Grade 3 Social Studies Curriculum: Teacher Guide
Industrial Period 1850-1920

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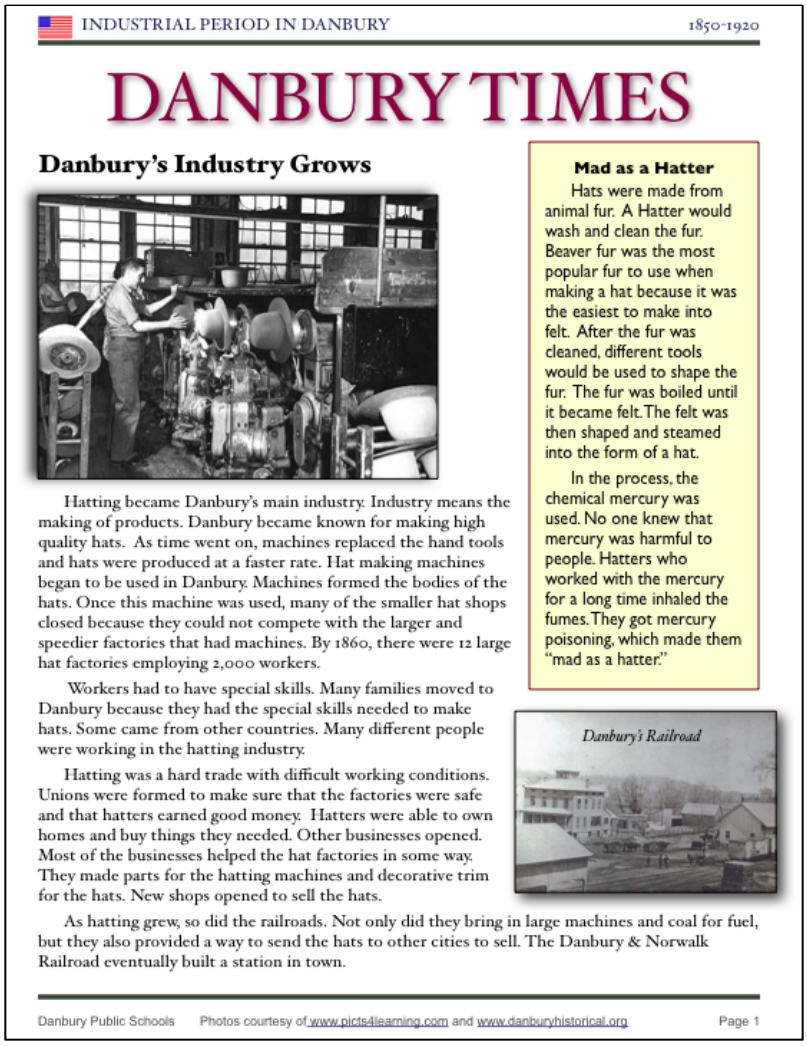

INDUSTRIAL PERIOD IN DANBURY 1850-1920

DANBURY TIMES

Danbury's Industry Grows

Hatting became Danbury's main industry. Industry means the making of products. Danbury became known for making high quality hats. As time went on, machines replaced the hand tools and hats were produced at a faster rate. Hat making machines began to be used in Danbury. Machines formed the bodies of the hats. Once this machine was used, many of the smaller hat shops closed because they could not compete with the larger and speedier factories that had machines. By 1860, there were 12 large hat factories employing 2,000 workers.

Workers had to have special skills. Many families moved to Danbury because they had the special skills needed to make hats. Some came from other countries. Many different people were working in the hatting industry.

Hatting was a hard trade with difficult working conditions. Unions were formed to make sure that the factories were safe and that hatters earned good money. Hatters were able to own homes and buy things they needed. Other businesses opened. Most of the businesses helped the hat factories in some way. They made parts for the hatting machines and decorative trim for the hats. New shops opened to sell the hats.

Mad as a Hatter

Hats were made from animal fur. A Hatter would wash and clean the fur. Beaver fur was the most popular fur to use when making a hat because it was the easiest to make into felt. After the fur was cleaned, different tools would be used to shape the fur. The fur was boiled until it became felt. The felt was then shaped and steamed into the form of a hat.

In the process, the chemical mercury was used. No one knew that mercury was harmful to people. Hatters who worked with the mercury for a long time inhaled the fumes. They got mercury poisoning, which made them "mad as a hatter."

Danbury's Railroad

As hatting grew, so did the railroads. Not only did they bring in large machines and coal for fuel, but they also provided a way to send the hats to other cities to sell. The Danbury & Norwalk Railroad eventually built a station in town.

