

UNIT II: GOLDEN AGE (1897 - 1918)

Topics: Coal Mining Industry and Cultural Minorities

Lesson 20: The Iowa Coal Camp

Objectives:

1. Students will gain an understanding of what a typical coal camp consisted of.
2. Students will recognize Buxton as an unusual and unique Iowa coal camp.

Materials:

Student access to *Coal Mining in Iowa*

Student access to *As / Remember* by Minnie B. London

Transparency: Iowa County Map

Art materials

Activities:

1. Provide students with access *Coal Mining in Iowa*. Review briefly the material covered in Lesson 1 relating Iowa coal mining to national events and the development of the railroad industry.
2. Read together the section under the question "What was life like in a coal camp?" Use the Iowa county map transparency to locate Mahaska and Monroe counties.
3. Provide student access to copies of *As / Remember*, by Minnie B. London. Introduce Mrs. London's writing as a primary source which would be distinguished from secondary sources such as their booklet *Coal Mining in Iowa*. Mrs. London lived in Buxton during the early 1900s and vividly remembered details of daily life in Buxton.
4. Read the booklet *As / Remember* using one of the following methods:
 - a. Read the selection to the class.
 - b. Have students take turns reading orally.
 - c. Have students get into pairs or small groups and read together.
5. Through a discussion of the booklet, emphasize the following points:
 - a. Buxton was unusual because of the relatively large black population. Recent research has indicated that Buxton's black population was probably lower than **previously** reported in the literature. However, Buxton did have at one time 55% black population and a total population of 5000.
 - b. Buxton was an atypical mining camp. It had many businesses and community organizations unlike most of the short-lived camps across southern Iowa.
6. Follow the lesson by having students draw pictures to illustrate the booklet *As / Remember*. Display illustrations on a Buxton bulletin board with captions relating the picture to Mrs. London's account.

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