Hidden Voices: Antonia Pantoja

Objective

Read the story of Antonia Pantoja, a woman who changed New York City.

Resources/Materials

- Fighting for Puerto Rican New York
- Fort Apache Protest image

Activity

- Read *Fighting for Puerto Rican New York*. As you read highlight, underline, or mark up the pages where you find answers to the questions below:
 - Why did Antonia Pantoja found ASPIRA?
 - Why did so many Puerto Ricans move to New York in the early decades of the 20th century?
 - How did Puerto Ricans arriving in New York transform a small community into a city within a city?
 - What were some of the challenges newly arriving Puerto Ricans faced?
 - In what important ways did Antonia Pantoja promote and extend the rights and opportunities of Latinx people in New York City?
 - How did Antonia Pantoja help to change rules and laws to help the Puerto Rican community in New York City?
- After completing the reading answer the questions above. Use evidence from the text to support your answers.
- Look at Fort Apache Protest image and answer the questions below the image.
- Reflect on the following question, "What are some issues or social concerns that people demonstrate about in NYC today?"

Additional Resources

• The Legacy Project: Dra. Antonia Pantoja - Inductee https://legacyprojectchicago.org/person/dra-antonia-pantoja

Hidden Voices: Antonia Pantoja

• PBS: Antonia Pantoja ¡Presente! https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/87537891-1a6d-41c6-9662-b09db4c17201/antonia-pantoja-presente/





Antonia Pantoja

Fighting for Puerto Rican New York

Between 1940 and 1960, over 800,000 Puerto Ricans moved to the United States mainland, about 85% of them to New York City. Antonia Pantoja (1922–2002) became one of their most important leaders. A schoolteacher from San Juan, she founded an organization—ASPIRA—that trained politicians, activists, and reformers to lead New York's growing Puerto Rican community in the following decades.

Born into a family of poor but educated tobacco and laundry workers, Antonia Pantoja never knew her father, who was not married to her mother. Neighbors helped her attend the University of Puerto Rico. In 1942 she became a teacher in rural schools. Later she would see education as central both to her own ambitions and to the needs of Puerto Ricans on their native island and in New York.

In 1944 she moved to New York and found wartime factory work making radios for submarines. In 1950 she applied

"You cannot live
a life that is
lukewarm. You
need to live a life
of commitment
and passion."

for an I.D. card as a U.S. citizen "born in Puerto Rico." The birth certificate she submitted described her as a "mestiza"— "of mixed race."

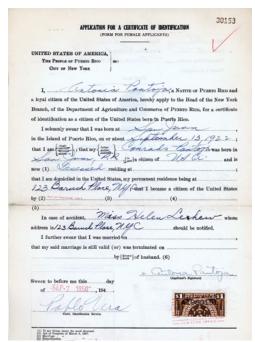
Antonia Pantoja on the Coney Island boardwalk, c. 1945



Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños. Antonia Pantoja Papers, 1923–2002. Box 26, Folder 7.

and New York, Pantoja resisted discrimination against darkerskinned Latinos. Migrants applied for identification from Puerto Rico's Department of Agriculture & Commerce. Helen Lehew, Antonia Pantoja moved to New York from San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1944. This is the Identification Certificate Application that she filed in 1950 as a U.S. citizen.





The Antonia Pantoja Papers. Archives of the Puerto Rican Diaspora, Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, CUNY.

Pantoja's roommate on Baruch Place on the Lower East Side, was the supporting witness for her application. Pantoja's birth certificate in Spanish noted her residence in San Juan's Barrio Obrero, a community of working people.

Pantoja and other postwar arrivals joined the city's existing community of over 60,000 Puerto Ricans, who had established vibrant and varied institutions in the early decades of the 20th century. Job opportunities in New York—and direct passenger flights from San Juan—encouraged thousands of Puerto Ricans to move to "Nueva York." They transformed a small community into a city within a city: a Spanish-speaking population with major settlements in East Harlem, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and the East and West Sides. Bodegas, or grocery stores, proliferated in Puerto Rican neighborhoods. But Puerto Ricans also encountered discrimination, poverty, and a declining industrial job market. Many new

"I have a responsibility... to teach people who are like me, who are poor people, who have no understanding of the fact that they can produce wealth."

migrants, moreover, were poorer *campesinos*, or rural farmers, with little or no tradition of literacy or formal education.

The city exposed Pantoja to diverse people: factory workers, Greenwich Village artists, social workers in East Harlem. She was a lesbian and while she was not openly gay until late in life, privately she connected with New York's gay community. Meanwhile, she pursued her education, earning degrees from

Below is a mural in East Harlem by Manny Vega depicting Dr. Antonia Pantoja. The mural was unveiled on November 20, 2015 as part of a larger celebration of Pantoja's life and ties to El Barrio and the Puerto Rican community.



Antonia Pantoja Mosaic Mural, 2018. Ronald Stockwell. East Harlem, New York City.

Hunter College (1952), Columbia University's School of Social Work (1954), and the Union Graduate School (1973).

In 1957 Pantoja was hired by Dr. Frank Horne to join a new city agency, the Commission on Intergroup Relations. Under his tutelage, Pantoja planned a new organization for Puerto Ricans, based on African-American and Jewish rights groups she observed in New York. The Puerto Rican Forum "would fight to eliminate the problems that were making our community weak, poor, silenced, submissive..."

The era of ASPIRA's rise—the years of the civil rights and antiwar movements, Black Power, and women's and gay liberation—also saw new Puerto Rican activism. Some New York activists worked with ASPIRA; others embraced more militant strategies. The Young Lords (1969), a revolutionary party, demanded public health services for the Puerto Rican community. Founded in 1965, United Bronx Parents mobilized Latino and other parents to challenge city officials for better public schools. The Nuyorican Poets Café (1973) became a crossroads for literature and art shaped by Latino social and political concerns.

Pantoja was ASPIRA's executive director from 1961 to 1966, and then she moved on to other projects. She helped found Boricua College, a bilingual institution with four New York City campuses, in 1974. In 1986 she founded Producir, Inc., to develop community self-help organizations in rural Puerto Rico. After teaching social work at San Diego State University, she returned to New York in 1999.

In 1996 Pantoja was honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, for her work founding ASPIRA and a host of other organizations, including the Puerto Rican Forum, the Hispanic Young Adult Association, the Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs, the Puerto Rican Research and Resources Center, Producir, Inc., and Boricua College. Since her death in 2002 she has remained an inspirational figure in New York City.

Source: Adapted from the New York at Its Core exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York

Document Analysis

Along with ASPIRA, many groups took action to bring about change for the Latino and black communities. In 1981, activists protested the movie, *Fort Apache, The Bronx* for what they saw as racist stereotyping in the South Bronx.



The Lourdes Torres Papers. Archives of the Puerto Rican Diaspora, Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, CUNY.

- Why would members of the Puerto Rican and Black communities of the South Bronx be concerned about the fictional depiction of their neighborhood in a film?
- How might actions like these create positive change in a community?
- What does this image tell us about the American identity? Explain.
- Based on this caption do you think the people participating in this protest believe that there is one America or many? Explain.

Passport to Social Studies: Causes of the Great Depression

Objective

Analyze a political cartoon and fictional conversation between economists to determine the economic conditions that led to the Great Depression.

Resources/Materials

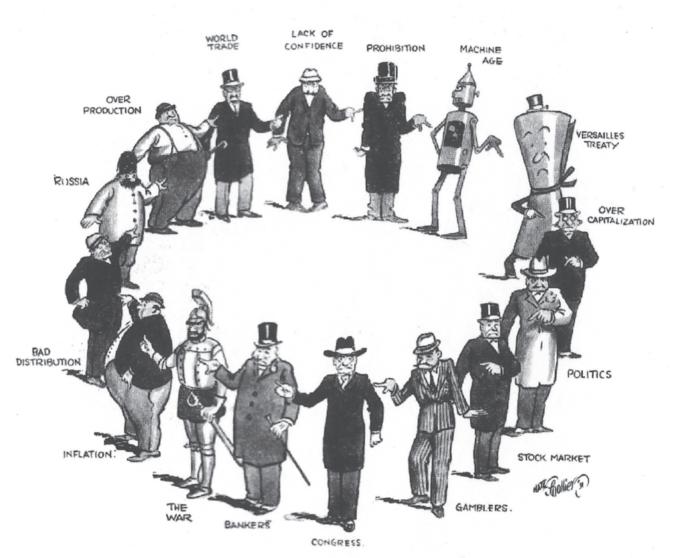
- The Depression is all HIS Fault cartoon by Nate Collier
- Economist Discussion on the Great Depression
- Causes of the Great Depression Worksheet

Activity

- Look at *The Depression is all HIS Fault* political cartoon and answer the following question, "What is the message of this cartoon?"
- Read the Economist Discussion on the Great Depression and complete the Causes of the Great Depression Worksheet.
- Based on the readings consider the following question, "Who do economists believe was to blame for the Depression?" Use evidence from the documents to support your answer.

Additional Resources

History Channel: The Great Depression https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8k0jJdqKP0



"The depression is all HIS fault!"

