

Heaven On Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism

Lesson Plans

Grade Level: 9-12

Overview

Heaven On Earth traces the evolution of socialism from the industrial revolution to the present day through profiles of leaders and thinkers. The film focuses on the many ways that nations have interpreted theories of socialism. The stories show powerful examples of the consequences of ideas. *Heaven On Earth* is not a comprehensive history but provides a broad picture of socialism's impact on world events in the 19th and 20th centuries.

This film can be used in a variety of ways. Most segments can operate as self-contained biographies, running approximately 9-12 minutes long. Go to the [Synopsis](#) section on the website to see segment descriptions. Teachers can either use individual segments to focus on a specific historical figure or use [interview transcripts](#) and the other resources on the website to lead students through larger historical movements. Many of the segments in Hours 2 and 3 return to stories started earlier in the program to track changes over time.

Lesson One

Socialism and Marxism in the Industrial Revolution

Focus on [Robert Owen](#), [Karl Marx](#), [Friedrich Engels](#), [Eduard Bernstein](#)

Objectives

Familiarize students with the ideas that shaped socialism and Marxism in the 19th century.

Lesson Two

Capitalism vs. Communism

The Russian Revolution, American Labor at the beginning of the 20th century and Socialism in Canada: [Vladimir Lenin](#) and [Samuel Gompers](#)

Objectives

Familiarize students with the ideas that continued to shape socialism and Marxism in the 19th century. Show how those ideas were implemented in the late 19th and early 20th century. Contrast reactions to socialism in America and Russia.

Lesson Three

Critical Thinking Skills: History and Perspective

This lesson uses three examples to show the challenge of discussing socialism's controversial history: Socialism in Tanzania, the transformation of the British Labour Party under Tony Blair, and contemporary scholars' views on the future of socialism. Each example uses interviews with participants who have directly opposing points of view.

Objectives

In this set of exercises, students will examine historical events through the words of participants who have very different perspectives. Students should gain an understanding of the events described but also begin to see how the biases of participants shape their recollection and interpretation of events. These exercises could be used in units focusing on the specific historic periods described or as a way of discussing general historical analysis, bias and perspective.

Lesson Four

Socialism in the Jewish Kibbutz Movement

Using interviews with the original settlers of one Israeli Kibbutz and their children, students can discuss the relationship between socialism, religious beliefs and the Zionist movement for a Jewish state.

Objectives

In this lesson, students will examine the role that socialism played in unifying settlers in a Jewish Kibbutz and how attitudes toward socialism changed with subsequent generations. Students can compare the experience described by the kibbutzim of Kibbutz Ginosar with Robert Owen's utopian community at New Harmony.

Credits

Educational Content by John Sorensen

Web Construction by Bienvenido Concepcion

Lesson One

Socialism and Marxism in the Industrial Revolution

Focus on Robert Owen, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Eduard Bernstein

Objectives

Familiarize students with the ideas that shaped socialism and Marxism in the 19th century.

Relevant Standards

This lesson meets the following standards set by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/search.asp>):

World History

Standard 35

Understands patterns of nationalism, state-building, and social reform in Europe and the Americas from 1830 to 1914.

Benchmark

3. Understands factors that led to social and political change in 19th century Europe (e.g. the interconnections between labor movements, various forms of socialism, and political or social changes in Europe; the influence of industrialization, democratization, and nationalism on popular 19th century reform movements; the extent to which Britain, France, and Italy become broadly liberal and democratic societies in the 19th century; the broad beneficial and detrimental effects of the industrial revolution on specific European countries).

Standard 37

Understand major global trends from 1750 to 1914 .

Benchmark

1. Understands the importance of ideas associated with republicanism, liberalism, socialism, and constitutionalism on 19th century political life in such states as Great Britain, France, the United States, Germany, Russia, Mexico, Argentina, the Ottoman Empire, China, or Japan (e.g. how these movements were tied to new or old-class interests).

Historical Understanding

Standard 2

Understands the historical perspective.

Benchmark

1. Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history.
2. Analyzes the influences specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history and specifies how events might have been different in the absence of those ideas and beliefs.
3. Analyzes the effects that specific “chance events” had on history and specifies how things might have been different in the absence of those events.

4. Analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history and studies how things might have been different in the absence of those decisions.
5. Understands that the consequences of human intentions are influenced by the means of carrying them out.
7. Knows how to avoid seizing upon particular lessons of history as cures for present ills.

Materials

Print out or have students read online the interviews with scholars on the website. For this lesson, have students read the interviews with [Manfred Steger](#), [Sheri Berman](#) and [Gareth Stedman Jones](#). Watch the video segments in *Heaven On Earth* focusing on Robert Owen, Marx and Engels, and Eduard Bernstein. Students can also read the profiles in the [Leaders and Thinkers](#) section.

