

Overview

This lesson features five reformers who worked to change conditions in Kansas and the nation. Designed as a simulation of *Meet the Press*, a TV show, this lesson allows students to perform various roles. Working in five groups, student will portray reformers, public relations directors, and reporters. *Read Kansas!* cards provide information from both primary and secondary sources. Each group will write questions and answers to be used as part of the “Meet the Reformers” simulation. During the presentation all students will complete a worksheet compiling information on all five reformers. This lesson may take two or more days.

Standards

Current standards can be found on kshs.org.

Objectives

Content:

- The students will identify three motives that inspired each of the five reformers.
- The students will reach conclusions regarding the impact of the reformers on Kansas and U. S. history.

Skills:

- The students will read historical documents to identify the main idea and supporting details.
- The students will work cooperatively to develop questions.

Essential Questions

- Why do people seek reform?
- How did these Kansas reformers impact the state and/or the nation?

Activities

This activity uses the following *Read Kansas* cards:

- **Mary Elizabeth Lease: The Populist Joan of Arc**
- **Dr. Samuel Crumbine: Public Health Pioneer**
- **William Allen White: Opponent of the Ku Klux Klan**
- **Kate Richards O'Hare: The First Lady of American Socialism**
- **Charles M. Sheldon: A Prominent Religious Leader**

Day 1

1. Introduce and define the term “reform.”
2. Identify the five reformers by name and the cause that students will be studying in this lesson.
3. Explain that the format for this lesson is a performance where students will assume roles of the reformer, a public relations director, and reporters.
4. Divide the class into five heterogeneous groups.
5. Assign each member of the group a role in the simulation.
 - Reformer
 - Public Relations Director
 - Reporters
6. Assign each group to study one Kansas reformer and provide each group with one copy of:
 - **Activity 1: Group Instruction Sheet**
 - **Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer**
 - **Activity 3: Developing Questions and Answers for the Presentation**
7. Give each student a copy of the appropriate *Read Kansas!* reformer card and a copy of **The Impact of Selected Kansas Reformers** graphic organizer.
8. Explain that each group will be preparing for a mock TV interview show entitled “Meet the Reformers.” Students will prepare on the first day and stage the show on the second. Each group has one *Read Kansas!* card that uses both primary sources and expository text that relate to one of five important Kansas reformers. After reading the *Read Kansas!* card thoroughly, each group will develop interview questions and answers that will clearly illustrate the problem that the reformer was trying to correct and how he or she went about that task.
9. Using an overhead transparency of **Activity 1: Group Instruction Sheet** as a teaching aid, lead the entire class through the instructions. Explain that each group must work through the steps in order. As each step is completed, each student is to initial on the line next to that step to indicate his or her progress.
10. Be available to student groups as they work through their instruction sheets. Discuss their progress with them and sign off for **Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer** and **Activity 3: Developing Questions and Answers for the Presentation** worksheets.

Day 2

1. Prepare your room for the interview show. Arrange the front of the classroom for the panel of five reformers. Place an additional chair behind each of the reformer’s chairs. This chair is for the public relations director. The remainder of the students will gather

their chairs in front of the panel as an audience. If parents and others have come to view the event, their chairs should be further back or to the side.

2. Provide each group with a copy of the **Activity 4: Final Preparation** sheet. Give students a few minutes to review for their presentation and arrange their props.
3. Before the interview begins, give each student a copy of **The Impact of Selected Kansas Reformers** graphic organizer. Students need to complete the graphic organizer as the simulation progresses. Provide a few minutes after the activity for students to compile their thoughts about the impact of each of the reformers.
4. Call the reporters aside and remind them to stand when asking a question. Remind each to give his or her name (or a fictitious one) and the "newspaper" or "TV station" for which they work. Emphasize that the reporter is to address his or her question to the reformer. Reporters should begin each question with the reformer's name, i.e., "Mr. White." There is no set order for asking questions. It usually works best if the questions are spread among the reformers. Reporters need not raise hands to be recognized, but also should not interrupt each other.
5. To add to the authenticity of the interview, the teacher should welcome the audience and introduce the program as "Meet the Reformers today features Kansas reformers who made an impact in history." As part of the announcement, include the "TV station" that is carrying the broadcast.
6. Begin the presentation by asking each public relations director to introduce his or her Kansas reformer before the questioning begins.
7. Open the floor to questions from the reporters.
8. If one group of reporters seems hesitant to ask a question, the teacher should call on those reporters periodically throughout the interview. If, in the teacher's opinion, the questions addressed to any of the reformers have not emphasized the impact that reformer made, the teacher (in the role of moderator) can ask his or her own questions of the panelists. Refrain from doing this until near the end of the interview session.
9. After the questions have ended, give the panelists an opportunity to present short summaries by calling on each one individually.
10. Thank the participants for their involvement and close the production. The session should not last more than 30 minutes.

Assessment

1. Evaluate the students' ability to perform a role.
2. Evaluate the students' ability to complete **The Impact of Selected Kansas Reformers** worksheet.
3. Optionally, evaluate group cooperation.

