*English Instructional Plan –* **Provoking Change Through Text**

**Primary Strand: 11.5 Reading**

**Integrated Strand/s: 11.1, 11.2 Communication and Multimodal Literacies, Writing**

**Essential Understandings:**

* the characteristics and cultures of a historical period are often reflected in its literature
* an author’s intent is achieved by the use of context and language
* different styles of text can promote shared ideas and provoke change

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

* use appropriate reading strategies to approach different genres and reading tasks
* discuss how the subject matter, style, genre, theme, and purpose of literary works often reflect the culture and events of the times in which the works were written
* analyze and critique themes across texts and within various social, cultural, and historical contexts
* analyze information from multiple texts to make inferences and draw conclusions
* compare and contrast how complex texts treat the same topics
* provide an objective summary of a text

**Primary SOL:**

11.4 The student will read, comprehend, and analyze relationships among American literature, history, and culture.

11.5 The student will read, interpret, analyze, and evaluate a variety of non-fiction texts including employment documents and technical writing.

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

11.1c The student will demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively with diverse teams.

11.1 d The student will respond thoughtfully and tactfully to diverse perspectives, summarizing points of agreement and disagreement.

11.1 e The student will use a variety of strategies to listen actively and speak using appropriate discussion rules with awareness of verbal and nonverbal cues.

11.2a The student will describe possible cause and effect relationships between mass media coverage and public opinion trends.

11.6 The student will write in a variety of forms, to include persuasive/argumentative, reflective, interpretive, and analytic with an emphasis on persuasion/argumentation.

**Academic Background/Language:**

## Materials:

[Ted X Youth: Generation Muckraker](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTf6s08_vo0)

*The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair, excerpts (below)

[Political Cartoon: Watch the Professor](https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/theodorerooseveltcenter/TRC/LCPP/1600/Puck/26000/LCPP_26062u.jpg)

[Political Cartoon: The Real Packingtown -- If You Let the Packers Tell It](https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/theodorerooseveltcenter/TRC/LCPP/1600/Puck/26000/LCPP_26074u.jpg)

[Political Cartoon: A Nauseating Job, but it Must Be Done](http://wps.pearsoncustom.com/wps/media/objects/5407/5537171/images/Resources/w422.jpg)

## Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?

* Post the following statements around the room and ask students to individually respond to statements by placing a dot on a line (disagree ------------------- agree).
  + Drinking coffee will stunt your growth.
  + Each and every one of us has the potential to be a muckraker (voice of a solution).
  + I trust the media.
  + This nation and this world is filled with corruption.
  + Our devices can be used as tools to find and expose truths.
  + It’s difficult to incite change and avoid criticism.
  + Silence is the voice of content.
  + If you see something, say something.
* Use the results of the poll to engage students in conversation about their responses.
* Watch [Ted X Youth: Generation Muckraker](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTf6s08_vo0) (statements come from this Ted Talk). After viewing, do any students have new insight to the statements or wish to change their minds? Discuss.
* In the video, Carson mentions an OG muckraker -- Upton Sinclair and his novel *The Jungle*. (The teacher will want to provide some background on Sinclair, the culture of America at the time, and Sinclair’s ambitions. It may be a good idea to forego revealing the impact of his novel because the students will be asked to make this inference from political cartoons later in the lesson.)
* Tell students they will be reading excerpts from the novel. Place the students in small groups and give each group one of the excerpts. Students may read independently or aloud with their group partners (choice).
* Students will next participate in a text rendering protocol within their groups. Students will independently select a sentence, a phrase, and a word from the text that they believe is important or powerful to the main idea of the passage. Taking turns, students will share their selections with other members of the group. Explain choices.
* After the text rendering discussion, each group will develop a literary 3x3 where they write three sentences of three words each to capture the essence of the text. Students should be encouraged to pull from their own selections and to choose strong words, avoiding “to be” verbs, articles, and pronouns.
* Student groups will share their literary 3x3 creations with the class. Look for common themes between the creations to facilitate discussion about Sinclair’s revelations about the meat packing industry to the nation.
* Use the political cartoons to illustrate national response to the novel. Ask students to analyze the cartoons in order to make inferences about the outcome of *The Jungle*. (Teachers may wish to use a [political cartoon response sheet](https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon_analysis_worksheet_former.pdf) to structure responses.)
* Discuss how the novel ultimately led to a change in food regulations, specifically with the Meat Inspection Act of 1906.

**Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)**

* As students are working, rotate around the room and facilitate their work, asking clarifying questions and summarizing what is being shared.
* Quickwrite: How did the publishing of Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* directly impact your life?

