LESSON PLAN 5

Woodrow Wilson as a Progressive

By Dr. Samantha Averett

Rationale:

The Progressive Era is often told from the lens of activists who were in opposition to public officials and politicians especially those in the Democratic party. However, in some circles Woodrow Wilson is discussed as a Democrat who embodied nonpartisans with his actions as governor of New Jersey and President of the United States.

Standard(s):

C3 NCSS

- 1. DS Civ 12 9-12: Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.
- 2. DS Civ 13 9-12 Evaluate public polices in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences.

Objectives:

- 1. Identify and define the elements of the Progressive Movement.
- 2. Evaluate the actions of Governor Wilson as it relates to the define beliefs of the progressive movement
- 3. Develop the skills to analyze information they take in from media outlets.
- 4. Demonstrate knowledge and practical application of historical skills (sourcing and analysis).

Activity:

- 1. Students will analyze the documents.
- 2. Students will corroborate sources and make historical connections.
- 3. Students will inference causes and effects.
- 4. Source the authors or creator of each item.
- 5. Students will respond to examination prompts.

Guiding Questions:

- 1. What is progressivism?
- 2. Why did the ideology of progressivism develop?
- 3. What makes this action a progressive act or policy?
- 4. What are the actions being taken by the governor?
- 5. Who do the actions affect?
- 6. What is the context or motivation for the governor's actions?

Sources:

- 1. Newspaper/ Journal
 - a. The Freehold Transcript and The Monmouth Inquirer (Freehold, New Jersey) · Fri, May 24, 1912 · Page 18, https://www.newspapers.com/image/358808845/
 - b. The Morning Post (Camden, New Jersey) · Wed, Dec 31, 1913, https://www.newspapers.com/image/447223041/
 - c. Asbury Park Press (Asbury Park, New Jersey) · Wed, Dec 3, 1913 · Page 6, https://www.newspapers.com/image/143125693/
 - d. Bridgeton Pioneer (Bridgeton, New Jersey) · Thu, Feb 13, 1913 · Page 8, https://www.newspapers.com/image/833537734/
 - e. The Morning Call (Paterson, New Jersey) · Wed, Jan 18, 1911 · Page 4, https://www.newspapers.com/image/552569224/
 - f. Asbury Park Press (Asbury Park, New Jersey) · Sat, Oct 28, 1911 · Page 1, https://www.newspapers.com/image/144683199/
 - g. Perth Amboy Evening News (Perth Amboy, New Jersey) · Tue, Oct 25, 1910 · Page 1, https://www.newspapers.com/image/632113592/

Suggested Lesson Structure:

- 1. Warm Up Invite the students to discuss the background information on Woodrow Wilson as the professor at Princeton University and governor of New Jersey and the Progressive Era. Then watch the videos to gain an understanding to the Progressive Movement and the ideologies of the members.
 - a. Source A Background information of Woodrow Wilson
 - b. Videos
 - a. Khan Academy https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/rise-to-world-power/age-of-empire/v/the-progressives
 - b. C-Span https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4837727/progressive-era-reforms-wilson-administration
 - c. YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9OQIOYuQbY
- 2. Sourcing and Document Analysis
 - a. Have students work in pairs to analyze the documents and complete the graphic organizer. This will allow students to discuss the documents and hear from their peers regarding the documents.
- 3. Evaluate

a. Students will work individually to take the information from the graphic organizer, annotations on the documents, and any notes to complete the brief constructive responses. This activity also requires another reading/ skimming of the text to identify evidence to support their claim for the brief constructive response.

Suggested Grade Level:

This lesson is suggested for middle and high school students.