Causes of the Great Depression Worksheet

		Causes of the Great Depression
		Why would this cause a depression?
		Cite and explain your evidence
		Create one question for further inquiry

Economist Discussion on the Great Depression

Moderator: Everything was so rosy just a few short months ago, and yet today the United States finds itself facing a horrible economic depression. We have invited the nation's top economists here to ask them, "How did this all come about?"

Economist #1: The consumer must be blamed as well. People used the popular installment plan to buy refrigerators, cars, radios, furniture, and clothing when they did not have the savings to pay for them. When people lost their jobs, not only could they not pay for rent or food, but they also struggled to keep up with payments for the goods they had purchased on credit. Also, people bought stocks with a down payment of only 10 percent of the purchase price. When stocks dropped, they lost all the money they had invested and even lost money on their worthless loans.

Economist #2: Big business caused the depression. Sales were good, and companies expected sales to get even better. So companies overproduced. New techniques and machines made production more efficient. Unfortunately, these techniques and machines replaced workers who were no longer needed. Trouble came when sales began to slow down. Then more workers had to be laid off. The laid off workers couldn't purchase the goods produced in such large numbers. This led to more unemployment.

Economist #3: The country as a whole was becoming richer, but most of the wealth remained in the hands of a few people. While the wealthy could afford to pay for cars and appliances, the average wage earners could not. Instead, they bought items on credit. When unemployment rose, the average person was not able make the installment payments and had to return the items. The country would have been much better off if the wealth had spread to more people by creating fairer wages for the average person.

Economist #4: Those who gambled on the stock market were at fault. Many people took chances investing their money in companies that were poor risks. Worthless stocks were sold and resold, so stock prices for worthless companies went higher and higher. Those average middle-class people purchased stocks on margin. Buying on margin was when someone purchased stocks on credit or with borrowed money. Lots of people laid out only 10% of their money and the rest came from the bank. When the stock market crashed, they were unable to pay back the banks. Banks and companies which purchased large amounts of these worthless stocks were forced to close, resulting in losses of millions of dollars and layoffs.

Economist Discussion on the Great Depression

Economist #5: During World War I, the government guaranteed farmers high prices for their crops and livestock. Farmers put more acres in cultivation and increased the size of their herds. They borrowed money from local banks to buy more land and machinery. However, the government ended its guarantees. Farm prices were allowed to drop back to natural prices as determined by supply and demand. Farmers continued to produce at high levels and soon surpluses appeared. As a result, prices for crops and for land fell. Those who had borrowed money could not pay off their loans. Even if farmers sold their farms, the money they received sometimes was less than what they owed. When banks could not collect the money farmers borrowed, the banks could not repay the people who had deposited money in their bank accounts. Many banks closed and depositors lost their money.

Economist # 6: The government tried to counteract the depression with raising and keeping tariffs (taxes on good from other countries) high. Trade between countries was hurt severely. There was already a decline in world trade because European nations were still recovering from World War I and could not afford American goods. High tariffs made it difficult for European nations to sell products to the United States. As a result, Europeans had even less money to buy American goods. Declining world trade also hurt American manufacturers. The government should have lowered these tariffs.

Passport to Social Studies: Reconstruction Amendments

Objective

Read, paraphrase, and summarize the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to understand their significance.

Resources/Materials

Reconstruction Amendments Handout

Activity

- Read *Reconstruction Amendments,* paraphrase the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, and explain the purpose of each.
- Write a summary explaining the importance and significance of the 13th, 14th, and 15th
 Amendments. They should explain how the three Amendments are connected and consider reasons for their specificity and repetition.
- Write a paragraph answering the question:
 - Which Amendment do they feel has had the most impact on US citizens and why?

Additional Resources

- United States Senate: Landmark Legislation
 https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/CivilWarAmendments.htm
- PBS: Reconstruction Amendments https://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/reconstruction-amendments/

The Reconstruction Amendments Handout

Thirteenth Amendment

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. [passed by Congress, January 1865; ratified December 1865]

Fourteenth Amendment

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. [passed by Congress June 1866; ratified July 1868]

Fifteenth Amendment

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. [passed by Congress February 1869; ratified March 1870]

Passport to Social Studies: Segregation in America

Objective

Analyze the social, political, and economic experiences of minority groups in the United States in order to understand segregation in America during the 1960s

Resources/Materials

- Document Set A: African American Experiences
- Document Set B: Native American Experiences
- Document Set C: Women's Experiences
- Document Set D: Latino American Experiences
- Individual vs. Institutional Oppression graphic organizer

Activity

- Ask how can prejudice lead to discrimination against individuals and groups?"
- Brainstorm examples from prior learning that show prejudice or discrimination against groups of people, creating a list.
- Read these definitions and explain the difference between the two:
 - Institutional oppression: policies, laws, and rules coming from organizations or social associations that provide advantages for some groups of people, while disadvantaging others
 - Individual oppression: actions and attitudes that reflect individual prejudice against a member or members of a group
- Consider, "How are they same and how are they different?"
- Read the documents sets and complete the Individual vs. Institutional Oppression graphic organizer.
- Reflect on the following question, "Which do you think is more dangerous to a society—individual or institutional oppression? Why?"

Additional Resources

- Library of Congress: Brown v. Board at Fifty https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/brown-segregation.html
- Smithsonian: Separate is not equal https://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/history/1-segregated/segregated-america.html

Passport to Social Studies: Segregation in America

Smithsonian Magazine: The Racial Segregation of American Cities Was Anything But Accidental https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/how-federal-government-intentionally-raciallysegregated-american-cities-180963494/

Document Set A: African American Experiences

Despite the United States Constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the law to all citizens, the Supreme Court ruled in the 1896 case *Plessy v. Ferguson* in favor of racial segregation, decreeing that "separate but equal" was constitutional. The state and local regulations enforcing the landmark decision became known as Jim Crow laws, which notably created segregated bathroom facilities, dining areas, and water fountains.

A White Resident of Louisiana Remembers Jim Crow

Memories of Jim Crow and segregation in the South vary greatly depending on who's doing the remembering. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the recollections of Southern whites who lived during the segregation era often stand in stark contrast to those of African Americans. In this interview, Leonard Barrow, a white resident of New Iberia, Louisiana, remembers that few whites openly questioned segregation; as he recalls, "That's the way it was."

Barrow: God, there was a fellow who worked for my father for a number of years in the rice field and we ran into each other one day and boy he came and threw his arms around me you know it uh...now this is another funny thing, you wouldn't have dreamed of shaking hands back in those days.

Ellis: The black man you ran into or your father?

Barrow: My father or me would not have dreamed of shaking hands with a black person.

Ellis: Some whites that I talked to say blacks were never treated poorly during Jim Crow, they were always treated well, they had their place and we had ours, but they were always treated well. I'm wondering how you see that? If you would agree?

LB: Well, being treated well, I guess, has a pretty broad spectrum of uh...The blacks definitely lived at a much lower standard. Much lower. Many of the houses didn't have running water, many of the houses didn't have electricity, ah heat was rudimentary, of course nobody had air conditioning.

A young man drinking at "Colored" water cooler in streetcar terminal, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



A "Colored" movie theater, Leland, Mississippi



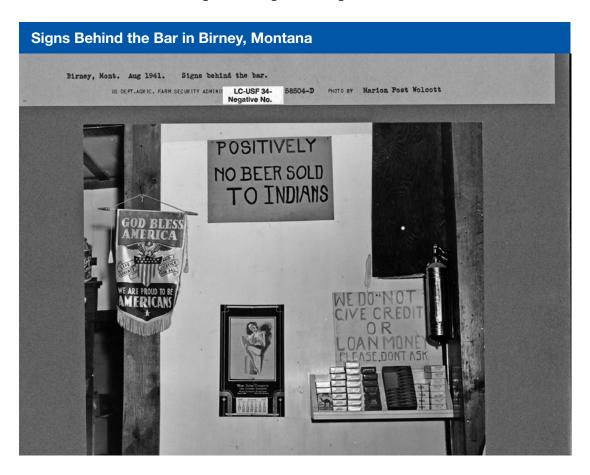
View of one-teacher [African-American] schoolhouse in Newberry County, South Carolina



Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration

Document Set B: Native American Experiences

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 ended the Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887. But despite the "New Deal" for Native Americans, a majority of Native Americans in the 1940s were still living in poverty. Many who resided on isolated reservations were dominated by federal regulations, and government-run boarding schools were little more than exploitive work camps. As a response to the economic inequality and discriminatory conditions of reservation life, the American Indian Movement (AIM) took rise and demanded that Native Americans be given the right of self-government.



Mary Crow Dog describes life as a child in the 1960s on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota.

...we wound up with our grandparents. We were lucky. Many Indian children are placed in foster homes. This happens even in some cases where parents or grandparents are willing and able to take care of them, but where the social workers say their homes are substandard, or where there are outhouses instead of flush toilets, or where the family is simply "too poor." A flush toilet to a white social worker is more important than a good grandmother. So the kids are given to wasicun [white] strangers to be "acculturated in a sanitary environment."

We are losing the coming generation that way and do not like it.

