

**Social Studies Content Themes for Middle/High School**  
**From**  
***“The Making of Milwaukee Curriculum”***

**Early Milwaukeeans:**

**Teaching about Early Milwaukeeans in Milwaukee**

The following activities are from “The Making of Milwaukee” on-line curriculum.

- Milwaukee’s Early Leaders (Comparing Early Leaders)
- “What If”...Milwaukee (Analyze Historical “What Ifs”)
- Start Spreading the News (Writing a Newspaper Article)
- What’s in a Photo
- Names, Faces, & Places (Identifying Famous Early Milwaukeeans)

**MILWAUKEE’S EARLY LEADERS**

1. Video Chapter 2, *New Frontiers*, explains the lives, leadership and competitiveness of Milwaukee’s founding fathers. Discuss the lives of Solomon Juneau, Byron Kilbourn and George Walker as portrayed in the video chapter. Students may also find additional information on these three early leaders from resources in the library or Internet.

*Show your students images of Milwaukee’s early leaders by visiting The Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com). Go to the “Image Library” within either the “In the Classroom” or “Milwaukee’s History” section. Use the “search” tool.*

2. Have students make distinct comparisons of the three individuals based on the video chapter and additional research (optional). Using a venn triagram, allow students to point out the similarities and differences between the three leaders. Students should take into consideration the following:
  - Backgrounds of the individuals
  - Personalities
  - Business experience/tactics
  - Accomplishments
3. Students may work individually or in pairs to complete the venn triagrams.
4. After students have completed their venn triagrams, have a class discussion using the following questions:
  - What differences did you identify between Juneau, Kilbourn and Walker?
  - What similarities do all three men have in common?

- Which of the three men do you feel was the most effective leader? Why?
- Does competition make things better for citizens?
- What might Milwaukee look like today if all three leaders combined their resources, experiences and talent?
- If you were one of the first leaders, what necessary decisions would you make that these three men may have overlooked in developing and improving Milwaukee?

Please visit the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section on *The Making of Milwaukee Website*, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com) and choose “Lesson Activity Images” from the pull down menu for images that can be used with this lesson. Be sure to use the “search” tool to locate separate photos entitled, “Juneau, Kilbourn, and Walker”.

## “WHAT IF”...MILWAUKEE

1. Consider the following list of topics from the Video Chapters 1-3, *Natives and Traders*, *New Frontiers* and *King Wheat*:
  - Early Natives and their way of life in Milwaukee
  - Trading posts in Milwaukee
  - The leadership of Juneau, Kilbourn and Walker
  - The attractiveness of Milwaukee (resources/location)
  - Early challenges (clearing swamps, farming, creating businesses)
  - Newspapers
  - Bridge wars
  - Railroads
2. To make students comfortable with the following activity, formulate three “what-if” questions that challenge students to predict or consider how Milwaukee would be different based on a different set of facts. See the following example to use for help in designing questions:
  - a. Start the activity by explaining to students that Milwaukee is the way it is today because of the historical events that have taken place more than 200 years ago. Explain to them that the past truly influences the present. For example, many of the businesses, such as the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, were started years ago for different purposes. The newspaper is still a business that inspires to inform the public, but in the 1800’s it was two separate newspapers each started by a competing founder. The Sentinel was founded by Kilbourn and the Milwaukee Journal was started by Solomon Juneau. Both leaders were trying to influence early settlers to side with their viewpoints.
  - b. Ask students to respond to the following question:

*“What if Milwaukee had no major, local newspaper?”*

- c. Allow students time to respond to the question by writing a brief paragraph, developing a short poster or creating a flowchart or diagram.
- d. Select three students to respond to the question. Explain to them that they will be given no more than one minute to describe what Milwaukee might be like today if it had no newspaper. As students respond to the question, write their responses on the board.

*(Show video chapters 1, 2, & 3)*

3. After watching all or one of the video chapters, allow students to formulate their own “what if” questions about how Milwaukee might look, function or operate as a city under different circumstances. Some possible questions might be:
  - What if Milwaukee’s early settlers were able to coexist with the Native tribes of Wisconsin?
  - What if Juneau, Kilbourn and Walker combined their resources, experiences and talents to develop Milwaukee?
  - What if early settlers were unable to convert the swamps of Milwaukee into stable, manageable lands?
4. Have students exchange their questions with a partner or small group. As they pose questions to each other, have them generate a list of responses.
5. Students can then create a poster that lists the responses/or share their findings with the class. They should identify what they feel are the most intriguing/interesting responses as well as their own personal response to their individual question.