Suggested Lesson Pace:

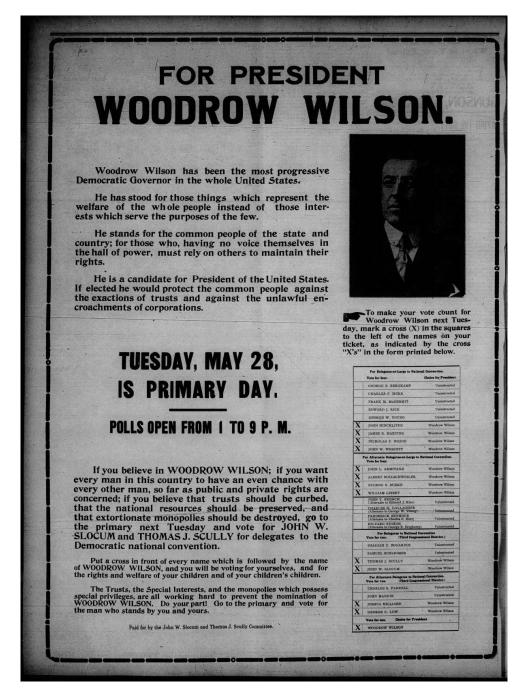
Schedule Type	Rationale
80 minute Double Block Schedule	This lesson structure may take one and a half
	class periods. This will allow for discovery
	for the first entire class period and then
	analysis and evaluation in the next class
	period. This will allow for reflection and
	analysis of the previous class's information to
	draw a conclusion based on evidence.
45 minute Single Block Schedule	This lesson structure may take three class
	periods. This will allow discovery during the
	first class period and re-examining in the
	second class period. Finally, the students can
	use the third class period to reflect and
	analyze the information from the last two
	classes to draw a conclusion based on
	evidence.

Source A

"In the spring of 1910, Col. George Harvey, editor of Harper's Weekly, persuaded James Smith of Newark, "boss" of the New Jersey Democratic Party, to support Wilson for the gubernatorial nomination. Wilson, who had recently lost an internal struggle at Princeton with one of his deans, agreed to accept the nomination if it were offered without conditions. Smith's well-oiled machine worked perfectly, but his plan to elect a dignified puppet soon went awry. Wilson accepted the Democratic state convention's nomination, aligned himself with the progressive forces that had been fighting Smith, and won in a landslide on Nov. 8, 1910. It was only the beginning of the revolution. Before his inauguration Wilson prevented Smith's election to the United States Senate by the state legislature. Inaugurated on Jan. 17, 1911, the new governor maintained such heavy pressure on the legislature at Trenton that he won enactment of most of his program in one session: direct primaries; effective state regulations of public utilities; workmen's compensation; municipal reform; and reorganization of the school system. In early 1913 he won the last of his important demands—antitrust legislation to drive industrial monopolies from New Jersey."

Source: Excerpt from Rutgers University, Center on the American Governors, https://governors.rutgers.edu/woodrow-wilson-and-the-election-of-1912/

Source B



Source: The Freehold Transcript and The Monmouth Inquirer (Freehold, New Jersey) · Fri, May 24, 1912 · Page 18, https://www.newspapers.com/image/358808845/

Source C



Excerpts from Source C

"SEVEN SISTERS" A LITTLE LAME.

When Governor Wilson presented the "Seven Sisters" to the Legislature for passage, assurance was given that these measures would prevent monopoly and combinations in restraint of trade in New Jersey. Yet here we have a statement from Chairman Egan of the coal probing committee of the last House of Assembly that "We have established beyond the shadow of a doubt that combinations of coal dealers exist in not only the large cities and counties of the State but in the smaller communities and we feel that they are stamped out." Chairman Egan further says that his committee in its report will recommend legislation to put an end to these unfair combinations.

Obviously the "Seven Sisters" have not demonstrated all that was claimed for them by Governor Wilson, in fact proving ineffective in eliminating combinations in restraint of trade. It is necessary, according to Assemblyman Egan, who was an ardent supporter of the "Seven Sisters" to pass further legislation to extirpate the combinations of coal dealers. It is disappointing to find such a lame and impotent conclusion to the sturdy efforts of a Democratic administration to legislate monopoly and restraint of trade out of existence in New Jersey.

It has been suggested that Congress should take the Wilson "Seven Sisters" as the model upon which to frame the anti-trust legislation that President Wilson considers necessary to supplement the Sherman Act. But since Assemblyman Egan's revelation of the existence of combinations in restraint of trade in New Jersey despite the "Seven Sisters," the national lawmakers may look askance to these ladies as models of the "New Freedom" anti-trust legislation.

