



## Post-Visit Lesson: Problems and Perspectives Grades 9-12

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### Lesson Length

60 minutes (plus research time)

### Common Core State Standards

#### *Reading Standards for Informational Text*

- Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington’s Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech, King’s “letter from Birmingham Jail”), including how they address related themes and concepts. CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RI.9-10.9
- Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features. CCSS.ELA.Literacy.RI.11-12.9



#### *Speaking and Listening Standards*

- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task. CCSS.ELA.Literacy.SL.9-10.4
- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks. CCSS.ELA.Literacy.SL.11-12.4

### North Carolina Essential Standards

#### *American Humanities Seminar*

- Understand how poverty, affluence, and the “American Dream” have influenced American culture. 12.C.3
- Understand how American culture has sought to balance individual rights with the common good. 12.C.4
- Understand how conflict and consensus influences American culture. 12.C.5
- Understand the relationship between industrialization, urbanization and American culture. 12.C.7

## Learning Targets

- Students will learn Sandburg's view of child labor through his poems and his involvement with the Social Democratic Party.
- Students will analyze historic photos
- Students will research, prepare and present various points of view regarding child labor in the early 1900's.

## Materials Needed

- Media Center (for research purposes)
- Pencil and paper
- Photos (included)

## Background Information

Carl Sandburg was the son of a Swedish American immigrant family. After completing the eighth grade, he went to work holding a variety of jobs: delivering milk, shining shoes, laying bricks, and more. In 1897 he rode the rail traveling as a hobo, meeting folks from all over the country--a journey which fostered the man whom he was about to become. His experiences greatly influenced his writing and political views. Sandburg lived during a time of great change in our country. He witnessed child labor, the labor rights movement, the Chicago race riots, segregation, women's suffrage movement, the Great Depression, World War I and II, and more. In the early 1900's Sandburg was an active member of the Social Democratic Party (as was Lilian Steichen, whom he married in 1908). Through his political activism and his writing, Sandburg spoke for those who had no words or power to speak for themselves, which is why he was and still is known today as "The Poet of the People."

## Procedure

### Activating Strategy

Think, Pair, Share - Pose the following question to the students, "should children be allowed to work instead of going to school?". Allow time for students to process their thinking. Then have students discuss their response with a partner. Finally, have students share responses with the class.

### Teaching Strategy

1. Divide students into 6 equal groups. Assign each group one of the following roles: Children, Parents, Employers, Mayor, Social Reformers, and Journalists. Distribute historic photos which pertain to their group.
2. Have students analyze the photos using the photograph analysis worksheet. These photos will aid them in developing their point of view.
3. Give the students the following scenario:  
*1910: You live in a small town in North Carolina. There is a large cotton mill in your town where many people are employed, including many young children. There will be a town meeting in your community to discuss the question: "Should children be working in the mill rather than attending school?"*

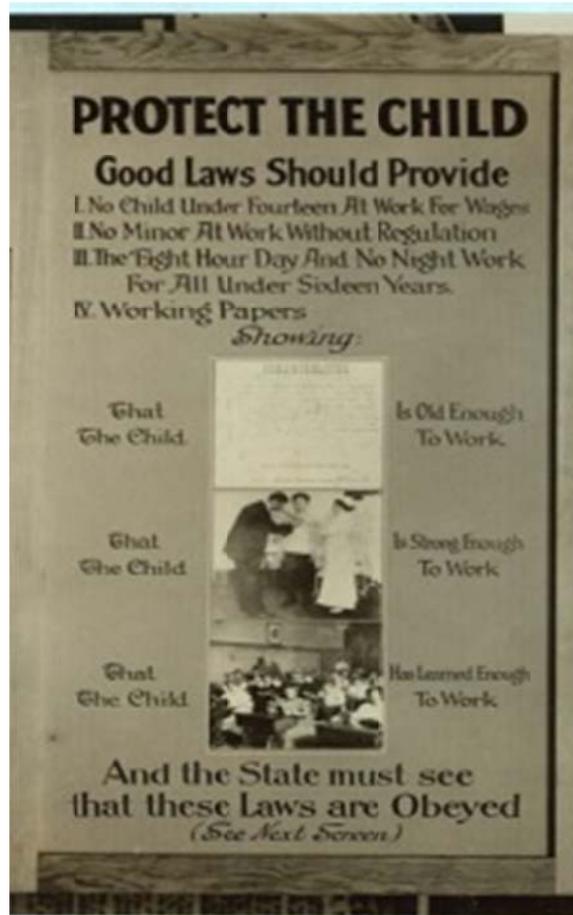
4. Have each group research, prepare and present their point of view (in character) regarding child labor.
5. Create a simulation of a town meeting in which each group presents their point of view.
  - a. \*Extension or Higher level learners: Students create scenario identifying modern problem, identify stakeholders and set up similar problem-solving discussion (application).

