

Intermediate-Level Activity

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- discuss the hardships of working as a child and compare working conditions in the past to those today;
- discuss child labor in the United States as represented in an early-twentieth-century photograph;
- create an original story inspired by research on child labor and discussions about a photograph;
- create a mock news broadcast about child labor in the world today.

Materials

- Reproduction of *Sadie Pfeiffer, Spinner in Cotton Mill, North Carolina* by Lewis Wickes Hine
- Background Information and Questions for Teaching about the photograph
- Five files, each containing an example of child labor in the **global economy** today along with a corresponding photograph of a child engaged in that labor

Lesson Steps

1. Begin by asking students to discuss with a partner what they currently know about kids who work.
2. Display *Sadie Pfeiffer, Spinner in Cotton Mill, North Carolina* and discuss the photograph with students. Refer to grade-appropriate discussion questions and information in steps 3–5 of the Beginning-Level Activity. Distribute copies of Web resources that describe working conditions of children during Hine's time, such as "Children at Work 1908–1912: The Photography of Lewis Hine" on the EyeWitness to History Web site (www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/hnintro.htm). Ask students the following questions: How do you look at the image differently now that you have read more about the working conditions? Do you notice anything about the image that we have not already discussed?
3. Instruct students to brainstorm what a typical day might have been like for Sadie Pfeiffer based on what they read. Tell students to work with a partner to write a detailed, hour-by-hour schedule of a typical day for her.
4. Next, instruct students to research the development of **labor laws** by using resources in the library and online, such as "Child Labor in America 1908–1912: Photographs of Lewis W. Hine" on the History Place Web site (www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/about.htm). Instruct students to brainstorm what Sadie's day might have been like after the labor laws were passed and to write a new hour-by-hour schedule with details of her day reflecting these changes. Tell students to refer to both schedules and create a short story about Sadie's life before and after the passing of child labor laws. Instruct students that their story should have Sadie as the main character, and they should include a plot and a setting rich with sensory details.



5. Before the next class, prepare five child labor files with age-appropriate background information. Each file should contain an example of child labor in the **global economy** today along with a corresponding photograph of a child engaged in that labor. The following resources may be helpful:
 - "Child Labor" on the Human Rights Watch Web site (www.hrw.org/en/category/topic/children%E2%80%99s-rights/labor)
 - *A Wal-Mart Christmas: Brought to You By a Sweatshop in China* on the National Labor Committee Web site (www.nlcnet.org/admin/media/document/China/2007_huanya/Walmart.pdf)
 - Photo Gallery on the International Labour Organization Web site (www.ilo.org/dyn/media/mediasearch.search?p_lang=en)
 - "Child labour" on the International Labour Organization Web site (www.ilo.org/global/Themes/Child_Labour/lang--en/index.htm)
6. Ask students to think of examples of children working today. Divide the class into small groups and pass out one of the five child labor files to each group. Tell each group to review the materials in the file. Students should discuss the image in the file with the following questions:
 - What do you see first? What do you notice about the person?
 - What is the person holding/touching?
 - What can you tell about the person by the way he or she is dressed?
 - What do you notice in the **background**? Where is the person? What makes you say that?
 - What is the person doing?
 - How is this worker different from the other worker we have discussed?
 - What else catches your eye? What else does that tell you about the photograph?
 - What do you think this person is thinking?
7. Instruct each group to prepare a mock news broadcast inspired by the contents of the file. The broadcast should include details about what is going on in the photograph as well as actions happening in response to the situation. If sufficient factual information about the situation is not readily available, students may include editorials and commentaries about what they think is happening or what they hope will happen.
8. Have students present their broadcasts in front of the class or on the school channel.

Assessment

Assess whether students can analyze a photograph depicting the hardships of working as a child and compare working conditions in the past to those today. Also assess students' original stories based on whether they contain a plot, setting, sensory details, and evidence of research on child labor. Finally, assess students' mock news broadcasts based on whether they contain evidence of information provided in the file.