Source: The Morning Post (Camden, New Jersey) · Wed, Dec 31, 1913, https://www.newspapers.com/image/447223041/

Source D



Excerpts from Source D

ANTI-TRUST LEGISLATION

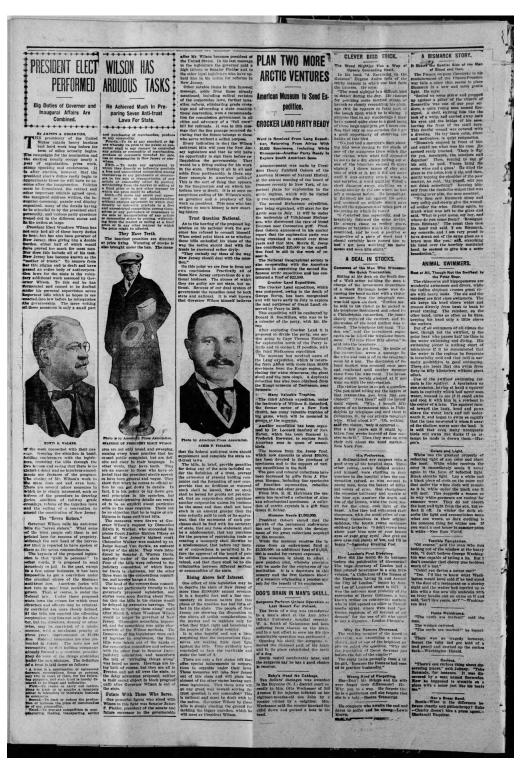
President Wilson's message makes it cleat there is to be no disturbance of honest business during his administration. Indeed, the president tacitly recognizes existing conditions that make for great business, big business, so called, and admits by inference that so long as big business is conducted in a manner not to oppress and destroy little business it is perfectly legitimate and should be sustained by proper laws. The Sherman anti-trust law has been shown to be effective for the regulation of trusts and corporations in many instances where it has been invoked. It has been shown to be inefficient in other instances. It is agreed the Sherman anti-trust law must be strengthened and amplified and made plain enough for sharp lawyers to understand it cannot be violated with impunity. The story of Standard Oil and the farcical end of litigation that cost the government many thousands of dollars and the trust its charter is supplemented by the extraordinary spectacle of its subdivided stock being still in the same hands and its monopoly even more oppressive than ever. Other trusts and monopolies have been accorded similar immunity under the Sherman law as it stands.

The question before congress and which the president will later talk about in a special message is how shall the Sherman law be made effective for the suppression of monopoly? This question must be settled before the country can quiet down and before business confidence can be restored......

When this era is opened it will be after President Wilson and the present congress had successfully mastered a problem of corporation control those previous administrations have failed to solve because they preferred to dally with the anti-trust legislation. This time it should perform a solemn duty to the public.

Source: Asbury Park Press (Asbury Park, New Jersey) · Wed, Dec 3, 1913 · Page 6, https://www.newspapers.com/image/143125693/

Source E



Excerpts from Source E

PRESIDENT ELECT WILSON HAS PERFORMED ARDUOUS TASK

Big Duties of Governor and Inaugural Affairs Are Combined. He Achieved Much In Preparing Seven Anti-trust Laws For Sale.....

President Elect Woodrow Wilson has not only had all of these heavy duties to bear, but has also been governor of New Jersey, thus giving him a double burden, either half of which would have proved too much for most men. Nor does this include all of this task. New Jersey has become known as the "mother of trusts." To remove from her this stigma and to draft and have passed an entire body of anti-corporation laws for the state in the voluntary additional work assumed by Governor Wilson. To this end he has formulated and caused to be drafted under his personal supervision seven important bills which he hopes to see enacted into law before he relinquishes the governorship. The mere writing of these measures is only a small part of the work connected with their passage.......

The closing of Mr. Wilson's work in the state does not end even here. There are several minor measures in which he is vitally interested, such as reform of the procedure in drawing juries, abolition of railway grade crossings, reform of the taxation laws and the calling of a convention to amend the constitution of New Jersey.......

