

## **Lesson 3: Feeling the Loss**

### **Grade Level:**

9-12

### **Subject Areas:**

Economics, U.S. History, Minnesota History, Language Arts, Art

### **MN State Standards:**

#### ***Economics Standards***

9.2.5.9.3 Measure full employment in terms of the unemployment rate and various types of unemployment; analyze past and recent data to describe factors that impact the long-run growth of jobs in an economy.

#### ***History Standards***

9.4.1.2.1 Pose questions about a topic in history, suggest possible answers and write a thesis; locate and organize primary and secondary sources, analyze sources for credibility and bias; corroborate information across the sources; use sources to support or refute the thesis; and present supported findings.

9.4.4.20.1 Explain how technological innovation, heavy industrialization, and intensified boom-bust cycles of an unregulated capitalist economy led to changes in the nature of work, economic scale and productivity, the advent of the modern corporation, and the rise of national labor unions. (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870—1920)

#### ***English Language Arts Standards***

##### ***Writing Benchmarks***

9.7.3.3-11.7.3.3 Write narratives and other creative texts develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

#### ***Arts Standards***

9.2.1.5.1 Create a single, complex artwork or multiple artworks to express ideas.

### **Materials:**

*Minnesota's Lost Mining Towns* DVD and DVD player

Graphic Organizer – *Boom-and-Bust Cycles*

Paper suitable for painting or drawing, colored pencils, watercolors, old magazines, scissors, glue sticks, and other art supplies

### **Objectives:**

- Students use examples from the documentary and their own lives to explore cycles of boom and bust.

- Students use writing and art to explore feelings of community loss.

### **Procedure:**

#### **Day 1: Exploring Boom and Bust**

- Ask students to think about two adults that they know well and/or are related to.
  - Have students write down the job of each of these adults on a half sheet of paper.
  - Collect these sheets and have a student help you to write all of these jobs up on the front board. Tell students that these jobs are now all part of one economy.
  - Ask another student to choose a company related to one or more of those jobs. Then cross out any jobs related to that company.
  - Ask students: *What did the loss of the company do to the overall economy? Did it have a large or small impact? Could the people with those jobs find other jobs in this economy? (15 minutes)*
- Introduce the *Minnesota's Lost Mining Towns* documentary as a history of mining settlements and boom-and-bust cycles in northeastern Minnesota. Boom-and-bust cycles are cycles of economic growth and collapse. Tell students to pay attention to factors that would lead to a boom-and-bust economy as they watch the first part of the program. Play the first twenty minutes of the show, through the end of the Taconite Harbor section (end is at 19:24) (20 minutes)
- As a class, discuss what happens when one industry or resource dominates an economy. Ask: *What happens to jobs? What happens to communities? (10 minutes)*

#### **Day 2: Causes and Effects**

- Play the rest of the documentary. Have students use the Graphic Organizer as they watch, to write down the effects of a boom-and-bust economy on people and their communities. (35 minutes)
- When the documentary is finished, have student pairs review the notes they took on their Graphic Organizers. Have them work together to write one or two paragraphs that summarize the causes and effects of boom-and-bust cycles. (10 minutes)

#### **Day 3: Different Experiences**

- Discuss as a class the people who were involved with iron mining and taconite production in locations on the Iron Range in the twentieth century. Write down the community roles of these people on the board. They could be miners, supervisors, spouses or children of miners, teachers, doctors, people who moved houses, shopkeepers in associated towns, railway workers, taconite loaders, etc. (5 minutes)
- Have each student imagine a specific person and write a one-page biography of their life at a booming mining location. (10 minutes)
- Then ask students to think about what would have happened to those people when the mining location was closed, and their community was moved to a new location. Have

each student write a one- to two-page journal entry from the point of view of that person, to portray their experience during the town move. (15 minutes)

- Invite students to read their journal entries aloud. Discuss the differences between the points-of-view of the individuals. (15 minutes)

#### **Day 4: Feelings of Loss**

- Invite students to think about the feelings they themselves would have if their community were lost or moved. Refer back to the people in the documentary who grew up in old Sparta, which is now a kind of ghost town. Have students create a short poem accompanied by a collage, drawing, or painting that expresses their feelings. (30 minutes)
- Allow students to share their work. Have a class discussion about the common themes expressed in the student work, and how they relate to the *Minnesota's Lost Mining Towns* documentary. (15 minutes)

**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER – BOOM-AND-BUST CYCLES**

<b>Effects on People and Communities</b>	
<b>Boom Time</b>	<b>Bust Time</b>
<i>(Answers could include: Lots of jobs available; unskilled workers can find work; families are taken care of; communities are built and thrive; families are stable within a stable community.)</i>	<i>(Answers could include: Jobs are hard to find; unemployment leads to hardship; communities are moved or disappear; families and communities become unstable; people need to leave their communities to find work; communities become desperate for any employer.)</i>