the same as our students. We went to the computer center to be taught how to create the movie using our photos, narratives, and song. Lisa introduced us to "Roxio Creator 2009" and walked us through the process. She put all these pieces, including credits, together into a professional-looking product. The success of the project was the result of Lisa Cacciatore and the access to superb technology.

Lesson 14: Modern Child Labor

We wanted to see child labor as a global problem today. An excellent source for this study is the April, 2006 issue of the magazine *Faces*. It was titled "Kids at Work". Using multiple copies we read and discuss sweatshops in Asia and children who slave away picking cacao beans to make chocolate. We learn that major American chocolate companies are buying cacao beans from suppliers that use children as laborers. We then brainstorm ideas of how we may help. We talk of boycotting chocolate made from companies that exploit children. It is difficult to find chocolate that isn't made without child laborers. When we did find "Fair trade" chocolate it was expensive. *Faces* magazine recommends writing your state senator asking him/her to take action against child labor.

Lesson 15: Senator Sanders

Our class again head to the computer center. I use the white board and an overhead projector and type. We compose a simple, to the point letter to our Vermont state senator Bernie Sanders (<http://sanders.senate.gov/contact/>). We express our concern over child labor in the world today and ask him to address this issue.

Lesson 16: **Assessment** and Showtime

The final day of our unit is bittersweet in many ways. My class has to take a vocabulary test in the form of a crossword puzzle (attachment). The crossword puzzle has all the meanings, and the students have to remember the words. The other assessment piece is their narratives to be scored using the State of Vermont rubric. While working on their tests my students munch on dark, Fairtrade chocolate from Central America.

That night.....Parents are invited to school for the first showing of their children's movie "Get the Picture". We gather in the computer center at 6:00 for the 25 minute movie. Many attended the movie and a few even cried.

Accommodations:

My unit offers a variety of approaches to learn: reading, writing, cartoons, pictures, symbols, singing, acting, dress-up, computer skills, and a puzzle. My project addresses Gardner's Multiple Intelligences and allows special learners to be accommodated and successful.

Attachment 1: Sample Parent Letter

September 22, 2009

Dear Parents,

Our class will be finishing our unit on child labor in the early 1900's. We are currently reading about youngsters who worked at the Lowell Mills in Massachusetts during the Industrial Revolution. Our project involves researching the unhealthy, dangerous jobs many children worked 100 years ago. There were no federal laws to protect children in the work place and no rights for them to attend school. Many children who worked to earn money for their families were treated little better than slaves. Lewis Hine, a former teacher, was a gifted photographer who captured the sorrow of the kid laborers with his pictures during this time period.

Students in our class have chosen jobs that were actually held by children a century ago. They have written short narratives describing their sad fictional lives. They have photos that show their jobs and the clothing worn around 1910. We are making a photo story presentation in the computer lab. (Mrs. Cacciatore is teaching me the steps.) I am going to take photos of individual students to match the narratives they wrote.

I am asking that parents send in any old clothes (patched, torn), hat, shoes, overalls, or dress that fit your child's character. *Please. This is to be a fun project. The items do not have to match.....just look old and woeful.* If you happen to have some century old period clothes, that would be great too!

I will start collecting the individual sets of clothing this week. I hope to have all the characters' clothes by next Tuesday, Sept. 29th. I will be taking photos next week. If you need help finding outfits, please let me know.

Many thanks,

Dave Marr

Attachment 2: Vocabulary

Child Labor Vocabulary and Definitions

Industrial Revolution – making things in factories with machines

Wages – payment for work

Labor – work

Orphan – a child whose parents are dead

Factory – building with machines where something is made

Unhealthy – harmful to a person's health

Dangerous – able to hurt

Rural – in the country

Urban – in the city

Hine – the famous photographer who took pictures of kids at work a century ago

Greed – more than one needs of money

Profit – make more money after paying workers

Textile – woven cloth to be sold

MotherJones – she fought against child labor

Sweatshop – any small business with unhealthy working conditions

Scavenger – to search for scraps of food

Newsie – street kids who sold papers all hours of day and night in all kinds of weather