**Summarizing Strategy**

Headline Summaries - Have students write a newspaper headline that gives the main points of the lesson.

# Image Key for Problems and Perspectives Activity

<p><i>Children</i></p>			
<p><i>Parents</i></p>			
<p><i>Mill Employers</i></p>			
<p><i>Social Reformers/Activists</i></p>			
<p><i>Journalists</i></p>			
<p><i>Politicians</i></p>			



**Point of View:** Social Reformer/Activist

**Photo:** Child Labor Bulletin

**Credits:** 1913, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Library of Congress

**Background:** A master of composition and mood, Lewis Hine used his camera for the cause of social reform. In 1908, he published a pictorial record of Ellis Island immigrants. In 1911, he was hired by the National Child Labor Committee as one of many “investigators” in the quest to document and portray the horrors of child labor through photographs.

**Probative Questions:**

- What specific changes in child labor policy was the author of this bulletin advocating for?
- What audience was this bulletin targeted at? Where may have it been posted?
- According to the author of the document, what was the role of the state in relation to child labor policy? Why was this controversial, specifically in the south?



**Point of View:** Parent

**Photo:** Family of Mill Workers in Fries, Virginia

**Credits:** 1913, Lewis Hine, Photojournalist, Library of Congress

**Background:** A master of composition and mood, Lewis Hine used his camera for the cause of social reform. In 1908, he published a pictorial record of Ellis Island immigrants. In 1911, he was hired by the National Child Labor Committee as one of many “investigators” in the quest to document and portray the horrors of child labor through photographs.

**Probative Questions:**

- Why might a family like the one depicted here argue against the reform of child labor laws? (i.e. believe that child labor is okay)
- How might the reform of child labor laws directly affect the social structure of families with previously employed children? (Hint: more free time for children, education, independence, etc.)



**Point of View:** Social Reformer/Activist

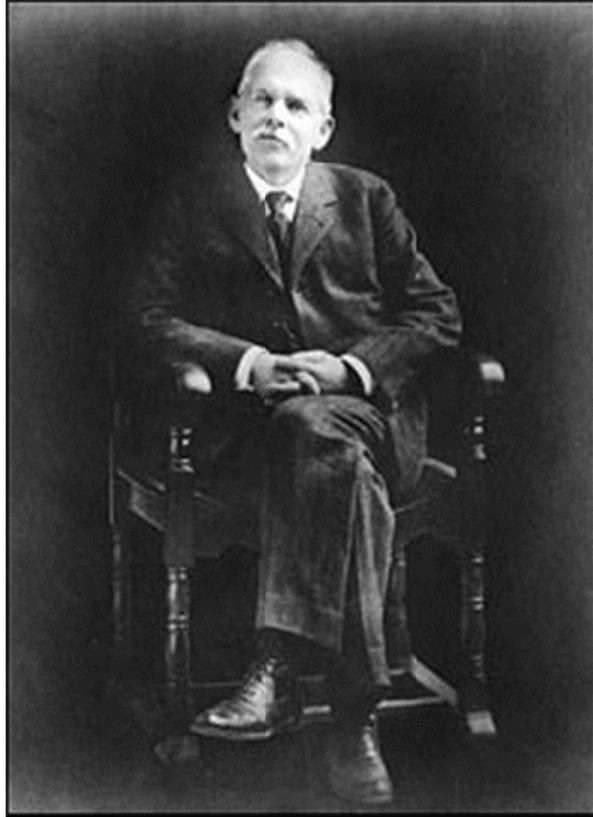
**Photo:** Mrs. Brown at Child Labor Hearing, Washington, D.C., May 20, 1937.