Document Set B: Native American Experiences

1944–45	Native American veterans return from World War II to find the same discrimination and exploitation as they experienced before.
1944	The National Congress of American Indians is formed to lobby for change.
1950s	Indians from many different tribes leave reservations and begin to meet in cities; find they have problems in common.
1950s/60s	Native American Indians see African Americans become militant in their struggle for equality; some significant gains are made.
1960s	Native American Indians who attended BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) schools in 1940s and '50s angry that schools had tried to force them away from their own cultures.
1961	National Indian Youth Council, first all-Indian youth protest group, formed in New Mexico.
1965	Native American Indians of Puyallup nation, who depend on fishing for food, stage a "fish in" to protest game warden's keeping them off river. They are arrested, tried, and acquitted.
1968	American Indian Movement (AIM) formed in Minnesota to deal with problems of urban Indians. Members are militant; call for "Red Power."

Document Set B: Native American Experiences (alternative)

In the 1940s, the Office of Indian Affairs noted that Native American schools should emphasize vocational training to prepare students of exceedingly low economic levels for gainful industrial employment. The US felt that since Native American pupils came from homes that offered little or no guidance, boarding schools were essential agencies to instill standards of American citizenship and skills that would "enable them to find a place in society." As a response to the discriminatory boarding schools and the impoverished conditions of reservations, The National Conference for Native Americans, founded in 1944, created a Pan-Indian movement to fight for self-government.

Pierre Indian Boarding School, Farming and Blacksmithing Class



Home of Native American tenant farmer living on a reservation in Oklahoma, 1939



Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration

Bill Wright, "Transforming People, Inside and Out"

I remember coming home and my grandma asked me to talk Indian to her and I said, "Grandma, I don't understand you,"...She said, "Then who are you?"

[I] told her [my] name was Billy. "Your name's not Billy. Your name's 'TAH-rruhm,"... And I went, "That's not what they told me."

Document Set C: Women's Experiences

By the 1950s and 1960s, the role of women in the workplace had shifted. Men returning from the war pushed women into the home and offices where they worked as full-time mothers and secretaries. With a rise in consumerism, women became targets of advertisements that promoted better household technology, such as washing machines and refrigerators, and a broad line of beauty products. The documents below depict and describe some of the issues women faced in the post-war period.

Shirley Chisholm, Congresswoman Speech in the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressional Record, May 21, 1969

When a young woman graduates from college and starts looking for a job, she is likely to have a frustrating and even demeaning experience ahead of her. If she walks into an office for an interview, the first question she will be asked is, "Do you type?" There is a calculated system of prejudice that lies unspoken behind that question. Why is it acceptable for women to be secretaries, librarians, and teachers, but totally unacceptable for women to be managers, administrators, doctors, lawyers, and members of Congress?



Document Set D: Latino American Experiences

The scale of the United States' war production touched every corner of the nation, affecting millions of people. When traditional farm workers left for military service or higher paying industrial jobs, the U.S. government looked south to Mexico. Several thousand field hands, or *braceros*, were invited to work in the United States, primarily in agriculture. The photograph below of braceros working on a Texas cotton ranch is evidence that African Americans (especially men who were too young to join the Army) worked alongside Mexican laborers harvesting cotton, which, as one bracero later wrote, was one of the most physically demanding jobs he had ever done. Such conditions were revealed in a well-known work song of the time:

But I too came to pick cotton and they have to pay me for each hundred pounds a dollar You can see I am quite skinny From lack of food to eat



American Social History Project/Center for Media Learning John Vachon, "Young Mexican and African-American Men Answer the Call for Farm Workers" HERB: Resources for Teachers: http://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/1293

Individual vs. Institutional Oppression

Use the documents provided to complete the chart below with examples of individual and/or institutional prejudice and discrimination against the groups you read about: African Americans, Native Americans, Latino Americans, and/or women. Explain how the conclusion of World War II affected the overall treatment of the minority group you have selected.

Minority group	Examples of individual oppression	Examples of institutional oppression	Draw a conclusion about this group's experience

Wrap-Up Brainstorm: Which do you think is more dangerous to a society—individual or institutional oppression? Why? Jot your ideas about the wrap-up question below.

Claim:			
Evidence:			

Works Cited: Segregation in America

Document Set A: African American Experiences

- "A White Resident of Louisiana Remembers Jim Crow." American Social History Project, City University of New York. Accessed April 4, 2019. https://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/984
- Lee, Russell, photographer. Negro drinking at "Colored" water cooler in streetcar terminal, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Oklahoma City Oklahoma City. United States, 1939. July. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017740552/.
- Wolcott, Marion Post, photographer. Rex Theatre for colored people. Leland, Mississippi Delta. Leland Leland. Mississippi United States Washington County, 1939. Nov. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017801759/.
- Newberry County, South Carolina. View of one-teacher [African-American] schoolhouse in...; 4/1941; Records of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Record Group 97.

 [Online Version, <a href="https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/newberry-county-south-carolina-view-of-oneteacher-[africanamerican]-schoolhouse-in, April 4, 2019]

Document Set B: Native American Experiences

Wolcott, Marion Post, photographer. Signs behind the bar, in Birney, Montana. Birney Birney. Montana Rosebud County United States, 1941. Aug. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017807970/.

Mary Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes. Lakota Woman. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990

Document Set B: Native American Experiences (alternative)

- Pierre Indian Boarding School Farming and Blacksmithing Class: Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration
- Lee, Russell, photographer. Home of Indian tenant farmer north of Sallisaw, Oklahoma. Oklahoma Sallisaw Sallisaw. Sequoyah County United States, 1939. June. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2017783776/.

Document Set C: Women's Experiences

- Shirley Chisholm. "Equal Rights for Women." archive.adl.org. Accessed August 10, 2016. https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2017/03/21/equal-rights-for-women-may-21-1969/
- "1968 Christmas Ad, Hotpoint Kitchen Appliances Save the Holidays for Housewife (2-page advert)." Classic Film, flickr. November 18, 2014, accessed April 4, 2019. https://www.flickr.com/photos/29069717@N02/15201549724

Document Set D: Latino American Experiences

John Vachon, "Young Mexican and African-American Men Answer the Call for Farm Workers," HERB: Resources for Teachers. Accessed April 4, 2019. https://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/1293.

Hidden Voices: Susie Rocco

Objective

Explore how industrial growth and technological advancements changed New York City through the story of Susie Rocco?

Resources/Materials

- Child of the Slums
- Susie Rocco image
- Susie's Neighborhood map

Activity

- Read *Child of the Slums* and answer the following questions:
 - How was Susie Rocco's life in the late 1800s similar to and different from your life?
 - How have industrial growth and technological advancements changed New York since this time?
 - To what extent did reform movements address the problems facing Americans such as Susie Rocco?
 - How would a historian research and write the history of an individual such as Susie Rocco?
 - Why did reform-minded journalists, such as Jacob Riis, use children in their writing and photographs? Was it effective?
- Look at the image of Susie Rocco and answer the questions at the bottom of the page.
- Look at Susie's Neighborhood map and answer the questions at the bottom of the page
- Do you think Susie Rocco would be happy with the working and living conditions of New Yorkers today? Explain why or why not?

Additional Resources

- History Channel: Photos Reveal Shocking Conditions of Tenement Slums in Late 1800s https://www.history.com/news/tenement-photos-jacob-riis-nyc-immigrants
- Library of Congress: Jacob Riis Revealing "How the Other Half Lives" https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jacob-riis/photographer.html





Susie Rocco

Child of the Slums

Focus Questions

Photojournalist Jacob Riis visited New York's poorest neighborhoods in the 1880s and '90s, documenting conditions there. In one cramped Lower East Side apartment, he met a 12-year-old girl pasting linen on tin covers for pocket flasks. He identified her only as "Little Susie." What was life like for Susie and other tenement dwellers?

In the late 1800s, the population of Manhattan soared, driven by an influx of new arrivals from Ireland, Germany, Italy, and Eastern Europe. The city had always attracted newcomers, but this period marked the beginning of immigration on a

"Her sunny smile made everyone and everything, even in that dark alley, gentler, more considerate, when she was around."

Jacob A. Riis

new scalenever before had so many people arrived so quickly.

Hundreds of thousands of immigrants

Impoverished children often carried big responsibilities at a very young age. Some worked to make money, like Susie did, and others took care of their younger siblings so that their parent(s) would be free to work. Sometimes the children who were babysitting were very young themselves.



Jacob A. Riis. Minding the baby; Baby yells a Whirlwind Scream, Gotham Court, c. 1890. Museum of the City of New York, 90.13.1.193.

poured into the tenements of Manhattan's Lower East Side, which by 1890 had become one of the most densely populated places on earth. The unprecedented numbers of people in such a small space posed serious challenges. Overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, disease, a lack of clean water, and safe food—all were part of everyday life in New York's slums.

