

Hot Dog!

Lesson 4: Problem Solving

Focus Questions

What history did the Union Stockyards leave behind? How did the meatpacking industry change Chicago economically and socially? What challenges did the meatpacking industry present for people and the environment?

Core Understandings

Students will understand that everything in Chicago history has a story behind it, just as everyone has a story to tell. Even though the stockyards were an important part of Chicago's economic advancement, there was a lot of controversy surrounding them.

Knowledge

Students will know key historical events in the evolution of Chicago, with a focus on the significance of the stockyards, the meatpacking industry, and the role of blues music. They will know the impact of the Maxwell Street Market (and its closing) on various Chicagoans' lives and how people of different cultures and backgrounds have effected the growth and development of the city.

Skills

Students will be able to use various research tools/avenues to explore different historical perspectives. They will use language-arts skills to interpret the past and formulate questions for personal inquiry. They will be able to compare and contrast primary and secondary sources and discern fact from fiction.

Common Core ELA Standards

CCSSR1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSSR2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

ISBE Social Science Standards

Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the US.

Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the US, and other nations.

Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the US.

Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the US.

In This Lesson

By exploring some of the challenges brought about by the stockyards and the meatpacking industry, students will grapple with the concept of controversy and the notion that institutions can have both positive and negative effects. The story element of dramatic twists is addressed.

This lesson was researched and written by Amy E. Andrews.



Activity

To begin this lesson, students should refer back to their original list of reasons why the hot dog is important from Lesson 1.

As they read over these lists again (to themselves) ask them to look back at Allan's interaction with Mr. Pernsley in the narrative. Focus in on Mr. Pernsley's comment that "Campaigns for better workers rights in meatpacking started here. Even many laws about keeping food safe started because of problems in Chicago's packing houses" (page 9 of the story PDF).

http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Hot_Dog_by_Kris_Nesbitt.pdf

Revisit the background information from the *Hot Dog!* story.

<http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/culture/background.php>

Then lead students through a discussion about the meaning of the word "controversy." Guide students in creating a web about what "problems" they think might have occurred as a result of the stockyards and the meatpacking industry (e.g. animals in the streets, worker's rights, food safety, air quality). Challenge them to give specific examples of how these problems would have affected people's lives and to offer possible solutions.

Materials & Resources

- **Computer access for students in the classroom**
- ***Hot Dog!* narrative:**
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Hot_Dog_by_Kris_Nesbitt.pdf
- ***Hot Dog!* background information:**
<http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/culture/background.php>
- ***Encyclopedia of Chicago* website** (optional):
<http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org>; entries for “Meatpacking” and “Air Quality”

Instructional Notes

Consider following this unit with a visit to the Chicago History Museum’s “Crossroads” exhibition, which features both the Maxwell Street Market and the Chicago Union Stockyards.

Extension Activities

Students can research other controversies surrounding the stockyards, such as the poor working conditions mentioned in the narrative. They can create a cause/effect chart to display their findings. This can be done as a Home Connection or given as an enrichment assignment in class.

Another option would be a Venn diagram to compare/contrast the Maxwell Street Market and the Union Stockyards as two very important pieces of Chicago’s history.