Governor Wilson calls his anti-trust bills the "the seven sisters." What some of the trust people call them is not printed here for reasons of propriety, although the new head of the harvester trust is reported to have spoken of them as the seven commandments.............

Under these proposed state laws the crimes for which trust directors and officers may be criminally convicted are more closely defined. If the bills are enacted the offending corporation may lose not only its charter, but the directors, dummy or otherwise, may be convicted of a misdemeanor, with a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment or \$1,000 fine. Holding companies are also prevented in future. The laws are not retroactive, so that hold companies already formed may continue, provided they do none of the things prohibited under the new statutes.......

Source: Bridgeton Pioneer (Bridgeton, New Jersey) · Thu, Feb 13, 1913 · Page 8, https://www.newspapers.com/image/833537734/

Source F



Excerpt from Source F

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Those who expected that Governor Wilson's inaugural address would be sensational, radical or revolutionary, will be disappointed.....

Governor Wilson calls attention to the changes that are under way in politics, in business and in other phases of life. The whole world has changed within the lifetime of men not yet in their thirties and conditions have arisen that are novel and require new treatment.....

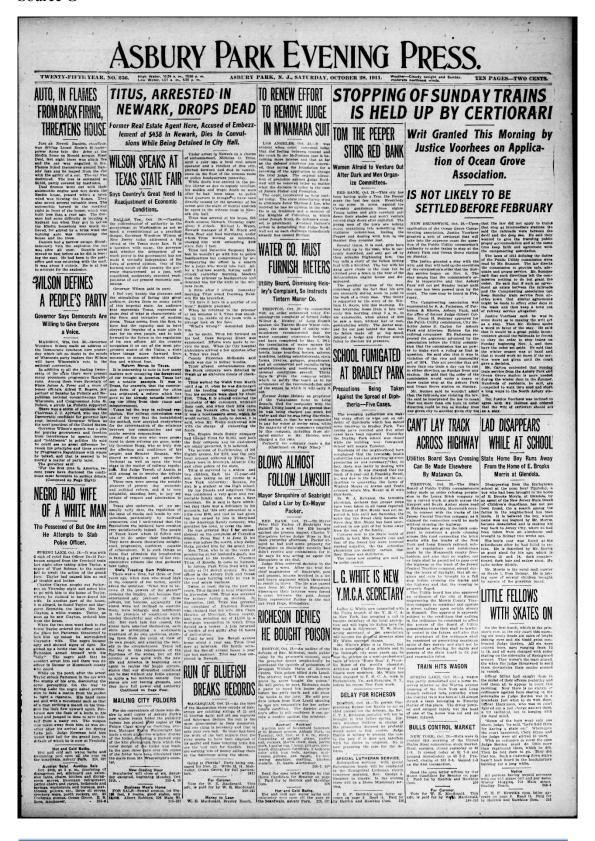
The governor thinks that the public has at last awakened to the necessity of reform. All movements in that direction are consistent with a newly aroused public sentiment. The time has come for a change in the laws that bear on the relations between employers and employees. There are no longer individual masters, no more than there are individual servants. The employer is now generally a large corporation or company; the employee is one of hundreds of thousands brought together, not by individual masters whom they know and with whom they have personal relations but by "agents" of one sort or another......

Governor Wilson thinks that the state of New Jersey has been too, free with grants of charters to corporations, and suggests that laws be passed to prevent the abuse of incorporations and to provide safeguards by which the public shall be protected against fraud, extortion, and every abuse of confidence. The public utility commission should be vested with more powers than it possesses at present, which are mainly of an advisory character. It should also have the power of initiation, instead of waiting to be called upon for action. In other words, the governor favors a commission with plenary powers, including rate making and regulation of public utilities.

Governor Wilson calls attention to the alleged inequalities of taxation. He does not see how any one can tell if there is any foundation in this complaint or not, because we have absolutely no uniform system of assessment. "Our whole system of taxation, which is not system at all, needs overhauling from top to bottom." Be we cannot fairly tax values until we have ascertained and established them, and the governor seems to think that this hold be one of the first duties of a public utility commission. Governor Wilson very emphatically approves of the principles of conserving the potable water of the state. He also expresses his sentiments on what he calls "machine nominations" by both the old parties, which means nothing ore than a choice between the candidate of one machine and the candidate of another machine. He thinks that this problem has been best solved by the laws that have been adopted in the state of Oregon, "whose effect has been to bring government back to the people and to protect it from the control of selfish and special interests." We should have systematic ballot reform, and again the governor takes Oregon as his guide.......

