

**Teaching and Learning Strategies for Elementary/Middle School
From
“The Making of Milwaukee” Curriculum**

**Discussion:
Teaching and Learning about Milwaukee through Discussion**

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

- **Arriving in Milwaukee** (Discuss Experience of Coming to a New Land)
- **Adding to Your Knowledge of Ethnic Milwaukee** (Discuss Immigrant Perspectives)
- **Making Comparisons** (Discuss News Article on Mexican Immigration)
- **From Poverty to Prosperity** (Discuss Mystery to Pose Questions)
- **Resistance, Resentment, and Racism** (Discuss African American Life in Early/Mid 1900’s)
- **Boom Boom & Lifestyle Changes** (Discuss Impact of Inventions)
- **The Mighty Migration** (Discuss African American Challenges, Diversity, Racism)
- **What a Difference a Century Makes** (Discuss Photos)
- **Crisis in Milwaukee** (Discuss Photos)
- **America’s Black Holocaust Museum** (Discuss Contents of Museum)

ARRIVING IN MILWAUKEE

*** Note to Teacher: Video Chapter 3, 4, & 7 complement this lesson activity.*

*This activity requires access to the accompanying book, *The Making of Milwaukee*, by John Gurda, or the accompanying Making of Milwaukee website, www.themakingofmilwaukee.com .*

In this activity students will discuss and debate the experience of coming to a new homeland like Milwaukee.

1. Have students study the photograph of the Polish Immigrant Family in Chapter 4, *Wheat, Iron, Beer, and Bloodshed*, of the Gurda book .

*Or, go to the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section of *The Making of Milwaukee* website, www.themakingofmilwaukee.com and choose “Lesson Activity Images” from the pull down menu. Use the “search” tool to find the photo of the “Polish Immigrant Family”.*

2. Have students answer the following questions:

- Where do you think these people might have come from? What causes you to think this?
 - What do you think their attitude is towards being in Milwaukee?
 - What do you think they brought with them when they came to Milwaukee?
 - What do you think they have left behind?
 - What will it take for these people to be able to call themselves “Americans”?
3. After students have written their responses, discuss students’ ideas as a group to see the possible wide range of ideas generated by the photograph.
 4. Then tell students that this is a photograph of Polish immigrants who came to Milwaukee. Although it would be difficult for them to tell solely from the photograph that these were Polish immigrants, Polish immigrants tended to have large families like the one depicted here. Answers to the other questions are wide open to interpretation from the photograph.
 5. Explain to students that they will learn many more specific details about people who arrived in Milwaukee from different countries like the individuals in this photograph.

ADDING TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF ETHNIC MILWAUKEE

**** Note to Teachers:** *Video Chapters 4, 5, 7, 15, & 17 complement this learning activity.*

***** Note to Teachers:** *During the following activity, students are asked to share their background knowledge and attitudes towards various racial and ethnic groups in Milwaukee. Consequently, it raises the possibility that students might use stereotypes and slanders that could be considered offensive to the racial and ethnic groups discussed in the activity. Make sure to have several teaching strategies in mind to deal with these potential situations before using this activity.*

1. Write the following words on the board or large sheets of paper around the room: German, Irish, Polish, Italian, Greek, African American, Serbian, Yankee, Norwegian, Slovenian and ask students to spend time walking around the room writing down words or phrases that they associate with each of these groups or any information they know about each group.
2. Select a student to read the final list for each group to the whole class. (Note: If the teacher is only planning to show portions of the video related to particular ethnic groups, then he or she may only want to include lists of those groups for discussion)

3. Engage students in a class discussion on the origins of their understandings or ideas about these racial and ethnic groups and the factors that have affected their perceptions of these groups.
4. Keep these lists up while students watch any video chapters from this unit and/or do any assignments or activities related to any video chapters from this unit.
5. At the end of the unit, ask students to add a new word, phrase, or idea they learned about this group to the list.
6. Finally, discuss whether or not their initial words, phrases, or ideas adequately characterized the different groups that settled in Milwaukee according to the information from the video and also discuss the new understandings about each group they developed from the video.

