

# Teacher Introduction

These Common Core History Assessments are designed to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they learn about the era of Progressive reform in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Similar sets of assessments are available (or planned) for each unit in a typical American history class.

## ★ *Historical Thinking and the Challenge of the Common Core*

This set includes nine assessments aligned with the first nine Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. We have left out the tenth Common Core History/Social Studies Reading standard, which does not lend itself to assessments of the sort provided here. The set also includes two writing tasks aligned with two key Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards.

These Common Core standards challenge history teachers to develop in students the complex literacy skills they need in today's world and the ability to master the unique demands of working with historical primary and secondary source texts. The Common Core standards are supportive of the best practices in teaching historical thinking. Such practices include close reading, attending to a source's point of view and purpose, corroborating sources, and placing sources in their historical context. These are the skills needed to make history less about rote learning and more about an active effort to investigate and interpret the past.

These assessments are also useful in many ways for ELA teachers. They assess many of the skills specified in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which put a good deal of emphasis on the reading of informational texts. The Anchor Standards form the basis for all of the various Common Core standards for English Language Arts.

## ★ *What Are These Assessments Like?*

- *A group of nine reading skills assessments and two writing tasks for each major era of American History*

Each reading skills assessment is based on one of the key Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. Two writing tasks are based on the first two College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, which are the basis for the Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards. The two writing standards focus on writing arguments to support claims and writing informative/explanatory texts.

- *Based on primary or secondary sources*

In most cases, one primary source is used. In some cases, an assessment is based on more than one primary source or on a primary and a secondary source. The sources are brief. In most cases, texts have been slightly altered to improve readability, but without changing meaning or tone.

- *Brief tasks promoting historical literacy*

For each assessment, students write brief answers to one or two questions. The questions are not tests of simple factual recall. They assess the student's mastery of the skills addressed by that assessment's Common Core History/Social Studies Standard.

- *Two versions of each of the nine reading standards assessments*

A *Basic* and an *Advanced* version of each assessment are provided. The *Basic* Assessment addresses the Common Core Standard for grades 6–8. The *Advanced* Assessment is based on the Common Core Standard for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. Each version uses the same source or sources. In some cases, sources have been somewhat shortened for the *Basic* version.

- *Easy to use both as learning and assessment tools*

These assessments do not take valuable time away from instruction. The primary sources and background information on each source make them useful mini-lessons as well as tools to assess student historical thinking skills. The sources all deal with themes and trends normally covered when teaching the relevant historical era.

- *Evaluating student responses*

Brief but specific suggestions are provided defining acceptable and best responses to each question asked in the assessment. The suggestions are meant to aid in evaluating students, but even more importantly they are a way for teachers to help students better understand and master the skills on which the assessment is focused.

# Progressivism and the Age of Reform

## Assessment 1

*Basic Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8

#### ★ Key Ideas and Details

1. **(6–8)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

#### ★ Using this Assessment

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*Progressivism and the Age of Reform: Assessment 1* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past.

#### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

[ This section is not available for review on sample pages ]

## Progressivism and the Age of Reform: Assessment 1

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read a primary source document and a secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

### Document 1: A Written Primary Source

***“A Fiery Sacrifice in New York Factory: One Hundred Forty-Eight, Mostly Girls, Perish.”***

*Nearly all the victims were employed by the Triangle Shirtwaist company, on the eighth, ninth and tenth floors of a ten story and loft building at 23 Washington Place, in the downtown wholesale district. The partners of the firm, Isaac Harris and Max Blanck, escaped, carrying over an adjoining roof Blanck's two young daughters and a governess. There was not an outside fire escape on the building. . . Max Blanck said tonight: “How or where the fire started I have no idea. There was no explosion, of that I am sure. We who escaped by the roof saw nothing of what happened below us. We probably were the last persons to get out of the building alive. I cannot understand why the people of the eighth floor could not have escaped had they not been thrown into panic. They could have found their way out by the fire escapes in the rear. This means of escape, however, was cut off by the flames from those on the ninth and tenth floors.”*

**Source Information:** The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory was destroyed by fire in New York City on March 25, 1911. The fire took the lives of 146 garment workers, mostly Jewish and Italian immigrant women. Newspapers across the country covered the Triangle Shirtwaist fire in the days just after it occurred. This excerpt is from newspaper story that appeared in *The Arizona Republican* on March 26, 1911, one day after the fire.

Source: *The Arizona Republican*. “A Fiery Sacrifice in New York Factory.” March 26, 1911. From Library of Congress, *Chronicling America*. Accessed August 29, 2013. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020558/1911-03-26/ed-1/seq-1/>.