For the Teacher

This lesson focuses on the topic of reform and reformers at the turn of the 20th century. By definition reformers are individuals interested in stopping bad practices and finding a better course of action. Populism, Socialism, and the Progressive Movement were reform movements.

Populism is a 19th century reform movement that is closely identified with Kansas and its rural population. This third party political movement spread throughout other areas of the United States but probably had more success in Kansas than elsewhere.

After the Civil War, numerous people had moved west to begin life anew. However, they found this much more difficult than they had imagined. The forces of nature often led to their disillusionment, but other problems contributed to their failure. The mechanical revolution had reduced the amount of labor needed to produce crops but greatly increased the amount of capital required to buy machinery. In addition to this, the nation itself was experiencing financial woes during the late 1880s. In Kansas alone, more than 11,000 farmers faced foreclosure.

Farmers began calling for government assistance. They wanted the government to ensure them a fair price for their product. Out of these cries for help grew the People's Party. Populism, or the People's Party, was a demand for "political democracy." The Populists campaigned for a change in the way currency was distributed; to break up monopolies; to establish a graduated income tax; to have government ownership of railroads, telegraph, and telephone systems; and to institute election reform including the secret ballot and election of U. S. Senators by the people (i.e., direct election).

Although the party won several state and local elections, most of its ideas weren't implemented until years later. Important Kansas Populists include Governor Lorenzo Lewelling, Senator William Peffer, Representative "Sockless" Jerry Simpson, and political strategist Annie Diggs. Mary Elizabeth Lease, a powerful lecturer, is the Kansas Populist featured in this activity.

Another third party, the Socialist Labor Party, also worked to improve conditions for Americans. A strong national voice for the Socialists was the *Appeal to Reason*, published by Julius A. Wayland in Girard, Kansas. Many reformers wrote for the *Appeal to Reason* including "Mother" Jones, Helen Keller, Jack London, and Upton Sinclair. Sinclair's *The Jungle* was first published in this newspaper. Another popular Socialist reformer was Kansan Kate Richards O'Hare. O'Hare dedicated her life to improving living conditions for Americans.

Like the Populist Party, Socialists campaigned on a national level for government control of transportation and communication systems. Both parties wanted reforms to the election system including secret ballots, referendums, and a recall system. The Socialists also tried to implement universal suffrage. They favored a progressive income tax system that allowed exemptions for the extremely poor and tax on inheritances. In addition, they wanted child labor laws and compulsory schooling for all children under 14 years of age. Socialists campaigned for shorter workdays and safer working conditions. They proposed workman's injury compensation and equal pay for women. The Socialist Party ran candidates in local, state, and national elections. Eugene Debs, who was a perennial candidate for president, led the party. Many Socialist leaders including Debs, Jones, and O'Hare, spent months in jail for various reasons from inciting riots to sedition [using language that incites others to rebel against the authority of the state]. In addition to O'Hare, who is featured in this lesson, other Kansas Socialists included Wayland and Emanuel and Marcet Haldeman-Julius.

The third movement covered in this lesson is Progressivism. Progressivism was not a political party but a movement that worked to build a better America. Progressives believed

that American citizens deserved much more than they were receiving. The nation was suffering from high unemployment and labor unrest. There were abundant abuses of corporate power. The influx of immigrants led to overcrowding of cities. People found themselves living in conditions of extreme poverty, disease, and high rates of crime.

The key to this reform movement involved working within major political parties and educating people. Progressives were composed of a new middle class of young professionals and journalists who attacked corruption and scandal. Important Kansas Progressives included in this lesson are William Allen White, Samuel Crumbine, and Charles Sheldon. Carry Nation is also another famous Kansas Progressive.

All across America, Progressives, led by President Theodore Roosevelt, worked to improve society. Like Populists, Progressives called for the direct election of U.S. Senators; secret ballots; the ability to use initiative, referendum, and recall methods; statewide primary elections; and universal suffrage. Child labor laws, old age pensions, and reduction of the tariff were also part of their cause. Progressives demanded truthful consumer information, guaranty of bank deposits, and public health reforms.

Kansas led the way in passing many laws for the protection of its citizens. Among these were mandatory school requirements, child labor restrictions, and public health initiatives. Under Roosevelt, the Departments of Labor and Commerce were added to the cabinet. Federal laws implemented during this period included the Pure Food and Drug Act. This was passed as a response to Socialist Upton Sinclair's book, *The Jungle*, that revealed the awful conditions of Chicago's slaughterhouses. National park lands were set aside to preserve nature for America's future. Jane Addams and the Hull House offered solace to poor immigrants in Chicago. Many of the reforms the Progressives had worked for came into existence later in America's history. The 18th Amendment that forbids the sale of alcohol also came about during this time.

The materials in this packet may be reproduced for classroom use only. Reproduction of these materials for any other use is prohibited without written permission of the Kansas Historical Society.

