

Urban Growth in America: Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 9-12

Curriculum Focus: U.S. History

Lesson Duration: Two class periods

Program Description

Travel back to the 1800s for a look at the rise of inventions and industry and how they contributed to the rapid growth of cities, such as New York. Meet the Progressives, a group of reformers who fought against corporate monopolies and for women's voting rights. And investigate the economic reasons why highly organized street gangs emerged in the early 1900s.

- Inventions and Industry (4 min.)
 - The Rise of New York City (4 min.)
 - Politics and Progressives (3 min.)
 - The First American Gangsters (35 min.)
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Onscreen Questions

- How did industrial growth change the United States?
 - Why did so many immigrants settle in New York City?
 - What did Progressives want to change in America?
 - Why did some immigrants turn to crime?
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Discuss what elements make up a city.
- Learn how New York City was planned.
- Design a city, using some of the design principles behind New York City.

Materials

- *Urban Growth in America* program
- Computer with Internet access

- Newsprint and markers
- Poster board or large sheets of newsprint
- Markers or colored pencils

Procedures

1. Ask students what they know about cities and list their answers on a sheet of newsprint. Possible answers include the following:
 - In cities, many people live together in a small space.
 - Skyscrapers are one kind of building found in cities.
 - Many people go to cities in search of jobs.
 - Buses and trains travel in and out of cities.
2. Show students the “Inventions and Industry” and “The Rise of New York City” segments in the *Urban Growth in America* program.
3. Divide students into groups of three or four and explain that they will design their own cities. Along with what they’ve just learned about urban growth, they should also use their own knowledge of cities to guide their designs. Remind them that their cities should include all of the necessary elements and should be planned in a logical fashion.
4. After giving the groups time to develop an initial list of necessary elements, tell students that they must include these items in their city design:
 - A street design, such as the grid system used in New York City
 - A plan for infrastructure – electricity, plumbing, garbage disposal, etc.
 - Places for people to live
 - Places for people to work
 - Restaurants, movie theatres, sports and concert arenas, and other places for entertainment
 - Parks and other recreational areas
5. Provide each group with poster board or large pieces of newsprint and colored pencils or markers. Give the groups class time to draw a blueprint for their cities. If needed, have students finish the assignment as homework.
6. During the next class, have the groups share their city designs and discuss the students’ ideas. Ask: How did each group fit in all the necessary elements? Do people have enough room to live and work comfortably?
7. Ask students to name some of the problems associated with cities, such as crime. Looking at their designs, can they see any contributing factors for these problems? (For example, overcrowding or competition for goods and services.) Show students “The First American Gangsters” segment in the *Urban Growth in America* program.



Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students were highly engaged in class and small-group discussions; produced an attractive, logical design for a city that had all the requested components; presented their ideas to the class in a clear, thoughtful way.
- 2 points: Students participated in class and small-group discussions; produced an adequate design for a city that had most of the requested components; presented their ideas to the class satisfactorily.
- 1 point: Students participated minimally in class and small-group discussions; did not complete a design for a city or completed one that had little or none of the requested components; did not present their ideas clearly to the class.

Vocabulary

city

Definition: A large area where people live and work that also has importance as a commercial and cultural center

Context: The city is a center of activity, with many opportunities for recreation, including shopping and attending cultural events.

design

Definition: A plan for something that lays out where things should go and how the different elements work together

Context: The design for New York City was based on the grid system, where the roads were laid out in an orderly way.

Thomas Edison

Definition: Inventor of the electric light bulb and of a large-scale electrical system

Context: On December 31, 1879, Thomas Edison displayed his electrical light system by lighting up the streets of Menlo Park, New Jersey, where his laboratory was located.

infrastructure

Definition: The underlying foundation of a system, such as a city

Context: The infrastructure of a city includes the power grid, the sewage system, and the way water is supplied.

skyscraper

Definition: A tall building that is an efficient use of space in a city

Context: Not only could many people fit into a skyscraper, this building was once a status symbol for a city.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- U.S. History: Era 6— Understands massive immigration after 1870 and how new social patterns, conflicts, and ideas of national unity developed amid growing cultural diversity
- Language Arts: Viewing— Uses a range of strategies to interpret visual media

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org>

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
 - Time, Continuity, and Change
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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

How to Use the DVD

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

Play Video— This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

Video Index—Here the video is divided into four segments (see below), indicated by video thumbnail icons. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. Brief descriptions and total running times are noted for each part. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

Curriculum Units—These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen pre- and post-viewing questions, reproduced below in this Teacher's Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

Standards Link—Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

Teacher Resources—This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

Video Index

I. Inventions and Industry (4 min.)

The Industrial Revolution brought major changes to the United States. Explore how industrial growth changed America and examine life in 19th-century cities.

