

Disney

NEWSIES

THE AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL

STUDY GUIDE

PREPARED BY

DISNEY THEATRICAL GROUP EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

To The Educator

SEIZE THE DAY!

Thank you for bringing your students to NEWSIES. We've prepared this Study Guide to enrich your students' experience at the show. It's full of background information, experiential lesson plans, and activity handouts for your class.

Set in New York City at the turn of the century, NEWSIES is the rousing tale of Jack Kelly, a charismatic newsboy and leader of a ragged band of teenaged "NEWSIES," who dreams only of a better life far from the hardship of the streets. But when publishing titans Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst raise distribution prices

at the newsboys' expense, Jack finds a cause to fight for and rallies newsies from across the city to strike for what's right.

NEWSIES is inspired by the real-life Newsboys' Strike of 1899, when newsboys Kid Blink and David Simons led a band of orphan and runaway children on a two-week-long action against newspaper publishers Pulitzer and Hearst.

Before you dive into the rich educational merits of the show, ensure you get the most out of this guide by reviewing its structure:

Educator's Edition:

These sections are written just for you and present activities in a common lesson-plan format. You can use these engaging activities in any classroom, club, home school, or afterschool setting.

Extra! Extra!:

These reproducible handouts are the student accompaniments to your lesson plans. They are written for kids, and include directions for completing assignments. Some of these sections also feature background information on the play and its creators.

Variations:

The lessons in this guide have been written with secondary school students in mind, but variations include modifications for working with younger or older students.

Bolded Words:

The bolded words in this guide have been defined in the glossary. Such vocabulary includes show-specific words, theatrical terms, and uncommon vocabulary.

The lessons in this guide have been designed for use before or after your students attend the show. Teach the lessons as written, or take what works for you and adapt freely. Above all, enjoy exploring NEWSIES with your students.

Thank you for your commitment to arts education, and enjoy the show!



This icon highlights things students should look for when they attend NEWSIES.

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EXTRA! EXTRA!

WORKING KIDS INSPIRE MOVIE, BROADWAY MUSICAL!

It Started With Some Kids...

NEWSIES is based on the real-life Newsboys' **Strike** of 1899. Children who sold newspapers on the streets were called "**newsies**". The New York newsies went up against two newspaper publishers, Joseph Pulitzer of *The World* and William Randolph Hearst of *The Journal*, to fight for fair **wages**.

The Spanish-American War made New Yorkers hungry for **headlines**, and **circulation** boomed as a result. Once the war ended, people were less inclined to buy newspapers – war was bad for the world, but great for the newspaper business. The strike was the result of the newspaper publishers refusing to lower the price-per-paper that the newsies had to pay back down to the pre-war prices. The newsies were not willing to pay more for their papers to make up for a lack of headlines, so they decided to strike – their goal was to make the newspaper **tycoons** recognize them as legitimate members of the business, and treat them as such.

The strike lasted two weeks, from July 19 to August 2, 1899. During that time, the New York newsies drew support from newsies all over the Northeast, as well as other young workers like messengers, bootblacks, and factory workers. The kids banded together to support one another, and at times things became violent – **scabs** were attacked on the streets, their papers ripped from them and destroyed to prevent their sale. Some

kids lost their nerve and went back to the publishers, settling for the higher price.

The newsies eventually came to a compromise with the publishers: they would purchase their papers at the higher price, but the publishers would buy back any papers that the newsies couldn't sell – this was more valuable to the newsies than a lower price would have been, as it allowed them to buy papers without the risk of losing money for any that went unsold. The Newsboys' Strike of 1899 is a significant moment in history; it is one of the first strikes that was carried out by children and it ended in compromise. The kids won!

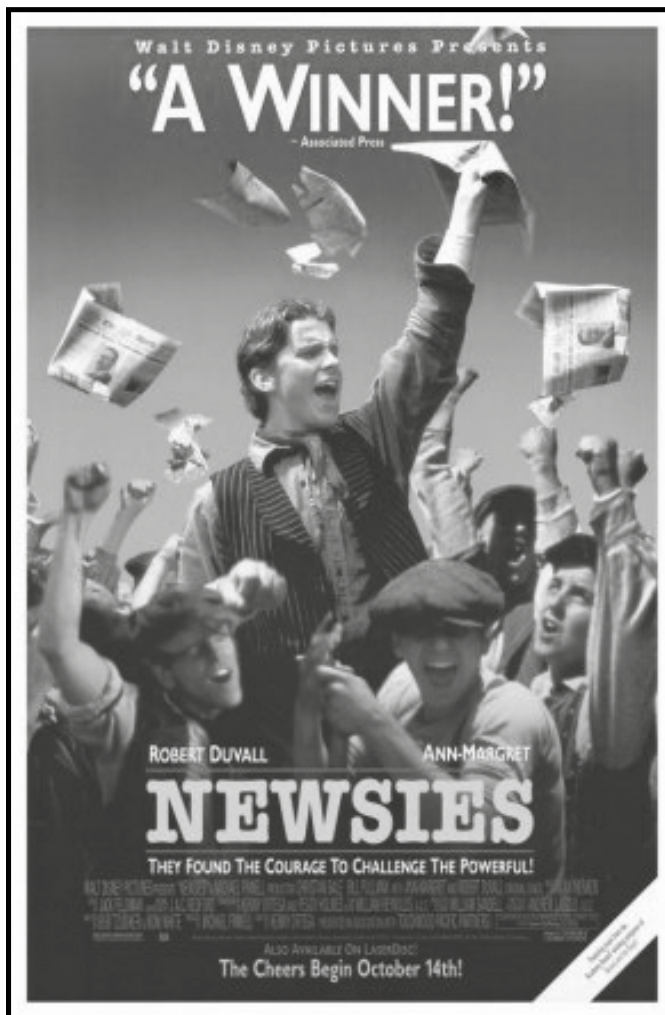


EXTRA! EXTRA!

WORKING KIDS INSPIRE MOVIE, BROADWAY MUSICAL! (cont.)

Then It Was a Movie...

In 1992, Disney released a live action **musical** based on the real-life events of the Newsboy Strike of 1899. With a **screenplay** by Bob Tzudiker and Noni White, and a **score** written by Oscar® winning **composer** Alan Menken and **lyricist** Jack Feldman, the film was meant to be a revival of the live action musical genre. Though it was not a hit in the theatres, its memorable score and athletic dance numbers made it a fan favourite, and it quickly gained a following.



And Then it Went to Broadway

A stage adaptation of NEWSIES was in great demand, so Disney Theatrical Group began working on developing a stage play. Alan Menken and Jack Feldman were called back to work on the score, and Tony® Award-winning **book writer** Harvey Fierstein signed on to adapt the screenplay for the stage. With this dream team of theatremakers onboard, Disney Theatrical Group began a several-year process of making NEWSIES as beloved onstage as it was on-screen.

Together with the Paper Mill Playhouse in New Jersey, Disney mounted a four-week engagement of NEWSIES to test the material. The show prepared for its Broadway transfer and opened at the Nederlander Theatre on March 29, 2012. After its Broadway run, NEWSIES hit the road on a North American Tour. NEWSIES played 1,711 performances between Broadway and the North American tour, to more than 2.5 million audience members in 65 cities across the country. In 2017, **"Disney's Newsies: The Broadway Musical!"** premiered in cinemas nationwide and is currently streaming on Disney+. Over 110 years in the making, the story of the New York newsies and their struggle for justice lives on!

ACT: ONE

Rooftops of New York

Jack Kelly is high above the rooftops of New York, savouring the last few moments of quiet before the sun rises and another day begins. His best friend Crutchie, an entrepreneurial newsie who uses a crutch, is asleep on the rooftop and asks for help climbing down to the streets. Instead, Jack shares his view of the city, and his dream for a better life (*Santa Fe – Prologue*).

Newsies Square

Meet the newsies! The boys sing about their life and their work (*Carrying the Banner*), and we are introduced to this ramshackle group of young friends. They start their day at the **Newsboys' Lodging House** before making their way to the **distribution window** for *The World*, the newspaper that they sell to make a living. Davey and Les, two boys trying to help earn money for their family, meet the newsies and try to learn the ropes. The great Jack Kelly agrees to help the boys out, since Les's young age will help him sell more papers.

Pulitzer's Office

Joseph Pulitzer, **publisher** of *The World* sits in his office, high above the streets of New York and the boys in Newsies Square. He expresses displeasure at the declining sales of his newspaper, and vows to increase profits (*The Bottom Line*), even if it is at the expense of the newsies.

NEWSIES SYNOPSIS

Streets of New York and Medda's Theatre

The newsies spend the day selling newspapers, and Les proves to be a natural. Jack offers to help them find a place to spend the night, but the brothers reveal that they have a family and a home – something that most newsies lack. Before they can part ways, a crooked orphanage manager named Snyder appears and chases Jack. Davey and Les, unaware of who the man is or why he is chasing them, follow Jack's lead and run through the alleys of New York. The boys find safety in Medda's Theatre.

Jack introduces Davey and Les to the Great Medda Larkin, one of the **Bowery's** most famous performers. Jack tells the boys about Snyder, who runs The Refuge, an orphanage for young boys and collects them only so that he can get a government paycheck. He has had it in for Jack ever since he escaped right out from under his nose, and remains in constant pursuit of him. Medda offers her theatre as a safe-haven for the boys, and they stay to watch her perform (*That's Rich*).