**Credits:** 1937, Harris & Ewing, photographer.

**Background:** Mrs. La Rae Brown of Boston, Mass., Director of the National League of Women Voters appeared before the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee. She stated that she was in favor of Senator Alden W. Barkley's bill which would prohibit the interstate shipment of goods made by child labor,

**Probative Questions:**

- What additional challenges did female reformers, such as Mrs. Brown, likely face? Contextualize this historically.
- What aspects of Senator Barkley's bill probably made it particularly controversial?
- In modern society, do women play a large role in defending the rights of children? How so and why?



**Point of View:** Journalist

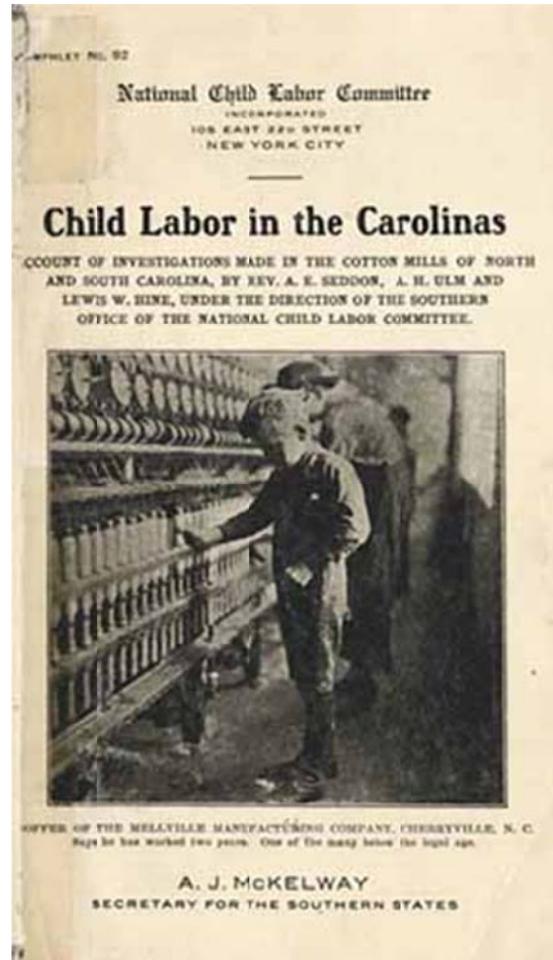
**Photo:** Portrait of Jacob Riis

**Credits:** Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York

**Background:** Jacob Riis, a police reporter whose work appeared in several New York newspapers, documented the living and working conditions of the poor. Through articles, books, photography, and lantern-slide lectures, Riis served as a mediator between working-class, middle-class, and upper-class citizens. Riis argued for better housing, adequate lighting and sanitation, and the construction of city parks and playgrounds. He portrayed middle-class and upper-class citizens as benefactors and encouraged them to take an active role in defining and shaping their communities. Riis believed that charitable citizens would help the poor when they saw for themselves how "the other half" lived.

**Probative Questions:**

- Why might the style and subject of Riis's journalism be perceived as radical and innovative?
- In what ways could the prominence of print culture (newspapers, books, pamphlets, articles, etc) effect progressive social movements, such as child labor reform?
- Were other early twentieth century journalists and writers also exposing social injustices? In what ways were these works similar to those of Riis?



**Point of View:** Social Reformer/Activist

**Photo:** Child Labor Committee Poster

**Credits:** McKelway, Alexander Jeffrey, 1866-1918.

**Background:** Many reformers sought out ways to improve the quality of life for women and children in particular. Here is a poster which highlighted child labor in the fiber mills of North and South Carolina. Account of Investigations Made in the Cotton Mills of North and South Carolina, by Rev. A. E. Seddon, A. H. Ulm and Lewis W. Hine, Under the Direction of the Southern Office of the National Child Labor Committee

**Probative Questions:**

- What aspects of Southern culture and society likely acted as hindrances for activists attempting to improve labor laws?
- How do you think investigations such as the one mentioned in the poster take place?
- What class of people would likely disagree with argument expressed in this source?



**Point of View:** Parent

**Photo:** The Padgett family. Mill Family, from *A Menace to Society* (newspaper article)

**Credits:** 1914, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Shaw Cotton Mills. Location: South Weldon, North Carolina.