**Writing Connections:**

* Students will briefly research and choose a contemporary employment issue. In the interest of encouraging change, compose a letter to a person of leadership that describes the issue and provides solutions -- remember the power of a counterargument to build an argument.

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* Watch the [address of Jon Stewart to Congress](https://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2019/06/11/jon-stewart-congress-reauthorizing-9-11-victim-compensation-fund-first-responders-sot-vpx.cnn) regarding the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund (note: please review in advance of showing to ensure that content meets school acceptability standards) Compare and contrast Stewart’s address to Sinclair’s novel.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Teacher may preselect groups and match passages to groups. Consider separating and using shorter passages (Reusing Waste and “Bubbly Creek”) for developing readers.

*Note: The following pages are intended for classroom use for students as a visual aid to learning.*

**The following is an excerpt from “The Jungle” by Upton Sinclair. He described the filthy conditions of the meat packing industry in Chicago during the early 1900s.**

**Workplace Hazards**

Let a man so much as scrape his finger pushing a truck in the pickle rooms, and he might have a sore that would put him out of the world; all the joints in his fingers might be eaten by the acid, one by one. Of the butchers and floorsmen, the beef-boners and trimmers, and all those who used knives, you could scarcely find a person who had the use of his thumb; time and time again the base of it had been slashed, till it was a mere lump of flesh against which the man pressed the knife to hold it. The hands of these men would be criss- crossed with cuts, until you could no longer pretend to count them or to trace them. They would have no nails, – they had worn them off pulling hides; their knuckles were swollen so that their fingers spread out like a fan. There were men who worked in the cooking rooms, in the midst of steam and sickening odors, by artificial light; in these rooms the germs of tuberculosis might live for two years, but the supply was renewed every hour. There were the beef-luggers, who carried two-hundred-pound quarters into the refrigerator-cars; a fearful kind of work, that began at four o'clock in the morning, and that wore out the most powerful men in a few years. There were those who worked in the chilling rooms, and whose special disease was rheumatism; the time limit that a man could work in the chilling rooms was said to be five years. There were the wool-pluckers, whose hands went to pieces even sooner than the hands of the pickle men; for the pelts of the sheep had to be painted with acid to loosen the wool, and then the pluckers had to pull out this wool with their bare hands, till the acid had eaten their fingers off. There were those who made the tins for the canned meat; and their hands, too, were a maze of cuts, and each cut represented a chance for blood poisoning. Some worked at the stamping machines, and it was very seldom that one could work long there at the pace that was set, and not give out and forget himself and have a part of his hand chopped off. There were the "hoisters," as they were called, whose task it was to press the lever which lifted the dead cattle off the floor. They ran along upon a rafter, peering down through the damp and the steam; and as old Durham's architects had not built the killing room for the convenience of the hoisters, at every few feet they would have to stoop under a beam, say four feet above the one they ran on; which got them into the habit of stooping, so that in a few years they would be walking like chimpanzees. Worst of any, however, were the fertilizer men, and those who served in the cooking rooms. These people could not be shown to the visitor, – for the odor of a fertilizer man would scare any ordinary visitor at a hundred yards, and as for the other men, who worked in tank rooms full of steam, and in some of which there were open vats near the level of the floor, their peculiar trouble was that they fell into the vats; and when they were fished out, there was never enough of them left to be worth exhibiting, – sometimes they would be overlooked for days, till all but the bones of them had gone out to the world as Durham's Pure Leaf Lard!

**The following is an excerpt from “The Jungle” by Upton Sinclair. He described the filthy conditions of the meat packing industry in Chicago during the early 1900s.**

**Reusing Waste**

It seemed that he was working in the room where the men prepared the beef for canning, and the beef had lain in vats full of chemicals, and men with great forks speared it out and dumped it into trucks, to be taken to the cooking room. When they had speared out all they could reach, they emptied the vat on the floor, and then with shovels scraped up the balance and dumped it into the truck. This floor was filthy, yet they set Antanas with his mop slopping the "pickle" into a hole that connected with a sink, where it was caught and used over again forever; and if that were not enough, there was a trap in the pipe, where all the scraps of meat and odds and ends of refuse were caught, and every few days it was the old man's task to clean these out, and shovel their contents into one of the trucks with the rest of the meat!