NEWSIES SYNOPSIS

(cont.)

Streets of New York and Medda's Theatre (cont.)

During Medda's performance, Jack notices Katherine, a young reporter he had seen earlier that day. Mesmerized by her beauty and intelligence, Jack makes an unsuccessful attempt to woo her. Meanwhile, the Bowery Beauties perform their show (***Don't Come a-Knockin'***). When his sweet-talking routine doesn't work, Jack resorts to sketching a portrait of Katherine (***I Never Planned on You***), and leaves it for her to find. With a tip of his hat, Jack Kelly is off.

Newsies Square

The newsies gather at the distribution window of *The World* for another day of selling **papes**. When the headlines go up, the newsies are outraged to learn that Pulitzer has increased the price that they have to pay per newspaper – they can barely afford to eat as it is. After much anger and outrage, and the discovery that the competing newspaper, *The Journal*, has agreed to the same price increase, the newsies decide to form a **union** and strike (***The World Will Know***).

Jacobi's Deli

After a successful first day of striking at the distribution window, the newsies gather at Jacobi's Deli, and contemplate their next step. Newly elected union leader Jack Kelly assigns various kids to spread the word to newsies in other **boroughs**, and to encourage all New York City newsies to join their cause. Katherine, the young journalist that Jack met at the theatre,

comes to the deli in hope that the newsies will give her an **exclusive** for tomorrow morning's paper.

After considering it, Jack tells her to be at the distribution window bright and early tomorrow morning, because not only do they plan to prevent other kids from selling papers, but they also plan to stop the newspaper delivery carts as well. He tells her that they all have a lot riding on her reporting skills, and Katherine gets to work writing her breakout article (***Watch What Happens***).

Newsies Square

Only a few kids have assembled to strike the next day, and none of the newsies from the other boroughs come through. Jack urges Davey to convince the small group of frightened kids not to back down. When scabs arrive to take the newsies' place, Jack asks them to stand in solidarity with all the city's **exploited** working children. The scabs throw down their papers, just in time for Katherine and her photographer to snap a victorious photo (***Seize the Day***). But soon the newsies are surrounded by toughs and engage in a fierce fight. When the police arrive and start going after the kids, the newsies run. Snyder scares Jack away, but not before he watches the Delanceys – toughs who work for *The World* – take down Crutchie and carry him off to The Refuge. Reaching the temporary safety of his rooftop, Jack paces, guilty about leading the kids into danger. He longs for an escape (***Santa Fe***).

NEWSIES SYNOPSIS

(cont.)

ACT: TWO

Jacobi's Deli

Battered and bruised after a failed attempt to thwart Pulitzer and his toughs, the newsies lament the previous day's events at Jacobi's Deli. Amid rumors that he was captured or worse, several newsies wonder where Jack is. Katherine arrives with a copy of the story she printed in *The Sun*, complete with a front-page picture of the newsies, **above the fold!** They are ecstatic; they thank Katherine and celebrate their fifteen minutes of fame (*King of New York*).

Medda's Theatre

Back at Medda's theatre, Jack is trying to forget the world around him by immersing himself in his art. He is painting a new **backdrop** for Miss Medda when Davey finds him and tries to convince him to come back to the fight. Jack refuses, saying that they have already lost too much – they won't win a fight against a man as big and powerful as Joseph Pulitzer. Katherine and Les show up, and the three of them convince Jack that they do stand a chance, and that this is a fight worth fighting (*Watch What Happens – Reprise*). Jack agrees to come back to the newsies and help with the strike. The kids plan a **rally**.

Pulitzer's Office

Discovering the headline "Newsies Stop The World", Pulitzer furiously resolves to take down Jack. Snyder describes Jack's

criminal past and escape from The Refuge. Just then, a cocky Jack arrives to announce the newsies' rally. Pulitzer scoffs and assures Jack that no paper will cover it. If it is not in the press, no one will ever know it happened. He then reveals Katherine, who left a life of luxury to write for a rival paper, and Snyder, who emerges from the shadows. Amid Jack's shock and panic, Pulitzer offers a choice: get sent to The Refuge, or renounce the strike and leave New York with pockets full of cash. The Delanceys escort Jack to the cellar to ponder his decision on an old **printing press** (*The Bottom Line Reprise*).



Medda's Theatre

That evening, Spot Conlon – the leader of the Brooklyn newsies – crosses the bridge with his gang to join newsies from every borough at Medda's theatre for the rally (*Brooklyn's Here*). Davey gets the kids excited about their progress. When Jack appears, they leap to their feet, but their cheers turn to boos as he tells them to go back to work because they are no match for Pulitzer. Jack accepts his **payoff** money at the door and exits quickly.

NEWSIES SYNOPSIS

(cont.)

Rooftops of New York

On his rooftop, Jack finds Katherine looking through his drawings of The Refuge's bleak conditions. He snatches them from her and they argue fiercely until she kisses him. Katherine shares her plan to have the newsies distribute her article, "The Children's Crusade", which quotes Jack on the exploitation of working kids and calls for a citywide strike. Before heading to the old press Jack recently discovered, they share their hope in one another (***Something to Believe In***).

Pulitzer's Cellar

With the help of Katherine and a few well-connected friends, the newsies sneak into Pulitzer's cellar to print their paper called *The Newsies' Banner* (***Once and For All***). The kids distribute the pamphlet – featuring Katherine's article and Jack's drawings – all over the city. Jack and Katherine go off in pursuit of some very important people.

Pulitzer's Office

Having read *The Newsies' Banner*, Pulitzer is furious at the kids' attempt to thwart him. His office is flooded with angry calls from every corner of New York! Jack, Davey and Spot show up (***Seize the Day – Reprise***) to personally deliver the news, and say that the boys are willing to make a compromise. Pulitzer refuses to back down until Governor Roosevelt appears with Katherine and Jack's drawings of The Refuge. Jack and Pulitzer decide to settle their problem alone, and everyone leaves the room. They come to the agreement that the price increase

will remain, as long as the publishers agree to buy back any unsold papers at the end of the day. If the boys are able to take a few more papers without the risk of losing money, chances are that they will sell more and circulation might actually increase! The two shake hands, and the strike is over.

Newsies Square

Outside, Jack announces the end of the strike. Crutchie appears amid the jubilation, followed by a handcuffed Snyder, who is led off to jail. Despite his dreams for Santa Fe, Jack realizes that the newsies are his family and Katherine gives him something to believe in – so he's staying put for now (***Finale***).



MEET THE CHARACTERS



JACK KELLY – The leader of the Manhattan newsies, Jack is a surly, independent dreamer who yearns to get out of the crowded streets of New York and make a better life for himself out West.



MEDDA LARKIN – The entrepreneur, singer, and star of the Bowery, Medda offers her theatre as a safe haven for Jack and the newsies. She stands behind them in their fight for justice.



CRUTCHIE – Jack Kelly's best friend is a business-savvy newsie with a disability.



KATHERINE PLUMBER – A reporter who wants to make a name for herself as a legitimate journalist in a time when women aren't taken seriously. Katherine is inspired by the promising potential of the brand new century.



DAVEY – Les's older brother, Davey starts selling papers to help his family earn a living, but becomes swept up in the fervour of the strike. A leader in his own right.



JOSEPH PULITZER – A businessman through and through, he owns *The World* and is only concerned with profits.



LES – Davey's younger brother, Les is immediately taken by the freedom of the newsies and their independent lifestyle.



MR. JACOBI – A deli owner known to let the newsies congregate in his restaurant to escape the hard streets of New York – when he doesn't have any paying customers, that is.



WIESEL – Mr. Wiesel runs the distribution window for *The World*, and knows most of the newsies by name. He has the help of the intimidating Delancey brothers, who keep order by any means necessary.



SPOT CONLON – Spot is the leader of the Brooklyn newsies; his reputation precedes him.



OSCAR and MORRIS DELANCEY – Brothers who work at the distribution window for *The World*. They both take the side of the publishers in the strike, and are known to use their fists to make a point.



SNYDER – Snyder runs The Refuge, a ramshackle orphanage for homeless boys. He is only concerned with catching enough boys to keep his government checks coming.

The Other Newsies

Albert, Buttons,
Elmer, Finch,
Henry, Ike, Jojo,
Mike, Mush, Race,
Romeo, Sniper, Specs,
and Tommy Boy.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

CHARACTER CREATION

Introduction:

Although characters featured in NEWSIES aren't actual people from history, they are an amalgamation of the real kids who rallied in 1899. Our play's hero, Jack Kelly, is based on a newsie known as Kid Blink who was blind in one eye. By creating their own historically-based characters, students will encounter NEWSIES from an authentic point of view.

Subject:

English, PHSE, Drama/Performing Arts

Line of Inquiry:

What informs a person's character? What can images tell us about character? How does an author create historically-based characters?

Goal:

To encourage empathy for historical figures, and to allow students to write creative fiction based on historical evidence.

Objectives:

Students will:

- critically analyse historical photographs and hypothesize on circumstances surrounding the subjects.
- create an original, historically-based character.
- write and perform an original monologue, featuring historically-inspired content.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

CHARACTER CREATION (cont.)