Source: The Morning Call (Paterson, New Jersey) · Wed, Jan 18, 1911 · Page 4, https://www.newspapers.com/image/552569224/

Source G



Excerpts from Source G

WILSON DEFINES A PEOPLE'S PARTY

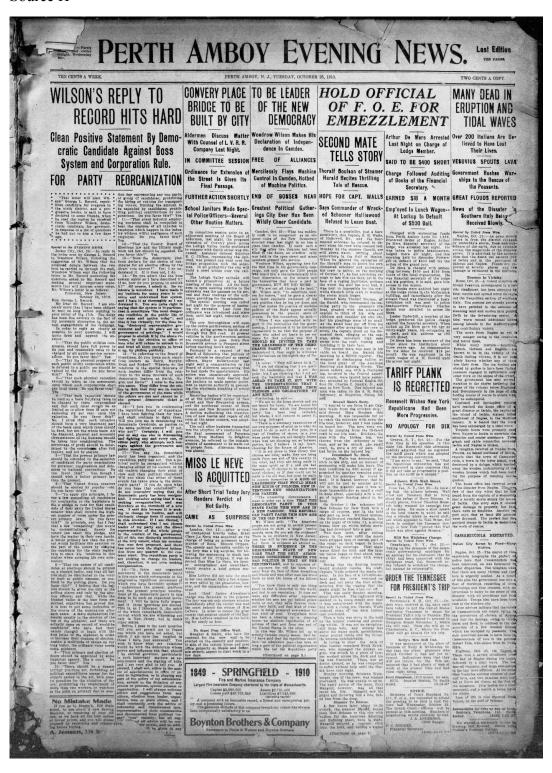
Governor Says Democrats Are Willing to Give Everyone a Voice

Madison, Wis Oct. 28 – Governor Woodrow Wilson made an address at the Democratic luncheon here yesterday which left no doubt in the minds of Wisconsin party leaders that Wilson will have Wisconsin's vote in the national convention. In addition to all the leading Democrats of the state there were present many prominent progressive Republicans......

There was a storm of applause when Chairman J. C. Aylward who was the Democratic candidate for governor last year, introduced Governor Wilson as the next president of the United States. Governor Wilson's speech was a plea for popular government and freedom from interference by special interests and middlemen in politics. He said he could see not great difference between his principles and those avowed by Progressive Republicans with who he talked and that is seemed to be merely a matter of party label.

Source: Asbury Park Press (Asbury Park, New Jersey) · Sat, Oct 28, 1911 · Page 1, https://www.newspapers.com/image/144683199/

Source H



Excerpts from Source H

WILSON'S REPLY TO RECORD HITS HARD

Clean Positive Statement By Democratic Candidate Against Boss Systems and Corporation Rule.

FOR PARTY REORGANIZATION

That letter will elect Wilson George L. Record, Republican candidate for congress in the ninth district, and a progressive leader, is said to have declared to some friends, when he read the replies he received from Woodrow Wilson, democratic candidate for governor in response to a list of questions he had put to him a few days ago......

My Dear Mr. Record: I am sincerely sorry that I have been obliged to wait so long before replying to your letter of the 17th. The delay has been due entirely to the fact of my necessary absorption in the actual engagements of the campaign. In order to reply as clearly as possible to your questions, I will quote them and append the answers:

- 1. "That the public utilities commission should have full power to fix just and reasonable rate to be charged by all public service corporations. Do you favor this?" Yes.
- 2. "That the physical property of each public utility corporation which is devoted to a public use should be valued by the state. Do you favor this?" Yes.
- 3. "That such physical valuation should be taken as the assessment upon which such corporations shall pay local taxes. Do you favor this?" Yes.
- 5. "That the present primary law should be extended to the selection of candidates for party nominations for governor, congressmen, and delegates to national conventions. Do you favor this?" Yes, though I should wish a better primary law than the present.
- 6. "That United States senators should be elected by popular vote. Do you favor this?" Yes