I REGRET I DID NOT COME SOONER

At the end of Video Chapter 5, *Neighbors and Strangers*, a German immigrant wrote the following line in a letter home:

“I thank the Lord that I am here, and I regret I did not come sooner”

1. Read this quote to students or write it on the board and discuss the following questions with this perspective on “Coming to Milwaukee”:
 - What might have caused this immigrant to feel this way about Milwaukee?
 - Why might other German immigrants have agreed with the idea expressed in the letter?
 - Do you think there were Germans who may have disagreed with the idea expressed here? Explain why some may have not felt this way.
 - Do you think members of the other groups who came to Milwaukee felt the same way as the idea expressed in this letter? In what ways might they have shared this perspective? In what ways might they have not shared this perspective?
 - Based on your experiences with Milwaukee today, do you think you would feel the same way as this immigrant after living here? Why? Why not?

MAKING COMPARISONS

***Note to Teachers: Video Chapters 4, 5, & 7 complement this lesson activity.*

1. Access the following news story from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel about Mexican immigration to Milwaukee
<http://www.jsonline.com/news/metro/feb04/211195.asp>
2. Then have students use information from the video to complete a Venn diagram comparing the following issues related to past immigration to Milwaukee and present-day Mexican immigration to Milwaukee: 1). Where the immigrant groups settled in the past and present, 2). The size of the various immigrant groups in the past and present, 3). Milwaukee's unique role in immigration history, 4). Economic factors in drawing immigrants, and 5). the possible changes to the city as a result of immigration
3. Discuss the article with the Venn diagram as a class.

FROM POVERTY TO PROSPERITY: SOLVING TWO MYSTERIES

The following learning activity, mystery story, and two leading questions can be used before viewing Video Chapter 15, *The Exploding Metropolis*.

1. First, the teacher reads aloud the passage that follows with two built-in mysteries. The teacher should use an overhead to project the mystery passage so that students can both hear and see various clues.
2. After reading the story, the teacher poses one of the mystery questions at a time which helps direct students as they attempt to solve each mystery by posing questions to the teacher that can only be answered with a "yes" or "no" answer.
3. Give the students "think time" to think about the first question and to create questions that can be answered "yes" or "no". (The forming of questions can be done individually or in small groups with students taking turns as they pose questions.)
4. Let the student questioning begin. The teacher records a "yes" or "no" answer to each question as well as the nature of each question on the board or overhead so students can keep track of the clues or data collected. (During the Q and A session it is essential that the teacher consistently ask students: "*What clues did you see or hear that prompted you to ask that question?*" Give as much positive feedback for logical questions as you do for questions that can be answered with a "yes").
5. After a few questions have been posed, instruct students to regroup so they can think about the clues and collected data thus far and construct new questions.
6. After a few minutes, begin the Q and A session again and continue until students believe they have an answer. (If a student believes they have the correct answer, they must tell the teacher before speaking it aloud in order to provide the teacher with the option of having

the student wait for a few more questions to be posed by other students before stating what they think.)

7. The Q and A session is over when the right answer is determined, when either the teacher or students believe they are stumped, or if students have gotten as close as possible. (This latter option is definitely acceptable, especially if students have little background knowledge on the topic).

The Mystery Passage (with mystery questions 1 and 2):

For 15 years most Milwaukee citizens struggled and sacrificed in order to make ends meet and keep their families together. They went without many of life's small pleasures when even gas, flour, and sugar were very difficult to get even if they were able to scrape together enough money to buy them. Big families lived together in very small houses in order to help take care of each other as well as save money. Men, women, and young adults worked long hours every day, seven days a week in order to help themselves, their families, and their country. They saved small items like string, rags, paper, and tin. They used every vacant piece of land for community gardens in order to conserve their food supply. And, while Milwaukeeans dreamed for a better, more prosperous life for themselves, their families, and their country, they did not waiver in their efforts to keep working.

And then, suddenly, the 15 years of hard times, the scrimping, the struggling, the sacrifice, and the saving came to an end. The dreams and hopes that had been postponed were realized in just a few short years as prosperity swept Milwaukee like no other time in history. People were determined to build a new and better world. New businesses and industry and the jobs that followed helped families earn a better living. Many babies were born to families who had put off having children because previous times were just too hard. Thousands purchased modern conveniences such as cars, televisions, and refrigerator-freezers. New houses were built and people moved to new neighborhoods. All these new babies and houses in new neighborhoods caused a need for many new schools in Milwaukee. Shopping centers and freeways emerged to get Milwaukee citizens on the move as never before. The people of Milwaukee pursued the good life with zeal.