Danbury Public Schools Photos courtesy of www.picts4learning.com and www.danburyhistorical.org Page 1

Additional information

The Danbury Seal was created 1889. On the seal are several symbols:

- Hat for hatting
- Wavy lines for Kohan Disaster
- Wooster monument fo Revolutionary War an General Wooster
- Phoenix for Danbury's rise from the ashes (various disasters)

CMT Connections:

- Developing Interpretation What caused the small h shops to close?
- The main idea of which paragraph can be suppo by the sidebar?

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MORE CHANGES COME TO TOWN

Main Street in 1875 - St. Peter's Church is on the left.

Danbury Grows

Because the new railroad station increased trade, businessmen began to build large buildings with more than one floor. On Main Street more buildings were built and new businesses were started on White Street. In 1857, the Danbury Gas Light Company was started. Businesses could now stay open late because they had lights.

At first, Hatters were paid with hats and not with money. When they were paid with cash, they were unsure of how to handle it. The Savings Bank of Danbury was formed to help the hatters.

By 1860, there were more than 7,000 people living in the village of Danbury. Soon new neighborhoods began forming outside the village. Many hatters and Irish immigrants lived in these areas.

Danbury continued to grow. People had jobs and were doing well. They began to form clubs and other social activities. The residents also raised money to create a "central park". This is now Elmwood Park on Main Street.

The Civil War

As Danbury grew, so did the Nation. In the North many people worked in factories or owned small farms. In the South many people owned large farms called plantations. They were so large they needed help on the farm. Slaves were used on plantations. Slaves were owned by the plantation owner and were not paid for their work.

The North was against slavery and felt that all people should be free. People in the North and South had very different ways of life. They could not agree on what to do about slavery and that is one of the reasons the Civil War started.

Danbury sided with the Union (the Northern states). The Southern States were called the Confederates. The war was long and hard. Danbury's economy was badly hurt by the war. Hats were sold to southern cities like Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans. When the war started, trade between the North and South stopped. The hatting industry lost some important places to sell their hats.

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Additional information

A lot of Danbury men enlist in the 17th Connecticut Infantr during the Civil War. African American men also enlisted ir the 24th and 29th infantry. Between these groups, they fought in almost all the major battles of the Civil War. James Bailey, a newsman in the CT wrote what was going on duri the battles. He came back an bought the Danbury News, a newspaper that eventually became the Danbury News Times. He died in 1894.

In 1888 a monument was erected to all who fought in th Civil War. It is on Main Street across from the library. The G was a group of men who foug in the Civil War and were activ in civic affairs in Danbury. Onl one African American Danburi was included in the DAR.

A new Civil War monume Wooster Cemetery was dedicated to Danbury area African American soldiers in 2007.

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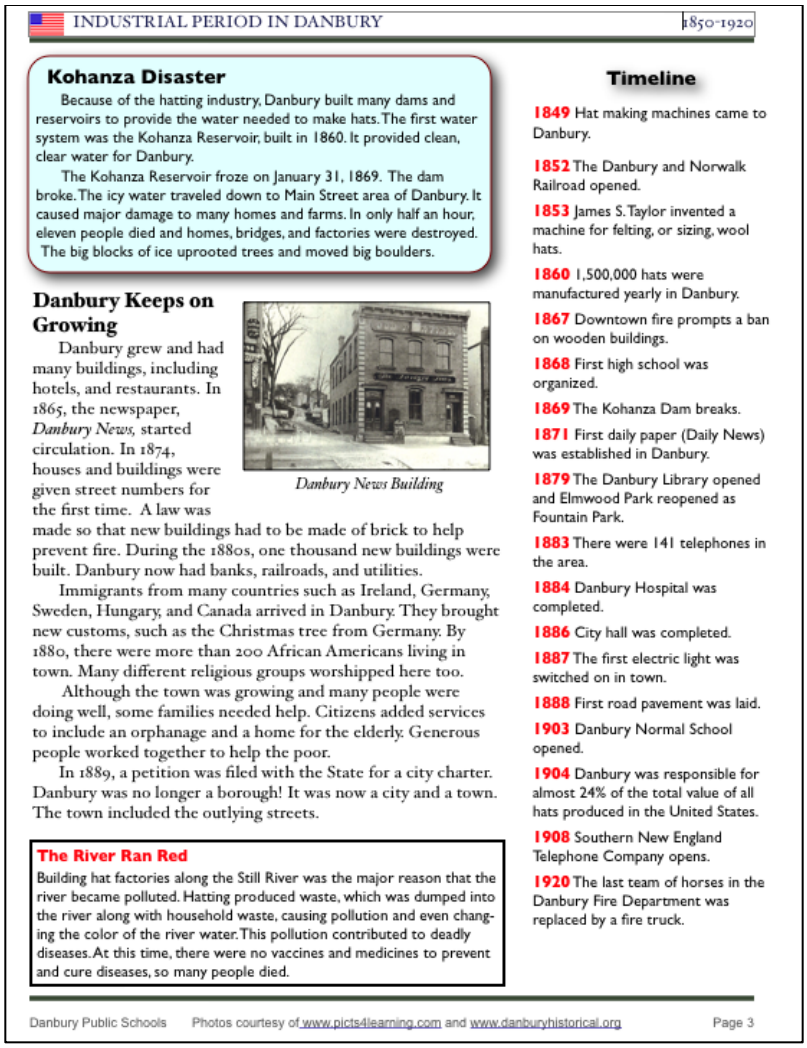

