

# ANCHORAGE MUSEUM

ALASKA IS: HOW WE WORK WITH EACH OTHER

---



---

## Construction site & men

Ink on paper  
Vern Brickley Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1998.014.1.2511

ANCHORAGE  
MUSEUM

## UNIT AT A GLANCE

---

Learn about some of Alaska's largest industries and the work conditions surrounding them.

**Social Studies:** Students will examine three photographs from the Anchorage Museum collection and design visual safety notices. Students will also learn about conditions of cannery workers in Alaska in the late 19th and early 20th century and organize a strike.

**Language Arts:** Students will examine three photographs from the Anchorage Museum Collection and design a description and advertisement for a future job.

## STANDARDS

---

### Alaska Geography Standards:

- B.1 know that places have distinctive geographic characteristics
- B.6 make informed decisions about where to live, work, travel, and seek opportunities
- D.1 know that the need for people to exchange goods, services, and ideas creates population centers, cultural interaction, and transportation and communication links
- D.4 analyze how changes in technology, transportation, and communication impact social, cultural, economic, and political activity
- D.5 analyze how conflict and cooperation shape social, economic, and political use of space
- E.1 understand how resources have been developed and used
- E.2 recognize and assess local, regional, and global patterns of resource use
- F.1 analyze and evaluate the impact of physical and human geographical factors on major historical events

### Alaska History Standards:

- A.5 understand that history is a narrative told in many voices and expresses various perspectives of historical experience
- A.8 know that history is a bridge to understanding groups of people and an individual's relationship to society
- B.1.b comprehend the forces of change and continuity that shape human history through human communities and their relationships with climate, subsistence base, resources, geography, and technology
- B.1.e comprehend the forces of change and continuity that shape human history through major developments in societies as well as changing patterns related to class, ethnicity, race, and gender
- B.2 understand the people and the political, geographic, economic, cultural, social, and environmental events that have shaped the history of the state, the United States, and the world
- C.1-4 A student should develop the skills and processes of historical inquiry
- D.2 solve problems by using history to identify issues and problems, generate potential solutions, assess the merits of options, act, and evaluate the effectiveness of actions
- D.3 define a personal position on issues while understanding the historical aspects of the positions and roles assumed by others
- D.4 recognize and demonstrate that various issues may require an understanding of different positions, jobs, and personal roles depending on place, time, and context
- D.5 base personal citizenship action on reasoned historical judgment with recognition of responsibility for self and others

### Alaska Language Arts Standards:

Reading Standards for Informational Text

2. Determine a central idea and subtopics of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including their relationship to supporting ideas; restate and summarize the central idea or events, in correct sequence when necessary, after reading a text.

Writing Standards

2.a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

2.b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

2.d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between

- information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others
7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration
  8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

## MATERIALS

---

### Social Studies:

[Clarion Safety Systems - ISO Symbols for Safety Signs and Labels](#)

[Clarion Safety Systems - ANSI Standards: Safety Signs and Labels](#)

Warning labels  
 Paper  
 Straightedge  
 Writing utensils  
 Coloring utensils  
 Scissors  
 Large paint stir-sticks  
 Tape

### Language Arts:

Laptop  
 Paper  
 Straightedge  
 Writing utensils  
 Coloring utensils

## KEY TERMS

---

<i>salting</i>	a preservation method using salt to draw water from fish, preventing spoilage
<i>petroleum</i>	a broad term encompassing unrefined and refined oil products as well as natural gas
<i>strike</i>	a form of mass protest in which employees cease work to negotiate labor terms or achieve some other goal
<i>labor union</i>	an organization of workers intent on maintaining or improving working standards
<i>exploitation</i>	the unfair treatment of workers in order to benefit from the products of their labor
<i>henu</i>	Dena'ina term for work
<i>uqsruḡrualiuḡvik</i>	North Slope Iñupiaq term for oil refinery
<i>savaaq</i>	North Slope Iñupiaq term for work
<i>uqurkaliurta</i>	Central Alaskan Yup'ik term for oil industry worker
<i>paankaraq</i>	Central Alaskan Yup'ik term for canned fish