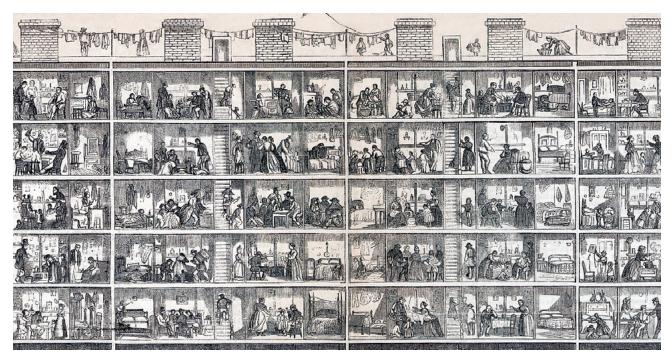
In the late 1800s in a Cherry Street tenement building called Gotham Court lived Little Susie where she worked hard making money to help support her family. Little Susie's world was described not just by Riis, but by earlier reformers who used maps to document the slums. In 1865, a team of doctors and officials had knocked on doors throughout the neighborhood to investigate public health threats. Little Susie's tenement was documented as Gotham Court at 36-38 Cherry Street.

Also in 1865, a newspaper hired an artist to look inside each one of Gotham Court's almost 120 two-room apartments. The resulting full-page cross section illustrates the sheer numbers of people crowded into the building. The sketch artist noticed many adults and children performing industrial piecework in the home. Multiple families or boarders often crammed into tight spaces in tenements like Gotham Court.

Thanks in part to reformers, city leaders experimented with new ideas to combat density's challenges, such as requiring that new buildings include windows in each room and indoor toilets. Reform did not immediately transform the lives of New Yorkers like Susie Rocco, but the movement focused the city's creative energy on the problems of crowding.

Source: Adapted from the New York at Its Core exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York

This image shows a cross-section of Susie's tenement apartment building, named Gotham Court. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* hired an artist to visit and draw the apartments. Made about 25 years before Riis photographed Susie, Gotham Court did not change much over that time.



Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, Tenement Building, 38 Cherry Street, New York City, sectional view, 1865.

Document Analysis

This is the only known photograph of Susie Rocco. Jacob Riis photographed Susie when she was 12 years old. Susie's voice is so hidden that we only know her through this photograph and from what Riis wrote about her in his 1892 book, *The Children of the Poor.*

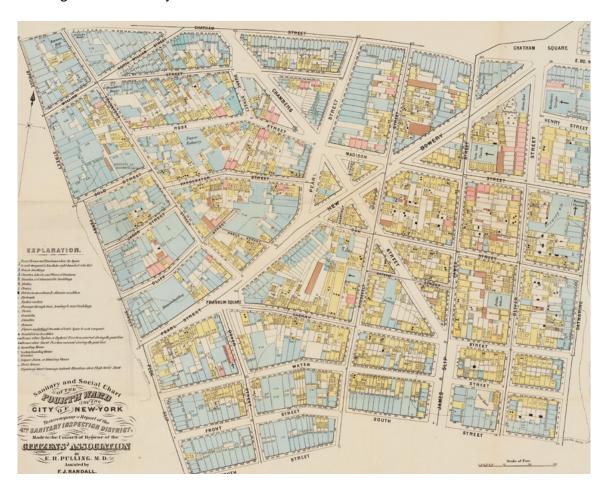


Jacob A. Riis, Little Susie at Her Work, c. 1890. Museum of the City of New York, 90.13.4.133.

- Why do you think that Susie was working in her own home?
- What evidence does the photographer provide about the conditions that Susie lived and worked in?
- Is this a reliable primary source? Why or why not?
- Is Little Susie at Her Work propaganda? Why or why not?

Document Analysis

This is a map of Susie's neighborhood that depicts some of the challenges and hazards she encountered in her daily life as she ran errands, sold her tin covers, and went to school. Named Cherry Hill, the neighborhood had once been a well-to-do part of the city but by 1865, when this map was made, Cherry Hill was known as a "slum" because of the poverty of its residents and the difficult living conditions they faced.



Sanitary and Social Chart of the Fourth Ward of the City of New York, c. 1865. Lithograph. Museum of the City of New York, 37.152.8.

- How were health conditions in NYC different in the 1800s from today?
- What do you think Susie would see and smell as she walked down the street?
- How might the neighborhood's negative factors have influenced daily life for a young person in Susie's neighborhood?
- What type of document might help us to get a better understanding of how these factors influenced a child's life in the late 1800s?
- What positive aspects of urban living did people like Susie Rocco have access to in 1890?

Tuskegee Airmen and Code Talkers

Objective

Examine how African Americans and Native Americans contributed during World War II.

Resources/Materials

- The Role of African Americans and Native Americans in World War II graphic organizer
- Case Study 1: Ray Elliot
- Case Study 2: Chester Nez

Activity

- During World War II, the American government enlisted the help of two specific groups,
 African Americans and Native Americans, in different ways.
 - In 1941, the Air Corps began training African Americans to be combat pilots. These men became known as the Tuskegee Airmen, numbering between 15,000–19,000 and including pilots, mechanics, cooks, doctors, nurses, parachute riggers, gate guards, flight instructors, firemen, radio operators, and more.
 - Around the same time in 1942, the American government sought ways to keep communication confidential within the army. Since Native Americans had their own languages that were often unwritten and unknown to other populations, many Navajo males were recruited to join the army and became known as the Code Talkers. They created a code language that was used to send messages without fear of the Axis powers intercepting and decoding them.
- Read each case study and complete *The Role of African Americans and Native Americans in World War II* graphic organizer.
- Answer the following questions:
 - In what ways could it have been considered ironic that African Americans and Native Americans helped America fight for democracy?
 - What moral issues do you think might have been involved in the Tuskegee Airmen's and Code Talkers' decision to fight?

Additional Resources

 Double V: Soldier Without Swords video: http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/vtl07.la.rv.text.doublev/the-double-v/

The Role of African Americans and Native Americans in World War II

Definitions	Case Study	Advancement and Opportunity	Limitation and Discrimination
The Tuskegee Airmen	Ray Elliot		
The Code Talkers	Chester Nez		

Case Study 1: Ray Elliot

Quote #1:

...[T]he vision was a "Double V" victory sign. And every time we saw each other, we'd give that. And that gave us courage and hope and patience, because what we decided was that we had two wars to win. And...once we finished the war against the Fascists and then...we would be home...we'll fight against racism. So the "Double Victory" was gonna be when we got back to this country, we would fight for racism. Now what that did was...against racism...that unified us! That brought us together with a common goal, a common cause, so we became more focused on how we were going to fight racism when we got back. And one of the big things we felt was we're gonna take advantage of the GI bill and get our education. And that's the way we're gonna fight it when we get back.

Quote #2:

I was not in combat in any time during my service, in the service. Most of the time I spent in this country, or a large part of it...I was in Biloxi, Mississippi, and we were told that whenever you go in town...go together...I went in by myself one time, and I drifted into the white community...I panicked. I started looking for a bus stop...[T]his old man came over...and he looked very, very serious and he said to me, "Step down there," and he pointed to the gutter, and I had my uniform on, and uh...I says, "Why did you tell me to step down there in the gutter?"...[A]s he was yelling at me; all these people that were around waiting for the bus, they came forward, and they started...almost surrounding me, you know, and he was raising his voice in anger and rage. "What're you doing in this area? You're up to no good! You've been up to something. You've done something..." And so I started walking away and I was walking...they start following me and...I finally realized how it felt...finally felt how...black folks, when they've been chased by a lynch mob...

Quote #3:

My job in the South Pacific was to survey in preparation for laying airstrips in the different islands in the Pacific. And so, we did this with instruments, and then when there was just bush area, we did it with what they call a table survey...[W]e'd make maps of the area, to prepare for troops advancement or laying airstrips...[O]ur regiment was also used for all kind of war type operations...

Quote #4:

...One of the things...I learned about [is] how to prepare myself for obstacles that I might face in life, and others might face in life...[S]o all of these negative experiences I've talked about...about the disrespect for another human being, and the way we're treated...there were positive lessons I learned from that. There were certain qualities that I began to develop...compassion for another human being...One of the things that I realized, too, I think, was the government really, was not really at fault for discriminating, having a discriminated army, in a sense. They had no real choice, I felt, because otherwise there'd be no unity in the fighting forces. There'd be if they went against Jim Crow practices in the South, or went against southern positions, southern positions that...[T]hey had to have unity, and so the only way was to separate the forces to prevent riots and things like that.

Case Study 2: Chester Nez

Quote #1:

My fellow Code Talkers and I knew the white people's words, but among ourselves we generally spoke in Navajo. Because of our mission, we didn't do a whole lot of moving around the ship or mingling with the other Marines. Instead, we gathered together on shipboard, practicing our code. Always practicing. All thirteen of us men had had a hand in designing the secret code, together with nineteen other Navajo Marines, back in the states. Recruited for our fluency in both Navajo and English, we'd been locked in a room after basic training and told to develop a secret military language using our Native Navajo. Now each man was determined the code would guarantee an American victory over the Japanese in the South Pacific.

