

Women, Children, Labor and the Progressive Era Unit

Nancy Deaton

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Illinois State Archives, Springfield

High School US History

Day 4 – Goals of the Progressive Era

Return to list of problems brainstormed on Day 1, have students add to or modify challenges that women and children face after reading the Factory Inspector's Report.

List could include the following topics:

- Women
 - property ownership rights
 - independence and divorce rights
 - suffrage
- Child Labor
- Immigrant rights, speaking English
- Food and drug safety
- Employment Rights
 - Working Hours
 - Minimum wages
 - Workers rights, unions, strikes
 - Workplace safety (lighting, air quality, cramped conditions, fire danger)
 - Big business with too much power
- Housing conditions
- Health Care and diseases
- Education, illiteracy
- Temperance (banning liquor) and Vice (prostitution and gambling)
- Family abandonment by husbands
- Political power for average citizens

Provide students with characteristics of Progressive reformers (middle class, white, urban, college educated, native born). Discuss what attitudes these Progressives might have had toward poor, immigrant factory workers and how this might have encouraged them to support paternalistic laws. Define paternalism using a [Concept of Definition Map](#) and discuss. (Could connect idea of paternalism to modern-day

Chicago “Big Box” Ordinance requiring WalMart to pay higher wages/benefits to employees)