

**Social Studies Content Themes for Elementary/Middle School**  
**From**  
***“The Making of Milwaukee Curriculum”***

**1920’s:**

**Teaching about the 1920’s in Milwaukee**

The following activities are from “The Making of Milwaukee” on-line curriculum.

- **Creating Our Own Milwaukee Textbook**
- **Take Me Out and Back to the Ballpark (Discussing Photographs)**
- **Speaking of the Ballpark (Preparing a Speech)**
- **Who Am I? (Trivia Activity)**
- **What Am I? (Trivia Activity)**
- **Acting Out Missing Events (Timeline Activity)**

**CREATING OUR OWN MILWAUKEE TEXTBOOK**

1. Imagine that your students have been asked by a local publishing company to write a textbook chapter or chapters explaining the history of Milwaukee from 1914 – 1945, which includes Milwaukee during World War I, the Roaring 20’s, the Great Depression, and World War II (You may select any or all of these topics based on what video clips you show in this unit. You may also assign different topics to different groups). Students will use information from the video or other sources to create a textbook for other students on these topics. However, just as the people who make textbooks have limited space to describe events, students will only get to create a limited number of pages. (Use your own discretion based on the topic(s) for each chapter. For example, 3 might be a good limit).
2. Divide the students into groups (or you may assign students to do this individually) and ask them to discuss the following questions first:
  - Which individuals, groups, or events should be included in the textbook chapter(s)?
  - Why should these individuals, groups, or events be included?
  - Which individuals, groups, or events should receive the most attention and focus?
  - Why should these individuals, groups, or events receive the most focus?
  - What makes some information more important than other information?
3. If students cannot come to some agreement on the general content of the textbook chapter(s), this might be a good time for a class discussion on these same questions.
4. After students have discussed these questions have them list specific individuals, events, groups, and information related to these topics that they will include in

their textbook page(s). They should also discuss where and how they will place any text, photographs, captions, graphs, quotes from primary sources, or other elements of a textbook page. If students are working in groups, they might want to assign roles like text writer, graphic designer, editor, and an individual to select photographs (see archives).

*Students can find images for their textbook pages by going to the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section of The Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com). Use the “search” tool to locate images and photographs under the various pull down categories.*

5. After students have completed their pages, have each group or individual present their textbook pages.
6. Then, return to the discussion questions listed above and have individuals or groups compare how their newly created textbook pages answered those questions.
7. Finally, this is a great opportunity to discuss how textbooks contain limited and missing perspectives from the past and the way some perspectives get attention over others. The activity should end with a discussion about the perspectives missing from the textbook pages. In fact, the teacher might have each group (or student if they are working on this individually) include a note with their textbook pages describing the missing perspectives and defending why these perspectives are missing.

Follow-up Learning Activity:

The teacher could ask students to look at their own textbooks that they use for the class and discuss the same issues about representation and which individuals, groups, and events get the most attention in relationship to the people, events, and ideas that are left out of the textbook.

*This activity requires access to the accompanying book *The Making of Milwaukee* or, the accompanying website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com).*

Photo of Borchert Field.....Present day photo of Miller Park  
(In “Hard Times and Wartime” Chapter) <http://www.ballparks.com/baseball/national/miller.htm>

*The Then and Now photographs for this activity can also be found by going to The Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com). Select the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section, and “Outdoor Places” from the pull-down menu.*

## **TAKE ME OUT AND BACK TO THE BALL PARK**

1. After viewing pictures of Borchert Field and Miller Park, have students imagine that they are at a present day Milwaukee Brewers game at Miller Park. Imagine that they happen to strike up a conversation with the person next to them. They find out that this person has lived in Milwaukee for years, and he or she begins telling them about a day at the ball park when it was called Borchert Field.
2. Have them analyze these two images and use their analysis to create a potential list of similarities and differences between the photographs. They should use as many details as possible in the photographs to make comparisons and contrasts.
3. Then have students use their lists to write a possible conversation between them and the person they meet at the ball game that compares the experience of a day at the ball park in Milwaukee during the 1930's and a day at the ball park today. They should use these fictional conversations to think about the way the experience of watching a baseball game in Milwaukee has changed in some ways but possibly stayed the same in other ways.
4. Have students read or even act out their conversations with one another in front of the class.

Follow-up Learning Activity:

- The teacher might want to discuss the different ways students interpreted the photographs and the different ideas that students focused on in their conversations.

**SPEAKING OF THE BALL PARK...**

1. Have students imagine that they have lived in Milwaukee for over 80 years and have been invited to speak to a class of kids about baseball in Milwaukee. They decide to bring the two photographs from above to their guest speaking engagement to help the students understand changes in baseball that the city has seen over the years. Before passing these photographs to the students, the student, as the guest speaker, decides to explain each photograph in detail to make his or her point.
2. Have students write a speech that they would give to other students in this situation based on these two photographs. The speech should include a description of as many details as possible from these photographs and highlight any possible similarities or differences between the photographs.
3. Have students deliver their speeches to the class.