Quote #2:

The white man's military had accepted us as tough Marines. Hardened by the rigors of life on the reservation or the Checkerboard Area, we often outperformed our white peers. In basic training, Marine sergeants bragged about the prowess of Platoon 382, the Navajo recruits. And our code was part of a bold plan to take the South Pacific islands back from the dominant Japanese. Cutting through endless ocean toward my first battle, the code's proving ground, my twelve buddies and I studied and restudied the entire vocabulary of two-hundred-plus words. All of us were fluent, yet we all continued to practice. We could afford no doubts, no hesitation. Accuracy and speed were a matter of life and death.

Quote #3:

When we neared the beach...[t]he hinge ramp opened, and we rushed down into chest-deep water, holding our rifles above our heads in the continuing rain. Japanese artillery shells exploded around us...Bodies of Japanese and American soldiers floated everywhere. I smelled death, as bullets sliced into the water. Blood stained the tide washing onto the beach...Navajo belief forbids contact with the dead, but we waded through floating bodies, intent on not becoming one of them. Close your mind, I told myself. I tried not to think about all those dead men...I am a Marine. Marines move forward. I tried to make myself numb.

Passport to Social Studies: Immigrant Experience

Objective

Compare and contrast immigrant experiences in order to evaluate the degree to which the United States lived up to the dreams of the new immigrants

Resources/Materials

- The Life Story of a Bootblack: Rocco Corresca (excerpt)
- The Life Story of a Sweatshop Girl: Sadie Frowne (excerpt)
- The Life Story of a Chinese Immigrant: Lee Chew (excerpt)
- Comparing Immigrant Experiences graphic organizer

Activity

Day 1

 The following poem excerpt is inscribed at the base of pedestal of the Statue of Liberty written by Emma Lazarus a Dutch Immigrant:

Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me.

I lift my lamp besides the golden door!

- Answer the following questions:
 - If you were an immigrant arriving in the U.S. at the turn of the century, how would you have felt upon reading the inscription on the base of the statue?
 - Explain by citing a specific example from the text.
- Immigrants to the Western part of the United States usually entered at Angel Island. Like Ellis Island, it served as a detention center for immigrants waiting for admission and for those who were awaiting deportation.
- At Angel Island some of the Chinese and Japanese detainees wrote poems on the walls of the
 wooden barracks. These poems recorded their feelings about their voyage, their longing for home,
 and their forced stay on the island.
- Read the poem below, The Angel Island Poem. Note that the Flowery Flag is a Cantonese term for the United States. It refers to its colorful flag:

Passport to Social Studies: Immigrant Experience

The Angel Island Poem

I used to admire the land of the Flowery Flag as a country of abundance.

I immediately raised money and started my journey.

For over a month, I have experienced enough winds and waves.

Now on an extended sojourn in jail, I am subject to the ordeals of prison life.

I look up and see Oakland so close by.

I wish to go back to my motherland to carry the farmer's hoe.

Discontent fills my belly and it is difficult for me to sleep.

I just write these few lines to express what is on my mind.

- Answer the following question based on The Angel Island Poem:
 - If you were an immigrant arriving in the U.S. at the turn of the century, how would you have felt upon reading this inscription on the wooden barracks wall? Explain by citing a specific example from the text.
 - How did the real experiences of the immigrants at Angel Island compare with the ideal America expressed in the Lazarus poem?

Day 2

- You will read, analyze, and compare four life story excerpts on the immigrant experience to determine whether the U.S. lived up to the dreams.
- Read all four life stories Bootblack: Rocco Corresca, Sweatshop Girl: Sadie Frowne, Chinaman: Lee Chew, and Irish Cook: Ann McNab
- Look for key points and information to answer questions on the *Comparing Immigrant Experiences* graphic organizer
- After reading and completing the graphic organizer answer the following:
 - To what extent did the experiences of these four immigrants live up to their expectations and dreams? Explain.
 - How did the real experiences of these immigrants to the U.S. compare with the ideal America expressed in the Lazarus poem, or with that expressed in the Angel Island Poem?

The Life Story of a Bootblack: Rocco Corresca

Excerpt

Rocco Corresca tells of his difficult upbringing in Italy. He grew up in the country in the care of kindly nuns, but at the age of eight was taken to live with his grandfather in Naples. For several years he lived in a cellar with five other boys and was forced to beg in the city. He eventually ran away with another boy named Francisco.

Now and then I had heard things about America that it was a far off country where everybody was rich and that Italians went there and made plenty of money, so that they could return to Italy and live in pleasure ever after. One day I met a young man who pulled out a handful of gold and told me he had made that in America in a few days. I said I should like to go there, and he told me that if I went he would take care of me and see that I was safe. ... So we said goodbye to our good friends. Teresa cried and kissed us both ... We cried, too, for it was our home, that place. Ciguciano gave us money and slapped us on the back and said that we should be great. But he felt bad, too, at seeing us go away after all that time.

The young man took us to a big ship and got us work away down where the fires are. We had to carry coal to the place where it could be thrown on the fires. Francisco and I were very sick from the great heat at first and lay on the coal for a long time, but they threw water on us and made us get up. We could not stand on our feet well, for everything was going around and we had no strength. We said that we wished we had stayed in Italy no matter how much gold there was in America. We could not eat for three days and could not do much work. Then we got better ... [A]t last we saw land and came up to New York.

After they landed at Ellis Island, they are almost sent back to Italy. But a stranger named Bartolo intervened, claimed to be their uncle, and took them to Brooklyn.

We came to Brooklyn to a wooden house in Adams Street that was full of Italians from Naples. Bartolo had a room on the third floor and there were fifteen men in the room, all boarding with Bartolo. He did the cooking on a stove in the middle of the room and there were beds all around the sides, one bed above another. It was very hot in the room, but we were soon asleep, for we were very tired.

The next morning, early, Bartolo told us to go out and pick rags² and get bottles. He gave us bags and hooks and showed us the ash barrels. On the streets where the fine houses are the people are very careless and put out good things, like mattresses and umbrellas, clothes, hats and boots. We brought all these to Bartolo and he made them new again and sold them on the sidewalk but mostly we brought rags and bones. The rags we had to wash in the backyard and then we hung them to dry on lines ... in our room. The bones we kept under the beds till Barolo could find a man to buy them.

¹ They were suffering from seasickness.

² Rags were sold by the pound to paper companies to be used in manufacturing paper.

Most of the men in our room worked at digging the sewer. Bartolo got them the work and they paid him about one-quarter of their wages. Then he charged them for board and ... clothes. So they got little money after all.

Bartolo was always saying that the rent of the room was so high that he could not make anything, but he was really making plenty. He was what they call a *padrone*³ and is now a very rich man. The men that were living with him had just come to the country and could not speak English. They had all been sent by the young man we met in Italy. Bartolo told us all that we must work for him and that if we did not the police would come and put us in prison.

He gave us very little money, and our clothes were some of those that were found on the street. Still we had enough to eat and we had meat quite often, which we never had in Italy. Bartolo got it from the butcher the meat that he could not sell to other people but it was quite good meat. Bartolo cooked it in the pan while we all sat on our beds in the evening. Then he cut it into small bits and passed the pan around, saying "See what I do for you and yet you are not glad I am too kind a man. That is why I am so poor."

We were with Bartolo nearly a year, but some of our countrymen who had been in the place a long time said that Bartolo had no right to us and we could get work for a dollar and a half a day, which, when you make it *lire* (reckoned in the Italian currency) is very much. So we went away one day to Newark and got work on the street. Bartolo came after us and made a great noise, but the boss said that if he did not go away soon the police would have him. Then he went, saying that there was no justice in this country.

We paid a man five dollars each for getting us the work and we were with that boss for six months. He was Irish, but a good man and he gave us our money every Saturday night. We lived much better than with Bartolo, and when the work was done we each had nearly \$200 saved. Plenty of the men spoke English and they taught us, and we taught them to read and write...

We got up at half past five o'clock every morning and made coffee on the stove and had a breakfast of bread and cheese, onions, garlic and red herrings. We went to work at seven o'clock and in the middle of the day we had soup and bread in a place where we got it for two cents a plate. In the evenings we had a good dinner with meat of some kind and potatoes. We got from the butcher the meat that other people would not buy because they said it was old, but they don't know what is good. We paid four or five cents a pound for it and it was the best, tho I have heard of people paying 16 cents a pound.

When the Newark boss told us that there was no more work Francisco and I talked about what we would do and we went back to Brooklyn to a saloon near Hamilton Ferry, where we got a job cleaning it out and slept in a little room upstairs. There was a bootblack named Michael on the corner and when I had time I helped him and learned the business. Francisco cooked the lunch in the saloon and he, too, worked for the bootblack and we were soon able to make the best polish.

³ A padrone was an Italian who took recent immigrants under his wing, providing them with room, board, and work in exchange for a portion of their wages. Many were ruthless and exploited the immigrants who spoke little or no English, knew no one else in America, and feared being deported.