Mystery Question #1: *What happened to move Milwaukee from very hard and desperate times, from times of poverty to times of prosperity?* Be sure to let students completely explore question one before introducing question two. Use question two as an added mystery.

Question #2: Before reading question two, add to the mystery by reading and showing this additional, brief passage to students before the yes and no questioning strategy resumes:

But, wait a minute, the mystery is not complete and, therefore, misleading. While these prosperous times allowed many Milwaukee people access to the "good and prosperous life", other Milwaukee citizens were left behind and even denied access to the "good and prosperous life". Many people flocked to Milwaukee as its booming economy offered

jobs, decent housing, and entertaining city features on a great lake. However, some newcomers met with resistance and resentment. And while many of them did find jobs, few escaped poverty, and most lived in very old houses with very little or no income to pursue the “good life”.

Mystery Question #2: *Why was the prosperous life, the “good life”, true for some and not others?*

***Regardless of whether the students come up with the exact answers, these puzzlers can be used to introduce Video Chapter 15 and set the stage for discovering, through the video, specific answers to questions they may have raised during the Q and A sessions. If students want to pursue why African American citizens of Milwaukee were left behind, encourage them to listen for reasons within Video Chapter 15 and assure them that you will investigate these issues further as you engage in the film response activity to follow, “*Resistance, Resentment, and Racism*”.

RESISTANCE, RESENTMENT, AND RACISM

As depicted in Video Chapter 16, *City Under Siege*, Milwaukee, like many major cities in the U.S., experienced much turmoil and growth during 1960’s and the Civil Rights Movement. The crisis was rooted in issues of poverty and race. Unlike many other big cities in the U.S., Milwaukee’s African American population had remained very small, barely two percent, as late as 1945. However, after World War II, the booming Milwaukee economy attracted newcomers by the droves and the African American population soared to 15 percent by 1970. Sadly, African Americans were faced with resistance, resentment, and often racism when they arrived.

1. After viewing Video Chapter 16, *City Under Siege*, engage students in a discussion about what life was like for African American families during this time. Ask the students to describe ways in which the various African American family members might have faced resistance, resentment, and racism when they moved to Milwaukee.
2. After this initial discussion, ask individual or small groups of students to think about, record descriptors, and share the meaning of the following terms: resistance, resentment, and racism? If deliberating in small groups, provide individual think time before placing them into their cooperative groups and then have students number off “1,2,3,4” as soon as they get into their groups. Explain that at the end of their recording session you will choose a specific number within each of the groups to report the groups’ thinking so that all students know they might be called upon to share their thoughts.
3. Have students share their thinking about the terms resistance, resentment, and racism with the whole class.
 - (After this discussion, if you determine that students are not capturing the essence of racism, show students portions of these PBS Video Series: “*The Power of an Illusion*” or “*Eyes on the Prize*”. Go to the PBS websites: www.pbs.org or www.pbs.org/teachersource for information and learning activities related to each video series.

- Or, use the book, **“*Children in the Civil Rights Era*” by Catherine A. Welch as a reference.) **Welch, Catherine. (2001). *Children in the Civil Rights Era*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books.
- Other valuable social justice resources can be accessed from the Southern Poverty Law Center that publishes the *Teaching Tolerance* magazine for teachers. This organization also provides other free teaching materials focused on issues of social justice. Their website is: www.tolerance.org

4. Finally, pose the following questions for groups to analyze:
- In what ways are resistance and resentment different than and similar to racism?
 - In what ways is racism in a class by itself?

Follow-up Learning Activities:

- Just before class ends and after the above discussion, have students use the words “resentment, resistance and racism” within one written sentence as a way to demonstrate how they have begun to think about the terms. Have students hand in this sentence synthesis for feedback and/or assessment.
- As a homework or in-class writing assignment have students imagine what it would have been like to be a new African American moving into a predominant European Milwaukee culture. Assign or let students choose a specific role or voice to represent in their writing: such as, mother, father, worker, or young adult. The teacher or student may also choose a format and audience, such as: a descriptive or persuasive essay, poem, or letter to a family member or newspaper editorial in which to represent their thoughts.

BOOM BOOM & LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Show the following pictures to students from *The Making of Milwaukee* book by John Gurda:

Photo of television set.....Photos of automobiles
(Both photos found in “The Exploding Metropolis” chapter.)

Or, go to the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section on *The Making of Milwaukee* website, www.themakingofmilwaukee.com and use the “search” tool to find the images that can be used for this lesson.