## **Document 2: A Secondary Source**

In the early 1900s, Progressive reformers often spoke up about terrible working conditions in tenements and factories in America's rapidly growing cities. In the New York garment industry, for example, many newly arrived immigrants and other poor workers labored 12 hours or more a day for low wages in cramped, poorly ventilated and dangerous buildings. On March 25, 1911, one tragedy brought these conditions to the attention of the entire nation. On that day, a fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in New York City. Most of the workers were young Jewish and Italian immigrant women. They worked on the eighth, ninth, and tenth floors of the building. The managers of the company often locked exit doors to prevent workers from stealing cloth. In the fire, many on the ninth floor could not escape in part because of one locked door. Some workers died jumping from that floor or the other two. Others died from smoke inhalation, flames or a collapsing fire escape. In all, 146 died in the disaster. The company's owners, Max Blanck and Isaac Harris, were tried on charges of first and second degree manslaughter. The defense argued the two did not know the doors were locked. The jury acquitted the two owners. The fire was a terrifying tragedy. But it was also a wake-up call. Within just a few years, it led to new laws in dozens of states regulating fire safety more strictly and improving workplace conditions.

**Source Information:** This document is a secondary source account of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. As a secondary source, this document is not evidence from the time of the Triangle Shirtwaist tragedy. It is a later account by someone writing about that time. This particular historical account was written in 2013 specifically for use as part of this activity.

### **Assessment Questions**

1. In Document 1, what do you learn about the fire, its causes and the role its owners played in the incident? Sum up by mentioning three details from the document.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How does Document 2 add to your understanding of what caused this event and its importance in American history? Cite at least two new details in Document 2 that add to your understanding of these two things?

# Progressivism and the Age of Reform

## Assessment 7

*Advanced Level*

### Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–12

#### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (9–10) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- 7. (11–12) Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

#### ★ *Using this Assessment*

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*Progressivism and the Age of Reform: Assessment 7* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in a wide variety of primary sources presented in many visual and textual formats. It also asks them to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of visual as compared with written sources.

#### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

[ This section is not available for review on sample pages ]

## Progressivism and the Age of Reform: Assessment 7

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to study three primary source documents carefully and answer questions focused on what the sources have in common. In order to better understand these documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 7: (9–10)** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. **(11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

### Document 1: A Written Primary Source

*The Standard produces only one fiftieth or sixtieth of our petroleum, but dictates the price of all, and refines nine tenths. Circulars are issued at intervals by which the price of oil is fixed for all the cities of the country, except New York, where a little competition survives... This corporation has driven into bankruptcy, or out of business, or into union with itself, all the petroleum refineries of the country except five in New York, and a few of little consequence in Western Pennsylvania... Their great business capacity would have insured the managers of the Standard success, but the means by which they achieved monopoly was by conspiracy with the railroads... After the Standard had used the rebate to crush out the other refiners, who were its competitors in the purchase of petroleum at the wells, it became the only buyer, and dictated the price. It began by paying more than cost for crude oil, and selling refined oil for less than cost. It has ended by making us pay what it pleases for kerosene, and compelling the owner of the well to take what he can get for his product.*

**Source Information:** Henry Damarest Lloyd was a Progressive reformer and journalist who was critical of the power of the large corporations emerging in the late 1800s. In particular, he attacked John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company, accusing it of gaining monopoly power through unfair practices. He especially objected to the rebates Rockefeller got from railroads. These were payments by railroads back to Standard Oil to help it keep its railroad transportation costs lower than those of its competitors. In this document, Lloyd focuses on the rebate issue. This excerpt is adapted from a much longer article, "Story of a Great Monopoly," which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1881.

Source: Lloyd, Henry Damarest. "Story of a Great Monopoly." *The Atlantic Monthly*. March 1, 1881. Accessed August 29, 2013. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1881/03/the-story-of-a-great-monopoly/306019/>.

# Student Handout

## Document 2: A Written Primary Source

Of all the subjects which seem to have attracted the attention of the public to the affairs of the Standard Oil Company, the matter of rebates from railroads has perhaps been uppermost. The Standard Oil Company of Ohio, of which I was president, did receive rebates from the railroads prior to 1880, but received no advantages for which it did not give full compensation... The Standard gave advantages to the railroads for the purpose of reducing the cost of transportation of freight. It offered freights in large quantity, car-loads and train-loads. It furnished loading facilities and discharging facilities at great cost. It provided regular traffic, so that a railroad could conduct its transportation to the best advantage and use its equipment to the full extent of its hauling capacity without waiting for the refiner's convenience. It exempted railroads from liability for fire and carried its own insurance. It provided at its own expense terminal facilities which permitted economies in handling. For these services it obtained contracts for special allowances on freights.