INDUSTRIAL PERIOD IN DANBURY 1850-1920

Kohanza Disaster

Because of the hatting industry, Danbury built many dams and reservoirs to provide the water needed to make hats. The first water system was the Kohanza Reservoir, built in 1860. It provided clean, clear water for Danbury.

The Kohanza Reservoir froze on January 31, 1869. The dam broke. The icy water traveled down to Main Street area of Danbury. It caused major damage to many homes and farms. In only half an hour, eleven people died and homes, bridges, and factories were destroyed. The big blocks of ice uprooted trees and moved big boulders.

Danbury Keeps on Growing

Danbury grew and had many buildings, including hotels, and restaurants. In 1865, the newspaper, *Danbury News,* started circulation. In 1874, houses and buildings were given street numbers for the first time. A law was made so that new buildings had to be made of brick to help prevent fire. During the 1880s, one thousand new buildings were built. Danbury now had banks, railroads, and utilities.

Danbury News Building

Immigrants from many countries such as Ireland, Germany, Sweden, Hungary, and Canada arrived in Danbury. They brought new customs, such as the Christmas tree from Germany. By 1880, there were more than 200 African Americans living in town. Many different religious groups worshipped here too.

Although the town was growing and many people were doing well, some families needed help. Citizens added services to include an orphanage and a home for the elderly. Generous people worked together to help the poor.

In 1889, a petition was filed with the State for a city charter. Danbury was no longer a borough! It was now a city and a town. The town included the outlying streets.

The River Ran Red

Building hat factories along the Still River was the major reason that the river became polluted. Hatting produced waste, which was dumped into the river along with household waste, causing pollution and even changing the color of the river water. This pollution contributed to deadly diseases. At this time, there were no vaccines and medicines to prevent and cure diseases, so many people died.

Timeline

1849 Hat making machines came to Danbury.

1852 The Danbury and Norwalk Railroad opened.

1853 James S. Taylor invented a machine for felting, or sizing, wool hats.

1860 1,500,000 hats were manufactured yearly in Danbury.

1867 Downtown fire prompts a ban on wooden buildings.

1868 First high school was organized.

1869 The Kohanza Dam breaks.

1871 First daily paper (Daily News) was established in Danbury.

1879 The Danbury Library opened and Elmwood Park reopened as Fountain Park.

1883 There were 141 telephones in the area.

1884 Danbury Hospital was completed.

1886 City hall was completed.

1887 The first electric light was switched on in town.

1888 First road pavement was laid.

1903 Danbury Normal School opened.

1904 Danbury was responsible for almost 24% of the total value of all hats produced in the United States.

1908 Southern New England Telephone Company opens.

1920 The last team of horses in the Danbury Fire Department was replaced by a fire truck.

Danbury Public Schools Photos courtesy of www.picts4learning.com and www.danburyhistorical.org Page 3

Additional informatio
The pollution in the Still R
was due not only to the hat
factory waste, but to the
household waste dumped into
the river. In 1893 the state of
Connecticut ordered Danbury
create a sewer system to clea
up the river. It was the third
sewer system created in the
state, but the only one ordere
the state.

