



LESSON PLAN

WEST VIRGINIA MINE WARS MUSEUM

wvminewars.org

401 Mate Street Matewan, West Virginia 25678

Lesson 5: People's History of the Bull Moose Special

Objectives:

- Students will interact with the events, stories, and people of the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek Strike of 1912-1913.
- Students will understand how the events of West Virginia's deadliest strike affected individuals, but also how those individuals built community and a union movement across racial, ethnic, and gender lines.

Materials Needed:

- [Journal handout](#), plain sheet of paper, or access to Microsoft word.
- **Student Handout:** [Mine Wars characters](#) to assign to each student. Mixer roles include the following:

1. Fred Mooney (Miner)
2. Frank Keeney (Miner)
3. Newt Gump (Miner)
4. E.S. Hurst (Miner)
5. Dan Chain, alias "Few Clothes Johnson" (Miner)
6. Rocco Spinelli (Miner)
7. Bill Blizzard (Miner)
8. Lawrence "Peggy" Dwyer (Union Organizer)
9. George H. Edmunds (Union Organizer)
10. Maud Estep (Wife of a Miner)
11. Ralph Chaplin (Union Organizer)
12. Eugene V. Debs (Union Organizer)
13. Mary Harris "Mother Jones" (Union Organizer)
14. Thomas Cairns (Union Organizer)
15. Cleve Woodrum (Miner)
16. Giacomo Alicata*¹ (Miner)
17. A.D. Lavinder (Miner)
18. Lazlo Solyom* (Miner)
19. Rimantas Balkus* (Miner)
20. Nellie Bowles Spinelli (Wife of a Miner)
20. Sarah "Mother" Blizzard (Wife of a Miner)
21. Thomas Felts (Mine Guard)
22. Ernest "Tony" Gaujot (Mine Guard)
23. Lee Calvin (Mine Guard)
24. Captain Guy Levy (Mine Guard)
25. Bonner Hill (Politician)
26. Fred Michaels (Mine Guard)
27. Quinn Morton (Mine Owner)
28. Blanka Solyom* (Wife of a Miner)
29. Maria Gorofalo* (Wife of a Miner)
30. Heather Lester (Wife of a Miner)
31. Juraj Nagy* (Miner)
32. Daniela Jakubisko* (Wife of a Miner)
33. Wesley Williams* (Miner)
34. Eliza Williams* (Wife of a Miner)

¹*Indicates the character was not a real person, but still based on historical research.

Activity 1: Warm Up Activity

(Synchronous) Debrief the previous lesson about the Bull Moose Special. Facilitate a class discussion about the different point of views in each article. Why was the Bull Moose Special Attack significant in the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek Strike?

(Asynchronous) Have students review their work from the previous lesson and reflect on the events of the Bull Moose Special. Why was it so significant in the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek Strike?

Activity 2: Bull Moose Special “Tea Party”

1. From the [Mine Wars Character Handout](#), assign students a mixer role.
2. Have students read and “get to know” their character. They should be prepared to mingle with other students and find out the sometimes conflicting stories of individuals involved in the strike.

(Synchronous)

Once students have assumed their mixer roles, have them “meet” each other in multiple rotations of Zoom Rooms or Google Meet (we recommend groups of three). If students have the capability to change their screen names, it is helpful to change it to their character’s name, so that their discussion partners can easily track who they’re talking to. This activity can carry on as long as your class-time permits. Once finished, ask students to write up a journal entry, citing one of the newspaper accounts from the previous lesson and at least 2 other characters they “met,” from the point of view of their assigned character about what happened during the Bull Moose Special.

(Asynchronous)

1. Have students make a short, 1-2 minute video of their character. ([Fligrid](#) or [chatterpix](#) are great options!)
2. Ask students to respond, in character, to at least 3 of the other videos.
3. Ask students to write up a journal entry, citing one of the newspaper accounts from the previous lesson and at least 2 other characters they “met,” from the point of view of their assigned character about what happened during the Bull Moose Special.

Closing Discussion: *Facilitate a discussion about the role of “ordinary” individuals involved in the strike. Suggested questions include:*

- How did we see other themes we have been learning about affect individuals?
- How did individuals come to play the role they did? Do you think it changed over time?

- What was the role of the company town environment on the strike?
- How was the story experienced differently for minorities and women?
- What role did having community play in this story?

Historical Context/Background Resources:

- Read [a brief history of the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek Strike](#), compiled by the Mine Wars Museum
- Read the U.S. Senate Testimony of attackers and defenders, from Mine Operator Quinn Morton, Kanawha County Sheriff Bonner Hill, and wife of a deceased miner Maud Estep, made [available at the West Virginia Department of Culture, Arts, and History](#).
- [See the gravesite of Francis F. "Cesco" Estep](#), the only person killed during the Bull Moose Special, photographed by Roger May.²
- Listen to Hazel Dickens' song, [Coal Miners Grave](#)
- See [a cartoon based on the Bull Moose Special](#)

For more resources on forming a union in southern West Virginia, please visit our website at www.wvminewars.com

WV 8th Grade Curriculum Standards:

SS.8.23: Demonstrate an understanding of major social, political, and economic developments that took place in West Virginia during the second half of the nineteenth century. (Explain the significance of the increased immigration into the United State in the late nineteenth century to West Virginia, including cultural and economic contributions of immigrants, opportunities and struggles experienced by immigrants, increased racial hostility and the effect of racial and ethnic diversity on national identity)

SS.8.24 Demonstrate an understanding of West Virginia's development during the early twentieth century. (Analyze the evolution of the labor movement in West Virginia. Summarize the progressive reform movement in West Virginia)

SS.8.25: Demonstrate an understanding of West Virginia's development during the mid-twentieth century.

² Why was only one person killed during such an attack? At the time, machine guns could only maneuver side-to-side. If the machine gun would have shot down from the elevated train tracks, historians estimate that more would have been wounded or killed during the attack on the tent colony.