1. Allow students to discuss the following questions:
- How did these inventions change society?
 - How did families change their lifestyles as they purchased these two items?

- What do you think were the pros and cons of introducing these new items in American homes?
- Compare today's televisions and automobiles with those of the 1950s. What do you think contributed to the different designs over the past 50 years?
- Have the use and functions of today's televisions and automobiles changed over the past five decades? Explain.

THE MIGHTY MIGRATION

***Note to Teachers: You may want to view Video Chapters 15 & 16 before these activities.*

1. Migration Map

(Note: Teachers and/or students may want to visit the following sites to gather background information for this activity):

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/intro.html>

<http://northbysouth.kenyon.edu/>

http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/frameset_reset.html?http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/stories/0701_0131.html

<http://www.inmotionaame.org/home.cfm>

- On a blank map of the United States, have students show the migration of African Americans from the South to northern cities such as Chicago and Milwaukee.
- Students should use a variety of colors, lines and arrows to show the various routes taken from southern states.
- Discuss with students the following questions concerning the migration of blacks to northern cities:
 - Why did blacks leave the South?
 - What did blacks leave behind as they migrated north (traditions, family, jobs, homes, culture, etc)?
 - What types of challenges did blacks face as they migrated (segregated facilities, safety risks, uncharted territories, long trips, etc.)?

2. Dear Diary...

Photos of the following topics are available in the "Image Library" of the "In the Classroom" section on The Making of Milwaukee website, www.themakingofmilwaukee.com. Choose "Lesson Activities Photos" from the pull down menu and use the "search" tool to locate the photos related to the topics below:

- Have students consider the movement of African Americans from the South to

the North. They should reflect on the challenges blacks faced once they settled in Milwaukee. Briefly discuss the following issues with students:

- North Side blight
 - Hillside housing project/low income housing
 - Hostility with whites
 - Resistance to diversity in neighborhoods/communities
 - Poverty and prejudice
 - Acquiring jobs in a new city
 - Milwaukeeans United for School Integration Committee (MUSIC) Protests
 - Father Groppi marches
 - The riot of July 30, 1967
- b. Students will take on the perspective of an African American who has migrated to Milwaukee during this time period. Using the topics of the reflective activity, students will write 1-3 diary entries explaining their experiences in Milwaukee. They should bring to light the difficulties that were explained Video Chapter 16, *City Under Siege*.
- c. Students may also consider interviewing someone who lived in Milwaukee during these difficult times. They should use the information in the interview to create a journal or diary for that particular person based on the information they gathered. These diary or journal entries can cover several days or weeks in which these events took place. Students should draw on the interviewee's experiences to bring about a passionate, realistic account of what it was like to live in Milwaukee during this era.

Follow-up Learning Activities:

- Students may exchange diaries with a partner, read a day's entry to a small group or select a passage to read to the class.
- Have students respond to the following questions in written form or group discussion:
 - What were the experiences of new blacks arriving in Milwaukee from the South?
 - What fears did whites have about an increasing black population in Milwaukee?
 - How does the "inner core" (North Side of Milwaukee) in the 1960s compare with the "inner core" of 2006?

3. Rising Above Racism...A Message for Milwaukee

- a. Allow students to reflect on the events surrounding the racial tensions in Milwaukee.

- b. Encourage students to write a persuasive speech that will be presented in a local Milwaukee church. The speech's message should focus on the following:
- The racial tensions of Milwaukee in the 1960s
 - How blacks have faced and struggled through racial animosity
 - What needs to be done in Milwaukee to make it a great place for ALL people to live, regardless of color, race, religion and socio-economic status?
- c. Speeches should be written in the context of the 1960s. Limit speeches to 1-2 minutes to ensure that all students will be afforded the opportunity to present and promote their ideas.
- d. After listening to speeches, discuss the following questions with students or have students discuss them in small groups:
- What are the benefits and consequences of a diverse city?
 - How can racial equality be obtained in cities that contain an assortment of ethnic groups?
 - Does violent behavior lead to progress towards racial equality? Why or why not?
 - Have race relations improved today in comparison to what Milwaukee experienced throughout the 1960s? Explain by incorporating specific examples.
- e. Students may also contact local churches to present their speeches. Assist students in making contacts and organizing a visit to local churches and their congregations to deliver their powerful messages. Encourage community leaders to work with students in delivering informative and passionate speeches that help uplift individuals during difficult times.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A CENTURY MAKES: THE CORNER OF THIRD STREET AND JUNEAU AVENUE OR THE CORNER OF THIRD ST. AND STATE ST. (1890 & 1990)

***Note to Teachers: In this learning activity you may use one of two picture sets. Either set will work for this activity.*

Option #1: These two photos may be found in “*The Making of Milwaukee*” book by John Gurda, chapter entitled, “*Shifting Currents*”.