Estimated Lesson Time

3x60 minute lessons. Teachers may choose to show the segments all together or split them up and pause for discussion after each. Play the DVD chapters listed below. The links will take you to that chapter's location within the program transcript.

ROBERT OWEN & UTOPIAN SOCIALISM	9:43
MARX AND ENGELS: BIRTH OF A MANIFESTO	11:19
EDUARD BERNSTEIN & A CRISIS OF FAITH	3:11

Background for Teachers

At the beginning of the 19th century reformers like Robert Owen were concerned with the social conditions that the factory system seemed to be creating. Owen created New Lanark in Scotland as a model factory community. It is widely regarded as one of the earliest examples of open primary education, limited work hours, disabled worker compensation, and other innovations of labor movements in the 19th century.

Owen believed that if you could change the environment you could change the person. This instinct to help his fellow man and a consciousness that class was not inherent in the person but a result of the conditions in which the person lived, formed central themes in socialist thought throughout its development. From this root, socialism evolved through the 19th century and into the 20th. The principal divisions in the movement pivoted two central questions. How do you change human nature: through democratic choices or some degree of state control? And who owns property: the individual, the state or the community? Most nations answered these questions with a spectrum of policies, retaining centralized economic control for some key nationalized industries at the same time promoting free markets in others.

Owen believed that the root evils in society were the institutions of religion, marriage, and most importantly private property. He attempted to create a community without these institutions, hoping that it would change the way people behaved. His attempt to create a utopian community in New Harmony, Indiana failed for a number of reasons. According to

many observers, the new settlers lacked the skills to survive on the frontier, and the community's egalitarian structure removed any incentive to work.

Marx predicted that dire working conditions would lead to a series of revolutions that would transform human beings and ultimately remove the need for a state. The personal relationship between Marx and Engels is a fascinating part of the story of socialism. It is not coincidental that as with most intellectual and political movements, the privileged leisure time afforded by Marx's and Engels' class status enabled them to write the definitive critique of class status.

Bernstein believed that Marx's revolutions would never come because working conditions were improving not worsening as predicted, and that a more realistic path was incremental change within a democratic system.

Teaching Strategy

Play the segments from the film. Guide students through a discussion of the key issues raised by each. Between lessons, have students take home and read interview transcripts for additional perspectives. Divide the students into small groups of 3-4 and have them design their own utopian community in which they decide for themselves how they would answer the key questions that Owen, Marx and Bernstein raise.

Discussion Questions

1. Robert Owen
 - What were working conditions in the early 19th century like?
 - How was life different if you were a worker versus a factory owner like Robert Owen?
 - Why do you think Owen came to America to create his utopian community?
 - What did Owen believe caused society's problems and why?
 - Why do you think New Harmony failed?
 - What institutions did Owen create that continue to influence how we think about work and the workplace?
2. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
 - What did Marx and Engels believe was the problem with the capitalist system?
 - How did they think those problems could be alleviated?
 - Why did they believe revolution was inevitable?
 - Why do you think Marxism was attractive to labor movements across Europe?
 - What does the phrase, "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" mean?
 - How did the relationship between Marx and Engels and their respective backgrounds make the creation of the *Communist Manifesto* and *Das Kapital* possible?
 - How do you think history might have been different if they had not met?

3. Eduard Bernstein

- What changed between the time when Marx and Engels wrote the *Communist Manifesto* and the time that Bernstein was writing?
- What is “revisionism”?
- Do you think social change comes incrementally or suddenly through revolution?
- Can economies share aspects of both Capitalism and Socialism?

Activity

Design a new community like Robert Owen’s New Harmony and present it to Congress. All over the United States during the 19th century, small groups of Americans founded “utopian” communities. They were organized around a wide range of ideas and religions. Each thought they could reinvent society from the ground up and create a “heaven on earth.” Many of these communities broke up after a short time because they failed to address the practical demands of survival on the frontier. Divide into small groups and design your own community. Come up with a name and draw a simple map of the layout of your community. As a group, answer the basic questions below to determine how your community will be governed and how the economy will function.

- Who owns property, the individual, the state, or the community?
- How are decisions made about prices, production, and the availability of commodities?
- How would you provide and distribute basic necessities like food and clothing?
- What skills would the residents need? What encourages them to work?
- What products would the community make?
- Is there a central belief system or religion that the community would be organized around and what happens if people disagree?

