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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2014 Volume I: Understanding History and Society through Images, 1776-1914

Power and the Machine: A Visual Examination of Class and Gender through the Industrial Revolution

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by Miles Greene

Power and the Machine: a Visual Examination of Class and Gender through the Industrial Revolution aims to help students gain a deeper understanding of the social ramifications surrounding the Industrial Revolution by examining the experience of the worker through a lens that focuses on class and gender. As participants in the 21st century it is more important than ever that students develop the critical thinking skills to effectively interpret text and image in conjunction with one another. This unit will utilize paintings, prints and photographs as well as primary documents in an effort to help students realize how the Industrial Revolution dramatically changed the social landscape of Great Britain and the United States during the 19th century. Using the Socratic Thinking Method along with the Four-Reads approach to tackling primary text, students will develop the skills to become stronger visual interpreters, critical thinkers and ultimately more effective communicators through a variety of modalities. Lastly, students will gain an appreciation for art as a vehicle for communicating, criticizing and reflecting history.

(Developed for World History, grade 10; recommended for World History, grade 10, American History, grade 11, and Western Civilization II, grades 10-11)

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