II. The Rise of New York City (4 min.)

New York City was a major hub of U.S. industrial growth in the 19th century. Tour the engineering history of "the city that never sleeps."

III. Politics and Progressives (3 min.)

The Progressives worked to address and correct the urban problems of corruption and dangerous workplace conditions. Learn about Progressivism and see how Teddy Roosevelt and other leaders reformed society.

IV. The First American Gangsters (35 min.)

America has long been fascinated with urban gangsters. Travel back in time to discover the roots of organized crime and learn about Al Capone and other such infamous gangsters.

Curriculum Units

1. Industrialization in America

Pre-viewing question

Q: What appliances, tools, and gadgets do you use daily?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What was life like for most 19th-century immigrant workers?

A: Most immigrant workers lived in big city slums, commonly working 60 hours a week. They received no pensions or payments if they were injured or lost their jobs. Their living conditions were crowded and unsanitary, which led to outbreaks of disease that spread quickly.

2. History of the Big Apple

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you like about New York City?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What would be the reaction of 19th-century city planners in New York City today?

A: Answers will vary.

3. Progressive Solutions to Urban Problems

Pre-viewing question

Q: What would you like to change about the United States?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: How did Teddy Roosevelt uphold the ideals of the Progressives?

A: Teddy Roosevelt was the first Progressive president. He used his office to break up many business trusts, or huge combinations of companies that used their economic power to take advantage of their competitors and workers. Roosevelt enacted the Square Deal, which was designed to give all Americans an equal chance to succeed. He created the Pure Food and Drug Act to protect American consumers, and he established the National Park system to conserve the environment.

4. New York's Early Street Gangs

Pre-viewing question

Q: Describe what you consider a typical gangster.

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What similarities exist between modern gangs and 19th-century street gangs?

A: Street gangs in the 19th century wore specific colors, called their headquarters "cribs," spoke of ruling their turf, and they used gang signs, similar to those of gangs today.

5. Getting Out of the Slums

Pre-viewing question

Q: Why do people join gangs?

A: Answers will vary.



Post-viewing question

Q: What advantages did gangs offer immigrants in the 19th century?

A: Answers will vary.

6. The Black Hand

Pre-viewing question

Q: Why do you think gangsters receive attention in the media?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Describe the Black Hand.

A: Established by a group of Italians, this street gang rapidly provoked a reign of terror with vicious extortion. Its members sent extortion letters signed with a black handprint; if victims refused to comply with the gang, they would pay heavy consequences. Black Hand gang members wore hats and mustaches, which earned them the name "Mustache Petes."

7. Gang Business

Pre-viewing question

Q: What tactics do people use to manipulate others?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What activities did New York's 19th-century gangs take part in?

A: New York City gangs defended their territories and fought turf wars over areas where the winning gang would have the exclusive right to commit crimes. By the early 1900s, gangs were also acting as contract assassins, taking cash to kill people.

8. An Era of Gangster Films

Pre-viewing question

Q: Why might gangster movies be popular with the public?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: How did *Musketeers of Pig Alley* differ from other movies of the time?

A: It was the first true gangster movie. The director filmed on location rather than in a studio, having paid local gang bosses to protect his equipment. The extras used in the filmmaking were real gangsters. The use of authentic gangsters onscreen caused a sensation and gave the movie a feeling of reality that was missing from other pictures.

9. Movie Gangsters Influence American Culture

Pre-viewing question

Q: In what ways does Hollywood set American style trends?

A: Answers will vary.



Post-viewing question

Q: In what ways has the look of “gangster style” changed over the years?

A: Answers will vary.

10. Well-Organized Crime

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you know about the Mafia?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Who do you think was the cause of the Mafia's rise to power?

A: Answers will vary.

11. White-Collar Crime

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you consider white-collar crimes?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What were the effects of street gangs on the community?

A: Answers will vary.

12. Al Capone and Prohibition

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you know about Al Capone?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do you think Al Capone could have been successful if he hadn't been a gangster?

A: Answers will vary, but students may cite the following as evidence that he could have been successful in another field: Unlike other gangsters, Capone's instinct for public relations was his key to success. He understood that speaking well and acting polite were often as effective as violence. He employed anyone with talent and could sway people to his causes through the use of charm instead of threats.