**Background:** The entire family including the mother totally illiterate. No one could read or write. The mother does mill work some. Alice, 17 years has steady job. Makes from \$5 to \$6 a week. Alfred, 13 years now, worked here when he was 12, and in other mills before that. Makes \$4 a week. Recently crippled by getting his hand caught in the cogs of a spinning machine. Richard just reached 11. Been working here 1 year; began when he was 10. Makes \$2.40 a week. "The work runs him down too." William, 6 years old, nearly blind. Lizzie, 5 years old. Home in utter neglect; filthy and bare. When investigator called the mother had been gone about an hour, leaving a roomer's 3 months old baby in the cradle before an open fire on the hearth, and only two children 5 and 6 years old - one nearly blind, playing around. She came back and fed them a lot of cheap candy. What will Society reap from its neglect of this family?

**Probative Questions:**

- In what ways could the size of early twentieth century families (number of children) affect their views of child labor policies? How about this family?
- What could be the connection between work-related accidents, such as the one depicted here, and child labor advocacy?
- How might illiteracy and child labor be related phenomena?



**Point of View:** Mill Employer

**Photo:** Mill Employer with Children

**Credits:** 1908 November 28, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Location: Chester, South Carolina.

**Background:** Mr. Smith, overseer in Wylie Mill, Chester, S.C. He will not let his children work in the mill. Says it is no place for them. Plenty of children below 12 in his mill. He said that it is a common practice all through the South for employers in cotton mills to evade the child labor law by allowing young children to help their older sisters or brothers. The name of the small child is not on the books. "That is the way we manage it." Nov. 28/08.

**Probative Questions:**

- According to the background, what is Mr. Smith's hypocrisy here?
- For what reasons would Mr. Smith support child labor? For what reasons would he be against it?
- Does Mr. Smith fit the stereotype of a dishonest southern businessman? Why or why not?



**Point of View:** Mill Employer

**Photo:** Mill Supervisor with young girl worker

**Credits:** 1908 December, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Location: Newton, North Carolina.

**Background:** The superintendent and one of the spinners, Catawba Cotton Mills, Newton, N.C. Others smaller still. Ten boys and girls this size and smaller out of a force of 40 employees.

**Probative Questions:**

- What stylistic elements of this photograph make it so dramatic?
- Would it be possible for mill supervisors to care about their employees? Or to even believe they are doing the children and their families a favor?
- How might have the laboring children felt about their work? Do you think they found it normal, necessary, and commonplace? Or brutal and unjust?



**Point of View:** Politician (Small Town Mayor)

**Photo:** Small Town Mayor

**Credits:** 1939 Sept, Wolcott, Marion Post, 1910- photographer.

**Background:** R.B. Whitley, who was one of the first citizens of the town and is one of its leading citizens, owner of the general store, president of the bank, and owns a cotton mill nearby and a farm. He is a big land owner, owns Whitley-Davis farm and a cotton mill in Clayton. He said he cut down the trees and pulled the stumps out of the main street, and was the first man in that town of Wendell, Wake County, North Carolina.

**Probative Questions:**

- Why might Mr. Whitley be in a predicament with regards to child labor (as both a business man and public servant)?
- How might the role of a small town mayor in child labor policy be different from that of a large city mayor?
- Do you think it was common for business and politics to collide in small southern towns? Why or why not?



**Point of View:** Child

**Photo:** Children Working in Mill

**Credits:** 1908 November, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer.

**Background:** Picture of one of the smallest and youngest boys working in the mill at Cherryville Mfg. Co., Cherryville, N.C.. Doffer.

**Probative Questions:**

- How might have these children felt about their work? Do you think they found it normal, necessary, and commonplace? Or brutal and unjust?
- Imagine these children were in a large impoverished family. In they realized the injustices of child labor and consequently refused to work, how could this affect their families?



**Point of View:** Child

**Photo:** Children Protesting

**Credits:** 1909 May, George Grantham Bain Collection (Library of Congress).

**Background:** Children rally together in protest against child labor and indentured servitude/slavery in a labor parade.

**Probative Questions:**

- What classes of children were most likely to be protesting child labor?
- Why might some children be in support of child labor?
- Do you think these children were successful in their protest? Why or why not?



**Point of View:** Parent

**Photo:** Parents & Children

**Credits:** 1912, May, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Location: Belton, South Carolina.

**Background:** A part of the Hopkins family. All of these (and "except the least one") in the mill. Belton Mfg. Co. The two girls together run 10 sides \$1.10 a day. The little girl apparently not 12 years old couldn't write her name. The next to the smallest boy doesn't appear to be 12 years makes 50 cents a day sweeping. 3 others not in the photo, work. The mother showed me the family record of the older half of the family. "The other list got destroyed." (Queer.)