Source: Perth Amboy Evening News (Perth Amboy, New Jersey) · Tue, Oct 25, 1910 · Page 1, https://www.newspapers.com/image/632113592/

Woodrow Wilson as a Progressive Dr. Samantha Averett			
Name:	Date:		
Instructions: Use source B- H to complete the chart. You must choice a document to answer the question by citing the information from the document and explain for rationale for your selection.			
Questions	Source	Claim and evidence from source	Justification – Why did you select that source over the other sources?
Identify the action taken by Wilson and explain how this action defined him as a progressive?			
How does his election to the office of president influenced the legislation he brought forth as governor?			
How had or might his actions as governor influenced his actions as president?			

Questions	Source	Claim and evidence from source	Justification – Why did you select that source over the other sources?
What role does media play in securing a public official's message and/or initiatives?			
Which source was most help to Wilson when promoting his message/initiatives?			
Which action taken by Woodrow Wilson was primarily aligned with progressive philosophies and what was the context/ motivation for the action?			

Evaluation Question				
Answer the question below based on the information discussed in class and the presented sources.				
1. To what extent did Wilson's policies as governor aid in his nomination and subsequent election as president?				

Woodrow Wilson as a Progressive

Dr. Samantha Averett

Suggested Look Fors.....

Questions	Source	Claim and evidence from source	Justification – Why did you select that source over the other sources?
Identify the action taken by Wilson and explain how this action defined him as a progressive?	D	This source highlights the Anti-Trust Legislation and Sherman Anti-Trust Law. This distinguished him as a progressive because of his use and belief of government regulation for businesses and public safety.	Students might choose this source because it discusses the legislation that is similar to the progressive philosophies.
How does his election to the office of president influenced the legislation he brought forth as governor?	С	This source describes Wilson introducing legislation "Seven Sisters" to prevent monopolies, but the legislation was admittedly a but weak and could be strengthen by or a guide for federal legislation by Congress.	Students might choose this source because it discussed the legislation, the weaknesses that could be improved on the federal level, and how Wilson might influence that improvement.
How had or might his actions as governor influenced his actions as president?	E	This source was written as Wilson was running for President and explains some of the progressive actions he took as governor, including the "seven important bills" he hoped to sign before leaving New Jersey for Washington, DC. This source gives the impression that Wilson will continue to be a progressive when he gets to the White House.	Students might choose this source because it discusses what Wilson actually accomplished as governor. I almost picked source F because it laid out some of the plans he had when he was inaugurated as governor.

Questions	Source	Claim and evidence from source	Justification – Why did you select that source over the other sources?
What role does media play in securing a public official's message and/or initiatives?	G	This source is an editorial expressing the view that Wilson will win Wisconsin's (electoral) votes in the presidential election. That implies that Wilson becoming president would be a good thing for the people of Wisconsin. This source is proof that the journalists can help spread a politicians' message at least as well as a politician can.	Students might choose this source because it is an obvious pro-Wilson sentiment expressed on the front page of an important newspaper.
Which source was most helpful to Wilson when promoting his message/initiatives?	B or H	B- This source is a campaign poster encouraging the voters to vote for Woodrow Wilson by listing his accomplishments and promises once elected. His believes and ideologies that will influence his governance. H – This source allowed Wilson to highlight his ideologies and respond to critics to correct misunderstandings and misrepresentations that may impact public opinion.	Students might choose these sources because they highlight and explain his message/initiatives.
Which action taken by Woodrow Wilson was primarily aligned with progressive philosophies and what was the context/ motivation for the action?	F	This source discussed necessity of reform for the public good. He also discussed regulation of corporations. He also discussed regulation of government actions such as taxation. These are fundamental ideas and practices for the progressive movement. His motivation seems to be delivering on campaign promises and effectively cleaning up the practices within the state of New Jersey that Wilson viewed as problematic.	Students might choose this source because Wilson discuss the actions he will take as governor and why these actions are important to the public good for the citizens of New Jersey.