Warm Up:

Gallery Walk

Reproduce the images found on the following page, and tape them to the walls of your classroom. Give each student a pad of sticky-notes and a pencil, and invite your class to walk about your “gallery”, noticing the photographs. Ask open-ended questions of your students to encourage deep observation. What do the subjects’ clothes look like? What assumptions do you make about these people? What time period might this be? What do you notice in the background? What does the environment look like? After students have observed all the photos, ask them to write something they have noticed about each photo on a note and stick it to the image.

Main Activity:

Character Creation

Distribute the Character Creation activity on the following page. Read the directions aloud and walk around the classroom to field any questions.



Reflection:

Monologues

The theatrical term “monologue” refers to a speech made by a character in a play. Now that your students have created a historically-based character, have them write a one to three paragraph monologue. Monologues should be written in the first person, in the character’s voice, and should address one or more of the items students established on their character worksheets. Select a few volunteers to perform their monologues for the class.

Variation: If you are working with older students, take the activity further by having them create a social networking profile for their character. Draw a template on the board representative of the profile pages on popular social networking sites. After students have completed their character’s profile, challenge them to generate a list of status updates their character might post. These updates can be the inspiration for the monologue project described in the reflection activity.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

CHARACTER CREATION

Directions:

Choose one of the historical photos below and create a character based on the image you selected. Complete the worksheet with information based on your class discussions, the information in this guide, and your own imagination!

Name (First Middle Last): _____

Age: _____ Occupation: _____

Education: _____

Home Location: _____

Family Members: _____

Best Friend: _____

Chief Wish: _____

Proudest Moment: _____

Biggest Fear: _____

In An Emergency, This Character's First Response Would Be To: _____

In Their Spare Time, This Character Would Most Likely: _____



When you attend NEWSIES, pick one character to follow throughout the show. What do you notice about the character's mannerisms, speech, and behaviour? How might your Character Creation answers affect the way your character behaves?



EDUCATOR'S EDITION

TURN OF THE CENTURY

Introduction:

The 1992 film *Newsies* on which NEWSIES is based has gained a following. But neither film nor stage play would exist if real kids hadn't stood up for their rights in 1899. By trying their own hand at playwriting, students will gain a new perspective on this historically-based musical.

Subject: English, PSHE, Drama/Performing Arts

Line of Inquiry:

How do playwrights dramatize historical material for the stage?

Goal:

To provide students with first-hand experience in adapting historical events for the stage.

Objectives:

Students will:

- identify the reasons history is recorded.
- identify the components of a compelling story.
- learn historical facts about New York City in 1899.
- write an original scene, based on historical events.
- perform an original scene for the class.
- decode their work to identify fact and fiction.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

TURN OF THE CENTURY (cont.)

Warm Up:

Dramatic Moments in History

Use these prompts to engage your class in a discussion about historically-based fiction:

- What kinds of historical events do people record?
- Can you think of any moments in history that have been made into a novel? What about a book or a TV show? A stage play or musical?
- Does an author always replicate a historic event exactly the way it happened? Why might an author change something, create new characters, or speculate about an under-documented piece of history?
- What makes a book, film, TV show or play engaging? Do any of those traits occur in historical events? Is history good inspiration for drama?
- Historically, whose histories were recorded and whose were left out? What can that tell us about privilege and power?

Variation: If you are working with younger students, pick some iconic landmarks and break the class into small groups. Charge the groups with creating a series of tableaux (or frozen stage pictures) that tell the story of how the landmarks came to be.

If you are working with older students, have your playwrighting teams investigate and write about a dramatic moment in history that they are studying (like women's suffrage, Rosa Parks' bus ride, or WWII).

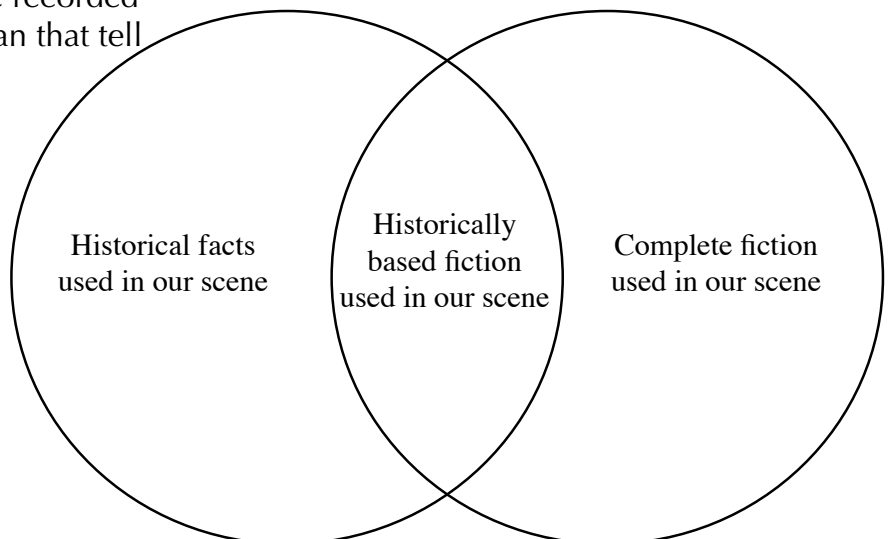
Main Activity:

Adapting History

Distribute the handout on the following page and read the article aloud as a class. Divide your class into groups of three or four and review the directions. As your groups brainstorm and begin to write, walk around the classroom and field any questions. Give your playwrights ten and two-minute warnings to complete their scenes. Allow each group to perform their scene for the class.

Reflection:

Ask each group to create a venn-diagram reflecting their scene. Draw this model on the board for your students to reference as they work.



TURN OF THE CENTURY

NEWSIES is set in 1899 – the end of the 19th century and a time of great change around the world. Advances in technology, like the invention of the film camera, the commercial automobile and successful prototypes of the airplane meant people were more mobile and informed than ever before. Around the world, **colonized** nations fought to gain their independence and workers went on strike to improve their working conditions. Farmers in South Africa fought for their independence against their British colonizers in battles later known as the Boer Wars. The Spanish colonies of Cuba and the Philippines also wished to govern their own countries and the struggle led to an international conflict.

In New York City, Mayor Robert Van Wyck presided over a newly incorporated **metropolis**. The boroughs of **Manhattan, The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens** and **Richmond** (later known as **Staten Island**) were brought together on January 1, 1898, making New York City the second largest city in the world. The city was speeding forward into the new century with several new improvements.

Construction for a public library at 42nd Street and 5th Avenue in Manhattan began in the spring of 1899. The Bronx Zoo also opened in 1899 with 843 animals in 22 exhibits. With the expansion of the boroughs, the city had to make it possible for people to get around town. In addition to the already completed **Brooklyn Bridge**, the city began laying tracks for a **subway** that would connect Manhattan and Brooklyn. The subway would open to passengers five years later, in 1904.

At **Ellis Island**, **immigrants** from all over the world continued to surge into the city, many escaping famine, persecution, or poverty and seeking a better life. Often immigrants during this time period arrived with few belongings, little money, and limited to no English. An estimated 330,000 people came through New York Harbor that year, primarily from Italy and Russia. Many of these new Americans settled on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, making the cramped neighbourhoods even tighter.



ABOVE: Immigrants arriving at Ellis Island.

FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN IN 1899 INCLUDE:

Duke Ellington,
Fred Astaire,
E.B. White,
Ernest Hemingway,
PL Travers,
Lillian Disney,
Mary Margaret McBride,
and Alfred Hitchcock

EXTRA! EXTRA!

TURN OF THE CENTURY (cont.)

Directions:

Working in small groups, select an event described in the second paragraph of the article on the previous page. Work with your group to write a scene from a play based on the event you selected; your scene should include at least two characters and five lines of **dialogue**, and follow these guidelines:

- Each character must have a name.
- You must communicate your setting using dialogue or **stage directions**. Stage directions are unspoken words that describe the setting and tell us where the actors go and what they do onstage. You can put your stage directions in parentheses.
- Your scene must have a beginning (exposition), middle (a moment of conflict), and an end (a resolution).
- Incorporate historical facts from the article as you write your scene, but also use your imagination to create characters and fill in the gaps of your story.



When you attend NEWSIES, pick out two locations or characters that you think are real places or people from history, and two that you think the playwright invented for the story. Why might a playwright choose to create new people or places for a historically-based musical?



Opening of the Bronx Zoo, 1899

ALSO HAPPENING IN 1899:

The paper clip was invented, Aspirin was patented, and Marshall "Major" Taylor became the first African American to win a world championship in a sport.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

CHILD LABOUR

Introduction:

Despite its catchy music and show-stopping choreography, NEWSIES highlights a very real struggle that many children around the world still face today. Child labour was once legal and common in the United States. By exploring the real plight of working children, students will understand the stakes of the newsboys' strike and appreciate the reform that happened at the turn of the century.

Subject:

Maths, PSHE, English

Line of Inquiry:

What was the lived experience of child labourers? What did the reformers work to change? How did the newsboys' strike of 1899 pave the way for the rights US children enjoy today?

Goal:

To illuminate the challenging working and living conditions of disenfranchised kids in 1899, and to examine the circumstances and tremendous effort necessary for reform.

Objectives:

Students will:

- identify the difference between typical childhood chores and child labour.
- work in groups to solve maths problems.
- understand the daily struggle of working kids at the turn of the century.
- recognise how reform comes about.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

CHILD LABOUR (cont.)

Warm Up:

Chores vs. Labour

Ask students to offer various tasks and jobs that kids today are expected to take responsibility for. What must students do before school? During school? After school? In the summer? What chores are typical of kids today? Write your class ideas on the board.