Each group should present its community plan to the rest of the class playing the role of Congress. Presentations should emphasize why settlers would likely move to the new community and why it is likely to succeed. After all the plans have been presented, “Congress” should vote on which plan to endorse.

Lesson Two

Capitalism vs. Communism

The Russian Revolution, American Labor at the beginning of the 20th century and Socialism in Canada: Vladimir Lenin and Samuel Gompers

Objectives

Familiarize students with the ideas that shaped socialism and Marxism in the 19th century. Show how those ideas were implemented in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Contrast the reactions to socialism in America and Russia.

Relevant Standards

This lesson meets the following standards set by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/search.asp>):

World History

Standard 35

Understands patterns of nationalism, state-building, and social reform in Europe and the Americas from 1830 to 1914.

Benchmark

3. Understands factors that led to social and political change in 19th century Europe (e.g. the interconnections between labor movements, various forms of socialism, and political or social changes in Europe; the influence of industrialization, democratization, and nationalism on popular 19th century reform movements; the extent to which Britain, France, and Italy become broadly liberal and democratic societies in the 19th century; the broad beneficial and detrimental effects of the industrial revolution on specific European countries).

Standard 37

Understand major global trends from 1750 to 1914.

Benchmark

1. Understands the importance of ideas associated with republicanism, liberalism, socialism, and constitutionalism on 19th century political life in such states as Great Britain, France, the United States, Germany, Russia, Mexico, Argentina, the Ottoman Empire, China, or Japan (e.g. how these movements were tied to new or old-class interests).

Standard 42

Understands major global trends from 1900 to the end of World War II.

Benchmark

1. Understands how revolutionary movements in such countries as Mexico, Russia, and China either drew upon or rejected liberal, republican, and constitutional ideals of 18th and 19th century revolutions.

Historical Understanding

Standard 2

Understands the historical perspective

Benchmarks

1. Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history.
2. Analyzes the influences specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history and specifies how events might have been different in the absence of those ideas and beliefs.
3. Analyzes the effects that specific “chance events” had on history and specifies how things might have been different in the absence of those events.
4. Analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history and studies how things might have been different in the absence of those decisions.
5. Understands that the consequences of human intentions are influenced by the means of carrying them out.
7. Knows how to avoid seizing upon particular lessons of history as cures for present ills.

Materials

Print out or have students read online the interviews with scholars on the website. For this lesson, have students read the interviews with [Nina Tumarkin](#), [Richard Pipes](#) and [Michael Kazin](#). Watch the video segments in *Heaven On Earth* focusing on Lenin, Gompers, and the spread of socialism in Canada. Students can also read the profiles in the [Leaders and Thinkers](#) section.

Estimated Lesson Time

2x60 minute lessons. Teachers may choose to show the segments all together or split them up and pause for discussion after each. Play the DVD chapters listed below. The links will take you to that chapter’s location within the program transcript.

LENIN & THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION	12:48
SAMUEL GOMPERS & AMERICAN LABOR	7:36
CANADIAN SOCIALISM	5:25

Background for Teachers

The period during which Eduard Bernstein rejected Marxism’s prediction of an inevitable revolution and endorsed incremental change through democratic means was also the point at which historical forces in Russia gave rise to violent upheaval. Although Marx expected that industrial Britain would be the most logical place to give rise to the first socialist revolution, it was the predominately agricultural monarchy of Russia to become the first socialist state. Lenin’s interpretation of Marxism rejected the middle stage of socialism and proceeded directly to “communism.” Lenin believed that history could not wait for workers to transform themselves, but instead they must be led by a “vanguard of the people” meaning Lenin and his followers. The devastating consequences of Lenin’s

policies are well documented, but scholars continue to debate whether Marxist-Leninism was an aberration or the inevitable result of a socialist philosophy.

In America, the story of Samuel Gompers asks the central question, “At a time when socialism was sweeping across Europe, why did it fail to become an active political force in America?” This is still a heavily debated point, but there is a general consensus that Samuel Gompers was instrumental in divesting the American labor movement of an overt political association with socialism as in Europe. Socialism’s main support in America came from farmers. These same organizations eventually moved north to influence the growth of socialism in Canada. It is also generally agreed on that Eugene Debs anti-war stance during World War I marked a breaking point in popular support for the American Socialist Party. The interview with Michael Kazin is an excellent resource for the discussion of the labor movement’s relationship with socialism.

Teaching Strategy

Play the segments from the film. Guide students through a discussion of the key issues raised by each using the questions below. These lessons expect that students are familiar with the issues and content raised in Lesson One. If necessary, incorporate a review of Marxism by referring students to the Leaders and Thinkers profile on Karl Marx or re-read the interview with Manfred Steger.

