

Facilitation Guide



Labor Movements & Protest Music during the Industrial Era – Create a Song Using Lyrical Substitution

Social Studies Grades 9, 10, 11 (US History)

EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

Students explore how music has been used to unite social movements—particularly the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)—by closely analyzing historical texts and songs, and then applying this technique by writing new lyrics to familiar melodies that represent workers’ struggles during the Industrial Revolution.

Standards

SOCIAL STUDIES

- USH.BR.1 – Students will analyze the causes and consequences of industrialization in the late 19th-century United States by:
 - Evaluating how improved use of resources, new technology and inventions, and transportation networks influenced the growth of industrialization and urbanization. (USH.BR.1.a)
 - Describing the impact of business leaders, laissez-faire capitalism, and the use of trusts/monopolies on the American economy. (USH.BR.1.b)
 - Evaluating the impact of industrialization and laissez-faire policies on labor. (USH.BR.1.c)

CCSS:

- RH.9-10.2 – Determine central ideas or information in a source and summarize key developments.
- RH.9-10.3 – Analyze events or ideas in detail to understand causes, effects, and relationships among them.
- W.9-10.3.d – Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- RH.11-12.7 – Integrate multiple sources and formats (text, song, primary documents) to answer questions or solve historical problems.

ARTS STANDARDS

- MU:Cr1 – Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
- MU:Re7 – Perceive and analyze artistic work
- MU:Cn11 – Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding

Getting Ready

CONTENT TOPIC:

- Industrialization

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

- Did the benefits of post-Civil War industrialization outweigh the costs?

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OBJECTIVE:

- Students will analyze how songs promoted worker solidarity in historical movements like the IWW and create their own protest song using lyrical substitution from the perspective of a worker during the Industrial Revolution.

ASSESSMENT (SEE SLIDES FOR RUBRIC, CRITERIA BREAKDOWN, & EXAMPLES):

- Students will work in small groups to create a protest song using a familiar melody and lyrics that reflect a challenge faced by workers during the Industrial Revolution. Each group will compile their song into a one-page songbook, including:
 - A visually engaging cover with the song title
 - A page with a slogan or message (can be designed like a logo)
 - A page with the full song lyrics

CONTENT VOCABULARY

- *Note: A complete glossary can be found on the Industrial Workers of the World Handout.*
 - Labor Union
 - Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)
 - Solidarity
 - Strike
 - Direct Action
 - Industrial Revolution
 - Protest Song
 - The Little Red Songbook

MUSIC VOCABULARY:

- Lyrical substitution: Writing your own lyrics to the melody of a well-known song.

MATERIALS/CLASSROOM SUGGESTIONS:

- Slides
 - Includes primary source images
 - Guiding questions and research links
 - Songwriting guidance videos and song examples
 - Assessment criteria 7 examples (both song and songbook)
 - Rubric
- Close reading handouts
 - Overview: Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900
 - Work in the Late 19th Century
 - The Industrial Workers of the World (with key vocab glossary)
- Performance space
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils, paper
 - Or Canva

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TEACHER BACKGROUND & PREPARATION

- **Watch: Meet Dan & Claudia Zanes**



- **Watch: Music, Solidarity, and the IWW: How Songs Unite Movements**
 - Dan & Claudia explain how the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) used inclusive organizing and collective singing—through adapted popular songs—to build worker solidarity and galvanize social movements during the Industrial Revolution.



- **Watch: From Spirituals to Protest Songs: Examples of Lyrical Substitution**
 - In this video, Dan & Claudia show how familiar Spirituals were transformed through lyrical substitution into powerful Civil Rights protest songs, demonstrating how music unites movements and supports collective action.



- **Watch: Assessment Overview: Songbook Criteria & Model Song with Songbook Example**



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STUDENT BACKGROUND & PRIOR LEARNING

- **Understand: The Great Migration**
 - [Arts Every Day's The Great Migration Arts Integrated Lesson](#)
 - Links to explore:
 - [The Great Migration](#)
 - [The Great Migration: History, Causes, and Facts](#)
 - <https://www.history.com/news/great-migration-southern-landowners>
 - ["South Unable to Put Stop to Negro Exodus": Newspaper coverage of the Great Migration, 1916](#) (primary)
 - ["The Charge": Newspaper editorial on the Great Migration, 1917](#) (primary)
 - Great Migration Maps
 - [Map 1](#)
 - [Map 2](#)

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ARTS INTEGRATION MATERIALS



SLIDES



**VIDEO
PLAYLIST**



MATERIALS
GOOGLE FOLDER

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TEACH

Engage: Music, Society, & You

- **Slide 2: Opening discussion** – (turn & talk, stop & jot, and/or whole class):
 - Your opinion: Music can create real change in society.
 - Why or why not?
 - Have you ever had a song get stuck in your head that made you feel understood or less alone?
 - What made it powerful – the lyrics, the beat, the message?
 - Did it change how you felt in the moment?
- Say: Today we're going to see how workers turned shared feelings into shared action—using music.

