



LESSON PLAN

WEST VIRGINIA MINE WARS MUSEUM

wvminewars.org

401 Mate Street Matewan, West Virginia 25678

The Mystery of the Bull Moose Special

11th Grade

Objectives:

- This lesson introduces students to the events of the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek Strike of 1912-13.
- The activities are centered on students reading a variety of sources critically, and making a historical argument.
- Students will role play characters and to understand how the events of the strike affected individuals, but also how those individuals built community and a union movement across racial, ethnic, and gender lines and the importance of civil and constitutional rights.

Materials Needed:

- [Student handout with assigned characters](#) (suited for up to 32 students)
- [Who Writes History? Handout](#) for asynchronous learning

Introduction and the challenge to write history

(Synchronous)

Introduce students to the Baltimore Sun article ([available in the handouts](#)) that reports the Bull Moose Special incident as a “passenger train fired upon.” Tell students that their job is to find out exactly what happened, but also why. Mention that some of the sources may contradict one another to try and understand what occurred and the reasons for it. Challenge them, explain they are historians, writing history, uncovering facts and telling a story with them. Remind them that not all characters were present for the Bull Moose incident but might have important context for understanding the events.

(Asynchronous)

Students will be [assigned their character](#) and read the instructions on an accompanying student handout, [Who Writes History?](#), before meeting other characters in the role play.

Tea Party:

Teachers should [assign students a character to play](#) when they mingle with other students to find out what happened during the Bull Moose Special and why.

(Synchronous)

Once students have assumed their mixer roles, have them “meet” each other in a mixer. If virtual, you can conduct 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.

Write up

Citing at least two other characters, students will write a short journal entry (3-5 sentences) explaining what happened during the Bull Moose Special and why. They should be ready to contribute to the class discussion.

Discussion

Instructor leads a discussion based on students reading their explanations, asking the class why they included some things and not others. Why did the original article we started with explain the events the way it did? Was it false, if not, why is it still not entirely true? Also in the discussion encourage students to think about the following:

- challenges of forming a union
- limits on constitutional and civil rights
- role of minorities and women
- importance of community, and what strengthened it

(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,” Citing at least two other characters, students will write a short journal entry (3-5 sentences) explaining what happened during the Bull Moose Special and why.

Historical Context/Background Resources on the Paint Creek Cabin Creek Strike:

- 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.¹
- Listen to Hazel Dickens’ song, [Coal Miners Grave](#)
- See [a cartoon based on the Bull Moose Special](#)

WV 11th Grade Curriculum Standards (U.S. Studies Comprehensive):

SS. USC. 1: Identify issues regarding evolution of US citizenship and evaluate rights and responsibilities of US citizens

SS USC.2: Evaluate then defend the importance of the fundamental democratic values and principles of US constitutional democracy in a global context including conflict between individuals, communities, and nations. (ex. rule of law and ethics [civil disobedience], liberty and equality, individual rights and the common good

SS. USC.7: Trace economic development through US history

SS. USC. 8: Critique the cause and effect relationship between the labor movement, industrialization, and urbanization

SS. USC.17: Analyze the characteristics of cultural contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, and immigrants

SS. USC. 29: Demonstrate an understanding of industrialization and reform movements

- The contributions of business, industry, and entrepreneurs at the turn of the century Compare and contrast societal, economic, and population shifts (Agrarian to industrial, labor v. industry, immigration and migration)
- Identify the goals and accomplishments of reformers and reform movements (labor, women, minorities)

For more resources on the Bull Moose Special, please visit our website at www.wvminewars.org

¹ 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.