Discussion Questions

1. Lenin and the Russian Revolution
 - How did the ideas of Marx and Engels influence Lenin?
 - Why do you think revolution took hold in Russia first instead of a more industrialized nation as Marx expected?
 - Do you think Lenin faithfully enacted Marx’s philosophy or was it something different?
 - What are the possible negative human consequences of a command economy vs. a free market economy?
 - What was the importance of World War I in the timing of the Russian revolution?
 - How did the history of events in Europe during the 19th century lead up to Lenin’s actions?
 - Why do you think Lenin’s actions were inspirational for socialist movements of the time?
 - Were the negative consequences of Lenin’s policies due to the ideas of socialism or the way that Lenin enacted them?
 - How might the Russian Revolution been different if a person like Eduard Bernstein had been in charge?

2. Samuel Gompers, American Labor movements, socialism in Canada
 - What are the differences between unions, a labor movement and a socialist political party?
 - Why do you think the American Federation of Labor was popular?
 - Why do you think Gompers rejected associations between the union movement and socialism?
 - Why do you think socialism in America was more popular in rural areas among farmers than among union workers in big cities?
 - The peak of the Socialist Party's popularity was prior to World War I and fell off following the war. Do you think the Socialists' anti-war stance hurt their popularity? Why?
 - The Socialist Party's presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs was imprisoned for sedition with the support of President Woodrow Wilson. Why do you think the President chose this position and do you agree with his decision?
 - Do you think a non-violent anti-war protestor could be imprisoned today?
 - Why do you think farmers' political organizations moved north to Canada?

Activity

After the students are familiar with the central issues, divide the class into small groups. Each group should choose to focus on either the Russian revolution or the American Federation of Labor, then brainstorm together reasons why an average person involved in those events would:

- A. Choose to join or resist Lenin's revolution
- B. Join Samuel Gompers American Federation of Labor or join the American Socialist Party.

After class, students should write a short diary entry from the point of view of an average American or Russian witnessing the events depicted in the film. In the diary explain why your character will support one side or the other.

Lesson Three

Critical Thinking Skills: History and Perspective

The history of socialism continues to polarize commentators and participants in ways that make a clear discussion of its history challenging. Students should understand that these clashing ideas and interpretations are both part of the history of socialism and fundamental to understanding its impact on the world.

This lesson uses three examples to make this point: Socialism in Tanzania, the transformation of the British Labour Party under Tony Blair, and contemporary scholars' views on the future of socialism. Each example uses interviews with participants who have directly opposing points of view.

Objectives

In this set of exercises, students will examine historical events through the words of participants with very different perspectives. Students should gain an understanding of the events described but also begin to see how the respective biases of the participants shape their recollection and interpretation of events. These exercises could be used in units focusing on the specific historic periods described or as a way of discussing general historical analysis, bias and perspective.

Relevant Standards

This lesson meets the following standards set by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/search.asp>):

World History

Standard 43

Understands how post-World War II reconstruction occurred, new international power relations took shape, and colonial empires broke up.

Benchmark

5. Understands reasons for the shift in government in Africa and how Africans responded (e.g. reasons for the replacement of parliamentary-style governments with military regimes and one-party states in much of Africa, how Africans survived and resisted apartheid).

Historical Understanding

Standard 2

Understands the historical perspective.

Benchmark

1. Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history.
2. Analyzes the influences specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history and specifies how events might have been different in the absence of those ideas and beliefs.
3. Analyzes the effects that specific "chance events" had on history and specifies how things might have been different in the absence of those events.

4. Analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history and studies how things might have been different in the absence of those decisions.
5. Understands that the consequences of human intentions are influenced by the means of carrying them out.
7. Knows how to avoid seizing upon particular lessons of history as cures for present ills.

Thinking and Reasoning

Standard 2

Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning.

Benchmark

11. Understands that once a person believes a general rule, he or she may be more likely to notice things that agree with that rule and not notice things that do not; to avoid this “confirmatory bias,” scientific studies sometimes use observers who do not know what the results are supposed to be.

Materials

Print out or have students read the interviews online. Watch the video segments in *Heaven On Earth* focusing on Tony Blair, Julius Nyerere and Tanzania, and the two conferences looking at the future of socialism. Students can also read the profiles in the Leaders and Thinkers section and refer to the Timeline for additional information. The relevant DVD chapters of the film are listed below under the “Teaching Strategy” section. The links will take you to that chapter’s location within the program transcript.

Estimated Lesson Time

3x60 minute lessons. Each lesson can be done independently or in conjunction with other segments from the program. Students should read the interviews outside of class after they have viewed the relevant section of the video.