1890 photo of the corner of 3rd St. and Juneau Ave.

1990 photo of the corner of 3rd St. and Juneau Ave.

OR

Option #2: On-line photos of 3rd St. and State St.

Go to the “Milwaukee’s History” section of *The Making of Milwaukee* website, www.themakingofmilwaukee.com. Select the “Then and Now Photos” category for this option.

Discuss the following questions in small groups or as a class with either picture set:

- Describe what you see in the first picture (1890).
- Describe what you see in the second picture (1990).
- According to the pictures, how did things change in Milwaukee within a time span of 100 years? Be specific by using the images in the photos.
- What do you think contributed to these changes in Milwaukee?
- What societal and cultural changes took place in Milwaukee within 100 years? Provide examples from the two photos?
- What similarities can you identify within the two photographs?
- What types of changes (technological, societal, cultural, economic, etc) needed to occur in order for the picture in 1890 to progress into the image provided in 1990? Be specific.
- How might Milwaukee look in the year 2090? Can you predict specific changes that will occur on the corner of Third Street and State Street or Third Street and Juneau? What are your reasons for these changes?

Follow-up Learning Activity:

Venn Diagram

- a. Have students compare the two photographs of the corner of Third Street and State Street using a Venn Diagram.
- b. Students should look for the commonalities within both photos as well as the differences.
- c. These ideas should be placed in the proper areas of the Venn Diagram.
- d. Have students share/present their Venn Diagrams in a pair, small groups or as a class.

CRISIS IN MILWAUKEE

In the Video Chapter 16, *City Under Siege*, the many challenges and struggles Milwaukee faced during the 1960s are identified.

1. Organize students in groups and have them create a pictorial collage that depicts these struggles.

2. Students should locate pictures on the Internet, in encyclopedias, textbooks, magazines, create their own photos, or a combination of all these to create the collage. (Refer to www.wisconsinhistory.org for a variety of photographs.)

A variety of photos related to the following topics are also available by going to the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section of The Making of Milwaukee website, www.themakingofmilwaukee.com, and selecting “Lesson Activity Images”.

3. Collages should contain photographs that depict the following events/occurrences:

- The extinction of the streetcar
- The loss of neighborhood shopping districts
- The dingy, dirty look of Milwaukee
- Redevelopment claiming old neighborhoods
- Freeway system claim land in the heart of the town
- The destruction of landmarks (Our Lady of Pompeii)
- Dutch elm disease
- Loss of Alewives (ocean fish)
- Relocation of the Milwaukee Braves to Atlanta

4. Have groups present their collages to the rest of the class, emphasizing and describing the images and how they symbolize the challenges in Milwaukee during the 1960s.

5. Discuss with students the struggles of today that have occurred in Milwaukee over the past 5-10 years. Address the following questions with students:

- What losses has Milwaukee experienced over the past 10 years?
- Why did these losses take place?
- What effect did these losses have on Milwaukee’s economy, communities, culture, relationships, etc.?
- What could have been done to prevent these losses from occurring in Milwaukee?
- Do you think Milwaukee’s struggles are over? Explain.

AMERICA’S BLACK HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

1. Organize a trip to America’s Black Holocaust Museum in downtown Milwaukee. Prepare students by covering content about the African culture, the African Slave Trade, the Middle Passage, Colonization, Plantation Life and the Underground Railroad.
2. Show portions of the critically acclaimed television miniseries, “Roots”, to give students a different perspective on African traditions and customs.

3. Have students develop at least five questions that they would like to ask tour guides on the trip.
4. As a follow-up, have students participate in an open forum where they discuss their experiences at the museum, the artifacts and documents displayed and the information delivered by tour guides. Teacher may develop a series of questions pertaining to the content delivered at the museum as an additional assessment.
For further information contact:

America's Black Holocaust Museum, Inc.

2233 N. Fourth Street

Milwaukee, Wisconsin USA 53212

Phone: 414-264-2500