Variation: If you are working with older students, ask the groups to determine how long it would take – assuming Racetrack were to sell through 95% of his inventory everyday – before he runs out of money completely. Do any variables affect this outcome? How many papers should Racetrack buy each day?

Main Activity:

A Day in the Life of a Newsie

Distribute the following activity and read the article aloud as a class. Divide your class up into small groups and review the directions. If necessary, work through some of the maths as a class to ensure everyone understands.

Reflection:

Journaling Reform

Ask students to write a journal entry answering one of the following questions:

- What are the differences between the lifestyles of newsies in 1899 and kids where you live today? What are the benefits and challenges of being a kid in each circumstance?
- Why did the reformers fight for child labour laws? What do you think working kids thought when the laws passed? What do you think their families thought?



CHILD LABOUR!

In America, the idea that a kid's job is to go to school and prepare for their future is a relatively new one. While many kids today are expected to do chores, set the table or help with dishes or laundry, this is not what is meant by child labour. Throughout most of American history, it was normal for children to work long hours at difficult and dangerous jobs.

Child labour in America is as old as the country itself. In the early 1600s, it was believed that crime and poverty were a result of **idleness**, not a lack of education. As a result, poor children were sent by the thousands from England to the American colonies to become **apprentices**. This arrangement allowed England to avoid supporting these children and also provided a cheap solution to the **labour shortage** in the colonies. Colonists' children were also apprentices or did gruelling work on their family's farm.

During the **Industrial Revolution**, as the number of factories increased, so did the number of jobs. Factory owners needed more workers and turned to children to help do everything from operating dangerous machinery to mining coal. It was expected that children as young as 10 years old work 12 or more hours per day for six days a week. According to the U.S. **Census** of 1880, one in six American children were employed. This number does not account for the number of children under 10 years old working illegally in **sweatshops** or on the streets. In 1881 only seven states had education laws requiring kids to attend school, but even in these states, many people found ways to get around the law.

By the turn of the 20th century, at the time when NEWSIES is set, the child workforce hit its peak with almost 2 million legal and countless undocumented working children. During this period, **reformers** began to take action and created **child labour laws**, fought to end the abuse of kids in the workplace, and worked to make sure that all children had the opportunity to better themselves through education.



ABOVE: Checking in at the Newsboys' Lodging House / Operating dangerous machinery

CHILD LABOUR! (cont.)

"Newsie" is a term for a child who sold newspapers on the streets at the turn of the century. The newsies of New York City were popularly admired as "little merchants", for, unlike children working for a company in factories, the newsies were seen as being business people. Even though they were their own bosses, the newspaper owners controlled the prices and the newsies sometimes had to choose between food and a bed to sleep in for the night.

It was not until 1938 that Congress passed the **Fair Labour Standards Act**, a law that prohibited the employment of kids younger than 16 and placed limits on the employment of kids between 16 and 18 years old.

Many people argued that child labour helped children by teaching them a trade. In reality, their jobs as children kept them from going to school and improving their futures.

SPOTLIGHT ON REFORMERS

LEWIS HINE (1874-1940)

Lewis Hine was a New York City schoolteacher and photographer. He felt so strongly about the problem of child labour that he quit his job to take photographs for the National Child Labour Committee. Most of the historical photographs of working kids in this guide were taken by him. He understood that a picture could be a powerful tool to make the public comprehend the problem of child labour in America.

MOTHER JONES (1830-1930)

One of the most famous reformers was Mary Harris Jones, better known as "Mother Jones". In 1903, Mother Jones visited the Kensington Textile Mills near Philadelphia. She was horrified when she saw what had happened to the child workers, most of whom were only 9 or 10 years old. Many of the children she visited had lost fingers or crushed bones by working with dangerous machines. Mother Jones organized the children and took them on a cross country "Children's Crusade" that led them to the home of President Theodore Roosevelt. Although the president refused to see them, Mother Jones's "Children's Crusade" did bring the issue of child labour to a much wider audience.



A political cartoon protesting child labour.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

CHILD LABOUR! (cont.)

Directions:

Work with your group to determine how much money this newsie earned today, and then make decisions about how he should spend it.



1) This is Racetrack Higgins. Racetrack has 35¢ in his pocket this morning. After cleaning his bunk and getting ready at the lodging house, Racetrack heads to the distribution window to buy the newspapers he will resell on the streets. Papers normally cost 50¢ per hundred, but Racetrack just found out the prices went up! He'll have to pay 60¢ per hundred papers this morning. It looks like a nice day, and there is a good headline, so he thinks he can sell 50 papers today. He might be able to sell more, but if he doesn't he'll never see that money again. The publisher won't buy back his unsold papers! Racetrack decides to buy 50 papers.

What is the cost of 50 papers? _____

How much money does Racetrack have left? _____

2) The weather turns bad, and three of Racetrack's papers get ruined by the rain. No one will buy them! He manages to sell the rest of the papers at the going rate of 1¢ per paper.

How much did Racetrack earn today? _____ How much money does Racetrack have now? _____

3) Racetrack is hungry and tired. Which of the items below do you think Racetrack should spend his money on? Remember – he'll need enough money left over to buy tomorrow's newspapers, and the weather has turned stormy.

- Bunk at Newsboys' Lodging House: 6¢
- Private bed at Newsboys' Lodging House: 10¢
- Supper: 20¢
- Breakfast in the morning (bread and coffee): 6¢
- Lunch tomorrow (pork and beans): 6¢
- Candy: 1¢
- Ticket to theatre on the Bowery: 20¢
- Tomorrow's papers: _____ ¢



When you attend NEWSIES, notice which grownups want to help the newsies. Why do these adults care? Which grown-ups seem indifferent? What could sway their opinion on the strike? What other types of jobs do the newsies talk about when they try to draw awareness to all the working kids in the city?

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

CLASS & POWER

Introduction:

NEWSIES is set at the turn of the twentieth century in the newly incorporated and rapidly expanding New York. The city was home to some of the wealthiest people in the world; at the same time, new immigrants poured through Ellis Island and settled into deplorable and cramped tenement houses. There were huge disparities between the haves and the have-nots, and NEWSIES examines the power dynamics between one of the most powerful people in the world and a group of uneducated, orphaned, and disenfranchised kids. By exploring class systems, students will understand the ways in which social standing influences power and politics...and what happens when the scales tip.

Subject:

PSHE, English, Drama/Performing Arts

Line of Inquiry:

What were the disparities between New York's wealthiest and poorest inhabitants at the turn of the twentieth century? How did these dynamics influence a person or group's power?

Goal:

To encourage critical investigation into the social influences that dictate class and power.

Objectives:

Students will:

- discover disparities between classes.
- identify power as symbiotic.
- make critical arguments and debate a case as a group.
- develop empathy for historical figures.
- write analytically and expressively about historical events.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

CLASS & POWER (cont.)

Warm Up:

Judgments and Assumptions

Create two handouts.

- On handout A, write the following: "Friends and fellow workers. Dis is a time which tries de hearts of men. Dis is de time when we'se got to stick together like glue.... We know wot we wants and we'll git it even if we is blind."
- On handout B, write this quote: "Friends and fellow workers: this is the time that tries the hearts of men; this is the time when we've got to stick together like glue. We know what we want, and we'll get it even if we are blind."

Distribute one handout to each student, ensuring half the class receives A and the other half B. Ask the students to read through their quote independently, and to write their answers to the following questions:

- Do you think the speaker is educated? Why or why not?
- Do you think the speaker is rich or poor? Why?
- How old do you think the speaker is? Why?
- Do you think the speaker is powerful? Why?

Tell the class that they received different versions of the same speech. How did their assumptions vary based on which version they read? Why might some newspapers choose to publish version A and others version B?

Main Activity:

Tammany and Tenements

Read the article on the following page aloud with your students. Divide your class in two, and have one half represent the politicians of Tammany Hall and the other half New Yorkers who live in crowded tenement houses. Arrange your classroom so that the two groups face each other. Review the directions on the following page and begin the activity. Act as a moderator for the discussion, but allow the class to effectively argue their cases.

Reflection:

Purchasing Power

Ask students to pick one of the historical figures in the next activity. Students should write a letter from that individual to a family member or friend, explaining their feelings on the recent election of Mayor Van Wyck. How will the new Mayor impact their daily lives? Do they have more power? Less power? At what cost?



Variation: If you are working with older students, refer back to the excerpt from Kid Blink's speech in the warm-up activity. Have students select a historical figure from the Class & Power handout and write an Op Ed piece about the strike and Kid Blink's speech. Articles should be written in the first person and in their character's voice.