## CLOSE-LOOKING

---

### TIME FRAME

Approximately 40 minutes

### MATERIALS

Photograph 1: *Untitled*, Wien Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1985.027.1012

Photograph 2: *Untitled (Union/Marathon Trading Bay, oil exploration and production)*, McCutcheon Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1990.014.004.00047

Photograph 3: *Construction site & men*, Vern Brickley Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1998.014.1.2511

### DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by looking closely at provided photographs. Use the questions below to guide discussion.

[30 min.]

**CLOSE-LOOKING:** Look closely, quietly at the objects for a few minutes.

**OBSERVE:** Share your observations about each photograph.

#### Photograph 1: *Untitled*, Wien Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1985.027.1012



**ASK:** What do you notice about this image?

Describe the objects and people that you see in this image.

What might the people in the image be doing?

In what time of year do you think this image is set?

Why do you think this photo was taken?

What more can you find?

#### Photograph 2: *Untitled (Union/Marathon Trading Bay, oil exploration and production)*, McCutcheon Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1990.014.004.00047



**ASK:** What do you notice about this image?

Describe the general feeling of what is going on in this image.

What is happening in this image?

What are some action words you would use to describe this image?

What does this remind you of?

What more can you find?

#### Photograph 3: *Construction site & men*, Vern Brickley Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1998.014.1.2511



**ASK:** What do you notice about this image?

Describe what you see in this image.

What do you notice about the clothes in this image?

How would you describe the person's body language in this image?

What does this remind you of?

What more can you find?

**DISCUSS:** Use the [20 Questions Deck](#) for more group discussion questions about the photographs.

2. As a class, discuss the meaning of jobs and work. Invite students to share what they

think of as work and what separates that from other activities. Invite students to share why they think work exists in our society today.

[10 min.]

## SOCIAL STUDIES: SAFETY WARNING

---

**TIME FRAME** Approximately 40-45 minutes

**MATERIALS** [Clarion Safety Systems - ISO Symbols for Safety Signs and Labels](#)  
[Clarion Safety Systems - ANSI Standards: Safety Signs and Labels](#)  
Warning labels  
White and construction paper  
Straightedge  
Writing utensils  
Coloring utensils  
Scissors

**DIRECTIONS** 1. Share the following with students:

[Clarion Safety Systems - ISO Symbols for Safety Signs and Labels](#)  
[Clarion Safety Systems - ANSI Standards: Safety Signs and Labels](#)

Pass out examples of other safety labels and signage. Review with students the details necessary in creating safety signage such as colors and symbols.

[10 min.]

2. Discuss: *why might safety signage be important? What could happen without it?*

[5 min.]

3. After the discussion, pass out white and construction paper, straightedge, writing utensils, coloring utensils, and scissors. Explain to students that they will be creating a safety sign for an unexpected event either alone or in pairs. Clarify to students that this event can be real or imaginary.

[15-20 min.]

4. Once finished, invite students to share their signs and to explain how their safety sign will help others.

[10 min.]

## ASSESSMENT

---

Students will be assessed based on participation in class discussion and completion of their safety warning.

## LEARN MORE

---

### **ALASKA'S LARGEST WORK INDUSTRIES: OIL, TOURISM, AND FISH**

Currently, Alaska's three biggest industries are oil, tourism, and fish. All three large scale industries began in the late 19th to mid 20th centuries and account for well over half of the state economy. Large scale oil production began in 1968 after the Atlantic Richfield Company conducted surveys in Prudhoe Bay resulting in the location of profitable oil fields. The construction of the Trans-Alaska pipeline to bring oil from Prudhoe Bay south to Valdez has had considerable effects to employment and the Alaskan economy that are relevant to this day.