CMT Connections:
- Making Connections: Thi
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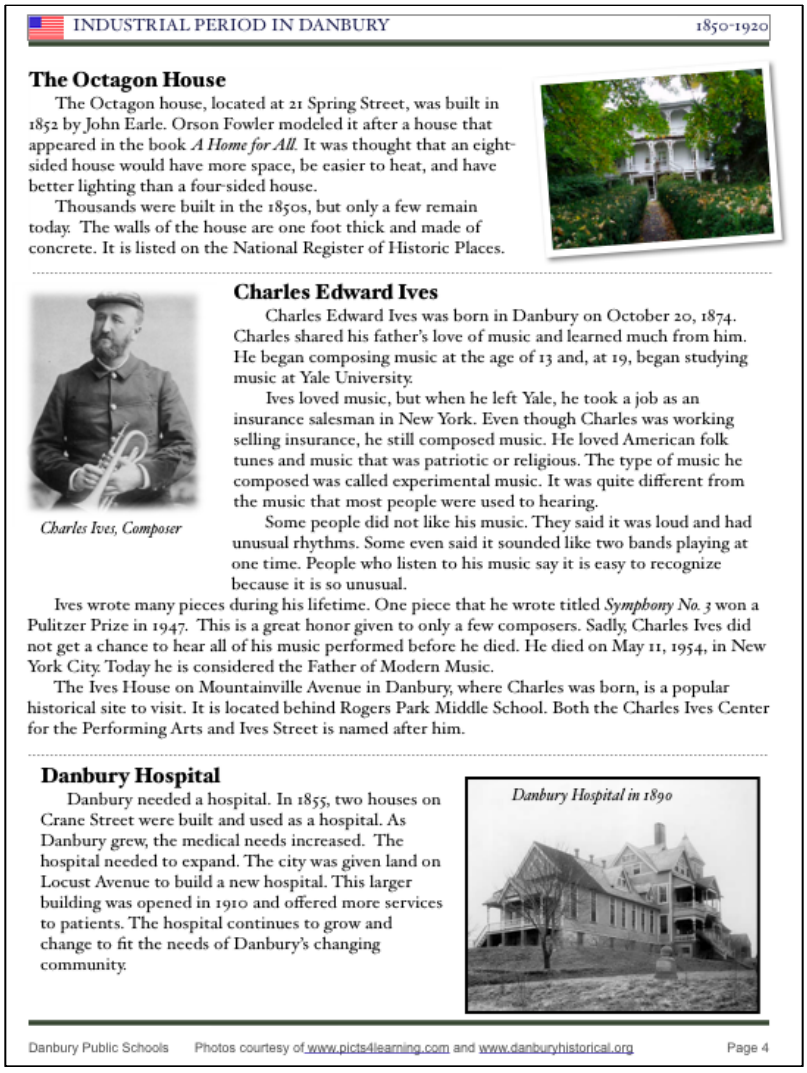

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The Octagon House

The Octagon house, located at 21 Spring Street, was built in 1852 by John Earle. Orson Fowler modeled it after a house that appeared in the book *A Home for All.* It was thought that an eight-sided house would have more space, be easier to heat, and have better lighting than a four-sided house.

Thousands were built in the 1850s, but only a few remain today. The walls of the house are one foot thick and made of concrete. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Charles Edward Ives

Charles Ives, Composer

Charles Edward Ives was born in Danbury on October 20, 1874. Charles shared his father's love of music and learned much from him. He began composing music at the age of 13 and, at 19, began studying music at Yale University.

Ives loved music, but when he left Yale, he took a job as an insurance salesman in New York. Even though Charles was working selling insurance, he still composed music. He loved American folk tunes and music that was patriotic or religious. The type of music he composed was called experimental music. It was quite different from the music that most people were used to hearing.

Some people did not like his music. They said it was loud and had unusual rhythms. Some even said it sounded like two bands playing at one time. People who listen to his music say it is easy to recognize because it is so unusual.

Ives wrote many pieces during his lifetime. One piece that he wrote titled *Symphony No. 3* won a Pulitzer Prize in 1947. This is a great honor given to only a few composers. Sadly, Charles Ives did not get a chance to hear all of his music performed before he died. He died on May 11, 1954, in New York City. Today he is considered the Father of Modern Music.

The Ives House on Mountainville Avenue in Danbury, where Charles was born, is a popular historical site to visit. It is located behind Rogers Park Middle School. Both the Charles Ives Center for the Performing Arts and Ives Street is named after him.

Danbury Hospital

Danbury needed a hospital. In 1855, two houses on Crane Street were built and used as a hospital. As Danbury grew, the medical needs increased. The hospital needed to expand. The city was given land on Locust Avenue to build a new hospital. This larger building was opened in 1910 and offered more services to patients. The hospital continues to grow and change to fit the needs of Danbury's changing community.

Danbury Hospital in 1890

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Additional information
At the turn of the century, t
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Main, West, and White Street
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CMT Connections:
- Developing an Interpretation: Why did th author include the secon paragraph about the Octagon House?
- General Understanding: What is the section of the article called "Charles Edward Ives" mainly abo Use information from the article to support your answer.

Information Technolo
Use Nettrekker to research m
information about Charles Ive
Listen to his music online.