

Women, Children, Labor and the Progressive Era Unit

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AHTC 2006 Summer Fellowship

Illinois State Archives, Springfield

High School US History

Day 5—Why Might People Oppose Progressive Reforms?

1. Have students Think, Pair, Share on the question “Who might have supported child labor at this time and why might some people approve of children under 16 working?” Then read the [Boy Needs Work Letter](#) and discuss.
2. Ask students “How might restricting a women’s working hours have been paternalistic?” Also ask students to evaluate their attitudes towards paternalism aimed at women during this era (Was it needed or not needed?). Then read the [Female Working Hours Letter](#) and see if students agree/disagree with the argument made in the letter.
3. Ask students: “What motivations would employers have had to hire women and children?” Discuss and list their ideas on the board. Then examine the chart “[Reasons for Hiring Women](#)” and have students adjust and revise their brainstorm. Discuss if those reasons are still valid today. Debate if companies should be allowed to hire only people of a certain gender or age if they have “legitimate” reasons.