



# The Industrial Revolution: A Global Event

A Simulation for Grades 9-12

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# TEACHER BACKGROUND MATERIAL

## I. UNIT OVERVIEW

The Industrial Revolution has fundamentally altered the way human beings live more drastically than has any other historical phenomenon. An essentially static agrarian human society based on rigid social distinctions dominated by traditional elites gave way to a dynamic system with no predictable outcome. This is the legacy bequeathed to our current students. By engaging in this simulation students will better understand the historical basis of the contemporary world's fluid and volatile character. We live today within an ever restructuring world economy, one that produces rapid social mobility and the emergence of new divisions of labor and new power elites.

The principal aim of this unit is to offer an alternative to the traditional textbook approach, which typically focuses narrowly on the English Industrial Revolution and its spread to the continent. This unit stresses the notion that the "Industrial Revolution" was in fact a long-term process of worldwide discoveries. Recent research and writings have increasingly demonstrated that industrialism, from its inception, was a global phenomenon.

The unit directs students to perceive historical events in an expanded frame of time and space. Students will understand that industrial development and change occurred over centuries. Although the initial focus of industrial change had European roots, local histories and political-economic structures around the world provided the context for a rich interaction among peoples. The simulation provides a series of biographies which reflect this interaction and describe the resultant winners and losers in this new global environment.

The simulation raises additional questions concerning unpredictable consequences of historical phenomena. Each of the biographies forces students to consider linkages between industrialism and imperialism. They reflect both the acceptance and rejection of "Westernization." They also identify the local resistance movements which contributed to the evolution of nationalist movements. Other interconnected global trends appear in many of the biographies such as population growth, urbanization, migration, changing gender roles and scientific and cultural diffusion.

The approach of this unit is to have each student understand the perspective of a specific individual who witnessed, participated in, or was in some way affected by world industrialization during the period 1850–1914. That individual is associated with a specific social class within a specific nation during the nineteenth century. The core documents of this unit are fifty-four profiles of individuals. Together, these profiles represent prototypes of six social classes in each of nine countries.

The six social classes are:

**Farmers**  
**Workers**  
**Ruling elites**  
**Merchants/Entrepreneurs**  
**Religious figures**  
**Intellectuals/Artists**

The nine countries are:

**Brazil**  
**China**  
**Egypt**  
**Germany**  
**Great Britain**  
**India**  
**Japan**  
**Russia**  
**South Africa**

Through a series of learning activities, the student will come to appreciate his or her character's connection to a particular social class and nation-state and to the global phenomenon of industrialization. Ultimately, we want students to deal with a "big question," an "essential question," which, based upon their study of history, leads them to make their own clear response to an issue of continuing significance in their lives: economic and technological change. The profiles are based on lives of persons who lived and worked between 1850 and the outbreak of World War I. Although the focus is on these seven decades, the issues raised in this simulation cover the broader development of industrialization and its global impact. Most of the profiles are of actual individuals, who appear with their names. When real historical actors were not available, a composite biography was constructed from historical sources. The composite profiles are labeled "typical," for example "typical farmer."

In addition, teachers and students will discover among the profiles individuals who, true to real life, did not necessarily represent the views of the majority of their social class. One example is the Russian merchant/entrepreneur who gave funds to the Bolsheviks. Another is Karl Marx, who was a German intellectual but did not represent the majority viewpoint of that class. These inconsistencies will stimulate student thinking and help them appreciate the complexities of historical reality.

## II. PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

**A**wareness of multiple intelligences and learning styles, commitment to the concept of "student as worker, teacher as coach," and application of authentic assessment techniques, form the pedagogical cornerstones of this unit. In teaching history, such principles support the philosophy that guides much educational research, including the "Standards in Historical Thinking" in the *National Standards for History*. In working with this unit, students know at the outset the "essential question" to which they will seek their own answer. They will also know the criteria they will have to meet in order to demonstrate that they have successfully grappled with the question.