**Probative Questions:**

- Why might have the Hopkins parents have a contradictory view of child labor—finding it necessary but also being against it perhaps?
- How may have family size affected a families view of child labor?
- According to the background paragraph, what role could education and literacy advocated have in child labor policy? Why?



**Point of View:** Journalist (Photojournalist, specifically)

**Photo:** Young Workers in Mill

**Credits:** 1914 November, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Location: Lumberton, North Carolina.

**Background:** A master of composition and mood, Lewis Hine used his camera in the cause of social reform. In 1908 he published a pictorial record of Ellis Island immigrants. In 1911, he was hired by the National Child Labor Committee, and was one of many “investigators” in the quest to document and portray the horrors of child labor through his photographs. Here, a large group of children working in the Lumberton Cotton Mills is depicted. Many of these children came from large impoverished families.

**Probative Questions:**

- Do you think photojournalist such as Lewis Hine were effective? Where might have photos like these been displayed? And to whom?
- How might have these children felt about their labor? Do you think they were discontented?



**Point of View:** Child

**Photo:** Children Workers

**Credits:** 1910 November, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Location: Pell City, Alabama.

**Background:** Some of the youngsters working in Pell City Cotton Mill. Mr. E.A. Thompson, Supt. of the Mill is also Mayor of Pell City.

**Probative Questions:**

- How might have these children felt about their work? Do you think they found it normal, necessary, and commonplace? Or brutal and unjust?
- Imagine these children were in a large impoverished family. In they realized the injustices of child labor and consequently refused to work, how could this affect their families?



**Point of View:** Journalist (Photojournalist, specifically)

**Photo :** Family in Rock Hill, SC

**Credits:** 1912 May, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Location: Rock Hill, South Carolina.

**Background:** Johnie William Bumgarden (boy in front and part of his family). His birth record in the family bible says born May 7th, 190[2?] Just past his 10th birthday, is learning to doff. Got a regular job. 35 cents a day. Been at it a few weeks. Cannot write very well. Says he is 12 years old. Father said 5 of the family formerly worked in the mill making \$28 a week. They take boarders which bring them \$5 a week. A total of \$33 a week. (Later the father said the record in the bible was put in wrong.)

**Probative Questions:**

- In this case, was child labor necessary? Or even acceptable?
- What challenges do you believe journalist faced in collecting this sort of data?
- What audience probably saw photos such as these? Where may have they been posted?



**Point of View:** Journalist

**Photo:** Carl Sandburg as a News Correspondent

**Credits:** 1918, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, CARL 7873

**Background:** Carl Sandburg wrote newspaper and journal articles, as well as poetry and prose which highlighted the human condition, especially in regards to those who had no voice, such as children working in factories, the horrors of war and poverty, and labor rights.

**Probative Questions:**

- In what ways could writers such as Sandburg use poetry and prose (fiction) to expose the horrors of the human condition? Can you think of any other authors that have done this?
- Can you think of other groups of people who ‘had no voice’? What do you think their involvement was with the labor movement?
- By what means could one obtain the data necessary to write articles such as these? (i.e. interviews, letters, etc.) Do you think this was a challenge?



**Point of View:** Mill Employer

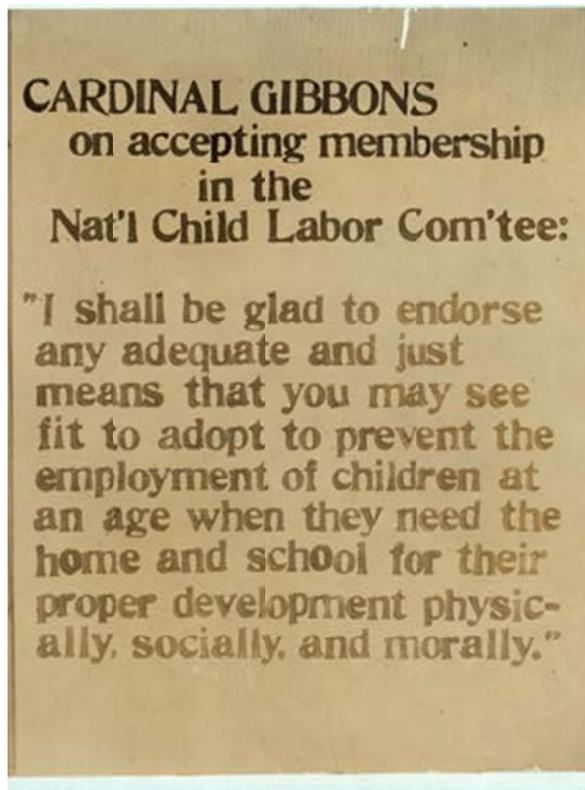
**Photo:** Girl working in Yazoo City Yarn Mill