JaneAddams – child saver

Breakerboy – he picked out pieces of slate from the coal

Riis – through photos and writing he showed terrible working conditions

Slum – lots of people and poor housing

School – a place to learn to read, write and do math - where child laborers did not go

Ignorant – without education or knowledge

Homeless – not having a place to live, eat, or sleep

Reform – to improve or correct

Roosevelt – the president Mother Jones wrote to get rid of child labor

Abuse – to hurt or injured

Tenement – run down, low rental apartment

Malnourished – suffering from not enough food

Children – factory owners wanted them because they worked cheap and didn't mind danger

Apprentice – worked for free to learn a skill

1938 – Fair Labor Standards Act became law to protect children

Attachment 3: Crossword puzzle

CHILD LABOR - "GET THE PICTURE"

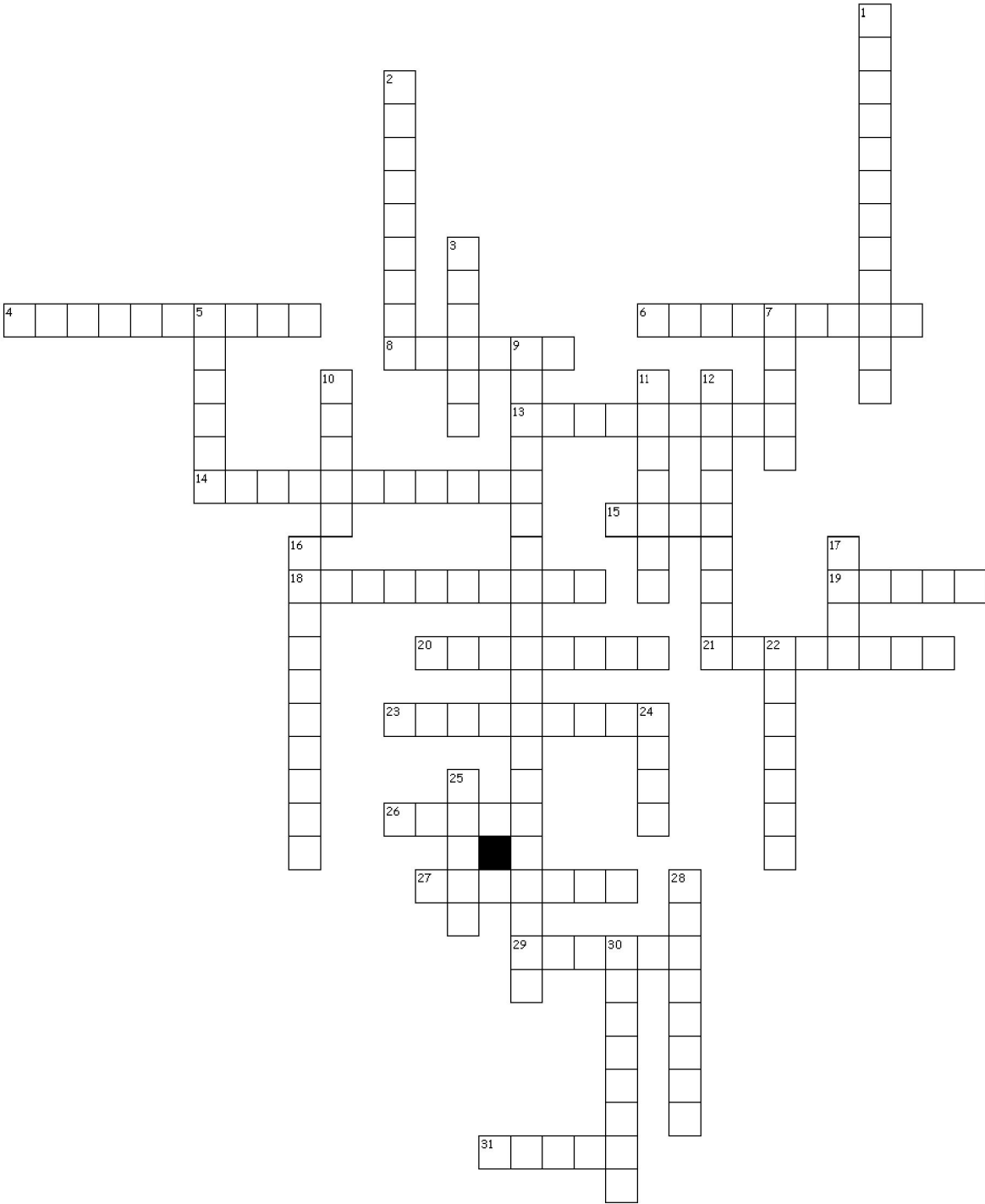
Across

4. pick out pieces of slate from the coal
6. harmful to a person's health
8. make more money after paying workers
13. able to hurt
14. she fought against child labor
15. famous photographer who took pictures of kids at work a century ago
18. worked for free to learn a skill
19. work
20. factory owners wanted them because they worked cheap and didn't mind danger
21. rundown, low rental apartment
23. to search for scraps of food
26. in the country
27. building with machines where something is made
29. a child whose parents are dead
31. payment for work

Down

1. suffering from not enough food
2. any small business with unhealthy working conditions
3. a place to learn to read, write and do math - where child workers didn't go
5. to improve or correct
7. to hurt or injure
9. making things in factories with machines
10. more than one needs of money
11. woven cloth to be sold
12. the president Mother Jones wrote to get rid of child labor
16. child saver
17. lots people and poor housing
22. street kids who sold newspapers
24. through photos and writing showed terrible working conditions
25. in the city
28. without education or knowledge
30. not having a place to live, eat, or sleep

Child Labor



Annotated bibliography – Child Labor

Adams, Cross, Middleton, Tagholm. *Children's History of the 20th Century*. New York: Dorling Kindersley, 1999. Print.

This children's book is a time-line of the 20th century which is chock full of pictures and photographs. There are 3,500 photographs and many vibrant, colorful illustrations that jump out at the young reader. The book begins in the year 1900 and includes every year through 1999. While the events covered each year are described simply and completely, there is not an apparent process for selecting important world events. For instance, the year 1956 has two pages devoted to "rock 'n' roll". The next year regarded tennis, a broad-way play, car racing, and Dr. Seuss as noteworthy in the world. However, children will love to browse through the 344 pages of quick, visual history. Hopefully, they will move on to explore some historical items in more depth. I recommend this book to hook new readers of history.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Kids on Strike*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999. Print.