This unit incorporates use of four scoring sheets. These are integral to this pedagogy because they delineate for both teachers and students what students should know and be able to do, and by what criteria they will be assessed. Students will become more engaged in their learning and self-critical of their work as they use explicit criteria to guide their efforts.

The methods used in this unit demand that students interpret historical evidence, do research effectively, synthesize their data, and engage in higher order applications. For teachers the process demands modeling a successful product and facilitating cooperative learning skills. Also, it requires teachers to help students make decisions to overcome obstacles as they move from step to step.

The Mastery Project is a summative feature of the simulation. By providing students with a variety of media through which they can show their understanding of the “essential question,” the project fulfills the promise of multiple-intelligences, learning-style theory, and authentic assessment. The formats the Mastery Projects may take reflect the variety and range of intelligences described by Gardiner, giving the teacher an opportunity to reach every student (See Howard Gardiner, *Frames of Mind*, New York, 1985). The projects require students to address independently and critically an open-ended historical question that gives focus to all the work they do to engage in the simulation.

### III. UNIT CONTEXT

This simulation unit may be presented in connection with a wide variety of commonly taught topics centered on the nineteenth century. These might include the Industrial Revolution, patterns of technological and scientific change, the social impact of industrialization, economic and social reform movements, new political ideologies, and initiatives and enterprise of peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America amid global economic change.

### IV. CORRELATION TO THE NATIONAL HISTORY STANDARDS

*Industrialization: A Global Event* provide teaching materials that address the *National Standards for History*, Basic Edition (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996), **World History, Era 7**, “An Age of Revolutions, 1750–1914.” This unit relates particularly to **Standard 2** on the agricultural and industrial revolutions; **Standard 3** on transformations of Eurasian societies; **Standard 4** on patterns of nationalism, state-building and social reform; **Standard 5** on global change in the era of Western dominance; and **Standard 6** on major global trends 1750–1914. The unit also address **Era 8**, “A Half-Century of Crisis and Achievement, 1900–1945,” **Standard 1** on reform, revolution, and social change in the world economy of the early century.

## V. UNIT OUTLINE

The profiles may be used in different ways, depending on the amount of time and depth each teacher wishes to give the simulation. In past experience with this unit in New York State, projects have ranged from ten weeks using all or most of the historical character profiles to mini-lessons of one or two days. If most of the profiles are used, the simulation may take approximately four weeks.

The overarching objective of the unit is to ask students to analyze and respond to an Essential Question: **Can the effects of major economic and technological change in any era be limited and controlled, or will these effects bring global consequences that go beyond the expected?** Investigation of industrialism around the world thus becomes a case study for considering a question of continuing significance in our lives.

The simulation has four basic stages, culminating in a hypothetical Global Conference of Social Classes held in Geneva in 1913. The purpose of this Conference is to address six important issues, one issue directed toward each of the six social classes represented in the simulation. In preparation for the Conference students proceed through the following stages:

- Stage I: **Students learn their character.** Each student learns to identify with one of the characters represented in the profiles. The student should identify with the character as an individual, as a member of a particular social class, and as a citizen of a nation.
- Stage II: **Students learn the historical context of their character's life.** Each student locates his or her character in the context of historical events occurring in that character's country.
- Stage III: **Students meet as National Delegations.** Each student gets ready to participate in the Global Conference in Geneva as a member of a National Delegation. The student learns how social class and national interest may conflict in the face of global industrialism.
- Stage IV: **Students attend the Global Conference of Social Classes.** Each student participates in the Global Conference primarily by representing his or her social class. The student learns how that class was similar to and different from comparable classes in other nations. The student also learns how nationalism and national traditions affect class interests, and perceptions about class interest, in different countries.

