



MODULE 2:

TOLERANCE

A CURRICULUM GUIDE TO

**“MILLHUNKS AND RENEGADES:
A PORTRAIT OF A PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOOD”**

Academic Standards met in this module:

8.2.9.C

Identify and analyze how continuity and change have influenced Pennsylvania history from 1787 to 1914

8.2.9.D

Identify and analyze conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in Pennsylvania history from 1787 to 1914

8.2.12.D

Identify and evaluate conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in Pennsylvania history from 1890 to Present

8.3.9.A

Identify and analyze the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to United States history from 1787 to 1914

8.3.12.A

Identify and evaluate the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to United States history from 1890 to Present

8.3.12.D

Identify and evaluate conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in United States history from 1890 to Present

INTRODUCTION

This module is based on the belief that becoming familiar with diverse ethnic groups, their cultures and their struggles, leads to tolerance and understanding in dealing with people of varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

AIM

This module introduces students to issues of tolerance and intolerance in the history of the Pittsburgh town of Greenfield, and examines how people of various backgrounds dealt with intolerance against them.

RATIONALE

Everyone at some time is a victim of prejudice and intolerance. Everyone, even though many of us know better, has had thoughts of prejudice - thoughts that we know are not based in any reality but are left over from things taught to us as children, sometimes by well-meaning parents who were facing struggles of their own.

Through exploring the struggles of people of various backgrounds, we see similarities in these groups and understand each other in a way we could not before. This understanding is an important step toward tolerance and an embrace of diversity.

SUBJECT MATTER

Students will read chapters from *Millhunks and Renegades* that touch upon problems faced by Native Americans, Irish, Italians and Slovaks in Pittsburgh and the surrounding area. They will learn which problems these people were able to overcome, and their methods of overcoming these obstacles. They will discuss how these struggles compare and contrast to those of other ethnic groups not covered in the text.

MATERIALS

- Book: *Millhunks and Renegades: A Portrait of a Pittsburgh Neighborhood*, Anita Kulina, Brandt Street Press
- Writing Paper
- Additional Materials for Homework Assignment - Access to Internet

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Activity: Religion Discussion Groups

Preparation: Have students read pages 10-13 in Chapter 1 *Tribes, Trappers and Traders*.

Arrange students into cooperative working groups of 3-4. Have groups compare and contrast the following:

- In what ways were the religions and customs of the Indian tribes different from religions with which they are familiar?
- In what ways are they similar to religions and customs that they know?

Afterward, lead a class discussion, listing group findings on the board.

Activity: The Simple Simons and the Dusters Student Role-Play

Preparation: Have students read Chapter 5 *City Folks and Country Folks*.

Arrange students into cooperative working groups of two. The student on the left will play a "Simple Simon" and the student on the right will play a "Duster." Have students hold a conversation between a "Simple Simon" and a "Duster" during a chance meeting.

After ten minutes of this exercise, conduct a class discussion. Create two columns on the board, and label them "Simple Simon" and "Duster."

- Discuss what students imagine to be traits of each group, and list these in the appropriate columns on the board.
- Ask students to give examples of situations in which these different traits would be desirable or undesirable.

Activity: Leaving the Old Country
Topics For Class Discussion

Preparation: Have students review Chapter 1 *Tribes, Trappers and Traders*, and have them read Chapter 7 *The Irish*, Chapter 12 *The Italians* and Chapter 13 *The Slovaks and The Run*.

Conduct a class discussion about Ireland's Penal Laws. In what ways can they be compared to the oppression of other people, especially regarding the slavery of Africans in America? In what ways do they differ?

Expand this class discussion to evaluate the reasons people leave their native land. In what ways were the reasons the Irish left their native land different from the reasons the Indians left their homelands? How are these reasons different from the reasons the Italians and Slovaks left the "old country"? In what ways are these reasons similar?

Activity: Famous and Admired
Internet Research

Have students list five famous people of the same ethnic background. Students may choose their own nationality or one at random. Which of the people on their list do they admire most? Why?

Keywords: famous Italians, famous African-Americans, famous Jews

Activity: Why Did People Join the Ku Klux Klan? Student Role-Play

Preparation: Have students read pages 106-109 in Chapter 16 *Prohibition and the KKK*.

Arrange students into cooperative working groups of two. Students on the left will be Klan members. Students on the right may choose to be a shop owner, a clergyman, or a mill worker.

Have students role-play as if the Klan member is meeting a person at their place of business, attempting to recruit them to join the Ku Klux Klan. Students who are being persuaded to join must keep in mind that they would only have the limited information that was available at the time.

Afterward, conduct a class discussion on the methods of persuasion used during the exercise.

- o Were any particularly imaginative?
- o In what ways were they deceptive?

- Discuss as a class how easy or difficult it is for the students to understand how ordinary people might have been persuaded to join the Ku Klux Klan.

- Homework Assignment: How would students have attempted to educate these people so that they would have said “No” instead of “Yes” to joining the Klan? Students are to write a persuasive paragraph telling the shop owner, clergyman and mill worker why they should NOT join the KKK.

- Discuss the previous night’s homework. Then, conduct the role-playing experiment again in the classroom, only this time with a now better-educated shop owner, clergyman and mill worker. Are they able to refute the arguments of the Klan members?