**Credits:** 1911 Lewis Hine , Library of Congress Collection. Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

**Background:** Overseer supervising a girl (about 13 years old) operating a bobbin-winding machine in the Yazoo City Yarn Mills, Mississippi, photograph by Lewis W. Hine..

**Probative Questions:**

- What stylistic elements of this photograph make it so dramatic?
- Would it be possible for mill supervisors to care about their employees? Or to even believe they are doing the children and their families a favor?
- How might have the laboring children felt about their work? Do you think they found it normal, necessary, and commonplace? Or brutal and unjust?



**Point of View:** Social Reformer/Activist

**Photo:** Child Labor Law Endorsement

**Credits:** 1913, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer.

**Background:** Cardinal Gibbons on accepting membership in the National Child Labor Committee. Cardinal Gibbons, also known as James Gibbons (July 23, 1834 – March 24, 1921) was an American Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. He served as Bishop of Richmond from 1872 to 1877, and as ninth Archbishop of Baltimore from 1877 until his death in 1921. Gibbons was elevated to the cardinalate in 1886, the second American to receive that distinction, after John McCloskey.

**Probative Questions:**

- What specifically do you think Mr. Gibbons meant by “proper development physically, socially, and morally”? Why would child labor inhibit this?
- What social groups would be affected negatively by this declaration? In what ways?
- Why is this poster in particular significant? Where could it have been posted?



**Point of View:** Politician (big city mayor)

**Photo:** Chicago Mayor

**Credits:** Between 1911 and 1917, Harris & Ewing, photographer

**Background:** William Hale Thompson (May 14, 1869 – March 19, 1944) was Mayor of Chicago from 1915 to 1923 and again from 1927 to 1931. Known as "Big Bill," Thompson was the last Republican to serve as Mayor of Chicago (as of 2013). He ranks among the most unethical mayors in American history. After Thompson's defeat in the 1932 election, the Chicago Tribune wrote that "for Chicago, Thompson has meant filth, corruption, obscenity, idiocy and bankruptcy.... He has given the city an international reputation for moronic buffoonery, barbaric crime, triumphant hoodlumism, unchecked graft, and a dejected citizenship. He nearly ruined the property and completely destroyed the pride of the city. He made Chicago a byword for the collapse of American civilization. In his attempt to continue this he excelled himself as a liar and defamer of character."

**Probative Questions:**

- How might big city mayors, like Bill Thompson, have a conflict of interest with respect to child labor policy?
- How could powerful politicians such as Mr. Thompson inhibit the success of child labor reform activists?
- Think of a solution to the problems mentioned in the previous two questions.



**Point of View:** Politician (President)

**Photo:** President Woodrow Wilson signing the Child Labor Legislation

**Credits:** Harris & Ewing, photographer, between 1910 and 1917, Library of Congress.

**Background:** This photo depicts president Wilson signing the Keating-Owen Child Labor Act of 1916. This child labor act limited the work hours of children, forbade the interstate sale of goods produced by child labor, and began a new program of federal regulation in industry.

**Probative Questions:**

- Why was this photo taken? (Why was this moment significant?)
- What social groups would be negatively affected by the policy being signed here?
- What was this photo likely used for? How may have activists employed it as a tool?)



**Point of View:** Journalist

**Photo:** Lewis Wicks Hine with his camera.

**Credits:** 1913, Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer. Library of Congress.

**Background:** Lewis Wickes Hine was an American sociologist and photographer. A master of composition and mood, Lewis Hine used his camera for the cause of social reform. In 1908, he published a pictorial record of Ellis Island immigrants. In 1911, he was hired by the National Child Labor Committee as one of many “investigators” in the quest to document and portray the horrors of child labor through photographs.

**Probative Questions:**

- What other kinds of technology (like Hine’s camera) could have been used as tools for social reform activists?
- What types of places were Hine’s photos likely placed? Do you think these were effective?
- Why might photos be a more effective way of advocating reform versus written sources (newspapers, books, pamphlets, etc.)