**STAGE III: STUDENTS MEET AS NATIONAL DELEGATIONS****Student Manual Assignment**

## Assignment 7: National Delegation Resolutions

**LESSON ONE**

- A. Instruct the students as follows: It is 1913 and a Global Conference of Social Classes will be convened to discuss the promises and problems facing people around the world in the twentieth century, particularly problems linked to the spread of industrialism. Several nations will be invited to the conference and asked to bring representatives from six social classes. (Remember that teachers may wish to be selective about the number of nations and social classes attending the conference, depending on the number of students taking part in the simulation.) Before the conference opens, each National Delegation will meet to determine whether it is able to develop a *national* position on each of the issues that the conference will consider. In other words, is it possible for representatives of a single country, but who came from several different social classes, to reach agreement on ways to come to grips with serious social, economic, political, or cultural issues that industrialization in the 19th and early 20th centuries has raised?
- B. Direct students to the issues, which are presented below and in **Assignment 7** of the Student Manual. Each issue is of special concern to a particular social class. Instruct all students to use the knowledge and understandings they have developed about their historical character (from study of the Profile and their other research) to develop a resolution based on the issue of special concern to his or her social class. Students should build a forceful defense of that resolution, and they should stay in character while they undertake this assignment. See **Student Aid 3: Defining and Writing a Resolution** for the proper format and an example. When students are creating their resolutions, ask them to consider not only the main issues raised, but also complexities of these problems, which are suggested in the secondary questions in parentheses.

**Farmer**

**Issue:** Is it in the interest of society to redistribute land so that small farmers own enough acreage to support themselves and their families? (Are small farmers more efficient or less efficient than big landowners? Does redistribution of land promote or threaten political stability? Who gets compensated when land is redistributed?)

**Worker**

**Issue:** Should governments pass laws to protect factory workers? If so, what kinds of laws—wages, hours, working conditions? (Should unions be legalized? Should union activity be limited? Should collective bargaining be mandatory?)

**Ruling Elite**

**Issue:** Who should be allowed to vote and hold office in government? (Should women be permitted to vote and hold office? Should there be universal suffrage for both men and women? Should the desires of the masses be balanced by protections for the elite, as is the case in Britain with its House of Lords?)

**Merchant/Entrepreneur**

**Issue:** Who should own or control the means of production—government, foreigners, wage-earning workers, or all citizens? (What is the traditional role of the government in the economy in your nation? Should foreign capital be invited in to develop the economy?)

**Religious Figures**

**Issue:** Should religious authorities have veto power over economic and political changes if these changes threaten family, social structures, or elements of traditional culture? (Should religious figures have a voice in censoring unwanted ideas? Can people maintain a traditional culture during a time of political and economic change? What are ways in which people of a nation may react to change initiated by foreigners?)

**Intellectual/Artist**

**Issue:** Who should be educated? What should an educational system look like for citizens of the early twentieth century? (Should women get the same education as men? Should the lower classes get the same education as the wealthy? Should the schools teach traditional, secular, or Western subjects and values?)



**LESSON TWO**

- A. Instruct students (in their social class roles) to present and defend their Resolution within their National Delegation. Each Delegation should discuss or debate the proposed Resolutions in order to try to arrive at a consensus position. Members of the Delegation should ask questions and challenge the position taken on each Resolution in order to deepen understanding of the kinds of issues that unite or divide the delegates from a particular nation. Why were the delegates able to compromise on some issues and not on others? Which delegates were most likely to work together? Which were likely to clash?
- B. As they carry on the discussion, ask students to keep track of the variety of responses to each Resolution. Members of the Delegation should propose amendments or modifications to the Resolution in order to try to come to agreement. Following discussion, the Delegation should vote on each Resolution. The group's Secretary should keep a record of all votes and the main pro and con arguments for each Resolution. The Organizer of Paperwork should duplicate copies of the Secretary's record of votes for each member of the National Delegation and for the teacher.
- C. As a summary, ask students to discuss whether their National Delegation is relatively unified or divided. What factors might unite the members despite social class differences, interest conflicts, and disagreements? For example, an anti-imperialist Resolution might unite a Delegation from an African or Asian country. A strongly nationalist Resolution might unite a Delegation from a European country.