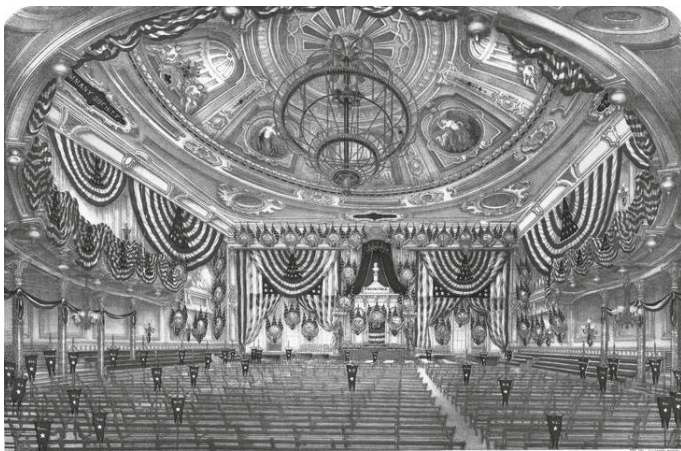
CLASS & POWER

Directions:

Your class has been divided into two groups: politicians at Tammany Hall and recent immigrants who live in New York's tenements. You've been invited to a meeting regarding the upcoming Mayoral election. The Tammany Hall group would like to elect Robert Van Wyck to office and need to win the votes of the tenement citizens. Have a conversation with the other group. What will it take to convince the tenement occupants to vote for Van Wyck? What services do the citizens need in order to consider voting for a particular candidate? What could sway the vote?

Tammany Hall

Founded in 1786, **Tammany Hall** was a political organisation in New York City that often dominated local and state politics. By the mid-1800s, Tammany controlled the city politics and was referred to as a "political machine" because of the way it ensured its desired candidates were elected. Tammany politicians were voted into office by the city's poorest residents; recent immigrants and others who lived in **tenements**. By promising them food, jobs, services, and housing, Tammany politicians regularly won elections by appealing to New York's neediest citizens. Tammany Hall became a corrupt organisation; the people in charge regularly profited from the projects they initiated and the services they provided.



Interior, Tammany Hall



Interior, Tenement

Tenement Houses

Tenements were cramped and unsafe homes, often occupied by multiple families. In New York, most tenement occupants were poor, immigrant families. At the time, New York was the most densely populated city in the world; the Lower East Side was home to over 800 residents per acre. The public became aware of the deplorable conditions in 1890 when Jacob Riis published *How the Other Half Lives*, which used shocking photographs and vivid descriptions to illustrate life in New York's slums. The book led to the **Tenement Act of 1901**, which reformed housing standards across the city.

CLASS & POWER (cont.)

Who's Who: 1899, New York

Robert Van Wyck (1847-1918), 91st Mayor of New York



Robert Van Wyck began his public career as a city judge and later rose to Chief Justice, working closely with the political organisation, Tammany Hall. In 1898, he became the 91st Mayor of New

York and the first mayor to preside over the newly incorporated five boroughs. Mayor Van Wyck also awarded the city's first subway contract, valued at \$35,000,000. In 1900, he was implicated in an Ice Trust Scandal by owning a large sum of **shares** in the American Ice Company before they planned to double their price from 30 to 60 cents per hundred pounds. The American Ice Company was the sole ice provider for the city, and therefore was an illegal **monopoly**. An investigation was conducted by Governor Theodore Roosevelt and – although the mayor was found to be not guilty – the **scandal** cost him the election in 1901. Mayor Van Wyck continued to work as a lawyer and moved to Paris in 1906. He lived there until his death in 1918.

Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), 33rd Governor of New York

A life-long public servant, Theodore Roosevelt served as a State Assembly Member, United States Civil Service Commissioner, president of the New York Board of Police Commissioners, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy. As the leader of the **Rough Riders**, Roosevelt became a national hero during the Spanish-American War. As governor, he improved labour laws, outlawed racial segregation in public schools, and advanced park and forestry programs. In 1900, he was elected vice president under William McKinley. Roosevelt became president after McKinley's **assassination** in 1901 and was reelected independently three years later.



Roughhousing in The Newsboys' Lodging House

CLASS & POWER (cont.)

Joseph Pulitzer (1847-1911), Editor and Owner of *The New York World*



Joseph Pulitzer was born in Hungary in 1847. At the age of 17, after the death of his father, Pulitzer emigrated to the United States to enlist in the **Union Army**. At the end of the war, he travelled from New York

City to St. Louis to find a job. After three years of working as a fireman, dockworker, waiter, and grave digger, Pulitzer was offered a job writing for the German newspaper, the *Westliche Post*. Despite his poor eyesight, he was so successful that he was named managing editor and eventually purchased the *St. Louis Dispatch*, one of the major newspapers in the city. Pulitzer purchased *The New York World* in 1883 and turned the failing paper into one of the most widely-read publications in the city. The articles that *The World* published about the sinking of the battleship U.S.S. Maine were a large contributor to the start of the Spanish-American War. Pulitzer died in 1911 at the age of 64 and left enough money to Columbia University to start a journalism school. The Pulitzer Prize, an award for excellence in journalism, literature and music, was named in his honour.

William Randolph Hearst (1863-1951), Editor and Owner of *The New York Journal*



William Randolph Hearst was born into a wealthy family in San Francisco. After attending Harvard University, Hearst became the manager of a paper his father owned, *The San Francisco Examiner*.

At *The Examiner*, he published stories by some of the best writers of the time, including Mark Twain and Jack London. In 1895, he decided to purchase *The New York Morning Journal*, becoming a fierce competitor to Joseph Pulitzer and *The New York World*. Hearst became so successful in the newspaper business that, at the peak of his career, he owned over 20 newspapers across the United States. By the 1940's, Hearst's company, the Hearst Metrotone News, created programmes for radio, movie **newsreels** and television. Hearst was also an enormous art collector and his home in San Simeon, California has been transformed into a museum. Hearst died at the age of 88 in 1951.



Each of these historical figures broke barriers by accomplishing things society did not expect of them. When you attend NEWSIES, notice which characters break barriers in the story. What makes Katherine, Ms. Medda, and Jack exemplary? Does Pulitzer break any barriers? How do these traits bring about change?

CLASS & POWER (cont.)

Kid Blink (unknown), Real Newsies Leader

The leader of the real-life Newsboy Strike of 1899, Kid Blink was named for his signature eye patch (he was blind in one eye). A ragamuffin who led the newsies in their fight for justice, Kid Blink was the inspiration for Jack Kelly in Disney's *Newsies*. Kid Blink was often quoted in newspapers covering the strike, with writers using the phonetic spelling of his speeches in an effort to keep his **dialect** intact. Kid Blink and the other newsies allegedly found this style of reporting **condescending**.

Jacob Riis (1849-1914), Photo Journalist



Born in Denmark in 1849, Jacob Riis emigrated to the United States in 1870. He began work as a Police Reporter for *The New York Tribune* in 1877, and soon after was employed as a photo-journalist for

The New York Evening Sun. Sometimes referred to as one of the fathers of photography, Riis published *How The Other Half Lives*, a photo-account of poverty in the city. He later caught the eye of President Theodore Roosevelt, and the two became lifelong friends. Riis spent much of his professional life documenting the life of impoverished children and labourers in the nation's urban centres.

Aida Overton Walker (1880-1914), Performer

Aida Overton Walker was one of the premiere African American artists of the turn of the century. Known for her original dance routines and refusal to conform to the stereotype of traditional Black female performers, Walker had a successful career as a star of the **Bowery** and beyond. Aida married George Walker, with whom she performed, in 1898 and the pair became one of the most revered African American couples on the stage. Before her death in 1914, Aida worked to help young Black women striving to make a name for themselves; she organised benefits in honour of the Industrial Home for Colored Working Girls, and she played an active role in the development of young Black women as stage performers.



Nellie Bly (1864-1922), Journalist

Nellie Bly was the **pen name** of female journalist Elizabeth Jane Cochran. In a time when female reporters didn't cover much beyond the **society pages**, Ms. Bly made a name for herself as a legitimate journalist. She reported on her record-breaking trip around the world and even faked a mental illness to report on what it was like to be a patient in a mental institution.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

THE POWER OF THE PRESS

Introduction:

The phrase “Yellow Journalism” was coined in the 1890’s to describe sensational and often inaccurate reporting designed to increase circulation of newspapers. Pulitzer and Hearst, two competing titans of journalism, notoriously exaggerated and invented headlines to outsell the other’s publication. The Spanish-American war is often described as the first “media war”; Hearst and Pulitzer’s newspapers fuelled the US interest in the conflict, and business boomed.

Subject:

History, PSHE, English, Media

Line of Inquiry:

How did journalism in the late 1890’s affect the public’s interest in the Spanish-American War? How does journalism today guide public opinion on political matters? What are the ethical responsibilities of journalists and publishers? What are the ethical responsibilities of politicians? Of readers?

Goal:

To introduce students to the way Yellow Journalism influenced the Spanish-American War and to draw connections to the power of the press today.

Objectives:

Students will:

- identify the differences between sensationalized news and balanced journalism.
- understand why publishers may want to sway public opinions.
- work in small groups to create content for a viral news story.
- present original work to the class.
- critically analyse a news story to determine if it is fair, misleading or unbalanced.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

THE POWER OF THE PRESS (cont.)

Warm Up:

Fact Check!

Distribute the Power of the Press activity on the following page and read the introduction aloud as a class. Review the real historical headlines from *The World* and *The Journal*.

Working in pairs, ask students to pick one of the publications and generate a list of facts they can summarize from the content provided. Solicit some facts based on each paper and write them on the board. Now explain to the class that these articles were published before any fact-checking had been done. At the time the papers were published, there was a terrible tragedy aboard the U.S.S. Maine, but it was still unclear what caused it. It could have been an attack or a mechanical accident on the ship.

Engage your class in a discussion using these prompts:

- Why do you think *The World* and *The Journal* published sensational headlines and images?
- How might Americans feel after reading the headlines in *The World* and *The Journal*? What pressures might they put on politicians?
- Is it ethical to sensationalize news? What are the benefits of sensational reporting? What are the consequences?
- Why is a free press essential in our country? What important role does the press play in checks and balances?