The rich histories of Indigenous places, historic towns, wildlife, and glaciers are some of the many reasons people to travel to Alaska. The Alaska Railroad, cruise ships, and various airlines all benefit from an average of one million visitors annually.

Fish comprise a large portion of the roughly six billion pounds of annual commercially harvested seafood. This figure represents roughly sixty percent of annual seafood harvests in the United States. Though salmon comprises the majority of the profit, pollock constitutes the majority of volume. Alaskan companies process and sell fish and fish products to clients throughout the world.

### **ALASKA LABOR UNIONS**

Alaska's history with labor unions mirrors the labor movements throughout the continental United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Prior to statehood, The Alaska Territorial Federation of Labor organized members of various labor unions to bargain for fewer working hours, higher wages, and improving labor-management relations. This organization would change names as the Alaska State Federation of Labor after statehood, and again in the 1970s as the Alaska State AFL-CIO. Today, the Alaska State AFL-CIO represents fifty-thousand union workers across fifty affiliated unions throughout Alaska.

Similarly, the Alaska Public Employees Association, the first public employee union in Alaska, lobbied for pay and benefits for Alaska State employees beginning in 1955. The 1972 Public Employment Relations Act was the culmination of nearly twenty years of work, granting the right for State and Local Government employees to organize and unionize regarding employment terms and conditions.

### **READ:**

National Park Service - [A Brief History Of Tourism In Skagway](#)

Alaska Historical Society - [Tourism in Alaska's Past](#)

Alaska Historical Society - [Alaska Fisheries: A Guide to History Resources](#)

Resource Development Council - [ALASKA'S OIL & GAS INDUSTRY](#)

Anchorage Daily News - [All Alaska ferry service suspended as largest shipboard union strikes for first time since 1977](#)

Reuters - [Alaska labor deal reached to end 10-day ferry strike](#)

Anchorage Daily News - [Histories of Anchorage: The story of the 1953 restaurant workers strike, which shut down almost every eatery in town](#)

## SOCIAL STUDIES: GENERAL STRIKE

---

**TIME FRAME**                      Approximately 50 minutes

**MATERIALS**                      Computer  
[PBS LEARNING MEDIA | Labor Day | PBS KIDS](#)  
Paper  
Straightedge  
Writing utensils  
Coloring utensils  
Large paint stir-sticks  
Tape

## DIRECTIONS

1. Watch [PBS LEARNING MEDIA | Labor Day](#) | [PBS KIDS](#) with students and return to the quote: 'Can you imagine a time when staying home on a weekend, or taking a vacation could get a person fired?'. Ask students to give 1-3 word responses to this statement and write them on the board.

[7 min.]

2. Discuss: *What are some widespread working conditions that may not have existed 150 years ago?* Share examples of wages, work hours, and age restrictions. Explain to students that workers went on labor strikes and formed unions to fight for these rights.

[5 min.]

3. Ask students to form groups of two to three and discuss: *What would an ideal work environment look like? What are some benefits that you would like to see for future generations? What would you like to change when you begin working?*

[7 min.]

4. Pass out paper, writing and coloring utensils, tape, and large paint stir sticks. Inform students that they will plan a strike for a future right in the workplace by designing a picket sign using the paint stir stick, paper, and tape. Students will create a slogan to write on their picket sign.

[15 min.]

5. After creating their signs and slogans, invite students to form a picket crowd and walk in a circle through the classroom while holding up their signs and vocalizing their slogans. If they are comfortable with doing so, ask students to individually explain their signs.

[5 min.]

6. Ask: *Picketing as a form of labor protest can last for hours. What are other ways people can inform the wider public of labor practices that need reform or change?* Encourage students to share with each another what else they can do to promote their causes. If comfortable, select two to three students to share their responses with the class.

[10 min.]

## ASSESSMENT

---

Students will be assessed based on participation in class discussion and completion of their signs and slogans.