## **START SPREADING THE NEWS**

1. Review with students the events surrounding the Bridge War between Solomon Juneau and Byron Kilbourn. Have students identify and explain the conflicts and disputes between both leaders.
2. Have students assume the role of a local newspaper reporter (not associated with either Juneau or Kilbourn). Students will gather information on the Bridge War and its effects on the city’s image, the citizens of Milwaukee, local businesses, the design of the city and other aspects of Milwaukee.

Note: Teacher may want to use a current article as a model in explaining the components of newspaper articles.

3. Using the Video Chapter 2, *New Frontiers*, and other resources such as library books, encyclopedias and Internet websites, motivate students to write a news article that explains the Bridge War in Milwaukee.

Please visit the “Interactive Lessons” section of “In the Classroom” on The Making of Milwaukee Website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com) and choose the Interactive Newspaper Exercise. To access this tool now, click here:

<http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/classroom/newspaper/index.cfm>

Images for this lesson can also be found by going to the Image Library of the “In the Classroom” section of The Making of Milwaukee Website and choosing “Lesson Activity Images” from the pull down menu. Be sure to use the “search” tool to locate the photos entitled “Bridge War Painting and West Siders Destroy Bridge”.

4. Suggest the following to students as they create their articles:

- Create an eye-catching title
- Report accurate details and facts (include names of actual people, dates and important incidents)
- Incorporate a photo (if possible)
- Type the article (consider a column-based/new article format)
- The reporters’ name and city reporting from (Milwaukee)

5. Students may read articles in front of the class, in pairs or small groups. Students may also work collaboratively to create a small newspaper or magazine, using the individual articles developed by each student.

## WHAT’S IN A PHOTO

You can access these photos in *The Making of Milwaukee* book by John Gurda.

Photo of bridge at Chestnut Street in 1845 in Gurda’s 2<sup>nd</sup> book Chapter, “*City on the Swamp*”.

Photo of Hoan Bridge in Gurda’s 9<sup>th</sup> book Chapter, “*Shifting Currents*”.

*These photos are also available as still images on The Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofMilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofMilwaukee.com). Go to the Image Library within the “In the Classroom” section and select “Transportation” from the pull-down menu. Be sure to use the “search” tool.*

1. Discuss the following questions concerning the photographs of two distinct bridges in Milwaukee:

- How are the two bridges different?
- What similarities do you see between both bridges?
- What contributing factors (societal, economical, political) do you think caused these differences?
- How do the designs of these two bridges reflect the eras in which they were built (technology, city’s needs, resources, etc)?
- What were the functions and purposes of both bridges?

- What controversies surround the functions and purposes of these bridges being built? (Teacher may want to provide background on the Hoan bridge)
  - What types of bridges do you see being built in Milwaukee one hundred years from now? Give your reasoning for this design.
2. Challenge students to design and build a bridge of their own. Have them form groups of three or four to plan and discuss the features of the bridge. Share with students the following criteria:
- a. Bridge must meet the needs of the people of Milwaukee in 2006. Brainstorm on ways that your bridge will make life better in Milwaukee.
  - b. Bridges can also be designed on paper. Students can provide a drawing or an original, computer-generated model.
  - c. Students can provide a written/oral summary that addresses the following questions:
    - What challenges do you foresee in creating this bridge?
    - Where in Milwaukee will this bridge be located? Why did you choose this location?
    - How will this bridge improve the quality of life in Milwaukee?
    - What sacrifices might the public have to endure as you build this bridge (street closures, pollution, noise, etc)?
    - What controversies may possibly surround the construction of your bridge? How might you tactfully resolve this negative association with your bridge?
  - d. Any material can be used to build the bridge (Toothpicks, tongue depressors, and glue are examples of the types of inexpensive materials that can be used to build bridges).
  - e. Bridges can be displayed in small groups or in a class viewing. Short presentations that incorporate responses to the previous questions may be performed by students.

## **NAMES, FACES, & PLACES**

1. Research the Internet as well as the Making of Milwaukee website, [www.themakingofmilwaukee.com](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com) to find photographs of the following individuals, groups or places. Go to the Image Library within the “In the Classroom” section of the website.

(Note: Teachers may make additions or deletions to the following list)

- Solomon Juneau

- Byron Kilbourn
- George Walker
- Increase A. Lapham
- Jacques Vieau
- Alexander Mitchell

2. Place photographs on note cards, an overhead, poster board, chalkboard or a PowerPoint presentation.
3. On a separate sheet of paper, provide the descriptions that properly identify these individuals. Challenge students to match the faces with the appropriate descriptions. Devise a point value for each correct match. This educational game can be played as a class or in small groups. Have students keep a running tally of team scores. Devise a point value for each correct match. Keep playing until one team has matched all photographs with their descriptions/biographies.