Then we thought we would go into business and we got a basement on Hamilton Avenue, near the Ferry, and put four chairs in it. We paid \$75 for the chairs and all the other things. We had tables and looking glasses there and curtains. We took the papers that have the pictures in and made the place high toned. Outside we had a big sign that said:

THE BEST SHINE FOR TEN CENTS

... We had two boys helping us and paid each of them fifty cents a day. The rent of the place was \$20 a month, so the expenses were very great, but we made money from the beginning. We slept in the basement ... [and] Francisco cooked for us all. That would not do, tho, because some of our customers said that they did not like to smell garlic and onions and red herrings. I thought that was strange, but we had to do what the customers said. So we got the woman who lived upstairs to give us our meals and paid her \$1.50 a week each...

We had said that when we saved \$1,000 each we would go back to Italy and buy a farm, but now that the time is coming we are so busy and making so much money that we think we will stay. We have opened another parlor near South Ferry, in New York. We have to pay \$30 a month rent, but the business is very good...

At first we did not know much of this country, but by and by we learned. There are here plenty of Protestants who are heretics, but they have a religion, too. Many of the finest churches are Protestant, but they have no saints and no altars, which seems strange.

These people are without a king such as ours in Italy. It is what they call a Republic, as Garibaldi wanted, and every year in the fall the people vote. They wanted us to vote last fall, but we did not. A man came and said that he would get us made Americans⁴ for fifty cents and then we could get two dollars for our votes⁵. I talked to some of our people and they told me that we should have to put a paper in a box telling who we wanted to govern us.

I and Francisco are to be Americans in three years. The court gave us papers and said we must wait and we must be able to read some things and tell who the ruler of the country is.

There are plenty of rich Italians here, men who a few years ago had nothing and now have so much money that they could not count all their dollars in a week. The richest ones go away from the other Italians and live with the Americans.

We have joined a club and have much pleasure in the evenings. The club has rooms down in Sackett Street and we meet many people and are learning new things all the time. We were very ignorant when we came here, but now we have learned much.

On Sundays we get a horse and carriage from the grocer and go down to Coney Island.⁶ We go to the theatres often and other evenings we go to the houses of our friends and play cards.

⁴ become naturalized citizens

⁵ He is describing an encounter with an operative of the Tammany Hall political machine who offered to help them become citizens and then pay them to vote for Tammany's candidates.

⁶ The famous amusement park in Brooklyn

I am nineteen years of age now and have \$700 saved. Francisco is twenty-one and has about \$900. We shall open some more parlors soon. I know an Italian who was a bootblack ten years ago and now bosses bootblacks all over the city, who has so much money that if it was turned into gold it would weigh more than himself.

I often think of Ciguciano and Teresa. He is a good man, one in a thousand, and she was very beautiful. Maybe I shall write to them about coming to this country.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Originally published in The Independent, LIV (Dec. 4, 1902)

The Life Story of a Sweatshop Girl: Sadie Frowne

Excerpt

Sadie Frowne describes her life growing up in a Jewish family in Poland. At first the family lived well, but then her father died and she and her mother fell on hard times.

We struggled along till I was nearly thirteen years of age ... [M]other kept thinking more and more that we should have to leave Poland and go across the sea to America where we heard it was much easier to make money. Mother wrote to Aunt Fanny, who lived in New York, and told her how hard it was to live in Poland, and Aunt Fanny advised her to come and bring me. ... She said we should both come at once, and she went around among our relatives in New York and took up a subscription for our passage.¹

We came by steerage on a steamship in a very dark place that smelt dreadfully. There were hundreds of other people packed in with us, men, women and children, and almost all of them were sick. It took us twelve days to cross the sea, and we thought we should die, but at last the voyage was over, and we came up and saw the beautiful bay and the big woman with the spikes on her head and the lamp that is lighted at night in her hand (Goddess of Liberty²).

Aunt Fanny and her husband met us at the gate of this country and were very good to us, and soon I had a place to live out (domestic servant), while my mother got work in a factory making white goods.

I was only a little over thirteen years of age and a greenhorn, so I received \$9 a month and board and lodging, which I thought was doing well. Mother, who, as I have said, was very clever, made \$9 a week on white goods, which means all sorts of underclothing, and is high class work.

But mother ... died³ and I was left alone. I had saved money while out at service, but mother's sickness and funeral swept it all away and now I had to begin all over again...

So I went to work in Allen Street (Manhattan) in what they call a sweatshop, making skirts by machine. I was new at the work and the foreman scolded me a great deal. ... I did not know at first that you must not look around and talk, and I made many mistakes with the sewing, so that I was often called a "stupid animal." But I made \$4 a week by working six days in the week...

In Poland I and my father and mother used to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath, but here the women don't go to the synagogue much, tho the men do. They are shut up working hard all the week long and when the Sabbath comes they like to sleep long in bed and afterward they must go out where they can breathe the air. The rabbis are strict here, but not so strict as in the old country.

¹ raised money for the cost of their tickets

² the Statue of Liberty

³ from tuberculosis

I lived at this time with a girl named Ella, who worked in the same factory and made \$5 a week. We had the room all to ourselves, paying \$1.50 a week for it, and doing light housekeeping. It was in Allen Street, and the window looked out of the back, which was good, because there was an elevated railroad in front, and in summer time a great deal of dust and dirt came in at the front windows. We were on the fourth story and could see all that was going on in the back rooms of the houses behind us, and early in the morning the sun used to come in our window.

We did our cooking on an oil stove, and lived well...

Of course, we could have lived cheaper, but we are both fond of good things and felt that we could afford them.

We paid 18 cents for a half pound of tea so as to get it good, and it lasted us three weeks, because we had cocoa for breakfast. We paid 5 cents for six rolls and 5 cents a loaf for bread, which was the best quality. Oatmeal cost us 10 cents for three and one half pounds, and we often had it in the morning, or Indian meal porridge in the place of it, costing about the same. Half a dozen eggs cost about 13 cents on average, and we could get all the meat we wanted for a good hearty meal for 20 cents; two pounds of chops, or a steak, or a bit of veal, or a neck of lamb something like that. Fish included butter fish, porgies, codfish and smelts, averaging about 8 cents a pound.

Some people who buy at the last of the market, when the men with the carts want to go home, can get things very cheap... [W]e did buy that way and got good bargains. I got thirty potatoes for 10 cents one time, tho generally I could not get more than 15 of them for that amount. Tomatoes, onions and cabbages, too, we bought that way and did well, and we found a factory where we could buy the finest broken crackers for 3 cents a pound, and another place where we got broken candy for 10 cents a pound. Our cooking was done on an oil stove, and the oil for the stove and the lamp cost us 10 cents a week.

It cost me \$2 a week to live, and I had a dollar a week to spend on clothing and pleasure, and saved the other dollar. I went to night school, but it was hard work learning at first as I did not know much English.

Two years ago I came to this place, Brownsville,⁴ where so many of my people are, and where I have friends. I got work in a factory making underskirts all sorts of cheap underskirts, like cotton and calico for the summer and woolen for the winter, but never the silk, satin or velvet underskirts. I earned \$4.50 a week and lived on \$2 a week, the same as before.

I got a room in the house of some friends who lived near the factory. I pay \$1 a week for the room and am allowed to do light housekeeping that is, cook my meals in it. I get my own breakfast in the morning, just a cup of coffee and a roll, and at noon time I come home to dinner and take a plate of soup and a slice of bread with the lady of the house. My food for a week costs a dollar, just as it did in Allen Street, and I have the rest of my money to do as I like with. I am earning \$5.50 a week now, and will probably get another increase soon.

⁴ a section of Brooklyn

It isn't piecework in our factory, but one is paid by the amount of work done just the same. So it is like piecework. All the hands get different amounts, some as low as \$3.50 and some of the men as high as \$16 a week. The factory is ... in a room twenty feet long and fourteen broad. There are fourteen machines in it. I and the daughter of the people with whom I live work two of these machines. The other operators are all men, some young and some old.

... At seven o' clock we all sit down to our machines and the boss brings to each one the pile of work that he or she is to finish during the day, what they call in English their "stint." This pile is put down beside the machine and as soon as a skirt is done it is laid on the other side of the machine. Sometimes the work is not all finished by six o'clock and then the one who is behind must work overtime. Sometimes one is finished ahead of time and gets away at four or five o'clock, but generally we are not done till six o'clock.

The machines go like mad all day, because the faster you work the more money you get. Sometimes in my haste I get my finger caught and the needle goes right through it. It goes so quick tho, that it does not hurt much. I bind the finger up with a piece of cotton and go on working. We all have accidents like that. Where the needle goes through the nail it makes a sore finger, or where it splinters a bone it does much harm. Sometimes a finger has to come off...

All the time we are working the boss walks about examining the finished garments and making us do them over again if they are not just right. So we have to be careful as well as swift. But I am getting so good at the work that within a year I will be making \$7 a week, and then I can save at least \$3.50 a week. I have over \$200 saved now.

The machines are all run by foot power, and at the end of the day one feels so weak that there is a great temptation to lie right down and sleep. But you must go out and get air, and have some pleasure. So instead of lying down I go out, generally with Henry. Sometimes we go to Coney Island,⁵ where there are good dancing places, and sometimes we go to Ulmer Park to picnics. I am very fond of dancing, and, in fact, all sorts of pleasure. I go to the theater quite often ...