Resources for this lesson are from:

- Kansas Historical Society collections

Kansas Reformer's Name: _____

Meet The Reformers

Activity 1: Group Instruction Sheet

During **Meet the Reformers** your group is responsible for introducing a Kansas reformer to the rest of the class. This Kansan is someone who saw a problem and worked to improve the situation. You will teach the rest of the class about your reformer through information you have gathered from one of five *Read Kansas!* cards. In keeping with the talk show format, your group will need to develop precise questions and answers that explain clearly the problem and the actions taken by the reformer. These five reformers will meet as a panel to answer questions and explain their viewpoints of what was wrong with Kansas and the United States and what they proposed should be done to fix it.

Reformer

The group member who is portraying the reformer is responsible for making this person seem realistic during the talk show. To help you accomplish this, complete each of the following and initial the line to indicate that this is done.

- _____ Read your *Read Kansas!* card thoroughly.
- _____ Record your group's answers for **Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer**.
- _____ Share the answers for **Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer** with your teacher.
- _____ Assist your group with **Activity 3: Developing Questions and Answers for the Presentation**.
 - remember these questions and answers have to show the problems as your reformer saw them and how he/she went about solving these problems
 - you must also make the impact of your reformer very clear to the rest of the class
- _____ Help your group find appropriate costumes and props for the show.
- _____ Make and illustrate a table tent card that clearly shows your reformer's name.
- _____ Participate in **Activity 4: The Rehearsal**.
- _____ Write a short closing statement that will summarize your concerns and how your character brought change to both Kansas and the United States. This will be presented at the end of the talk show.

Public Relations Director

The group member who is portraying the public relations director is responsible for introducing the reformer to the rest of the class. To accomplish this you must complete each of the following and initial the line to indicate that this is done.

- _____ Read your *Read Kansas!* card thoroughly.
- _____ Participate as your group answers questions in **Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer.**
- _____ Assist the group with **Activity 3: Developing Questions and Answers for the Presentation.** These questions must teach the rest of the class about your reformer.
 - remember these questions and answers have to show the problems as your reformer saw them and how he/she went about solving these problems
 - you must also make the impact of your reformer very clear to the rest of the class
- _____ Neatly record the questions and answers developed in **Activity 3: Developing Questions and Answers for the Presentation.**
- _____ Take these questions and answers to your teacher for approval.
- _____ Help your group with appropriate costumes and props for the show.
- _____ Participate in **Activity 4: The Rehearsal.**
- _____ Write a short introduction to your reformer. You will present this at the beginning of the talk show.
- _____ Sit behind the reformer during the talk show. You will be able to assist the reformer if he/she should need help.

Reporters

The remaining members of the group will be portraying the reporters. To accomplish this, each of you must complete the following and initial the line to indicate that this is done.

- _____ Read the *Read Kansas!* card thoroughly.
- _____ Assist your group in answering the questions in **Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer.**
- _____ Assist your group with **Activity 3: Developing Questions and Answers for the Presentation.**
 - remember these questions and answers have to show the problems as your reformer saw them and how he/she went about solving these problems.
 - you must also make the impact of your reformer very clear to the rest of the class
- _____ Make additional copies of the questions and answers for each reporter and the reformer.
- _____ Help your group with appropriate costumes and props for the show.
- _____ Make and illustrate a nametag that shows your “reporter” name and the TV station or newspaper you represent.
- _____ Participate in **Activity 4: The Rehearsal.**
- _____ Ask your reformer at least two questions during the talk show.

Kansas Reformer's Name: _____

Meet The Reformers

Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer

With your group read aloud and discuss the entire *Read Kansas!* card about your reformer. When the group has finished reading, discuss the following questions. The student portraying the reformer should record your answers and take them to the teacher for approval.

1. What problem in Kansas or American society was your Kansas reformer attempting to correct?

2. What methods did your reformer use to make people aware of the situation?

3. List at least three other facts or events that will help you teach the rest of your class about your reformer.

1.

2.

3.

4. What impact did your character make on Kansas and the United States?

Kansas Reformer's Name: _____

Meet The Reformers

Activity 3: Developing Questions and Answers for the Presentation

All members of your group must work to prepare a minimum of two questions and answers for each of the reporters in your group. Use **Activity 2: Analyzing Your Reformer** to help you write these questions. During the talk show, the reporters will ask these questions of your reformer. Remember the questions must be designed to show your Kansas reformer's viewpoint of the problems in Kansas and the United States and how he/she attempted to correct these problems.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Kansas Reformer's Name: _____

Meet The Reformers

Activity 4: The Rehearsal

Rehearse for the talk show. During this final preparation make certain that:

- Public Relations Director** delivers a short introduction of the reformer.
- Reporters** ask at least two clear, concise questions each.
- Reformer** accurately and thoroughly answers the questions, not just “yes” or “no.”
- Reformer** delivers a short closing statement

Name: _____

The Impact of Selected Kansas Reformers

	Accomplishments	Reformer's Impact on Kansas	Reformer's Impact on the United States
Mary Elizabeth Lease	1. 2. 3.		
Samuel Crumbine	1. 2. 3.		
William Allen White	1. 2. 3.		
Kate Richards O'Hare	1. 2. 3.		
Charles M. Sheldon	1. 2. 3.		