**Source Information:** In this document, Rockefeller himself offers his explanation for the rebates his company received. These excerpts are adapted from John D. Rockefeller's *Random Reminiscences of Men and Events*.

Source: Rockefeller, John D. *Random Reminiscences of Men and Events*. New York, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1909. Quoted in "On the Standard Oil Company," *National Humanities Center*, accessed September 16, 2013, <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/gilded/power/text2/standardoil.pdf>.

## Document 3: A Primary Source

| Price of Gallon of Kerosene |       | Consumer Price Index* |     |
|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----|
| 1872                        | 22.0¢ | 1870                  | 100 |
| 1880                        | 9.3¢  | 1880                  | 76  |
| 1885                        | 8.1¢  | 1885                  | 71  |
| 1890                        | 7.4¢  | 1890                  | 71  |
| 1897                        | 5.9¢  | 1895                  | 66  |

\*This chart shows the overall average prices for several years in the form of an "index." A price index of this sort sets a given year's overall price level at 100 and then lists the price level for other years as percentages of 100. A figure over 100, that is, shows a rise in prices. A figure under 100 shows a fall in prices.

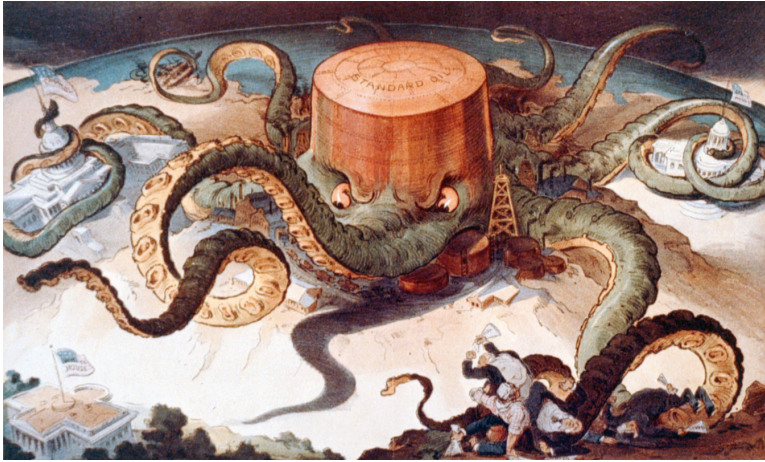
**Source Information:** A key criticism of monopolies is that they use their power to keep prices artificially high. By the 1880s, Standard Oil did control about 90 percent of the world's refined oil production (mainly kerosene). These charts offer evidence as to whether or not Standard Oil did ever use monopoly power to raise prices excessively. The left chart is based on figures in Ida Tarbell's famous book, *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904), pp. 384–385. The second chart is from *Historical Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975).

Sources: Tarbell, Ida. *The History of the Standard Oil Company*. New York, N.Y.: McClure, Philips & Co., 1904. Quoted in Jon Burack, *Rockefeller: Monster Monopolist or Marketplace Hero? Debating the Documents*. Culver City, C.A.: MindSparks, 2006.

*Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*. Bicentennial edition. Washington: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1975. Quoted in Jon Burack, *Rockefeller: Monster Monopolist or Marketplace Hero? Debating the Documents*. Culver City, C.A.: MindSparks, 2006.



## Document 4: A Visual Primary Source



**Source Information:** The title of this cartoon is “Next!” It shows a “Standard Oil” storage tank as an octopus with many tentacles wrapped around the steel, copper, and shipping industries, as well as a state house, the U.S. Capitol, and one tentacle reaching for the White House. The cartoon is by Udo Keppler. It was published in 1907.

Source: Keppler, Udo. “Next!” Illustration. New York: J. Ottoman Lith. Co., September 7, 1904. From Library of Congress, *Miscellaneous Items in High Demand*. Accessed September 16, 2013. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001695241/>.

## Assessment Questions

1. You are a historian trying to understand the impact of Standard Oil on America in the late 1800s. Rank these four documents in terms of their usefulness for this task. Rank them from most useful to least useful. Now explain your rankings.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. As this historian, what other primary source documents might help you better understand the impact of Standard Oil? Name two kinds of sources you think would help and explain your choices.