Follow-up Learning Activity:

- The teacher might want to discuss the different ways students interpreted the photographs and the different ideas that students focused on in the speeches.

## WHO AM I?

1. In the following activity students will be given 3 clues about a person who was famous during this time period (1914 – 1945) in Milwaukee’s history. The teacher should read the first clue to students and ask them to guess who the person is. If no students guess correctly, the teacher should then read the second clue to students to see if someone guesses correctly. Finally, if no students guess correctly, the teacher should read the third clue to students to see if someone guesses correctly. If no student guesses correctly after the third clue, the teacher should read the answer. The first person to guess correctly wins. The teacher could assign point values for each clue given. For example, a correct guess after the first clue could be worth 25 points, a correct guess after the second clue could be worth 10 points, and a correct guess after the third clue could be worth 5 points.

*An interactive version of this activity can also be found on-line by going to the homepage of The Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com). Choose the “In the Classroom” section and click on “Interactive Lessons.” Or, to go directly to this on-line activity, click here now:*

[http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/classroom/who\\_am\\_i/index.cfm](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/classroom/who_am_i/index.cfm)

*On-line directions are also given.*

CLUE #1 : I was a welcome distraction to Milwaukee’s worries during World War II

CLUE #2 : My story inspired a widely read children’s book in the U.S.

CLUE #3 : I laid a clutch of eggs on a piling next to the Wisconsin Avenue Bridge

**ANSWER : Gertie the Duck**

CLUE #1 : My grandfather was known to some as “Alexander the Great” in Milwaukee

CLUE #2 : I was placed in charge of the entire Allied Air Service during World War I.

CLUE #3 : Milwaukee’s airport is currently named after me

**ANSWER : Billy Mitchell**

CLUE #1 : I issued a very strong warning against the Ku Klux Klan in Milwaukee during the 1920’s

CLUE #2 : I was on the cover of Time magazine for being one of the nation's best public servants in 1936.

CLUE #3 : I served as Milwaukee's mayor during the Great Depression

**ANSWER : Daniel Hoan**

CLUE #1 : I ran the *Milwaukee Leader*, a socialist newspaper in Milwaukee

CLUE #2 : I was convicted for speaking out against the government when my paper ran anti-war editorials during World War I

CLUE #3 : Congress refused to offer me my seat when Milwaukee elected me to the House of Representatives in 1918

**ANSWER : Victor Berger**

CLUE #1 : I was an assistant city attorney, a stirring singer, and a gifted speaker

CLUE #2 : I defeated Daniel Hoan to become mayor in 1940

CLUE #3 : I quit my job to join the Navy during World War II and declared, "My life is not my own. It belongs to my country."

**ANSWER : Carl Zeidler**

## **WHAT AM I?**

1. In the following activity students will be given 3 clues about a place that became famous during this time period (1914 – 1945) in Milwaukee's history. The teacher should read the first clue to students and ask them to guess what the place is. If no students guess correctly, the teacher should then read the second clue to students to see if someone guesses correctly. Finally, if no students guess correctly, the teacher should read the third clue to students to see if someone guesses correctly. If no student guesses correctly after the third clue, the teacher should read the answer. The first person to guess correctly wins. The teacher could assign point values for each clue given. For example, a correct guess after the first clue could be worth 25 points, a correct guess after the second clue could be worth 10 points, and a correct guess after the third clue could be worth 5 points.

CLUE #1 : I was Milwaukee's biggest defense contractor during World War II

CLUE #2 : I became part of a top secret project to build the first atomic bomb

CLUE #3 : Nearly 20,000 people, enough to fill a small city, worked in my place at the peak of World War II

**ANSWER : The Allis Chalmers Company**

CLUE #1 : I am a planned community built for working class families during the Depression

CLUE #2 : There are 2 other communities just like me in Ohio and Maryland

CLUE #3 : I was completed in 1938 to surround workers with nature

**ANSWER : Greendale**

CLUE #1 : I am currently located next to the downtown Milwaukee Public Library

CLUE #2 : I was initially the mansion of Alexander Mitchell

CLUE #3 : I used to house the Deustcher Club before it changed its name during World War I

**ANSWER : The Wisconsin Club**

CLUE #1 : I am located on Milwaukee's Northwest side, and I became the quintessential 1920's neighborhood

CLUE #2 : My orderly streetscapes reflected the influence of zoning – a 1920's innovation

CLUE #3 : The bungalow became the signature house in my neighborhood during the 1920's

**ANSWER : Sherman Park**

CLUE #1 : I am Milwaukee County's largest green space

CLUE #2 : A botanical garden was built inside me with funds from the New Deal

CLUE #3 : I am named after a person who created a master plan for Milwaukee County's Park System

**ANSWER : Whitnall Park**

### **ACTING OUT MISSING EVENTS**

1. The teacher should divide the class into groups or pairs and have them act out one event that is missing from the timeline from the 1920's.
1. After the skit is over, the group should try to identify the event and discuss why this is important to include on the timeline.