...We have just finished a strike in our business. It spread all over and the United Brotherhood of Garment Workers⁶ was in it. ... We struck for shorter hours, and after being out four weeks won the fight. We only have to work nine and a half hours a day and we get the same pay as before. So the union does good after all in spite of what some people say against it, that it just takes our money and does nothing. I pay 25 cents a month to the union, but I do not begrudge that because it is for our benefit. The next strike is going to be for a raise of wages, which we all ought to have. But tho I belong to the union I am not a Socialist or an Anarchist I don't know exactly what those things mean. There is a little expense for charity, too. If any worker is injured or sick we all give money to help.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Independent, LIV (Sept 25, 1902).

⁵ The famous amusement park

⁶ a labor union for workers in the garment industry

The Life Story of a Chinese Immigrant: Lee Chew

Excerpt

... My father gave me \$100, and I went to Hong Kong with five other boys from our place and we got steerage passage on a steamer, paying \$50 each. Everything was new to me. ... The food was different from that which I had been used to, and I did not like it at all. ... When I got to San Francisco, which was before the passage of the Exclusion act,¹ I was half starved, because I was afraid to eat the provisions of the barbarians,² but a few days' living in the Chinese quarter³ made me happy again. A man got me work as a house servant in an American family, and my start was the same as that of almost all the Chinese in this country.

The Chinese laundryman does not learn his trade in China; there are no laundries in China. The women there do the washing in tubs and have no washboards or flat irons. All the Chinese laundrymen here were taught in the first place by American women just as I was taught.

When I went to work for that American family I could not speak a word of English, and I did not know anything about housework. The family consisted of husband, wife and two children. They were very good to me and paid me \$3.50 a week, of which I could save \$3.

I did not know how to do anything, and I did not understand what the lady said to me, but she showed me how to cook, wash, iron, sweep, dust, make beds, wash dishes, clean windows, paint and brass, polish the knives and forks, etc. ... She and her husband and children laughed at me a great deal, but it was all good natured.

In six months I had learned how to do the work of our house quite well, and I was getting \$5 a week and board, and putting away about \$4.25 a week. I had also learned some English, and by going to a Sunday school I learned more English and something about Jesus, who was a great Sage, and whose precepts are like those of Kong footsze.

It was twenty years ago when I came to this country, and I worked for two years as a servant, getting at the last \$35 a month. I sent money home to comfort my parents, but the I dressed well and lived well and had pleasure, going quite often to the Chinese theater and to dinner parties in Chinatown, I saved \$50 in the first six months, \$90 in the second, \$120 in the third and \$150 in the fourth. So I had \$410 at the end of two years, and I was now ready to start in business.

When I first opened a laundry it was in company with a partner... We went to a town about 500 miles inland, where a railroad was building. We ... worked for the men employed by the railroads. ... We had to put up with many insults and some frauds, as men would come in and claim parcels that did not belong to them, saying they had lost their tickets, and would fight if they did not get what they asked for. Sometimes we were taken before Magistrates and fined

¹ The Chinese Exclusion Act, passed in 1882, barred Chinese immigration to the U.S.

² Chinese immigrants often called Americans and Europeans "barbarians"

³ Chinatown

for losing shirts that we had never seen. On the other hand, we were making money, and even after sending home \$3 a week I was able to save about \$15. When the railroad construction gang moved on we went with them. The men were rough and prejudiced against us, but not more so than in the big Eastern cities. It is only lately in New York that the Chinese have been able to discontinue putting wire screens in front of their windows, and at the present time the street boys are still breaking the windows of Chinese laundries all over the city, while the police seem to think it a joke.

We were three years with the railroad, and then went to the mines, where we made plenty of money in gold dust, but had a hard time, for many of the miners were wild men who carried revolvers and after drinking would come into our place to shoot and steal shirts, for which we had to pay. One of these men hit his head hard against a flat iron and all the miners came and broke up our laundry, chasing us out of town. They were going to hang us. We lost all our property and \$365 in money, which members of the mob must have found.

...American cheap labor in the steam laundries has hurt it. So I determined to become a general merchant, and with this idea I came to New York and opened a shop in the Chinese quarter, keeping silks, teas, porcelain, clothes, shoes, hats and Chinese provisions, which include sharks' fins and nuts, lily bulbs and lily flowers, lychee nuts and other Chinese dainties. ...

Work in a laundry begins early on Monday morning about seven o'clock. There are generally two men, one of whom washes while the other does the ironing. The man who irons does not start in till Tuesday, as the clothes are not ready for him to begin till that time. So he has Sundays and Mondays as holidays. The man who does the washing finishes up on Friday night, and so he has Saturday and Sunday. Each works only five days a week, but those are long days—from seven o'clock in the morning till midnight.

...I have found out, during my residence in this country, that much of the Chinese prejudice against Americans is unfounded, and I no longer put faith in the wild tales that were told about them in our village, tho some of the Chinese, who have been here twenty years and who are learned men, still believe that there is no marriage in this country, that the land is infested with demons and that all the people are given over to general wickedness.

I know better. Americans are not all bad ... Still, they have their faults, and their treatment of us is outrageous.

The reason why so many Chinese go into the laundry business in this country is because it requires little capital and is one of the few opportunities that are open.⁴ Men of other nationalities who are jealous of the Chinese, because he is a more faithful worker than one of their people, have raised such a great outcry about Chinese cheap labor that they have shut him out of working on farms or in factories or building railroads or making streets or digging sewers. He cannot practice any trade, and his opportunities to do business are limited to his own countrymen. So he opens a laundry when he quits domestic service.

⁴ Due to employment discrimination against the Chinese

The treatment of the Chinese in this country is all wrong and mean. It is persisted in merely because China is not a fighting nation. The Americans would not dare to treat Germans, English, Italians or even Japanese as they treat the Chinese, because if they did there would be a war.

There is no reason for the prejudice against the Chinese. The cheap labor cry was always a falsehood. Their labor was never cheap, and is not cheap now. It has always commanded the highest market price. But the trouble is that the Chinese are such excellent and faithful workers that bosses will have no others when they can get them. ... It was the jealousy of laboring men of other nationalities—especially the Irish—that raised all the outcry against the Chinese. No one would hire an Irishman, German, Englishman or Italian when he could get a Chinese, because our countrymen are so much more honest, industrious, steady, sober and painstaking. Chinese were persecuted, not for their vices, but for their virtues. There never was any honesty in the pretended fear of leprosy or in the cheap labor scare, and the persecution continues still, because Americans make a mere practice of loving justice. ...

....There are few Chinamen in jails and none in the poor houses. There are no Chinese tramps or drunkards. Many Chinese here have become sincere Christians, in spite of the persecution which they have to endure from their heathen countrymen. More than half the Chinese in this country would become citizens if allowed to do so,⁵ and would be patriotic Americans. But how can they make this country their home as matters now are! They are not allowed to bring wives here from China, and if they marry American women there is a great outcry.

... Under the circumstances, how can I call this my home, and how can anyone blame me if I take my money and go back to my village in China?

New York

Independent, LV (Feb. 19, 1903). 417-3.

⁵ the Chinese Exclusion Act barred the Chinese in the U.S. from becoming citizens

The Life Story of an Irish Cook

Excerpt

The cook Ann McNabb whose story follows, lived for many years in the home of one of America's best known literary women, who has taken down her conversation in this form.

But about me--I was born¹ nigh to Limavaddy; it's a pretty town close to Londonderry. We lived in a peat cabin, but it had a good thatched roof. Mother put on that roof. It isn't a woman's work, but she was able for it.

...Pay was very small and the twins-that was Maria and Philip-they were too young to work at all. What did we eat? Well, just potatoes. On Sundays, once a month, we'd maybe have a bit of flitch². When the potatoes rotted³ --that was the hard times! Oh, yes, I mind the famine years. An' the cornmeal that the 'Mericans sent⁴. The folks said they'd rather starve nor eat it. We didn't know how to cook it. Here I eat corn dodgers and fried mush fast enough.

... Mother said when Maria died, "There's a curse on ould green Ireland and we'll get out of it." So we worked an' saved for four year an' then Squire Varney helped a bit an' we sent Tilly to America. She had always more head than me. She came to Philadelphia and got a place for general housework at Mrs. Bent's. Tilly got but two dollars a week, bein' a greenhorn. But she larned hand over hand, and Mrs. Bent kept no other help and laid out to teach her. She larned her to cook and bake and to wash and do up shirts -- all American fashion. Then Tilly axed three dollars a week. Mother always said, "Don't ax a penny more than you're worth. But know your own vally⁵ and ax that."

When I got here Mrs. Bent let Tilly keep me for two months to teach me—me bein' such a greenhorn. Of course I worked for her. Mr. Bent was foreman then in Spangler's big mills. After two months I got a place⁶. They were nice appearing people enough, but the second day I found out they were Jews. I never had seen a Jew before, so I packed my bag and said to the lady, "I beg your pardon, ma'am, but I can't eat the bread of them as crucified the Saviour." "But," she said, "he was a Jew." So at that I put out. I couldn't hear such talk. Then I got a place for general housework with Mrs. Carr. I got \$2 till I learned to cook good, and then \$3 and then \$4. I was in that house as cook and nurse for twenty-two years. Tilly lived with the Bents till she died, eighteen years...