Bartoletti focuses on the roles that children played in labor strikes from the Lowell, Massachusetts strike in 1836 to the Lawrence Strike in 1912, and four more in between. The children worked and struck as mill workers, messengers, bootblacks, newsies, coal miners and breakers, and garment workers. Bartoletti highlighted the brave individual efforts of Harriet Hanson, Agnes Nestor and Pauline Newman. She uses primary source photos and illustrations on most pages of the 193 pages. Bartoletti makes the girls' stories and the time periods come to life. Her writing is suited for middle school students, but the photos and the "Mother Jones and Her Industrial Army" chapter is accessible to upper elementary students. Also, a good resource for teachers. Recommended.

Denenberg, Barry. *So Far from Home*. New York: Scholastic, Dear America, 1997. Print.

Young Mary Driscoll is able to escape the Potato Famine in Ireland. With the help of her Aunt Nora she acquires a mill worker job in Lowell, Mass. The story is told through Mary's diary entries in 1847, as she witnesses the abuses of management, strikes, Yankee hatred of the Irish, and makes new friends. Denenberg covers many historical facts and details in writing this piece of historical fiction. A strength of this book is its description of the connection between desperate new immigrants and labor issues of greedy owners. Although it has a slow moving plot, third through sixth graders will identify with the characters. And while the Irish rhythm of the language is incorrect, students will enjoy throwing around "Twas and Ti's" in their best Irish interpretation. Recommended

Freedman, Russell. *Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor*. New York: Scholastic, 1994. Print.

In this collection of Lewis Hine's most evocative photographs, Freedman has woven the story of a crusader with a camera. He lets Hine's photos display the chilling reality of child labor at the turn of the century while effectively describing the history behind the pictures. Freedman's low-key approach and tight writing will appeal to upper elementary students as well as adults. Hine's photos make the book. They are stark, visceral reminders that one in four kids were a part of "child slavery" a hundred years ago. Young and old students alike will read the story and examine repeatedly the pictures. Highly recommended.