Build Background: What was the Industrial Revolution & the IWW?

- **Slide 3: Explain the objective & assessment**
 - Objective: Students will analyze how songs promoted worker solidarity in historical movements like the IWW and create their own protest song using lyrical substitution from the perspective of a worker during the Industrial Revolution.
 - Assessment: Students will work in small groups to create a protest song using a familiar melody and lyrics that reflect a challenge faced by workers during the Industrial Revolution. Each group will compile their song into a one-page songbook, including:
 - A visually engaging cover with the song title
 - A page with a slogan or message (can be designed like a logo)
 - A page with the full song lyrics
- **Slide 4: Discuss & research to build background knowledge & context**
 - Use the guiding questions on Slide 4 to check for understanding of the Industrial Revolution:
 - What was the Industrial Revolution? When did the industrial era take place?
 - What was the IWW? What challenges did workers face during this time period?
 - How do songs unite movements? What are protest songs?
 - Conduct further research as needed
 - Links to secondary and primary sources that directly address these questions are included in the notes section of Slide 4 and in the [Research Resources Google Doc](#).



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TEACH

- Included informational text handouts for student close reading:
 - [Overview: Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900](#)
 - [Work in the Late 19th Century](#)
 - [The Industrial Workers of the World \(with key vocab glossary\)](#)
- **Slides 5 & 6: Share photos of The Little Red Songbook (primary source)**
 - Zoom in to read the table of contents and the preamble

Learn: Music, Solidarity, and the IWW – How Songs Unite Movements

- **Slide 7: Students watch Dan & Claudia’s informational video where they make the connection between the time period, the IWW, and music**
- **Slide 8: Understand the concept of lyrical substitution**
 - Share the definition and a simple example with students:
 - Lyrical substitution: Writing your own lyrics to the melody of a well-known song.
 - Example: Original (familiar melody): Twinkle, twinkle, little star
 - Original lyrics:
Twinkle, twinkle, little star
How I wonder what you are
 - Substituted lyrics (same melody):
Working long days, no time to rest
Factory work is such a test
- **Slide 9: Students watch Dan & Claudia’s informational video, “From Spirituals to Protest Songs: Examples of Lyrical Substitution.”**
- **Slide 10: In pairs, students practice the skill by writing their own lyrics to an existing melody:**
 - A) Write lyrics about what you’ve learned about the Industrial Revolution and the IWW to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle.”
 - B) Write lyrics about what you’ve learned about the Industrial Revolution and the IWW to the tune of a well-known song of your choosing
 - C) Write lyrics about ____ (teacher/student choice) to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle” or another well-known song of your choice.



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TEACH

Apply: Write a protest song & create a songbook

- **Slide 11: Review the assessment**

- Assessment: Students will work in small groups to create a protest song using a familiar melody and lyrics that reflect a challenge faced by workers during the Industrial Revolution. Each group will compile their song into a one-page songbook, including:
 - A visually engaging cover with the song title
 - A page with a slogan or message (can be designed like a logo)
 - A page with the full song lyrics

- **Slides 12 & 13: View Dan & Claudia’s Example**

- Slide 12: Hear their song, “Shine Bright in the Union” to the tune of Rihanna’s “Diamonds.”
 - [Lyrics Handout](#)
- Slide 13: See their songbook example with modeling of cover, logo, and lyrics

- **Slides 14 & 15: Review assessment criteria & rubric**

- Can be adapted to your class structure and student needs

- **Students work in groups to craft their songs**

- Instruct students to first select the existing song they will use to rewrite lyrics about the workers of the Industrial Era. You may have a pre-selected list for students to choose from, or allow groups to choose their own songs (teacher discretion surrounding original lyrics appropriate for school advised).
 - Students research songs to find and note original lyrics
 - Students refer to notes and research to begin writing their lyrics. Guiding questions can include:
 - Whose point of view are you writing from?
 - What challenges are they experiencing?
 - What is daily life like for them?
 - Use sensory details and figurative language to create imagery about what they see, hear, taste, smell, and feel daily.

- **Next, create songbooks**

- Once students have their lyrics completed (check them first for accuracy and understanding), groups create their songbooks, including the engaging cover, the logo/slogan, and printed lyrics. Traditional art supplies like colored pencils and paper can be used, or digital options like Canva.
 - WATCH: [Songbook Criteria](#)



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TEACH

- **Perform & share!**

- Encourage student groups to share their songs with the class and for peers to provide positive feedback.

Optional extensions:

- **Class book:** Compile all class songs into one songbook to make your version of The Little Red Songbook!
- **Write a song about an issue important to me:** Once the students are comfortable with this assignment and have written their song about issues facing workers in the Industrial Revolution, students can write a song about an issue that's important to them today using lyrical substitution.