The Tanzania segments combined take 17.5 minutes.

Tony Blair: 14 minutes

Future of Socialism: 7 minutes

Background for Teachers

1. Julius Nyerere and Tanzania

Heaven On Earth follows the story of Julius Nyerere’s experiment with African socialism in Tanzania from 1960 up to Nyerere’s retirement in the 1980s. In the program, this story is broken up into two separate chapters. At the time of gaining independence from Britain, Tanzania was held up by the international community as a development model for other African nations to follow. Nyerere was lauded by the west as an innovator for blending western ideas of socialism with African traditions of community ownership and cooperation. Tanzania received large amounts of economic aid from Europe, the US, and especially Scandinavian nations like Sweden. By the late 1960s, Tanzania was not making the economic progress that Nyerere had hoped for, nor were the people embracing his socialist philosophy to the degree that he had expected. Nyerere increasingly turned to Maoist China for aid and as a model for centralizing economic and social planning. The combination of Nyerere’s forced re-

villagization policies, natural disasters and a war with Uganda ultimately crippled Tanzania's economy. On his retirement, Nyerere admitted that some of his policies were a mistake and since that time Tanzania has gradually begun the transition to a more transparent, market based economy. Paul Sozigwa was a close aid to Nyerere throughout the period discussed in the film. Christopher Mtikila is the leader of an opposition party who has been jailed several times for speaking out against the government. Even in the current political atmosphere of increased openness, Mtikila is a controversial political figure in Tanzania.

2. Tony Blair and New Labour

This story is covered in two basic segments in *Heaven On Earth*. Blair's story begins with the events that led to Britain's "Winter of Discontent" in 1978, Margaret Thatcher's victory over labor, and then returns to the story with Tony Blair's defeat of John Major in 1997. For more background it may be helpful to also show the segment on Clement Attlee. The central argument within the British Labour party revolves around what is known as Clause IV in the Labour Party's constitution. The section (originally adopted in 1918) stresses the importance of "common ownership," essentially defining the party as a socialist party. Blair's innovation was to distance the party from the core tenets of socialism while stressing the success of the popular social welfare programs created under Attlee. Blair called this "New Labour," though his critics feel it is Labour in name only. Blair's supporters say the party's guiding principal should be an emphasis on equality of opportunities within a democratic free market system, not government-dictated equality of outcomes. Blair's critics describe this as a rejection of the party's central beliefs and an effective nullification of the party as an alternative to conservatism. Blair's political success is complicated by his decision to support the United States in Iraq—a subject the program does not directly address. Most analysts believe that despite his unpopularity within his own party and public opposition to the war in Iraq, that his continued success is due largely to this balancing act of Labour's socialist ideals with market friendly policies. Tony Wright is a Labour MP, an historian, and a vocal supporter of Tony Blair's "New Labour." Roy Hattersley is a major figure within the party and an outspoken critic of Blair's attempts to reshape Labour.

3. The Future of Socialism

The program *Heaven On Earth* presents the thesis that socialism as a working philosophy has largely been abandoned, that today even nations that claim a socialist political heritage have turned to market-oriented principals and policies. Experts disagree over the reasons for socialism's decline, what it means for the future, and even the definition of socialism. This exercise pairs a series of short interviews gathered at two scholarly conferences in 2003. Free Market advocates met at "The 1st Annual Capitalist's Ball" in Belgium to discuss "Is Socialism Dead?" Pro-socialist scholars met in New York to discuss the future of socialism. Although the two groups are at opposite ends of the political spectrum, their predictions and analysis converge and diverge in interesting ways. On the left, the socialist movement has in many cases merged with the anti-globalization movement and the anti-war movements. One area of contention is the role of Marxist-Leninism in socialist history and the future of economies based on central planning. Supporters of socialism believe that the fall of

communism clarifies the distinction between social democracies and Marxist-Leninist states. Critics of socialism see communist states as a central part of the socialist legacy and their downfall as proof that socialism does not work. Another argument revolves around the question of the welfare state in democracies. Socialists claim the success of the “social safety net” in America and Europe as a direct result of socialism and proof of its contemporary relevance, where critics attempt to distance these popular programs from their socialist heritage.

Teaching Strategy

Each example below pairs two interviews with historical participants and links to the transcript of the interview on the website. Play the segments from the film. Guide students through a discussion of the key issues raised by each. Between lessons, have students take home and read the paired interview transcripts for each issue. After students have familiarized themselves with the paired interviews and viewed the segments proceed to the activity below.

