

## **The Bread and Roses Strike 1912** **Ron Miller, Jewett Academy**

### **Lesson Plan Summary:**

In early 1912, the women of the textile mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts had reached the end of their rope. A state law that went into effect on January 1, 1912 reduced the legal work hours from 56 to 54. Unfortunately for the workers, mostly women, the textile factories responded by cutting wages while speeding up production. The workers went on strike. The Bread and Roses strike was significant because the working women, predominately immigrants, organized and ran the strike mostly their own.

### **Objectives:**

SS.A.1.4.2, SS.A.1.4.4, SS.C.1.4.4

Students will understand and identify themes in history that cross economic and cultural boundaries.

Students will identify the working conditions gave rise to the Bread and Roses Strike.

Students will identify the factors that led to the success of strike.

Students will identify the role of unions and the role of women in the Bread and Roses Strike

### **U.S. History Era:**

Pre- World War I, Industrialization

### **Grade Level**

High School or Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

### **Materials:**

Bread and Roses Strike Research Directions

Bread and Roses Worksheet

Power Point Presentation Directions

### **Lesson Time:**

180 minutes

Power point may be assigned with a latter due date.

### **Lesson Procedures:**

#### **Activities:**

Students will go to the computer lab to do on-line research on the Bread and Roses strike. Students can use the resources listed as well as additional sources that they locate.

Students will complete a worksheet that focuses on basic information about the strike.

#### **Assessment:**

Students will create a power point presentation to tell the story of the Bread and Roses strike.

#### **Resources:**

*Bread and Roses: The 1912 Lawrence textile Strike*

by Joyce Kornbluh. The Lucy Parsons Project,

[http://www.lucyparsonspj.org/iww/kornbluh\\_bread\\_roses.html](http://www.lucyparsonspj.org/iww/kornbluh_bread_roses.html)

*The Bread and Roses Strike Begins*, Mass Moments

<http://massmoments.org/moment.cfm?mid=16>

*Girl Power: The Story of the Bread and Roses Strike*

By Debra Pawlak

[http://themediadrome.com/content/articles/history\\_articles/bread\\_and\\_roses.htm](http://themediadrome.com/content/articles/history_articles/bread_and_roses.htm)

*Hearings on the Strike at Lawrence, Massachusetts, House Document No. 671, 62nd Congress.*

Reprinted in *Rebel Voices: An I.W.W. Anthology*, ed. by Joyce L. Kornbluh (University of Michigan Press, 1964).

[http://massmoments.org/primary\\_source.cfm?mid=16](http://massmoments.org/primary_source.cfm?mid=16)

*1912: The Lawrence Textile Strike*

by Alex Aspden

<http://libcom.org/history-the-lawrence-textile-strike>

## The Bread and Roses Strike

### Research Directions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the United States experienced significant labor unrest. Workers attempted to organize into unions, management resisted the workers' efforts to unionize. Workers often went on strike for shorter work days, better working conditions, and better pay. Industry leaders, often with government assistance, tried to break the strikes and destroy the unions. Many of the clashes turned violent. The Haymarket Riot, Homestead Strike against Carnegie Steel and the Pullman Strike were some of the most violent labor disputes.

In 1912, the women textile workers went on strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. This strike was different than most of the labor disputes of the era. Search the web to learn about the Bread and Roses Strike. The following web sites are good places to start.

*Bread and Roses: The 1912 Lawrence textile Strike*  
by Joyce Kornbluh. The Lucy Parsons Project,  
[http://www.lucyparsonspj.org/iww/kornbluh\\_bread\\_roses.html](http://www.lucyparsonspj.org/iww/kornbluh_bread_roses.html)

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## **The Bread and Roses Strike Student Question Worksheet**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Using the information from the various web sites, answer the following questions about the 1912 textile strike in Lawrence Massachusetts.

After completing the worksheet, create a power point presentation to tell the story of The Bread and Roses Strike.

1. Describe the working conditions in the textile mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
2. What were the wages paid to the factory workers and how did the wages compare to the cost of living in Lawrence?
3. Describe the makeup of the work force in the textile mills.
4. Explain the events that led to the strike?
5. What were the demands of the striking workers?
6. Which union supported the strikers?
7. Describe the actions of the establishment in its attempt to break the strike?
8. What happened to Anna LoPizzo and how did that impact the strike?
9. Describe the action of the authorities which created public support for the strikers?
10. Who were Joseph Ettor and Arturo Giovannitti and what happened to them during the strike?
11. Explain why the strike is called the Bread and Roses Strike.

## **The Bread and Roses Strike**

### **Power Point Presentation Directions**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Using the information from the student question worksheet and the various web sites, about the 1912 textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, create a power point presentation to tell the story of The Bread and Roses Strike.

The presentation must be at least fifteen slides and include the following:

- title
- views of the working conditions in textile mills in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- images of striking workers
- slogans of striking workers
- living conditions in the mill towns in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- newspaper headlines or articles during the strike
- political cartoons or images representing the strikers

Completed power point presentations will be shown to the class for comments and suggestions for improvement. Revise the power point and turn in the final power point.