

Lesson Title: The Hyde Park Nuisance

Lesson Class Name and Grade Level: This lesson is intended for an Illinois State History class in either the 11th or 12th grade.

Lesson Type: Lecture, Questioning, Discussion.

NCSS Themes: III People, Places, and Environments

VII Production, Distribution, and Consumption

VIII Science, Technology, and Society

Illinois Learning Standard

16.A.3b: Make inferences about historical events and eras using historical sources.

16.B.5b (US): Analyze how United States political history has been influenced by the nation's economic, social and environmental history.

14.D.3: Describe roles and influences of individuals, groups and media in shaping current Illinois and United States public policy (e.g., general public opinion, special interest groups, formal parties, media).

Introduction: This lesson will utilize a newspaper article from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* (January 13, 1873) describing complaints brought up by the city of Hyde Park against the Northwestern Fertilizer Company. The company had earlier been given legal permission to erect a factory in the vicinity that would convert animal waste products from Chicago's meatpacking plants into fertilizer. After several years, however, no factory had been built, but the company continued to transport animal entrails and other waste products by train and dump them in the fields near the originally proposed site. Naturally, the pollution brought about by the abandoned waste raised the ire of Hyde Park's citizens, who sought legal remonstrance. In using this article, and the activities associated with it, the class can identify the sorts of concerns brought about in the early years of the Progressive Era and the intricate relationship among diverse peoples and institutions—in this case the city, its residents, the state government, the judicial system and the company.

Goals: When students complete this lesson, they should be able to:

1. Identify the situation presented in the news article and be able to point out the main actors.
2. Discuss the topic of the article within its historical context.
3. Make predictions about the possible outcome of the situation using the article and the information they have gathered in discussing the Progressive Era.

Materials/Equipment:

1. Primary Source Readings
2. Computer Access
3. Screen/Projector
4. Lecture notes
5. Worksheets

Procedures:

Pre-class Preparation:

- Check computer/projector
- Make photocopies of primary source reading
- Type up “prediction” worksheet and make the appropriate number of copies

Anticipatory Set

When the students come into the class, don't start lecturing immediately. Allow the students to have some time to chat with each other while you appear to be preparing your materials. As they're talking, go to several students' desks randomly and place piles of text books (really any object will do, as long as it's obstructive) on them. If you can avoid it, make no explanation of what you are doing or at least dodge their questions. Now try to start class, asking the students to get out paper to take notes. Some of the students will complain that they can't because there are too many books on their desk, that is when you will apologize, but then tell them that it is your class and that you've signed a contract with the school that allows you to do this sort of thing—even if piling debris on their desk makes it inconvenient for the students to function. The students should raise some sort of protest to this, and now you can relate it to the dispute between Hyde Park and the Northwestern Fertilizer Company.

Statement of Objectives

1. Analyze reliable primary sources and relate them to a historical narrative.
2. Work together in groups toward the completion of lesson activities.
3. Develop analytical skills by examining a text and interpreting its meaning.

Outline of Lesson Contents

1. After the anticipatory set is completed, do a quick review with the students over what you've learned about the Progressive Era in Illinois so far.
 - a. Be sure to focus not so much on specific events but more on the concepts and the general flow of history. This will allow students to get an idea of how politics and society worked during this period and will give them a foundation upon which to make their predictions later.
2. Now divide the students up into small groups by counting off. Pass out the photocopies of the newspaper article and give the students time to read through the article and discuss its meaning amongst themselves.

- a. Ask that each group identify the main actors, when and where it took place, what the dispute is over, the specific complaints of Hyde Park, and the defense offered by the company in the article.
 - b. Have the groups designate one student each as the “scribe” who will write down their answers to the above questions.
3. After giving the groups time to work, while periodically checking on their progress and helping with any questions they have, call attention to the board. Write on the board the questions that you asked that each group answer and call on the groups randomly to give the answer that they found; put the answers that they gave on the board and discuss it with the class briefly. This acts as a review of the article for the students to better flesh out the overall story and concept for them. (Be sure to collect the group worksheets at the end of class for participation grades.)
4. To wrap up the lesson, have a review discussion over the article with the students. Use this to gauge their understanding and give them an opportunity to express their ideas/opinions on the issue.
5. Obviously, the conclusion of the dispute is not given in the article. The case eventually went to the Illinois State Supreme Court and the ruling was in favor of the Northwestern Fertilizer Company, but the city appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court which issued its ruling on November 11, 1878. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* carried the Washington wire about the decision as well as a local summary of the decision’s influence in the November 12, 1878 issue (pgs. 2 & 4 respectively). Do not give the decisions to students at this time. Instead, as a homework project, give the students the “prediction” worksheet. Explain to them that they should use what they’ve learned in this lesson as well as previous lessons to make an educated guess on how the case will turn out.
6. The next day after students turn in their predictions, and perhaps share briefly their conclusions with the class, explain the real outcome and have them compare it to their own predictions.

Evaluation: The students will be informally evaluated based on in-class participation and group work. By asking questions the teacher can gauge comprehension and determine if review of the material is needed. Formal evaluation will be taken when the “prediction” worksheets are collected as homework the next day.

MIVCA: The lesson is meaningful because it conveys to students how primary sources are a necessary tool for historians to better understand historical developments. The lesson is integrative because it utilizes primary sources and literary methods to enhance overall comprehension of a subject. The lesson will be challenging in the sense that it asks students to examine and draw conclusions from a primary text that does not necessarily make its connection to a historical event readily apparent as well as to make predictions about the possible outcome. The lesson also promotes active learning through use of group work and discussion.