1. Tanzania and Julius Nyerere

Focus on Africa in the 20th Century with a look at Tanzania’s socialist experiment. Watch the following segments in the film:

<u>JULIUS NYERERE & THIRD WORLD SOCIALISM</u>	8:35
<u>TANZANIA’S UJAMAA VILLAGES</u>	9:02

Compare interviews with Paul Sozigwa, President Julius Nyerere’s press secretary with Christopher Mtikila, the leader of a political opposition party. Most Tanzanians still revere Nyerere and credit him with Tanzania’s strong sense of national identity. Mtikila is unusual in his outspoken criticism of Nyerere’s legacy.

2. Tony Blair and New Labour

Tony Blair led a campaign to change the British Labour Party’s constitution. As Prime Minister he has successfully won reelection several times with his “New Labour” platform. Roy Hattersley, the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party (1983-1992) believes that the changes are a betrayal of the party’s socialist principals. Tony Wright, Labour MP and a historian, believes that Blair’s reshaping of the party’s identity brings Labour into the 21st century.

Watch the following segments in the film:

<u>GREAT BRITAIN IN THE 1970s</u>	6:13
<u>TONY BLAIR & NEW LABOUR</u>	8:02

For additional background on the rise of the Labour party and the creation of many of its popular social welfare programs by Clement Attlee watch:

<u>CLEMENT ATTLEE & SOCIAL DEMOCRACY</u>	8:27	OPTIONAL
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3. The Future of Socialism

Free Market advocates met at “The 1st Annual Capitalist’s Ball” in Belgium to discuss “Is Socialism Dead?” Pro-socialist scholars met in New York to discuss the future of socialism. Although the two groups are at opposite ends of the political spectrum, their predictions and analysis converge and diverge in interesting ways. Discuss the biases reflected in their respective rhetoric.

Watch the following segment in the film:

THE FUTURE OF SOCIALISM

6:46

General Discussion Questions

- In what ways do the two sets of participants disagree about socialism?
- In what ways do they agree?
- Do they use different phrases or vocabulary to describe the same ideas?
- How do their word-choices reflect their respective point-of-view?
- What does each side have at stake that might influence their perspective?
- Do they disagree on facts or interpretations of the meaning of events?
- For any of the participants, do their roles as subjective observers undermine their credibility as sources of historical information?
- Is their interpretation more persuasive because of their involvement or in spite of it?
- How do you reconcile the differences between the two perspectives?

Activity

Divide the class into 6 groups. Have each group take the side of one interviewee or the other in each of the debate topics listed below. Students should discuss the central debate question for their issue with their group and brainstorm a list of at least three key points to support their side of the argument. Each group should appoint one person to present the primary argument, a second for the first rebuttal, and a third for closing remarks. After separate discussion have the students come back together with the group on the opposite side of their issue. In front of the other groups, have each side argue its points. Toss a coin to see which side goes first. Have a student keep time and give a 30 second warning before each speaker's time is up. The representative from each group should speak to the class uninterrupted, with each group taking turns. Allow 3 minutes for each side's main argument, two minutes apiece for each side's rebuttal and two minutes apiece for final comments. The teacher can appoint judges or have the class as a whole give a score to each team in the following categories: clarity of reasoning, presentation, and overall persuasiveness.

Debate Questions

1. Tanzania

Was the failure of socialism in Tanzania due to the way Nyerere implemented his policies or due to a problem in socialism itself?

2. Tony Blair and New Labour

Is "New Labour" a version of socialism or a rejection of the fundamental essence of socialism?

3. The Future of Socialism

Is socialism defunct as a practical theory of governance?

Lesson Four

Socialism in the Jewish Kibbutz Movement

Using interviews with the original settlers of one Israeli Kibbutz and their children, students can discuss the relationship between socialism, religious beliefs and the Zionist movement for a Jewish state.

Objectives

In this lesson students will examine the role that socialism played in unifying settlers in a Jewish Kibbutz and how attitudes toward socialism changed with subsequent generations. Students can compare the experience described by the kibbutzim of Kibbutz Ginosar with Robert Owen's utopian community at New Harmony.

Relevant Standards

This lesson meets the following standards set by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/search.asp>):

World History

Standard 1

Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns.

Benchmark

1. Knows how to identify the temporal structure and connections disclosed in historical narratives.

Standard 37

Understand major global trends from 1750 to 1914.

Benchmark

2. Patterns of social and cultural continuity in various societies.

Standard 43

Understands how post-World War II reconstruction occurred, new international power relations took shape, and colonial empires broke up.

Benchmark

9. Understands how the Balfour Declaration affected British policy toward Palestine and the political goals of the Arab league and the Zionist Movement, and how the White Paper Reports affected Jewish and Arab inhabitants of Palestine.

