

UNIT II: THE GOLDEN AGE (1897 - 1918)

Topic: Coal Mining Industry

Lesson 19: Introduction to Coal Mining in Iowa

Objectives:

1. Students will gain a general understanding of the geography of coal mining in the United States and historic trends in the industry.
2. Students will understand the development of coal mining in Iowa.

Materials:

Student copies: *Coal Mining in Iowa*

Access to online and print research sources

Activities:

1. Briefly review the history of Iowa's growth from the 1830s to 1900. Emphasize the following points:
 - a. Iowa's westward expansion during the pioneer period (1833-1870)
 - b. Iowa's industrial growth following the Civil War.
 - c. Advancing technology allowed significant improvement in farm machinery in the late 1800s.
2. Introduce the topic of coal mining by distributing the booklet *Coal Mining in Iowa*.
3. Read together the first section under the question, "How did coal mining begin and develop in Iowa?" Through discussion of this material emphasize the following points:
 - a. The Iowa coal industry developed because of the great demand by the railroads for coal.
 - b. Coal deposits are predominantly located in south central Iowa.
 - c. Coal production reached a peak around 1920 and tapered off after that.
4. As a follow-up to this discussion suggest the following questions for independent research.
 - a. How did early coal-burning train engines work? When did they come into use? When were they displaced by other types of engines?
 - b. How did coal form? Use a glass jar to illustrate layers of the earth.
 - c. What types of coal are mined in the United States and what characteristics does each have?
 - d. Where are coal deposits located in the United States?
 - e. Compare the history of coal production in Iowa with coal production nationally. What similarities and differences might be noted?
 - f. What national events may have contributed to trends in coal production in the last one hundred years?
5. Allow time for students to share their findings with the class.