



LESSON PLAN

WEST VIRGINIA MINE WARS MUSEUM

wvminewars.org

401 Mate Street Matewan, West Virginia 25678

Lesson 6: The Hatfield Contract

Objectives:

- This lesson seeks to build on previous lessons focused on the development of the UMWA and solidarity in Paint Creek and Cabin Creek.
- The lesson emphasizes the diversity of the coal fields and reminds students of the crucial, yet often overlooked, role of women and immigrants in the strike and the development of a union movement in the region.
- The lesson allows students to see and understand the challenges of the working class and the union movement by inserting them into this story as actors, encouraging them to think about their own agency and responsibilities to their community.

Materials Needed:

- [Student Handout #1](#)
- [Mine Wars Characters](#) (used in previous lesson)

Activity 1: Warm Up

(Synchronous) Have a couple of students read aloud their journal entry from the previous lesson. Ask students what surprised them the most from meeting the other characters.

(Asynchronous) Have students review their journal entries and character from the previous lesson. Who were they? What were they going through? If other students submitted their character for the class to review, have students review at least 2-3 other characters. (This activity would be perfect for a discussion board!)

Activity 2: Taking a Stance on the Hatfield Contract

(Synchronously)

1. Distribute the lesson handout to the students and assign them a Mine Wars Character. (These are the same characters from the previous lesson. It is up to the instructor if you want them to play the same or a different character.)
2. Have students read their roles and write down where their character stands on the Hatfield Contract and at least 2-3 reasons to support their stance.
3. Divide the students into 5 groups (wives of miners, union organizers, coal operators, mine guards, and miners). Each group should...
 - a. Assign a spokesperson

- b. Come up with 2-3 reasons to convince the miners to vote for or against the contract
4. Each spokesperson will get a brief amount of time (2-3 minutes) to make their case to the miners who then vote on whether to accept the contract or not.
5. Allow the miners to take a vote on whether or not they agree to the compromise from Governor Hatfield.

(Asynchronously)

1. Distribute the lesson handout to the students and assign them a Mine Wars Character. (These are the same characters from the previous lesson. It is up to the instructor if you want them to play the same or a different character.)
2. Have students read their roles and write down where their character stands on the Hatfield Contract and at least 2-3 reasons to support their stance.
3. Now, the students must write a one-page speech from the viewpoint of their character, with at least 2-3 main reasons, to convince the miners to vote on whether to accept the contract or not.
 - a. Students may write the speech and submit it to the teacher, or give the speech in front of their peers during the next in-class period.

Concluding Discussion: Debrief this exercise by facilitating a discussion on what students learned from this exercise. Some guiding questions might include...

- What challenges were faced in forming the union?
- What were the most influential arguments made on all sides?
- Were all the arguments made in “good faith?”
- What role did community identity play in where people stood on the contract?
- Compare the viewpoints of the different groups, what were the factors motivating these differences?
- Try especially to draw out the stories of the female characters in this (especially the questions of how immigrants and locals shared knowledge and “secret gardens”), and ask students to analyze why this might be surprising given the scarcity of food.
- Also, make sure students share the stories of the women tearing up the railroad tracks. In what ways do these stories challenge the students’ ideas about the role of women in history?

Historical Context/Background Resources on the Hatfield Contract:

- Read [e-WV Article about Henry D. Hatfield's life](#)
- Read Maud Estep's [U.S. Senate Testimony regarding conditions in the Paint Creek District](#) (you have to search for her name in the online book or go to page 460).
- (Research) [Mother Jones' activities on Paint Creek](#)
- (Listen) [WV Public Broadcasting](#) reports on the Hatfield Contract on "This Day in History"

WV 8th Grade Curriculum Standards:

SS.8.8: Analyze the impact of absentee ownership, renewable and nonrenewable natural resources, labor unionization and the development of infrastructure on the economic growth of West Virginia

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.8.2: Evaluate how citizens can influence and participate in government at the local, state and national levels and assume the role of an active citizen participating in the democratic process (e.g., lobbying, voting, community service, letter writing and school elections).

SS.8.4: Differentiate between the division of powers and responsibilities for each of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the United States and West Virginia governments, describe the system of checks and balances, and explore local forms of government.

For more resources on the Hatfield Contract, please visit our website at www.wvminewars.com

Student Handout #1 - Background of the Paint Creek and Cabin Creek Strike

Background:

It is April 28, 1913. The miners along Paint Creek and Cabin Creek in Kanawha County, WV have been on strike for nearly a year. Their demands are:

1. That the operators accept and recognize the union
2. That the miners right to free speech and peaceable assembly be restored
3. That black-listing discharged workers be stopped
4. That compulsory trading at company stores be ended
5. That the union also employ a second check-weigh man

During the strike the coal companies evicted pro-union miners, and organizers were imprisoned without trial by the state government. Living in tents like the camp at Holly Grove, miners and their families had little food, shelter, and medical care for an entire year. Also, violence between the miners and mine detectives has led to over 50 violent deaths on both sides. During the previous winter, a new governor, Henry Hatfield, was elected who promised to end the strike. Without input from the miners themselves, he convinced union leaders and coal companies to accept the “Hatfield Contract” this called for:

- A nine hour workday
- The right to select check-weigh man
- Semi-monthly pay
- No discrimination against union miners

He gave the miners 36 hours to accept the “Hatfield Contract” and get back to work or face prison.

Assignment:

You are now going to play the role of the character described on your slip of paper. Read about who you are (in your assigned character role) and think about how your character feels about the Hatfield Contract. Do you support it, or do you oppose it? Why does your character feel this way? Write your thoughts in the space below, and on the back of this page.