Main Activity:

Press Pressure Today

Divide your class into groups of four or five and give each group an example of a balanced news article reporting a current event. Be sure to select articles that are age-appropriate and do not single out individuals or groups of people (articles, community events, and technological innovations can be used for this activity. School editions of newspapers are a great place to find content).

Put your groups in role as reporters for an online news agency and review the directions with the class. After they've completed the assignment, ask each group to present their story and tactic to the class.

Reflection:

Letter to the Editor

Ask each student to select one of the historical articles or one of their classmates' news story presentations. Working individually, each student should write a letter to the editor of their selected publication articulating why they think the article is good, misleading, or unbalanced reporting. As students write, walk amongst the class and ask open-ended questions to encourage reflective writing.

Variation: If you are working with older students, select a current event being covered in a variety of media. Have students identify three articles about the topic that have been written for different websites or publications. Which of the three articles is the most balanced? Which political or social slants do the other articles take? How do blogs and social media report the topic? If you are working with younger students, work as a class to report on an event in your school or community. What must the reader know to gain an accurate understanding of the topic? How would your journalists change their reporting if they wanted the readers to take action (like purchase a ticket to the school play)?

Directions:

You and your group are reporters for an online news agency! Along with your group, read the article assigned by your teacher. Your team has just been given pressure from the boss to make your story go **viral**.

Create a headline, article, and picture that will generate the most hits to your website. What will make readers re-broadcast your news using social media? What kind of headline will draw readers in? How will your photo or drawing make your story appealing?

The Spanish-American War

In February of 1898, a battleship named the U.S.S. Maine was sunk off the coast of Cuba, killing 266 crewmen onboard. Although the cause of the explosion was still unclear, two New York newspapers claimed that the Spanish Empire sank the ship. Spain soon declared war on Washington, and, although he wanted to avoid conflict, US President William McKinley quickly followed suit by declaring war on Spain. Battles were fought in the Spanish colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and The Philippines. Over 2,000 Americans died in the war, many from infectious diseases. A cease-fire began in August of 1898, but the war was not officially over until a treaty was signed and ratified in February of 1899. Called the Treaty of Paris, this document gave control of almost all Spanish colonies to the United States.



When you attend NEWSIES, pay attention to the headlines. How do the newsies feel about the trolley strike headline? What do the newsies say to sell their papers? Why is Pulitzer frustrated that the war is over?

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

KIDS ON STRIKE

Introduction:

The newsboys' strike of 1899 was a pivotal moment for child labour issues and, in some ways, labour relations in general. In NEWSIES Pulitzer and Hearst are dramatized to be villainous titans, out to take advantage of helpless children. But there are two sides to every coin, and both sides of the strike needed to communicate their demands and limits to the other in order to reach an effective compromise. By exploring both sides of the issue, students will understand that strikes are the results of complex conflicts with many sides.

Subject: PSHE, English, Drama/Performing Arts

Line of Inquiry:

Why do strikes take place? What is the goal of a strike? Why do strikes often end in compromise?

Goal:

To explore the many facets of a conflict, and to appreciate compromise as a success.

Objectives:

Students will:

- identify both sides of the Newsboys' Strike of 1899.
- work in groups to articulate demands and limitations.
- present a persuasive argument to their peers.
- write a considered and balanced report of the Newsboys' Strike of 1899.

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

KIDS ON STRIKE (cont.)

Warm Up:

Two Sides To The Story

Read the article and timeline on the following pages as a class. Ask students to summarize the Newsboys' Strike of 1899. Create two columns on the board; label one "Newsies" and the other "Publishers". Ask students to offer items that both sides of the strike were fighting for and record them in the appropriate column. Review the outcome of the strike and ask students who "won". Why is this a genuine compromise?

Main Activity:

Negotiations

In order to reach a compromise, both the newsies and the publishers had to articulate their demands and limits to each other. Divide your class into two groups; assign one group to be the newsies and the other the publishers. Review the directions on the following page and put the groups to work. Ask open-ended questions to encourage collaboration. After the class has completed the assignment, have each group present their letter and proposal to their classmates.

Reflection:

Watch What Happens

Katherine Plumber, the journalist in NEWSIES covers the strike and draws awareness to the newsies' cause. Have your students write a newspaper article summarizing the strike and its conclusion; was the compromise a victory? If so, for whom? Were the newsies' lost wages and the publishers' lost profits worth it in the end?

Variation: : If you are working with older students, investigate the various union employees that students may have heard of i.e. NUT, Unison, equity. Break your class into small groups and have each group report on the structure of a specified union and a moment in which the union had to negotiate on behalf of its employees.



KIDS ON STRIKE!

(cont.)

What Is A Strike?

A strike is the refusal of a large group of employees to work. This usually stops business and means a loss of income for the business owner. Employees do not receive pay while striking, but they gain the ability to affect the operation of an industry, which gives the workers leverage in their negotiations with the business owners.

Why Do People Strike?

Strikes have occurred throughout history since people have worked (or been forced to work) for others. There is even evidence of strikes during the construction of the Great Pyramids of Egypt thousands of years ago!

Throughout the 1800's in the United States, as factories became more common, so did groups of workers banding together in protest of unfair treatment.

A group of organized workers is called a union. Unions are formed to protect the interests of employees.



NEWSIES centres around the Newsboys' Strike of 1899. But the newsies weren't the first kids to go on strike. In 1834, mill workers in Lowell Massachusetts began an almost century-long struggle in the textile industry when the mill girls (most were between 15 and 25 years old) went on strike against the mill owners. The mill owners were demanding the girls do more work for less pay, so the girls rallied together and went on strike.

The first large-scale American strike took place in 1877, 22 years before NEWSIES takes place. This was known as The Great Upheaval. Strikers in Martinsburg, West Virginia, angry over reduced wages for railroad workers, shut down the railroad. At that time, railroads were the lifeblood of American industry. The success of the strikers in Martinsburg caused the strike to spread to railroad workers across the country, and then to other industries where workers were either facing similar situations or simply wanted to support the railroad workers. In some places, the strike concluded because the workers gave up, while in other places, it ended because of violence. While The Great Upheaval may, at first glance, look unsuccessful, some strikers did have their demands met; more importantly, however, it showed Americans that the working class was not powerless against a wealthy minority. The strike was an effective way to protest poor working conditions.

By 1899, the year that NEWSIES takes place, more strikes were taking place in New York City than in any other city in the nation. A cartoon in *The Boston Daily Globe* declared New York City to be "The Greatest Strike City in America", with 3,285 strikes between 1886 and 1899.



Directions:

Work with your group to create the following items. Be sure your materials clearly communicate your desires and limitations to the other group.

- Newsies group: create picket signs and flyers stating your demands and your reasons for striking.
- Publishers group: create a newspaper ad stating your limitations and calling for an end to the strike.

A Timeline of The Newsboys' Strike of 1899

1890 – Joseph Pulitzer's 349-foot World Building is completed. At that time, it was the world's tallest building.

May 23, 1895 – The New York Public Library is founded

1898 – Brooklyn is annexed by the City of New York

August 12, 1898 – The Spanish-American War ends.

July 20, 1899 – The strike begins. Jersey City newsboys join with the New York City newsies.

July 22, 1899 – Newsie leader Kid Blink meets Hearst outside of his office.

July 25, 1899 – Pulitzer and Hearst agree to lower the cost from 60 cents per hundred to 55 cents per hundred. The newsboys are not happy with this offer, and hold out.

August 1, 1899 – Pulitzer and Hearst agree to buy back unsold papers from the newsies. The newsies, happy with this compromise, agree. The strike ends.

August 2, 1899 – The newsies of New York return to work. Life returns to normal.

January 1, 1892 – Ellis Island opens, and becomes the gateway to America. It was the busiest immigration station in the nation.

February 15, 1898 – The USS Maine is sunk by a mysterious explosion in Havana Harbor, Cuba

April 25, 1898 – The Spanish-American War begins

July 19, 1899 – Despite declining newspaper sales after the war, Pulitzer and Hearst refuse to lower their prices from 60 cents per hundred to 50 cents per hundred. Word gets around to the newsies that the strike will start the following day.

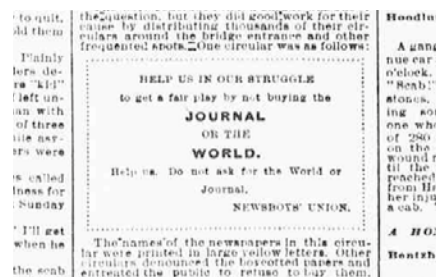
July 24, 1899 – Pulitzer and Hearst do not give into the newsies' demands. The publishers hire men to sell their papers, paying them as much as \$2 per day to do so.

July 24, 1899 – A mass meeting of newsies is held at New Irving Hall.

July 27, 1899 – Kid Blink leaves the newsboys union. Rumours spread that he accepted a bribe from the publishers.



When you see NEWSIES, pay close attention to the deal that the newsies' leader, Jack, negotiates with the publisher, Pulitzer. What does Jack need Pulitzer to understand? What does Pulitzer need Jack to know? Who has the most power in this scene?



