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# Get Your Act Together

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**Title:** Get Your Act Together

**Author:** Jacob Hillesheim

**Adaptor:** Olivia Lee-Benton

**Grade Levels:** 9-12

**Time:** 45 min

**Focus Statement:** This lesson is a discussion based on packets that students have been filling out throughout the course of the unit. These packets call for students to analyze certain legislation enacted by Congress during the Gilded Age: The Pendleton Civil Service Act 1883, The Interstate Commerce Act, The Sherman Silver Purchase Act, The Sherman Antitrust Act, the Gold Standard Act, the Dawes Act, and the Chinese Exclusion Act. By asking my students to answer these questions (Who? What? Why?), I am incorporating the following History Habits of Mind:

- Perceive events and issues as they were experienced by people at the time, to develop historical empathy as opposed to present-mindedness.

This is a student lead investigation with my guidance along the way. While I provide them with content over the course of the unit, I encourage them to find outside resources to answer these questions. In order to assure that my students have lead themselves to sound interpretations, we will be spending this class period going over the packet together as a class; sharing what we've discovered while discussing these acts, and their impacts, in depth. I also try to set time away on days throughout the unit so they have some class time to work on it while having me present to address any questions. A basic guide is attached to help facilitate the lesson, however, students' answers should go beyond what is listed.

**MN Standard:** 9.4.4.20.7 As the United States shifted from its agrarian roots into an industrial and global power, the rise of big business, urbanization and immigration led to institutionalized racism, ethnic and class conflict and new efforts at reform. (Development of an industrial United States 1870-1920).

**Benchmark:** Evaluate the effectiveness of political responses to the problems of industrialism, monopoly capitalism, urbanization, and political corruption.

**Learning Objective(s):** (Both Content and Skill)

- Students should be able to identify the people behind major legislation of the Gilded Age. They should also identify the people that it affected.
- Students should be able to state what the legislation did and how it affected particular groups of people.
- Students will be able to explain why these acts were put into place

**Resources:**

- Overhead digital projector in order for kids to display their illustrations
- Whiteboard in order to write notes on the board that I want to make sure the students have in their packets
- "Get Your Act Together" packets

**Methods/Procedures**

**Beginning (5 minutes):** Hand back packets to students after collecting them to make sure they did their work to contribute to discussion. If they handed the packet in for this review they may earn up to 10 points. If they hand it in on the day of discussion, they may still get points for participating in discussion.(by speaking

and taking notes to improve their packet. Failure to turn in the packet for review and participate results in zero points.

**Middle: (35 minutes):** Lead a discussion on the packet, calling on students to go over their answers. Some questions to guide discussion:

Who were the key figures?

Why did they want this legislation passed?

Who wouldn't have wanted it passed and why?

What did this legislation call for?

How was this legislation in practice?

What events/acts lead up this decision?

How would this affect the lives of industrial workers/industrial leaders/farmers/immigrants/Native Americans/ women/etc.?

Go one act at a time. Before moving on to another act, ask students if they would like to share their illustrations or share some sources they used and thought were helpful.

Take notes on who is participating

**End / Summary (5 minutes):** Go over any points you think you may have missed as a class and collect packets (now with participation notes) for final review

**Assignment:** The final review of the packet is the ultimate assessment. If students failed to put forth work prior to discussion and during the discussion, they have failed to prove they have taken away what was needed.

Grading of this lesson is as follows:

Review of packet before discussion: 10 points

Participation in discussion by sharing, contributing and taking notes: 10 points:

Final review of packet (shows they were taking notes during discussion): 5 points

### **Adapted From:**

This lesson was adapted from the work of Jacob Hildesheim of Elk River High School. I took Mr. Hillesheim's class in 10th grade and was asked to do something similar for the Civil Rights Era. We had five or six different events that shaped that time and were asked the same questions. We then had the same process of packet reviews and concluded with discussion. I decided to adapt this lesson so I could cover this particular standard with both a student directed investigation and a class discussion. I feel as though this process encourages participation in the class discussion so it is more meaningful.