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. "American History." *History in a Box*. Elementary School ed. 2009. Print.

"American History in a Box" is an excellent resource created specifically for elementary teachers. The box contains ten color-coded units that begin with the Cherokee Indians in the 1830's and stops at the end of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. The other 8 units focus on important time periods in American history for the 130 year frame. Each unit contains annotated primary source documents, photos or painted portraits which could be laminated for handling by children or for display. A worthwhile addition is a CD-Rom that has a printable electronic version of the text and images in the ten units. The box also has a DVD called "An American Sampler" which includes songs and poetry. There are seven poems and 18 songs. The songs are extremely well done with each being accompanied by fiddly, banjo, and mandolin, popular instruments in our country since the Colonial Era. "History in a Box" is a terrific supplement because it addresses the arts at an elementary level. Recommended

Hakim, Joy. *All the People Since 1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Print.

Modern history is interpreted and written in a succinct, storytelling fashion by Hakim. Using primary source photos, cartoons, and illustrations, she relates the history of the United States, since World War II, in an easygoing, informative manner. Hakim has a gift for transforming complicated history into a compelling "true" story that kids will digest and enjoy too. The graphics that accompany her writing are artfully chosen and evoke just the right emotion from upper elementary readers. There are 53 short chapters that cover U.S. history from 1945 through 2005. The beginning of the new millennium, history that elementary students actually experienced, is reflected in the book. Highly recommended.

McCully, Emily Arnold. *The Bobbin Girl*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. Print.

McCully writes a child labor tale based on an actual girl, Harriet Hanson Robinson. Her fictional counterpart is Rebecca Putney, a ten year old mill worker and striker. Bold as brass, this

courageous little factory worker walks out to protest a pay cut. McCully writes a tame tale with enough punch and interest for third graders. The watercolor illustrations fit the narrative and are true to the buildings in Lowell, Massachusetts. Young readers will be engaged by Rebecca, the female heroine, child labor, sense of place, and this period of history. Recommended.

Mofford, Juliet H. *Child Labor in America*. Carlisle, Massachusetts: Discovery Enterprises, 1997. Print.

Mofford has taken the topic of child labor and condensed and prioritized its events and stories into 62 pages. She has done a commendable job. In this small book you will discover the history of child labor, the dangerous jobs worked by children, stories told by the working kids, child-savers, greedy factory owners, and struggle for child labor laws. It is a superb resource for teachers who don't have the time to trailblaze through thick references. Highly recommended.

Pit Pony. Dir. Eric Till. Marvista, 2006. Film.

The Pit Pony is a terrific Canadian movie depicting a family's close-knittedness and courage during hard economic times. It takes place in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia in 1901. Feeding the family is difficult even with the men working in the coal mines. If a dad or brother dies in the pit, the family will lose their house and go hungry. When his father is injured in an accident and unable to work, young Willie MacLean quits school and goes to work in the mine to save his family from starvation. Willie's life depends on his best friend and fellow mine worker the pony. This movie illustrates coal mining greed, hard working families, child labor, and unions. Although it is a "Feature Film for Families," Pit Pony has a bittersweet ending. Recommended

Ross, Stewart. *Oxford Children's Book of the 20th Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. Print.

This book captures the world at its best and worst using a time-line of black and white and color photos. The graphics and text are balanced on each page throughout the book, and the focus is on "astonishing change" in the last century. The contents are separated into 20 categories such as "Empires and Nations, Body and Mind, and The Shrinking World." Within each category is a time-line of world events listed and the corresponding dates. The writing is concise, informative and interesting. The contents page is ambiguous but the index and glossary will make this an attractive book for elementary students. Recommended.

Winthrop, Elizabeth. *Counting on Grace*. New York: Yearling, Random House Children's Books, 2006.

Print.

While Winthrop is aiming her book at a twelve year old audience, *Counting on Grace* is an excellent read aloud for eight year olds. The book's appeal is that our kids in school are listening to how tough life was to kids their age 100 years ago. Winthrop captures mill life and child labor in a blunt but compelling manner. The mention of lost fingers, coughing from lint filled air, heat and sweat, and constant noise will keep the students riveted and thankful to be in school .

Highly recommended.