Standard 44

Understands the search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world.

Benchmark

5. Understands the role of political ideology, religion, and ethnicity in shaping modern governments (e.g. the strengths of democratic institutions and civic culture in different countries and challenges to civil society in democratic states; how successful democratic reform movements have been in challenging authoritarian governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America; the implications of ethnic, religious, and border

conflicts on state-building in the newly independent republics of Africa; significant differences among nationalist governments in Eastern Europe that have developed in the 20th century, how resulting conflicts have been resolved, and the outcomes of these conflicts).

Historical Understanding

Standard 2

Understands the historical perspective.

Benchmark

1. Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history.
2. Analyzes the influences specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history and specifies how events might have been different in the absence of those ideas and beliefs.
3. Analyzes the effects that specific “chance events” had on history and specifies how things might have been different in the absence of those events.
4. Analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history and studies how things might have been different in the absence of those decisions.
5. Understands that the consequences of human intentions are influenced by the means of carrying them out.
7. Knows how to avoid seizing upon particular lessons of history as cures for present ills.

Standard 6

Understands that culture and experience influence people’s perceptions of place and regions.

Benchmark

1. Understands why places and regions are important to individual human identity and as symbols for unifying or fragmenting society (e.g. sense of belonging, attachment, or rootedness; symbolic meaning of places such as Jerusalem as a holy city for Muslims, Christians, and Jews).

Materials

Print out or have students read the interviews online for Daniel Gavron, Moshe Abbes, and Noa Shamir. Play the DVD chapters listed below. The links will take you to that chapter’s location within the program transcript.

<u>THE KIBBUTZ</u>	7:30
<u>THE KIBBUTZ PART II</u>	3:15
<u>THE KIBBUTZ PART III</u>	9:15

If necessary, have students review the information on Robert Owen and New Harmony by reading his profile in the Leaders and Thinkers section of the website.

Estimated Lesson Time

2x60-minute lessons. Together the video segments total 20.5 minutes. This lesson can be done independently or in conjunction with other segments from the program focusing on socialism. Students should read the interviews outside of class after they have viewed the relevant section of the video.

Background for Teachers

The Israeli Kibbutz movement is often pointed to as one of the most successful real-world applications of socialist theory. But as the second generation of kibbutzim came of age, they desired a more market driven society with private property. Prior to the formation of Israel, groups of Zionist settlers banded together into small communities called Kibbutz. Most of the communities adopted socialism as a guiding philosophy in part as a practical response to the harsh physical environment of the border areas. Following World War II and the creation of the Israeli state, the kibbutz became a primary producer for the nation's agricultural products as well as a source of nationalist pride. Young Israelis and Jews from the diaspora are encouraged to spend time on a kibbutz to learn the pioneering values that the kibbutz are seen to represent. The film does not address the Palestinian issues connected to Jewish settlement and independence. This could be an optional area for expansion. Students should be aware that the effects of the 1947 war on Palestinians continue to be a central source of the tensions in the Middle East today. This could be an opportunity for students to explore the history of this region beyond the issues of socialism.

Daniel Gavron is an Israeli scholar who gives an overview of the kibbutz movement. Moshe Abbes is one of the early settlers of Kibbutz Ginosar. He describes the daily patterns of the kibbutz that are informed by socialism and how they have begun to change over time. His daughter Noa Shamir explains why socialism no longer holds an attraction for most of her generation.

Teaching Strategy

Play the segments from the film. Have students read the interview transcripts with Daniel Gavron, Moshe Abbes, and Noa Shamir. If necessary, you may want to review information on Karl Marx and Robert Owen so that students can compare the Kibbutz to earlier utopian communities and the fundamental concepts of socialism. Lead the students through a discussion of the issues raised by the segments. Once students are familiar with the core concepts for the material, proceed to the activity below.

Discussion Questions

- After reading the interviews, why do you think socialism was a popular model for the founders of Kibbutz Ginosar?
- In what way does the economic and political structure of the kibbutz embody the principles outlined by Marx and Engels?
- How is Kibbutz Ginosar similar and different from Robert Owen's utopian community at New Harmony, Indiana?

- Why do you think the children of the early kibbutzim like Moshe's daughter Noa, moved away from socialist principles?
- What role did religion play in the kibbutz?
- Do you think the kibbutz could have survived on a secular basis?
- What were some of the external factors that caused the kibbutz to begin incorporating market principles?
- What role did the kibbutz play in the larger conflict between Jews and Arabs in the Palestinian conflict?
- Why was the kibbutz important to Israel's national identity?