## LEARN MORE

---

### 19<sup>TH</sup>- AND 20<sup>TH</sup>- CENTURY CANNERIES IN ALASKA

Though fish was abundant in the 19th century, storage and preservation was an obstacle to selling and moving large quantities of fish. Prior to refrigeration, the more common methods of preservation methods were smoking, drying, salting, and canning. Of these techniques, salting became the first industrial scale fish processing enterprise, with salteries opening as early as the 1860s. Canning techniques in Alaska led to a large influx of canneries opening and replacing most salteries as entrepreneurs sought to capitalize on the fishing industry. Without regard to fish counts, overfishing led to a massive decline of Alaska salmon between the 1930s and 1970s. This would reduce the overall number of canneries in Alaska from a peak of 134 to 37 by 1950.

The working conditions in these canneries in the late 19th century and early 20th century were brutal and often exploited Alaska Natives, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino workers. The experiences of many Filipino cannery workers in Alaska led to the formation of the The Cannery Workers' and Farm Laborers' Union, Local #7 in Seattle and the Alaska Cannery Workers Union in San Francisco in the 1930s. Despite threats, violence, and assassinations of key labor movement organizers, the collective efforts of cannery workers resulted in criminal

investigations. These then led to convictions of contracting firms and shed light on the unbearable working conditions in canneries, leading to more positive change.

Active management and regulation by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the general public beginning in the 1990s led to more sustainable practices, increasing salmon yields without depleting overall fish counts. Today, roughly 60 salmon canneries are still in operation.

**WATCH:**

Alaska Public Media - [Cannery workers document the Chinese history of Alaska's fishing industry](#)

**READ:**

National Park Service - [Canneries of Alaska](#)

SitNews - [Baranovich: Alaska's First 'Industrialist](#)

National Park Service - [Bartlett Cove Canneries](#)

CHINESE WORKERS IN SALMON CANNERIES 華工在鮭魚罐頭工廠 - [A Forgotten Chapter of the American Chinese History?](#)

## LANGUAGE ARTS: AS ADVERTISED

---

**TIME FRAME**

Approximately 2 class sessions

**MATERIALS**

Laptop  
Paper  
Straightedge  
Writing utensils  
Coloring utensils

**DIRECTIONS**

**1.** Ask the class what they might know about job searching and descriptions. On a screen, pull up images of several job descriptions and job flyers. Invite students to make observations on all aspects of descriptions and flyers. Write student responses on the board and keep them there for the next learning session.

[15 min.]

**2.** In the next class, pass out laptops and invite students to open a word processor. Explain to students that they will be writing a job description for a job that does not exist yet.

[1 min.]

**3.** As students write their job descriptions, encourage them to think of what technical and non-technical skills people may need to know in the future. Invite students to consider what skills today may be relevant, which ones may not, and how one would obtain necessary skills for the position (education, certifications, or on-job trainings for example).

[25 min.]

**4.** When students are finished creating their job descriptions, invite them to print them out. Save these for the next learning session.

[5 min.]

**5.** In the next learning session, pass out job descriptions at random to students. Afterwards, pass out paper, straightedges, and writing and coloring utensils. Explain to students that they will be creating advertisements for the job descriptions they receive. Encourage students to consider what could make this job enticing. Encourage students to work on their individual flyers in small groups of two to three to cultivate discussion about the work process.

[25 min.]



**6.** When finished, invite students to present their work in pairs, with both the writer of the job description and the creator of the job flyer talking about their creative process. When both are finished, the creator of the poster will then present their job description along with the person who created the corresponding flyer. Repeat until finished.

[15 min.]

**7.** Once presentations are finished, ask students: *What challenges did you have as a writer of the job description and as the designer of the job flyer for jobs that do not exist yet? How might this help us understand how people react to change?*

[10 min.]

## ASSESSMENT

---

Students will be assessed based on participation in class discussion and completion of job description and job flyer.