Industrialization & Power:  
Marxism & Class Struggle

Concepts:

The main purpose of this lesson is for students to understand the stark differences between capitalism and communism and socialism.

Why did the idea of Marx’s communism emerge as a protest against capitalism?

Why does Marx believe that society is better off without classes?

Learning Outcomes:

Students should be able to read and analyze Manifesto of the Communist Party written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

Students will be able to explain the difference between the Proletariat and Bourgeoisie and explain why Marx says they are in an inevitable class struggle.

Students should be able to list and explain the differences between Communism, Socialism and Capitalism.

Content Outline:

Introduction to primary source-

Today we will be reading an excerpt from a primary source document on the Manifesto of the Communist Party. When reading a primary source document we must be careful to answer many important questions about the document even before reading it. I have provided a Document Analysis Worksheet to help you better understand primary source documents. The first part of the worksheet (question 1-5) should be filled out prior to reading the document. This will introduce the topic and give you a good background on who wrote it, the time period it was written etc. The second part (question 6) should be completed during and after the reading. This will help you better understand the content and give you a chance to ask questions if you are still confused. We will go over the first part together as a class (as an example).

Questions

1.) What type of document is this?
2.) Are there any unique physical qualities of this document?
3.) What date was this document written?
4.) Who is the author of this document?
5.) What audience was the document written for?

In-class reading- Manifesto of the Communist Party by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (20 minutes).

Answer all parts of question 6 on Document Analysis Worksheet
Additional questions to think about during the reading (written on blackboard)

1.) According to Marx and Engel, who are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat?
2.) Why is a clash between these two classes inevitable?
3.) What are some of the differences between communism and capitalism

**Class Discussion on Reading - Manifesto of the Communist Party (25-30 minutes)**

- Ask the students to get into groups of 3 or 4 to discuss the primary source document they have read. Use the above questions as a guide for the discussion. Have the group discuss each question on their document analysis worksheets. Then have them answer as a group the three questions on the blackboard (only one person has to write it down).

- Next the teacher will ask the the groups to share what their responses to question 6 (document information) from their document analysis worksheets. Students from other groups are encouraged to ask questions and make comments based on what the other groups say. The teacher will guide this discussion and post on the overhead what he had written down for each question.

- Finally the three questions written on the blackboard will be discussed by the entire class. These questions are vital in understanding the content and significance of the document.

**Marx’s Theory**

Communist Manifesto – written in 1849 by Marx and Engels

- Written in response to the horrendous conditions in factories
- Blamed the system of industrial capitalism for the terrible conditions.
- Solution to problem was a new social system – eventually known as communism

**Marx’s beliefs**

- All of history was a “history of class struggles”
- Oppressors vs. oppressed is a constant throughout history
- Oppressors own means to production (land, raw materials and money)
- Controlled government and society
- Oppressed- dependent on the owners of the means of production
- “Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into tow great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat”.
- Bourgeoisie- the middle/upper class- also known as the oppressors
- Proletariat-working class –also known as the oppressed.
- Struggle between proletariat and Bourgeoisie will eventually lead to a revolution.
- Proletariat would overthrow bourgeoisie
- Abolish economic differences that create separate social classes
- End up with a classless society

**Activity - Rock Paper Scissors game (15 minutes)**

This game is designed to illustrate to the students the differences between communism, socialism and capitalism. I divide the whole class into groups of two and give them all pieces of candy. They play rock/paper/scissors for a couple of minutes for those pieces of candy. Each time a players wins in a RPS battle they get a piece of candy from their opponent.
The first time I give each group of two an uneven amount of candy (making sure that one student has significantly more than the other student). I have them play RPS for a couple of minutes and tell them to stop and count their candy. In most situations the person who had the most candy before the game still has the most candy at the end. Some people who started with a very little amount of candy end up with none after the game. And only a few players with the lesser amount of candy end up with more at the end of the game. This part of the game is an attempt to demonstrate capitalism.

The second time I gave all the students an equal amount of candy. At the end of the game most of the partners still have about the same amount of candy or only a little less than their partners. This part of the game demonstrates socialism.

Next, I took all the candy from them and they reacted angrily. I ask them what do I need to do to appease them or keep them happy. Hopefully they respond by asking for some of their candy back. So I give them just as much as they needed to be satisfied. This part of the activity demonstrates communism. After each part of the activity I explain why I did it and how it was example of that particular economic philosophy.

**Exit pass** - (10 minutes)

Think back to the rock/paper/scissors activity we just did and write a short paragraph describing the three different economic philosophies. Be sure to explain the differences between each.

**Materials Needed for the Lesson:** two bags of candy, handouts on data analysis worksheet, and handout on communist manifesto

**Methods of Evaluating Student Progress/Performance:**
- Document analysis worksheet
- 3 questions written on blackboard
- Answering and asking questions during class discussion
- One paragraph essay on differences between communism, socialism and capitalism

**Differentiation for Special Needs:** This lesson plan involves a variety of different teaching strategies. It involves reading, writing, discussion and activities that help hands on learners. These different strategies supplement each other and help reinforce the material being taught.

**Subject Matter Integration/Extension:** This lesson plan fits in the Mass Society and Democracy unit. It fits well with the industrial revolution because it discusses some of the negative results of the industrial revolution. It also shows some peoples responses to the industrial revolution (Karl Marx). In the future this lesson plan can be taught right after the industrial revolution to see some of the radical responses.

**Reflections/PPT’s in Lesson:** I think this lesson fits very well with my philosophy of teaching. I think it is very important for students to be introduced to primary source documents and having practice analyzing them. Also I think this r/p/s activity is great for explaining the differences of communism, socialism, and capitalism in terms that young kids can understand.