

## Northwest History Consortium

### Labor Unrest in the United States

**Ken Wortley**

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

#### **National Standard**

**Era 6: The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900) / Standard 3B**

*Standard 3B: The student understands the rise of national labor unions and the role of state and federal governments in labor conflicts.*

**Era 7: The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930) / Standard 1**

*Standard 1: How Progressives and others addressed problems of industrial capitalism, urbanization, and political corruption.*

#### **OBJECTIVE**

Students will understand:

- How the rise of corporations, heavy industry, and mechanized farming transformed the American people.
- The rise of the American labor movement and how political issues reflected social and economic changes.

#### **BACKGROUND/SCENARIO**

“The single bloodiest day in the Pacific Northwest's labor history occurred at 12:00 noon on Sunday, November 5, 1916 (Bloody Sunday, 2000). On this day, a battle ensued in Everett, Washington between Everett town officials and members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The incident took place on the Everett docks when a ferry named "Verona" steamed into Everett carrying approximately 250 IWW union members. About 200 Everett citizen deputies, under the authority of Sheriff Donald McRae, awaited the Verona's arrival and were determined to prevent the IWW members from unloading their boat. This battle was sparked by the free speech movement and served as the climax to numerous free speech fights that took place during this decade. The Everett Massacre lasted only one day but the lives of seven men were taken and approximately 50 were wounded (Bloody Sunday, 2000).

There were many events that led to Everett's Bloody Sunday and the high level of animosity between the town of Everett and the IWW union. First of all, the IWW attempted to persuade the shingle worker's union to unite with their union on numerous occasions (Bloody Sunday, 2000). On May 1, 1916, the shingle weavers went on strike to protest their employer's failure to increase wages that were stated in an agreement made the previous year (Filippelli, 1990). Everett mill owners promised a wage increase when prices rose again after their spring recession but the employer's failed to follow through with it. The strike was free of violence until August 19, 1916 when strike breakers, hired by one of the mill owners, Neil Jamison, attacked the picketers by beating them with clubs. The scabs that were leaving the mill after work were also attacked (Bloody Sunday, 2000). The IWW union soon became involved in the violence.”

Christensen, Julie. “Everett Massacre of 1916.” University of St. Francis. Joliet, IL. 20 April 2010  
<<http://www.stfrancis.edu/content/ba/ghkickul/stuwebs/btopics/works/Everett.htm>>.

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#### TASK

The Attorney General of the State of Washington has commissioned a group to fully investigate the horrific events relating to that day in Everett, Washington. Your job is to report your findings from the various perspectives of both sides of the issues involved in this conflict.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Students will be able to understand the conflicts between the union workers' struggles and the citizens of Everett.
- Students will understand the nature of problem-solving issues using a problem-based model.
- Students will be able to understand the historical background of the labor movement in the Northwest.

#### RESOURCES

##### Book

Green, Michael K., et. Washington in the Pacific Northwest. Salt Lake City, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2005, chapters 6-8.

##### Internet

Christensen, Julie. "Everett Massacre of 1916." University of St. Francis. Joliet, IL. 20 April 2010 <<http://www.stfrancis.edu/content/ba/ghkickul/stuwebs/btopics/works/Everett.htm>>.

Crowley, Walt. "Five IWW Members and Two Deputies Die in a Gunbattle Dubbed the Everett Massacre on November 5, 1916." HistoryLink.org: The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History (Essay 5326). ©2003 – 2010. Seattle, WA. 20 April 2010 <[http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file\\_id=5326](http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=5326)>.

"The Everett Massacre." Everett Public Library (Digital Collection). Everett, WA. 20 April 2010 <[http://www.epls.org/nw/dig\\_emassacre.asp](http://www.epls.org/nw/dig_emassacre.asp)>.

"Everett Massacre Collection" from *Anna Louise Strong Papers*. 1916. University of Washington (Digital Collection). Seattle, WA. 20 April 2010 <<http://content.lib.washington.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/pnwlabor&CISOPTR=10&CISOSHOW=195>>.

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#### ASSESSMENT

\*The Students will be given an eight minute Pre-Write assessment on what they already know about the labor movement in the Northwest and if they know anything about Everett and its historical significance in our history.

\*The Post-Write will be an essay writing exercise in which the teacher will give the students a choice of three questions to answer. The questions will be centered around how people solve conflict with others they don't agree with. The teacher will be looking at how the students apply their PBL project to the relevant questions that the teacher will post. These are the three BIG IDEAS of this lesson.

#### REFERENCES/CITATIONS

Christensen, Julie. "Everett Massacre of 1916." University of St. Francis. Joliet, IL. 20 April 2010 <<http://www.stfrancis.edu/content/ba/ghkickul/stuwebs/btopics/works/Everett.htm>>.

"History Standards for Grades 5-12 United States." UCLA National Center for History in the Schools. 2005. Los Angeles, CA. 19 April 2010 <<http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/era6-5-12.html>>.

Wortley, Ken. "Labor Unrest in the United States." NWESD Organization. 2008. Anacortes, WA. 5 July 2009 <[http://www.nwesd.org/1510101216191755740/lib/1510101216191755740/6-7.3B\\_\\_LaborUnrest.Wortley.8.pdf](http://www.nwesd.org/1510101216191755740/lib/1510101216191755740/6-7.3B__LaborUnrest.Wortley.8.pdf)>.