Newsboys' advertisement in *The Sun*, 1899

EDUCATOR'S EDITION

A TRIP TO THE THEATRE

Your class trip to NEWSIES should be an enriching event! Review these tips to ensure your students get the most out of their theatregoing experience.

Expectations and Etiquette

For many of your students, this class trip may be the first theatrical experience of their lives. The event itself can be overwhelming; from the bright lights to the blackouts during the show, the theatre is a sensory experience. Take a few minutes before your field trip to tell your class what to expect. What is a programme? Are there assigned seats? How long is the show? Can the actors see the audience? What is an interval? Young theatregoers will have many questions about the experience.

Likewise, tell your group what is expected of them. Talking during cinema is rude, but talking during a play is unacceptable; unlike films the performers can actually hear the audience, which also means... laugh when something is funny! Clap when you are wowed! Actors appreciate an enthusiastic (but focused) audience.

When You Arrive

You'll arrive at the theatre early so that you have plenty of time to get everyone in their seats and settled. If you have a little time before the play begins, use it to your advantage! Remind your students of the explorations they've done leading up to this moment. What was it like when they wrote their own historically-based scenes? Was the life of a newsie fun or challenging?

Back at School

Young people need time to unpack and process an artistic experience to solidify what they've learned. It's important that you devote some time for reflection once you are back at school. Many of the activities in this guide can be used as post-theatre reflection and assessment tools, but a simple conversation can work just as well. Start by soliciting overall impressions from the group. What did they think? What did they like? How did the activities they participated in before they saw the show influence their experiences? From there, ask students what they noticed about each element of the play (script, music, staging, design, performance). Finally, devote some time to field remaining questions from your students. Is there anything they are still wondering about?



MEET THE ORIGINAL BROADWAY CREATIVE TEAM

ALAN MENKEN (Music). In 2012, Mr. Menken will have three shows running on Broadway simultaneously with *Newsies*, *Sister Act* and *Leap of Faith*. His theatrical scores include *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *Aladdin*. He has also written many scores for film including *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Newsies*, *Aladdin*, *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules*, *Enchanted*, *Tangled* and *Mirror Mirror*. He has won eight Oscars® and received 19 nominations (more than any other living person), 11 Grammys® (including Song of the Year), seven Golden Globes, and four Tony® nominations. Mr. Menken is a member of the Songwriter's Hall of Fame.

JACK FELDMAN (Lyrics).

Mr. Feldman has written lyrics for Broadway and Off-Broadway shows, including *The Madwoman of Central Park West*, *Isn't It Romantic*, *Beyond Therapy*, *Coming Attractions*, and *Miami*. His films include *Oliver & Company*, *Newsies*, *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York*, *Life with Mikey*, *A Goofy Movie*, *The Lion King II: Simba's Pride*, and *102 Dalmatians*. His work has been featured on "Sesame Street", "The Wubbulous World of Dr. Seuss" and "Out of the Box". Mr. Feldman is most well known for his Grammy Award-winning song "Copacabana" and the top-10 hit "I Made it Through the Rain". He has written special material for Liza Minnelli, Lily Tomlin, Dionne Warwick, and the Muppets.

HARVEY FIERSTEIN (Book) is a four-time Tony Award winning writer and actor. His Broadway writing credits include *Torch Song Trilogy* (Tony, Drama Desk, Dramatists Guild Awards), *Legs Diamond* and *A Catered Affair* (12 Drama Desk nominations and the Drama League Award for Best Musical). His *La Cage Aux Folles* is the only show to ever win Best Musical and two Best Revival Tony Awards. Other plays include *Spookhouse*, *Forget Him* and *Flatbush Tosca*. His children's HBO special, *The Sissy Duckling*, won the Humanitas Prize and the book version is in its fifth printing. Other honours include the Drama League Award for Outstanding Performer of the Year, a special OBIE award, NY Magazine Award, and nominations for The Olivier Award and an Emmy. He was inducted into The Theatre Hall of Fame in 2008.

JEFF CALHOUN's (Director) Broadway credits include *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Grey Gardens*, Deaf West's *Big River* (2004 Tony Honour, Excellence in Theatre), *Brooklyn*, *Bells Are Ringing* (2001 Revival), *Annie Get Your Gun* (1999 Tony Award, Best Revival), and *Grease* (1994 Tony nomination, Best Choreography). He directed Disney's *High School Musical 1 & 2: On Stage!*, *Jane Austen's Emma: A Musical Romantic Comedy* (2011 Craig Noel Award, Outstanding Resident Musical), and the National Tour of Dolly Parton's *9 to 5: The Musical*. Mr. Calhoun is an Associate Artist at Ford's Theatre.

MEET THE ORIGINAL BROADWAY CREATIVE TEAM (cont.)

BOB TZUDIKER & NONI WHITE (*Original Screenplay*) sold their first feature film pitch, *Newsies*, to Disney. They went on to write the hit animated films *Tarzan*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Anastasia*. Their live-action credits include *Newsies* and *102 Dalmatians*. Bob and Noni also contributed to the film *The Lion King* and have written screenplays for every major studio. They met as actors, members of the Ensemble Studio Theatre, LA. Mr. Tzudiker, a graduate of St. John's College in Annapolis, appeared in *Total Recall*, *Ruthless People* and *Hill Street Blues*, among others. Ms. White's TV credits include *Taxi*, *Little House on the Prairie* and *7th Heaven*, to name a few, and her features include *Memories of Me* and *The Prizewinner of Defiance, Ohio*. They live in Los Angeles with their son, Ben.

CHRISTOPHER GATTELLI (*Choreographer*) has choreographed the Broadway productions of *Godspell*, *South Pacific* (Tony & Outer Critics Circle Nominations), *Women on the Verge...*, *Sunday In The Park With George*, *The Ritz*, *Martin Short-Fame Becomes Me*, *13*, and *High Fidelity*. Off-Broadway, he has worked on *Altar Boyz* (Lortel & Callaway Awards, Drama Desk Nom.); *Bat Boy* (Lortel Award); *tick,tick..BOOM!*, and *SILENCE! The Musical* (directed and choreographed). Mr. Gattelli has choreographed for the concerts of *Hair* with Jennifer Hudson, *Chess* with Josh Groban and three seasons of "The Rosie O'Donnell Show."

TOBIN OST (*Set Design*). Mr. Ost's designs have been seen on Broadway in *Bonnie & Clyde* (set and costume design), *The Philanthropist* (costume design) and *Brooklyn the Musical* (costume design). Off-Broadway, he has worked on *Nightingale* (set design), *Grace* (set design), *The Overwhelming* (costume design), *Zanna, Don't!* (co-set and costume design), *Almost Heaven* (costume design), and *Fighting Words* (set design). Regionally, he has designed for The Old Globe, Ford's Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival and the Mark Taper Forum.

JESS GOLDSTEIN (*Costume Design*) has designed costumes for the Broadway productions of *Jersey Boys*, Lincoln Center's *The Rivals* (Tony Award), *Henry IV* (Tony nomination), *The Merchant of Venice* (Tony nomination), *The Columnist*, *Take Me Out*, *Proof*, *Love! Valour! Compassion!*, *The Apple Tree* with Kristin Chenoweth, *Enchanted April*, and *Julius Caesar* with Denzel Washington. He costumed *Il Trittico* for The Metropolitan Opera and is a graduate and current faculty member at Yale School of Drama.

MEET THE ORIGINAL BROADWAY CREATIVE TEAM (cont.)

About **DISNEY THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS (DTP)**, a division of The Walt Disney Studios, was formed in 1994 and operates under the direction of Thomas Schumacher. Disney Theatrical is proud of its long history in the UK, with six productions currently in performance across the country. The company's inaugural production, *Beauty and the Beast*, came to London in 1996, winning the Olivier Award for Best Musical. First seen on Broadway in 1994, where it played a remarkable 13-year run, it has now been produced in 37 countries worldwide. A brand-new production of *Beauty and the Beast*, reimagined by members of the original Broadway creative team – led by Matt West – had its world premiere at the Bristol Hippodrome in 2021, beginning a UK and Ireland tour which will include a 12 week season at the London Palladium this summer. The next Disney musical to be seen in the West End was *The Lion King*, which opened at the Lyceum Theatre in 1999, winning two Olivier Awards and the Evening Standard Award for Theatrical Event of the Year. Now in its 23rd year in the West End, *The Lion King* resumed its UK & Ireland tour in Dublin in December. *The Lion King* opened on Broadway in 1997, where it received six Tony® Awards including Best Musical and Best Direction, making Julie Taymor the first woman in history to win the award.

It has been seen by more than 110 million theatregoers and played 21 countries on every continent except Antarctica. Currently there are 10 productions of the show playing worldwide. *Mary Poppins*, co-produced with Cameron Mackintosh and directed by Richard Eyre, made its world-premiere in London in 2004, winning two Olivier Awards and an Evening Standard Award. The Broadway production followed in 2007 and went on to enjoy a six-year Tony-winning run. The show continues its Olivier award-winning return at its original home at the Prince Edward Theatre. In 2014 Declan Donnellan's critically acclaimed production of *Shakespeare in Love*, co-produced with Sonia Friedman, had its world premiere at London's Noël Coward Theatre. The play has since been produced around the globe and, for several years, was among the Top 10 produced titles in the US. *Aladdin*, Disney Theatrical's 2014 Broadway hit, opened in the West End in 2016 and played a three-year smash-hit run. By the end of this year there will be six productions of the show, directed by Casey Nicholaw, running around the world, including the original Broadway production which will soon celebrate its eighth anniversary. DTP's 2018 Tony-nominated Best Musical *Frozen* is their newest hit. Directed by Michael Grandage, it had the honour of reopening London's newly restored Theatre Royal Drury Lane, one of five *Frozen* productions now playing around the world.