**“Bubbly Creek”**

"Bubbly Creek" is an arm of the Chicago River, and forms the southern boundary of the yards: all the drainage of the square mile of packing houses empties into it, so that it is really a great open sewer a hundred or two feet wide. One long arm of it is blind, and the filth stays there forever and a day. The grease and chemicals that are poured into it undergo all sorts of strange transformations, which are the cause of its name; it is constantly in motion, as if huge fish were feeding in it, or great leviathans disporting themselves in its depths. Bubbles of carbonic acid gas will rise to the surface and burst, and make rings two or three feet wide. Here and there the grease and filth have caked solid, and the creek looks like a bed of lava; chickens walk about on it, feeding, and many times an unwary stranger has started to stroll across, and vanished temporarily. The packers used to leave the creek that way, till every now and then the surface would catch on fire and burn furiously, and the fire department would have to come and put it out. Once, however, an ingenious stranger came and started to gather this filth in scows, to make lard out of; then the packers took the cue, and got out an injunction to stop him, and afterward gathered it themselves. The banks of "Bubbly Creek" are plastered thick with hairs, and this also the packers gather and clean.

**The following is an excerpt from “The Jungle” by Upton Sinclair. He described the filthy conditions of the meat packing industry in Chicago during the early 1900s.**

**Using “Tainted” Meat**

All of these were sinister incidents; but they were trifles compared to what Jurgis saw with his own eyes before long. One curious thing he had noticed, the very first day, in his profession of shoveler of guts; which was the sharp trick of the floor bosses whenever there chanced to come a "slunk" calf. Any man who knows anything about butchering knows that the flesh of a cow that is about to calve, or has just calved, is not fit for food. A good many of these came every day to the packing houses – and, of course, if they had chosen, it would have been an easy matter for the packers to keep them till they were fit for food. But for the saving of time and fodder, it was the law that cows of that sort came along with the others, and whoever noticed it would tell the boss, and the boss would start up a conversation with the government inspector, and the two would stroll away. So in a trice the carcass of the cow would be cleaned out, and entrails would have vanished; it was Jurgis' task to slide them into the trap, calves and all, and on the floor below they took out these "slunk" calves, and butchered them for meat, and used even the skins of them.

One day a man slipped and hurt his leg; and that afternoon, when the last of the cattle had been disposed of, and the men were leaving, Jurgis was ordered to remain and do some special work which this injured man had usually done. It was late, almost dark, and the government inspectors had all gone, and there were only a dozen or two of men on the floor. That day they had killed about four thousand cattle, and these cattle had come in freight trains from far states, and some of them had got hurt. There were some with broken legs, and some with gored sides; there were some that had died, from what cause no one could say; and they were all to be disposed of, here in darkness and silence. "Downers," the men called them; and the packing house had a special elevator upon which they were raised to the killing beds, where the gang proceeded to handle them, with an air of businesslike nonchalance which said plainer than any words that it was a matter of everyday routine. It took a couple of hours to get them out of the way, and in the end Jurgis saw them go into the chilling rooms with the rest of the meat, being carefully scattered here and there so that they could not be identified.

**The following is an excerpt from “The Jungle” by Upton Sinclair. He described the filthy conditions of the meat packing industry in Chicago during the early 1900s.**

**Usage of Chemicals**

Cut up by the two-thousand-revolutions- a-minute flyers, and mixed with half a ton of other meat, no odor that ever was in a ham could make any difference. There was never the least attention paid to what was cut up for sausage; there would come all the way back from Europe old sausage that had been rejected, and that was moldy and white – it would be dosed with borax and glycerine, and dumped into the hoppers, and made over again for home consumption. There would be meat that had tumbled out on the floor, in the dirt and sawdust, where the workers had tramped and spit uncounted billions of consumption germs. There would be meat stored in great piles in rooms; and the water from leaky roofs would drip over it, and thousands of rats would race about on it. It was too dark in these storage places to see well, but a man could run his hand over these piles of meat and sweep off handfuls of the dried dung of rats. These rats were nuisances, and the packers would put poisoned bread out for them; they would die, and then rats, bread, and meat would go into the hoppers together. This is no fairy story and no joke; the meat would be shoveled into carts, and the man who did the shoveling would not trouble to lift out a rat even when he saw one – there were things that went into the sausage in comparison with which a poisoned rat was a tidbit. There was no place for the men to wash their hands before they ate their dinner, and so they made a practice of washing them in the water that was to be ladled into the sausage. There were the butt-ends of smoked meat, and the scraps of corned beef, and all the odds and ends of the waste of the plants, that would be dumped into old barrels in the cellar and left there. Under the system of rigid economy which the packers enforced, there were some jobs that it only paid to do once in a long time, and among these was the cleaning out of the waste barrels. Every spring they did it; and in the barrels would be dirt and rust and old nails and stale water – and cartload after cartload of it would be taken up and dumped into the hoppers with fresh meat, and sent out to the public's breakfast. Some of it they would make into "smoked" sausage – but as the smoking took time, and was therefore expensive, they would call upon their chemistry department, and preserve it with borax and color it with gelatine to make it brown. All of their sausage came out of the same bowl, but when they came to wrap it they would stamp some of it "special," and for this they would charge two cents more a pound.