I chose the Industrial Revolution for my time period, broadly speaking the Industrial Revolution took place from the 1760s to the 1840s. It was marked by the shift from hand made products to machine produced products, the increase of use of water, or stream power, and an increase in factory work. Most of the key players in the Industrial Revolution were the inventors, and magnates who made business, but in my opinion more importantly were the theorists like Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels, and the political groups like the Luddites. In the American Industrial Revolution which went a little later than the date above, key players were people like Andrew Carnegie, and John D. Rockefeller. Issues were of course the working conditions, and the introduction of industrial capital (Encylopaedia Brtiannica, 2020).

Focusing specifically on the United States which lasted from the late 18th century, into the early 19th, I would focus my question as “What caused the Industrial Revolution, and what were its consequences on America?”. In terms of assessments, I would utilize a lot of cause-and-effect questions in quizzes, and potentially chronological questions. For a summative assessment, I might ask students to pick a few examples from the Industrial Revolution and ask how it is relevant today, likely in the form of an essay, but maybe I would open it up to whatever they want to do. I think this could cover all the 6.1: Growth of an Industrial and Urban America standard, and incorporate the groundwork for 6.2, and 6.3 standards as well, if they weren’t incorporated as part of the unit to begin with.

The American Industrial Revolution, and even the European Industrial Revolution is incredibly important for a multitude of different reasons. I think most importantly is that if it weren’t for the Industrial Revolution, we would not have the technology we do today, but further it is the groundwork for our class relations we have today. The ramifications of people like Marx, like Carnegie, and groups like the Luddites can still be seen today in my opinion. One of the most important parts of being a democratic citizen is being an informed citizen, and I think knowing the history of our social relations is incredibly important, further I think this unit would allow for a lot of critical thinking from the students, as they discern causes and effects, and try to understand the motives and consequences of the various players, and events of this time period. I think it could cover all the standards in era 6, but most certainly 6.1 and 6.2, if it doesn’t directly cover 6.3, it would certainly lay the groundwork for it in a unit covering 6.3 and 7.

I am in 5th hour, and generally our class is pretty set in their ways insofar that students by and large have their friends who they sit next to, or work with. At the same time there is some cross contamination between groups, and I wouldn’t say it is incredibly cliquey. Nevertheless, the first student I chose sticks pretty closely in his friend group, but I think this has more to do with his identity. We briefly mentioned this in class, but him and the student that sits next to him are comfortable enough to share their identity with the class. I don’t entirely know the full details, but I believe they are either trans or non-binary. They tend to lag a little behind the class in terms of content understanding, but at the same time he can be very engaged and on top of things when he puts his mind to it. He, much like his friends who sit next to him are very into drawing. He “grew up on YouTube AMVs” (his words), which I found intriguing because their style, and interests match what my friends and I were doing at about the same time (I was never much of an artist myself I just watched in awe at my friends). The second student I chose is one who struggles on his own, but when you are able to work with him, he really shines. It is almost like he needs someone else to kickstart his interest. He plays for the football team, and I believe has an IEP. He struggles with anger and can get frustrated especially when working alone. Both the students I chose in my opinion, bring a lot to class, and are overall a joy to work with. That being said they definitely struggle in some areas especially during frers they find it hard to keep up.

I think while it may be hard to convince the first student that they need to learn this specific content, if my observations are correct, I think he will find having this knowledge quite important, as I did years before. I think his family is working class, and this is really the beginning of the American Proletariat, and the findings in it are still prevalent today. I still regularly utilize sources from this time period (both the European, and American Industrial Revolutions), and the lessons that were learned from this time are still useful today. Truthfully as a scholar of Marx his class analysis is still, in my opinion the only meaningful analysis of class, and capital we have. When I tell people to read Marx, or other foundational work, its not because I want to bog people down in boring theory. It’s because those theories I personally have found incredibly useful to have knowledge of, and it starts from a strong understanding of history. All that to say this time period is really important for anyone who may want to go into sociology or any related field. For my second student I think I will have a much easier time, as I know for a fact, he is very interested in industrialization. I think, especially if for instance I was working with him in class on this unit he would do very well, and be quite engaged. I think both students, and also the class as a whole are probably pretty solidly middle class, I think that some may be a little better off, while others less so, thus I think this period is very pertinent to their lives. Looking back on my own experiences it was also the first step in really understanding the world around me, the first this is how we got where we are chapter, and the first major look at more modern social relations.

My favorite community engagement this year was going to the High School production of Cinderella the Musical. When I was in High School we also did Cinderella, and our two performances were very different. Most prominently in my opinion was that in the musical they included in the story, a boy who upon returning from university spreads the good word of democracy. He falls in love with one of Cinderella’s sisters who isn’t a bad person, and together with Cinderella and Prince Charming they begin to rebuild the kingdom and establish a democracy. I think this is really representative of the population in Haslett, and what they value. It makes sense to me for a district like Haslett, and I feel that it closely aligns with their values. While I think Haslett is a rather socially liberal community, I think at least for the makeup of our class, this stays true, but I do think there is a large working-class population, though this may be due to school of choice. Nevertheless, I am sure understanding the plight of the working class is very important in the eyes of the families of Haslett.