Lesson Plan

Teacher:
Barbara Fowler

Lesson Title:
Female Workers and Life in Lowell

Grade Level:
7 or 8 Grade Middle School

Lesson Time Length:
One 75 minute block

Big Ideas:

• The Industrial Revolution changed life in America
• Women played a major role in the success of early manufacturing in America
• Planned communities for factories started out as a positive, safe way to supply a workforce
• Lack of regulations caused working conditions to become unsafe

Lesson Abstract:
This lesson is designed to help students understand the recruitment and working conditions for young women who came to the industrial city of Lowell, Massachusetts to work in the textile mills. Students will grasp the concept of a planned community and understand the reasons that young women accepted these jobs.

Lesson Background and Context:
Although the Industrial Revolution began in England it played an important role in the shift in the United States from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy. Young farm women were instrumental in providing a work force for the earliest mills in the United States.
Standards Alignment: Kansas Standards

SS 8.4.16A explains how the Industrial Revolution and technological developments impacted different parts of American society.

SS.8.3.42A analyzes push-pull factors including economic, political, and social factors that contribute to human migration and settlement in the United States.

Teaching Materials:

LDC projector and computer – Discovery Education film “The Industrial Revolution”
Lowell Power Point pictures
Mill superintendent letter handout
Class set of Lowell part 2
Mill Girls’ World class set
1836 Quotation about Working Conditions
Cornell Notes-Student Handout

Vocabulary (terms and concepts will students learn):

Mill Girls
Working Conditions
Spinning
Picking
Water Power
Overseer
Doffer
Carding
Boardinghouse Life
Warping
Weaving
Push Factors
Pull Factors
Lesson Implementation and Procedures:

APK Warm-Up (20%): **5 minutes**
1. Ask students: What are some factories that we have in this area?
   - What are the work hours? Shifts?
   - What are the working conditions?
2. On scratch paper write down 2 questions that you would like to know about the industrial revolution in America.

TIP (20%)/ SAP (45%): **5 minutes**
Explicit Instruction by teacher:
Explain that the Industrial Revolution began in England and then moved to the United States. This film will show how industrialization/factories came to America and the impact or changes that came about because of this new technology.

Student Practice:
(Watch film “The Industrial Revolution” **20 minutes**)
1. Pass out The Industrial Revolution Cornell Note Sheets. Students are to complete these while watching the film.
2. Following the film review important information from the Cornell notes. Notes should then be put in notebook on p. ______

TIP: **5 minutes**
Tell students that Lowell, Mass. was designed to be a model mill city.
Show pictures of Lowell from power point

Student Practice: **40 minutes**
1. Pass out copies of the Mill Superintendent primary source letter.
   Read this aloud to students. **5 minutes**
   Have Students work alone to answer the 3 questions at the bottom of the sheet. **7 Minutes**
   Next, share your answers with a shoulder partner. **4 minutes**
   Finally have a brief report out of pairs on various questions to the group. **6 minutes**
   Put in notebook p. ____
2. Read aloud each section of “Lowell: The Experiment on the Merrimack” (part 2) **10 minutes**
   After each section ask if there are words that the students are unsure about and discuss
   Have students verbalize with a partner what they believe to be the most important facts from that section. **10 minutes**
Technology Integration:

Lowell Power Point
Discovery Education Movie

Evaluation and Assessment:

Project Quotation about Lowell Workforce in 1836 and ask: **10 minutes**
Read “The Mill Girls’ World” sheet

1. Why do you think Lowell employed single women?
2. What are the advantages of employing young women?
3. What services would need to be available for the women?
4. Would this be a good employment opportunity? Why or Why not?

Exit slip: Answer question # 4 above giving specific reasons why or why not.

Extension and Enrichment:

- Read “The Mill Girls’ World” sheet
- The following information provides numerous activities and resources for extension and enrichment. I have copied the following from the site linked below.

Primary sources are an excellent way to incorporate language arts into your history teaching. Newspaper articles, diary entries and letters all provide students with vivid verbal pictures of the people and events of the past.

- **Mill Life**
  Learn about mill life from the archives of University of Massachusetts' Center for Lowell History, centrally located in the Patrick J. Mogan Cultural Center in downtown Lowell.
  <http://library.uml.edu/clh/mo.htm>
- **LNHP Collection**
  Lowell National Historical Park maintains an extensive collection of library and historical materials. The Library and Collections are a non-circulating collection of books, reports, dissertations, objects and other materials relating to the history of
Lowell, the early American Industrial Revolution, the American cotton textile industry, and the development and activities of the Park.

<http://www.museum.nps.gov/lowe/page.htm>

- **Bringing History Home**
  Use primary sources to make decisions for new "mill girl" Eliza Paige. In this interactive game, Eliza has just arrived in Lowell, and you get to decide her future based on letters and other documents. Which boardinghouse should she live in? Should she get involved in the labor protests? Is the reality of life in Lowell as good as what was promised? You decide!

<http://www.uml.edu/tsongas/bringing-history-home/page_00/index.htm>

**Resources:**

Lowell National Historical Park: Teacher Resources
<http://www.nps.gov/lowe/forteachers/index.htm>

Lowell Power Point