How did we keep our places so long? Well, I think me and Tilly was clean in our work and we was decent, and, of course, we was honest. Nobody living can say that one of the McNabbs ever wronged him of a cent. Mrs. Carr's interests was my interests. I took better care of her things than she did herself, and I loved the children as if they was my own. She used to tell me my sin was I was stingy. I don't know. The McNabbs are no wasteful folk. I've worn one dress nine year and it looked decent then.

Me and Tilly saved till we brought Joseph and Phil over, and they went into Mr. Bent's mills as weaver and spool boy and then they saved, and we all brought out my mother and father.

¹ She was born about 1830

² A salted and cured side of bacon

³ During the Famine, 1845–1850

⁴ Relief supplies of corn sent to Ireland during the Famine

⁵ value

⁶ My own family to work for

We rented a little house in Kensington⁷ for them. There was a parlor in it and kitchen and two bedrooms and bathroom and marble door step, and a bell. That was in '66, and we paid nine dollars a month rent. You'd pay double that now. It took all our savings to furnish it, but Mrs. Bent and Mrs. Carr gave us lots of things to go in. To think of mother having a parlor and marble steps and a bell! They came on the old steamer "Indiana" and got here at night, and we had supper for them and the house all lighted up. Well, you ought to have seen mother's old face! I'll never forget that night if I live to be a hundred. After that mother took in boarders and Joseph and Phil was there. We all put every cent we earned into building associations.⁸ So Tilly owned a house when she died and I own this one now. Our ladies⁹ told us how to put the money¹⁰ so as to breed more, and we never spent a cent we could save. Joseph pushed on and got big wages and started a flour store, and Phil went to nightschool and got a place as clerk. He married a teacher in the Kensington public school. She was a showy miss! Silk dress and feathers in her hat!

Father died soon after he come. The drink here wasn't as wholesome for him as it was in Ireland. Poor father! He was a goodhearted man, but he wasn't worth a penny when he died.

Mother lived to be eighty. She was respected by all Kensington. The night she died she said: "I have much to praise God for. I haven't a child that is dependent on the day's work for the day's victuals. Every one of them owns a roof to cover him."

Joseph did well in his flour store. He has a big one on Market Street now and lives in a pretty house out in West Philadelphia. He's one of the wardens in his church out there and his girls gives teas and goes to reading clubs.

But Phil is the one to go ahead! His daughter Ann—she was named for me, but she calls herself Antoinette—is engaged to a young lawyer in New York. He gave her a diamond engagement ring the other day. And his son, young Phil, is in politics and a member of councils. He makes money hand over hand. He has an automobile and a fur coat, and you see his name at big dinners and him making speeches. No saving of pennies or building associations for Phil.

It was Phil that coaxed me to give up work at Mrs. Carr's and to open my house for boarders here in Kensington. His wife didn't like to hear it said I was working in somebody's kitchen. I've done well with the boarders. I know just how to feed them so as to lay by a little sum every year. I heard that young Phil told some of his friends that he had a queer old aunt up in Kensington who played poor, but had a great store of money hoarded away. He shouldn't have told a story like that. But young folks will be young! I like the boy. He is certainly bringing the family into notice in the world. Last Sunday's paper had his picture and one of the young lady he is going to marry in New York. It called him the young millionaire McNabb. But I judge he's not that. He wanted to borrow the money I have laid by in the old bank at Walnut and Seventh the other day and said he'd double it in a week. No such work as that for me! But the boy certainly is a credit to the family!

From Hamilton Holt, ed., The Life Stories of Undistinguished Americans as Told by Themselves (New York: James Pott & Co., 1906; originally published in the Independent 1902)

⁷ A section of Philadelphia

⁸ Small banks that invested in house construction

⁹ Employers

¹⁰ Save money

Comparing Immigrant Experiences

Use the chart below to record information about the experience of one immigrant.

Aspect of Immigrant Experience	Circle the immigrant experience that you read about: Bootblack Rocco Corresca, Sweatshop Girl Sadie Frowne, Chinese Immigrant Lee Chew, or Irish Cook Ann McNabb
Expectations upon arriving in the United States	
Living conditions	
Work and working conditions	
Attitudes and reactions of other Americans to the new immigrants	
Adjustment of immigrants to life in the U.S.	

Passport to Social Studies: World War I Technology

Objective

Evaluate how new military technology shaped modern warfare and led to increased casualties.

Resources/Materials

- Warfare in World War I
- Warfare in World War I Article Questions
- War Statistics Charts

Activity

- Create a list responding to the following question, "What types of weapons were used in wars prior to WWI that you know of?
- In order to understand the devastating effects of warfare during WWI you will explore new war technologies to decide which ones had the largest impact on WWI.
- Review the Warfare in World War I Article Questions.
- As you read the Warfare in World War I handout highlight, underline, or mark up the handout to identify information that you can use to help answer questions on the Warfare in World War I Article Questions sheet.
- Look at the War Statistics Charts and respond to the following questions:
 - How do the casualties in WWI compare to previous U.S. wars?
 - How do they compare to the causalities of other nations?
- Based on what you've read and seen today, what are two conclusions you can make based on the charts and the readings about new technologies?

Additional Resources

History Channel: Life in the Trench https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/life-in-a-trench-video

Passport to Social Studies: World War I Technology

BBC: Which new weapons were used in the war?
 https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zqhyb9q/articles/zs666sg

Warfare in World War I

World War I was less than one year old when British writer H. G. Wells lamented the fate of humanity at the hands of "man's increasing power of destruction" (H. G. Wells, "Civilization at the Breaking Point," New York Times, May 27, 1915, 2). Although considered a father of science fiction, Wells was observing something all too real-technology had changed the face of combat in World War I and ultimately accounted for an unprecedented loss of human life. Infantry warfare had depended upon handto-hand combat. World War I popularized the use of the machine guncapable of bringing down row after row of soldiers from a distance on the battlefield. This weapon, along with barbed wire and mines, made movement across open land both difficult and dangerous. Thus trench warfare was born. The British introduced tanks in 1916; they were used with airplanes and artillery to advance the front.





Images Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration

The advent of chemical warfare added to the soldier's perils.

Sea and airborne weapons made killing from a distance more effective as well. Guns mounted on ships were able to strike targets up to twenty miles inland. The stealth and speed of German submarines gave Germany a considerable advantage in its dominance of the North Sea. Although airplanes were technologically crude, they offered a psychological advantage. Fighter pilot aces such as Manfred von Richthofen, Germany's "Red Baron," became celebrities and heroes, capturing the world's imagination with their daring and thrilling mid-air maneuvers.

Newspapers charted the public's reaction—horror and vengeance—to these technological advancements. A few weeks after the Germans first used poison gas in Ypres, Belgium, on April 22, 1915, a London newswire to the New York Times described the brutal details of the attack and the immediate effects on the soldiers, concluding: "It is without doubt the most awful form of scientific torture." Yet a Daily Chronicle [London] editorial urged Britain to retaliate with poison gas use of its own (quoted in New York Times, May 7, 1915). In fact, Germany claimed that the Allies were already using mines charged with poison gas. So horrified were people by chemical warfare that the use of poison gases was banned for future wars, although

When Germany's plan for a swift military victory, a blitzkrieg, went unrealized, the pace of war bogged

not until 1925.





Images Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration

down. Both sides tried to break this stalemate through the use of force. In previous wars, victory was achieved through territorial supremacy; in World War I it was accomplished by simply outlasting the opponent—a "war of attrition." Initially described at the onset of the fighting in April 1914 as a "splendid little war" that would be over by Christmas, the conflict lasted for more than four years and scarred an entire generation with its unprecedented brutality.

Warfare in World War I Article Questions

 According to the article, what were new weapons or technologies that were used in World W Create a list. 	ar I?
. Out of all these new weapons or technologies which one do you feel had the most significant impact on the war? Explain why by citing evidence from the article.	
What was meant by a "war of attrition"?	

War Statistics Chart

	Civil War Total (1861–1865)	American Revolution (1776–1783)	
Total Forces	3,867,0000	200,000	
Killed in Combat	184,594	4,435	
Wounded in Combat	412,175	137,000	
Total Casualties	634,703	335,524	

World War I Casualties

Allied Powers							
	United States	Russia	England	France			
Total Forces	4,355,000	12,000,000	8,904,467	8,410,000			
Killed in Combat	116,516	1,700,000	908,371	1,357,800			
Wounded in Combat	204,002	4,950,000	2,090,212	4,266,000			
Total Casualties	323,018	9,150,000	3,190,235	6,160,800			

Central Powers							
	Germany	Austria-Hungary	Turkey	Bulgaria			
Total Forces	11,000,000	7,800,000	2,850,000	1,200,000			
Killed in Combat	1,773,700	1,200,000	325,000	87,500			
Wounded in Combat	4,216,058	3,620,000	400,000	152,390			
Total Casualties	7,142,558	7,020,000	975,000	266,919			

Data from U.S. Department of Justice