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Lesson 7: Mills and Money Lesson Ideas for Alignment

Developed by Grace Morgan



Lesson Summary: Mills gradually took over the spinning and weaving jobs done at home. Because of the number of rivers in Maine, water power was plentiful so many mills and mill towns were established. Mills carded, spun yarn and wove fabric. Maine was even involved in the production of silk thread in the mid to late 19th century. Often very young people worked in the mills and the jobs were dangerous. Students will discover what working life was like for a young girl through a series of letters.

Teacher Note: It would be helpful to provide more information regarding mills, age of workers and working conditions. This lesson shows that technology not only changed the way cloth was made, but also had a great impact on the life of workers.

Learning Objectives:

The student will:

- Explain how the geography of Maine affected the growth of cloth production, at one time Maine's biggest business.
- Research working conditions in mills during the period 1800 to 1850.
- Identify 5 facts about Barilla's life revealed in her letters.
- Write a letter to Barilla, as if the student was her friend back home in 1844.
- Write a paragraph comparing Barilla's life to their own.

Maine Learning Results

ELA

B1a-h Writing - Interconnected Elements

B5a Writing - Practical Application

SCI

C3 Science, Technology and Society

SS

D2a, b Geographic Knowledge, Concepts, Themes & Patterns

Common Core

ELA

Speaking and Listening: 2

Writing: 4,



Process:

- Discuss the background information in *Mills and Money*.
- Discuss how the rivers promoted mill development.
- Working in small groups, have students use the internet and other resources to research working conditions in the mills in the 1800s as well as the impact of the mills on the environment.
- Provide time for brief oral presentations about their findings.
- Select students to take the part of Barilla, George Austin, Mrs. Taylor, Florena Austin, Mr. Taylor and Plinny Tidd and have them read aloud the letter that their character wrote.
- Discuss some of the expressions Barilla used in her letters and ask students to paraphrase them.
 - "pass through your head"
 - "came out for dinner"
- Have students write a paragraph comparing Barilla's life to their own.

Assessment: Use sample rubrics or use class-generated rubrics.





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