Activity

Oral History: Intergenerational Interviews

Students should find a parent, relative, neighbor, or person in their community who moved to the area from somewhere else. Interview them about their experience. Then interview someone from the next generation in the interviewee's family. Compare the attitudes of first and second-generation immigrants. How do attitudes toward the community change across generations?

If the first-generation person is from within the student's own family, they can choose to interview themselves as the second-generation person in the form of a diary entry. The "immigrant" could be either international or intranational, in other words someone who moved from outside the United States or from a culturally different part of the US. For example, a student could interview someone who moved from the south to the north or from a very rural area to a very urban one. Also "family" can be defined very loosely. This could be parent/child like Moshe and Noa or it could be uncle/niece, grandparent/grandchild, or a non-blood relation like a godparent. The important thing is that the two subjects have a strong relationship and are part of the same "community." Encourage students to look beyond defining community by ethnicity or nationality.

Communities in America are defined by a wide variety of social, geographic, religious, and political factors in addition to ethnicity and nationality. Most Americans belong to several overlapping communities at once. The distinction is that the students should look for an intergenerational pair of people that have chosen to make a life change and in doing so has joined a community. The teacher may want to approve the student's choices of subjects before they proceed.

The students can use videotape, audiocassette recorders, or detailed handwritten notes to record the interviews, whatever is available to them and the least intimidating for the subject. They should submit to the teacher both the original interview materials and a short summary paper comparing the two perspectives. The students should share their results with each other either in a presentation before the class or by binding all of the interviews together and allowing the students to read each other's interviews.

The goal of this project is to get the student to investigate what motivates people to make drastic changes in their lives, what binds communities together, and how those attitudes toward community often change across generations. The people motivated to establish the kibbutz in Israel were strongly motivated by a combination of political philosophy, religion, and national identity. They formed relatively closed communities from the ground up, often under challenging physical circumstances. The students may or may not encounter someone like this in their lives, but there are many parallel experiences that students can discover by going out into their own community.

Give the students the questionnaire below. They should be required to ask these questions as a starting point, but feel free to add their own.

Suggested Interview Questions

Some tips for interviewing:

Avoid yes or no style questions. Prompt the interviewee to elaborate on short answers by asking how or why questions. Follow up on short answers with questions like “Give me an example of that,” or “Can you think of a story that might help me understand what that was like?” If the interviewee is stuck or unsure of the question, you can prompt them with some of the examples, but be sure to allow them to elaborate. Ask which of the examples are the most important? Why?

1st Generation Immigrant

- Where did you move from and how old were you at the time?
- Did you move as a family or by yourself?
- Why did you choose to move here? For example, economic opportunity, political reasons, religious opportunities, family ties.
- How would you define your “community”? For example, by religion (my church), geography (my block), by politics, by ethnicity, by language, by area of origin, by job or class (people who do jobs like mine or have similar financial resources)?
- What kind of help and support do you receive from your community? For example, spiritual, economic, social.
- What kinds of things do you share with your community? For example, financial resources, child-rearing services, vehicles, information about jobs and housing.
- What, in your opinion keeps your community together or reinforces your sense of community? For example food, traditions (describe some), religious attendance, special holidays, language, proximity, the sharing activities described above, clothing.
- Do you see your community as more or less cohesive than when you first arrived? Why?
- Do you see the next generation carrying on the traditions that help define your community?
- How do you feel when you see members of the next generation move away, marry outside of the community, or stop observing religious traditions, etc.?
- Do you think the reasons for the creation of the community or for your moving here have changed, become obsolete or are stronger more relevant than ever?

2nd Generation Interview Questions

- What is your relationship to the first interview subject?
- Do you consider yourself part of the same “community”?
- How would you define your “community”? For example, by religion (my church), by politics, geography (my block), by ethnicity, by language, by area of origin, by job or class (people who do jobs like mine, who have similar financial resources to mine)?
- What kind of help and support do you receive from your community? For example, spiritual, economic, social.
- What kinds of things do you share with your community? For example, financial resources, child-rearing services, vehicles, information about jobs, where to shop, housing.
- What, in your opinion keeps your community together or reinforces your sense of community? For example food, traditions (describe some), religious attendance, special holidays, language, proximity, the sharing activities described above, clothing.
- Do you see the community as more or less cohesive than when you were younger? Why?
- Do you expect to move away from this community? Why?
- How do you feel when you see members of your generation move away, marry outside of the community, stop observing religious traditions, etc.?
- Do you think the reasons for the creation of the community have changed, become obsolete or are stronger more relevant than ever?
- Do you think you feel differently about your community than earlier generations?