MEET THE ORIGINAL BROADWAY CREATIVE TEAM (*cont.*)

In addition to the company's West End and touring credits, Disney Theatrical works with some of the UK's leading theatre artists creating new work for the stage. They collaborated with the National Theatre to create *Pinocchio*, directed by John Tiffany, in 2017 and recently collaborated with producer Michael Harrison to mount a new production of *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* under the direction of Candice Edmunds and Jamie Harrison, which is now touring around the UK. Outside the UK, their other Broadway productions include Alan Menken and Tim Rice's *King David* in concert; Elton John and Tim Rice's *Aida*, winner of four 2000 Tony Awards; *Tarzan*, which opened on Broadway in 2006 and went on to become an international hit with an award-winning German production enjoying a ten-year run; *The Little Mermaid*, the #1-selling new Broadway musical of its year; *Peter and the Starcatcher*, winner of five 2012 Tony Awards; and the hit Tony Award-winning *Newsies*. Other productions include Disney's *High School Musical*, *Der Glöckner Von Notre Dame* in Berlin and, in collaboration with preeminent American regional theatres, new productions of *The Jungle Book*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Freaky Friday* and *Hercules*. In the UK, DTP offers a range of creative education programmes, based on its productions, to introduce young

theatre-goers to all aspects of live theatre. For those already starting out in the profession, DTP works with the Royal Academy of Music to provide bursaries for talented artists from under-represented backgrounds, enabling them to take advantage of the world-class training and opportunities the Academy has to offer. Worldwide, its ten Broadway titles have been seen by over 200 million theatre-goers, and have been nominated for 62 Tony Awards, winning the coveted honour 20 times. With 23 productions currently self-produced or licensed, a Disney musical is performed professionally somewhere on the planet virtually every hour of the day.

GLOSSARY

Above the Fold: The prominent placement of an article in a newspaper. If a headline is above the middle fold, it is the first thing a reader would see when they bought the paper.

Apprentice: A person who learns a skill or a trade, usually from an expert at the job. Apprentices would often receive room and board instead of a salary.

Assassination: The murder of a well-known person, usually a politician.

Backdrop: The painted scenery that hangs behind the actors in a play.

Book writer: One of the authors of a musical. The book writer writes the script (dialogue and stage directions) for the show.

Boroughs: A district or municipality within a city. New York's boroughs include Manhattan, Brooklyn, The Bronx, Queens and Staten Island (known as Richmond in 1899).

Bowery: A neighbourhood in lower Manhattan. At the time NEWSIES is set, the Bowery was an immigrant neighborhood, famous for its vaudeville style plays and musicals.

Brooklyn: New York's largest borough, and one of the largest cities in America until it became part of New York in 1898.

Brooklyn Bridge: Completed in 1883, this iconic bridge connects Brooklyn to lower Manhattan. Tens of thousands of people cross the Brooklyn Bridge everyday.

Census: An official count of the population of a given area.

Child labour laws: Legislation created to limit and define work that people younger than 18 could do.

Circulation: The amount of newspapers or magazines a publisher sells.

Colonize: To claim a country or territory and govern its inhabitants.

Composer: One of the authors of a musical, the composer writes the music.

Condescend: To belittle or patronize an individual or a group; to talk down to someone.

Creative team: The director, book writer, composer, lyricist, choreographer, and designers comprise the creative team of a musical.

GLOSSARY (cont.)

Dialect: A type of speech unique to a group of people. In the United States, there are many dialects based on regions, backgrounds, and social groupings.

Dialogue: Conversation in a play; what the characters say to each other.

Distribution window: The location at which newsies would purchase their papers for the day. Each newspaper publisher had its own distribution window.

Ellis Island: An island port in New York and the station through which thousands of immigrants made their way into the United States. Ellis Island was an entry point for new Americans from 1892-1954. Today it is a museum and a popular tourist attraction.

Exclusive: In journalism, the only reporting done on a certain topic. In NEWSIES, Katherine hopes to land an exclusive interview with Jack and get information no other paper will cover.

Exploit: To take advantage of someone or something in an unethical manner.

Fair Labour Standards Act: Passed in 1938, this law prohibits the unethical employment of children, mandates a minimum wage, and guarantees overtime payment for certain types of work.

Headline: The title of a newspaper article; the feature story in a newspaper.

Idleness: Laziness, a lack of purpose.

Immigrant: A person who relocates to a new country. New York comprises immigrants from around the world.

Industrial Revolution: The rapid development of industries including agriculture, manufacturing, mining and transportation. The industrial revolution lasted from 1750-1850 and was the result of rapid development of new technologies and machines.

Labour shortage: A phenomenon that occurs when there is more work to be done than there are people to do it.

Lyricist: One of the authors of a musical, the lyricist writes the words, or lyrics, to the songs.

GLOSSARY (cont.)

Manhattan: The most densely populated of New York's five boroughs and a major financial and cultural hub.

Metropolis: A large, urban area.

Monopoly: The exclusive control over a product or industry. In the US, monopolies are illegal as they eliminate competition in the marketplace.

Musical: A stage play that uses dialogue, music, and choreography to tell a story.

National Child Labour Committee: A non-profit organisation whose mission is to promote "the rights, awareness, dignity, well-being and education of children and youth as they relate to work and working".

Newsboys' Lodging House: A rooming house run by the Children's Aid Society. Newsies and other child workers could purchase a bed to sleep in and meals on a daily basis.

Newsies: Young newspaper vendors who purchased their goods from the publisher and re-sold them for a profit. Some newsies were as young as six-years-old and worked long hours on the streets of American cities.

Newsreels: A short film that played before movies and presented news stories to the public. Newsreels were common in America in the 1930's and 1940's.

Pape: A slang term for "newspaper"; the kids in NEWSIES often refer to selling their papes.

Payoff: A bribe; the unethical exchange of money to persuade someone to act in another's favour.

Pen name: A made up name that an author or journalist chooses to publish under.

Printing press: A machine used to print newspapers.

Publisher: A person or company that creates and prints newspapers (and other kinds of literature).

Queens: One of New York's five boroughs, and the most ethnically diverse urban area in the world.

Rally: An organized meeting of a large group of people to show support for a cause.

GLOSSARY (cont.)

Reformer: Someone who advocates for change.

Richmond: Now known as Staten Island, Richmond was one of New York's five boroughs at the time NEWSIES is set.

Rough Riders: A volunteer cavalry who fought in the Spanish-American War. Theodore Roosevelt was one of the most famous Rough Riders, but the group mainly comprised Native Americans and cowboys.

Scab: A slang term for an individual who takes work when the regular employees are on strike.

Scandal: An event that causes public outrage.

Score: All of the music in a musical or film, including the underscoring and transitional music.

Screenplay: The script to a movie.

Share: A portion of a company that an individual can buy. The shareholders are the owners of the company.

Slum: An overcrowded, poverty-stricken, urban area.

Society pages: A section of a newspaper that reports on social events in the community.

Stage directions: Unspoken words in a script that tell the actors where to go and what to do onstage.

Staten Island: Formerly known as Richmond, Staten Island is one of New York's five boroughs.

Strike: The refusal of a group of employees to work. People tend to go on strike when unions are unable to reach a compromise with an employer.

Subway: An underground public transit system.

Sweatshop: A workshop, usually in the clothing industry, in which workers make very low wages, work under poor conditions, and do manual labour. In 1899, many children worked in sweatshops that sprung up in New York's tenement houses.

GLOSSARY

Tammany Hall: A political organisation in New York, incorporated in 1789. Tammany Hall was notoriously corrupt and sought control of local politics.

Tenement House Act of 1901: A law that banned the construction of dark and unsafe homes in New York.

Tenements: An overcrowded and rundown home, separated into small rooms that housed multiple families. New York's tenements forced deplorable living conditions on the city's poor immigrant families.

The Bronx: The northernmost of New York's five boroughs.

Tycoon: A wealthy and powerful business person.

Union: An association of employees that collectively bargains with employers to protect the interests of the workers.

Union Army: The northern army during the American Civil War, which took place between 1861 and 1865.

Viral Story/Video: A video or story that becomes immensely popular due to internet sharing.

Wage: The payment made by an employer to an employee.

RESOURCES

Tickets & Info:

- NewsiesTheMusical.co.uk

Further Reading:

- *Kids on Strike!* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti
- *Kid Blink Beats THE WORLD* by Don Brown
- *Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labour* by Russell Freedman
- *New York Year by Year: A Chronology of the Great Metropolis* by Jeffrey A. Kroessler
- *Children of the City, At Work & At Play* by David Nasaw
- *How the Other Half Lives* by Jacob Riis

Online Resources:

- City of New York: Centennial Classroom
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/nyc100/html/classroom/>
- Library of Congress, News & Journalism
<http://www.loc.gov/topics/content.php?cat=5>

Places of Interest:

- New York Historical Society, Dimenna Children's History Museum
<http://www.nyhistory.org/childrens-museum>
- Museum of the City of New York
<http://www.mcny.org/>
- Tenement Museum
<http://www.tenement.org/>