



Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 8, WEBISODE 9

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



Segment Overview

The International Workers of the World (IWW) was a militant labor union of socialists, anarchists, and trade unionists formed in 1905. William “Big Bill” Haywood and Eugene Debs (a Socialist Party leader) opened the IWW’s first convention. The IWW aimed to join all workers into one big union. Their members, called “wobblies,” fought important battles in the early labor movement, including strikes in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

IWW leaders organized the Lawrence, Massachusetts textile workers strike in 1912. Led by IWW leader Joe Ettor, the “Bread and Roses” strikers stopped their looms rather than take a pay cut. Police and mill owners responded with violence, but the strikers eventually won the concessions for which they protested.

Teacher Directions

- Students, in small teams, discuss the following questions.
 - How did Samuel Gompers’ AFL differ from the IWW?
 - How did mill owners in Lawrence respond when a new law cut workers’ hours?
 - How did the mill workers respond?
 - What labor leader led mill workers in Lawrence?
 - What happened to striking workers at Lawrence?
 - What were the long-term results of the strike?
- Make sure students understand the following points in discussing the questions.

Gompers’ AFL was a union of skilled workers, while the IWW was open to all workers. When a new law cut women and children’s hours from fifty-six to fifty-four per week, mill owners speeded up their machinery and took two hours’ pay from workers’ envelopes. The Lawrence mill workers went on strike. Joe Ettor, who spoke several languages, organized the protesting workers in Lawrence. Police used violence against peaceful striking workers—including women and children. Congress investigated the working conditions, and the mill owners agreed to improve wages and working conditions.



Let’s Discuss



History Sleuth

Teacher Directions

1. Students read about the Bread and Roses strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Students visit web sites listed above, read Chapter 21, "Bread and Roses, Too" in *An Age of Extremes*, Book 8 in Joy Hakim's *A History of US*, or consult other sources.
2. Working in small learning teams, students prepare four or five short (one minute) breaking news bulletins which trace developments in the strike. For example, the student might begin with: "We interrupt this program to bring you a breaking news bulletin. Workers in textile mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts, have walked off their jobs because....." Students create enough breaking news bulletins to tell the story of the Lawrence strike and its outcome.
3. During their preparation students should take brief notes or highlight the information that they wish to share with teammates.
4. Each student learning team shares its series of breaking news bulletins with the class.

Note to the Teacher: Use a timer to ensure each student has equal presentation time.

Teacher Directions

1. If necessary, briefly review the philosophy of the Wobblies and their role in the labor movement. Explain that the Wobblies used nonviolent, passive-resistance tactics. Among other tactics, they tried to be arrested by breaking laws that denied them free speech. As more and more were arrested, Wobblies continued to demonstrate in jail by singing, shouting, and refusing to eat.
2. Ask the students to identify leaders and groups who used non-violent, passive-resistance tactics to bring about social change. (Martin Luther King, Jr., and the civil rights movement of the 1960s; some protesters against the war in Vietnam; students may know of Gandhi, who refined the tactic to protest English rule in India).
3. Students discuss:
 - Why would nonviolent resistance be effective in bringing about social change?
 - Would you want to use these methods? Why or why not?



What do you Think?



Moving Toward Freedom

Teacher Directions

1. Distribute the Student Sheets: *Joe Hill*. Students read the biography of Joe Hill and the lyrics to the song which memorializes him. If available, students listen to a recording of the song (Joan Baez recorded this song in the 1970s, and other recordings exist as well).
2. With students, discuss the song lyrics using the following questions as guidelines.
 - In the song, why does Joe Hill say “I never died”?
 - What does the song line: “What they forgot to kill went on to organize” mean?
 - How can Joe Hill be by the side of workers where they strike and organize?
3. Emphasize the impact of individuals like Joe Hill who become martyrs for a cause. Ask students
 - How does a martyr’s fate help a cause?
 - Who else in American history is considered a martyr for a cause? (John Brown, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr. among others)
4. Students discuss the following question.
 - How did Joe Hill help move America toward freedom?

Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

Language Arts — Students read *Lyddie* by Katherine Paterson. A Partner Discussion Guide is available from the Johns Hopkins University Talent Development Middle School Program.

Library — Students read more about the labor movement in America.

Math — At its peak in 1912 – 1917, the IWW had 100,000 members. In 1892, the AFL had over one million workers. Students solve: The AFL had _____ percent more workers in 1892 than the IWW at its peak.



Connections

Joe Hill, Wobbly Poet and Songwriter



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Joe Hill joined the IWW in 1910. The union already used music to get the attention of workers at street corner meetings. The Wobblies put catchy new words to the tunes of popular songs or hymns urging workers to join the union, respect their work, and fight for their rights. As Joe himself said, “A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read more than once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over.”

The Wobblies and Joe Hill wanted a different society with a better life for the nation’s workers, and Joe wrote a stream of Wobbly hit songs expressing that hope. Joe understood the working man’s troubles, because he was a working man himself.

But in January 1914, Joe was arrested in Salt Lake City, Utah, and charged with the shooting murder of a grocery store owner. Many union people felt that Joe was being framed to stop his efforts with the Wobblies to organize Utah miners. He was tried and found guilty. Even though many people asked Utah’s governor to reconsider Hill’s case, the governor refused and Joe Hill was executed.

In prison, Joe fought for a new trial as he continued to compose more songs. His spirit lives on in the songs he wrote.



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Joe Hill

By Alfred Hayes and Earl Robinson

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night
Alive as you and me
Says I, "But Joe, you're ten years dead,"
"I never died," says he, "I never died," says he.

"In Salt Lake, Joe, by God," says I
Him standing by my bed,
"They framed you on a murder charge."
Says Joe, "But I ain't dead," says Joe, "But I ain't dead."

"The copper bosses shot you, Joe,
They killed you, Joe," says I.
"Takes more than guns to kill a man,"
Says Joe, "I didn't die," says Joe, "I didn't die."

And standing there as big as life
And smiling with his eyes
Joe says, "What they forgot to kill
Went on to organize, went on to organize."

"Joe Hill ain't dead," he says to me,
"Joe Hill ain't never died.
Where workingmen are out on strike
Joe Hill is at their side, Joe Hill is at their side."

"From San Diego up to Maine
In every mine and mill
Where workers strike and organize,"
Says he, "You'll find Joe Hill," says he, "You'll find Joe Hill."

Joe Hill



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