

The Realities of 19th Century Working Conditions in Lowell, MA	
Overview	Inspired by the Anti-Slavery Alphabet, students will create a similar one about the Lowell Mill girls using their publications, "The Offering" and "Mind among the Spindles" and the memoir of Lucy Larcom.
Grade level	8th grade U.S. History
Standards	2020 Colorado Academic Standards: 8th grade U.S. History <i>1. Investigate and evaluate primary and secondary sources about United States history from the American Revolution through Reconstruction to formulate and defend a point of view with textual evidence.</i>
Objective	I will be able to read texts from the 19th century and use them to create a class alphabet using opinionated language about working conditions and the lives of the female workers in the Lowell textile mills.
Essential questions	A) What were the realities of the lives of the young women who worked in the Lowell Mills between 1830 and 1860? B) Do you think change needed to happen?
Texts	<i>Mind amongst the spindles : a miscellany, wholly composed by the factory girls / selected from the Lowell Offering: with an introduction by the English editor, and a letter from Harriet Martineau.</i> (Boston: Jordan, Swift, & Wiley, 1845). Bib ID 51191 19th Cent. 3161 Larcom, Lucy, <i>New England Girlhood, Outlined from Memory</i> , (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1889). Bib ID 146620 First Eds. Larcom Reference (previously used): The Anti-Slavery Alphabet
Do Now	Carousel Walk and Quick Write: Review the Anti-Slavery Alphabet as placed around the room. (selected letters: A, B, C, D, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, Y, Z) Quick Write: What was the author's purpose in creating the text?
Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review letters A, B, Y, Z 2. Whole class re-reading: "To Our Little Readers" <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. first reading- teacher b. second reading- warm call 3. Form groups of 3-4 and assign individual letters to students <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reading time: find 1-2 selections to read b. Individual: Design an individual letter c. Small Group: create a preface for the class alphabet using mentor text 4. Whole Class Reflections: Do you think change needed to

	<p>happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Think-Pair-Share b. Cold Calls <p>5. Writing prompt: What is your opinion of the working conditions of the Lowell Mills? Be sure to use text to explain the basis for your opinion.</p>
Exit Ticket	<p>Check in:</p> <p>3 observations you've made about their lives</p> <p>2 concerns you have about the working conditions</p> <p>1 question you have</p>
Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Students will create their own "Alphabet", using evidence and ideas from the texts. (1 student per letter) B) Students will work in groups to write a preface. C) Written response stating opinion of working conditions using evidence from the text.
Extensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a newspaper article about the working conditions for the girls. • Write a letter to someone in Congress at that time advocating for change. • Create a complete alphabet on your own. • Create another alphabet for another topic.
Accommodations	<p>Intentional groups/paired work/preferential seating</p>
Notes	<p>This lesson is not confined by time; the Exit Ticket could be done repeatedly as needed.</p> <p>Students could be encouraged to explore the texts, or specific readings could be assigned- including (but not limited to):</p> <p><i>Mind amongst the spindles</i>: Introduction, "Abby's First Year in Lowell" p. 21, "Pay Day" p. 108, "Leisure Hours of the Girls" p. 122</p> <p><i>New England Girlhood</i>: pp. 146-152, 152-157</p>
Additional resources	<p>Lowell National Historic Site: https://www.nps.gov/lowe/index.htm</p> <p>Library of Congress - photos of Louis Hine: https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/nclc/</p> <p>AAS Mill Girls: https://collections.americanantiquarian.org/millgirls/items/show/32</p>