

Montana Women at Work Lesson Plan: Clothesline Timeline

Essential Understanding: Montana women have always worked. Discrimination, cultural expectations, and changing technology influenced the types of work women undertook.

Activity Description: Students will use historical photographs to learn about women's changing occupations and opportunities between the 1880s and the beginning of the 21st century. Divided into three sections to be done consecutively, on separate days, or as classroom time allows, the lesson asks students to analyze primary sources (photographs) to draw conclusions about women and work. A PowerPoint lesson follows, providing additional information. Together, these activities inform a wrap-up discussion that will allow students to explore the following topics:

- Continuation over time of certain service professions by women (nursing, teaching, care-giving);
- How and why women faced limitations/barriers in the working world; what some of those barriers were;
- Historical and social factors that contributed to women's ability to expand their professional horizons;
- Examples of women who forged ahead into new occupations previously held only or predominantly by men;
- Comparison of intergenerational differences in work opportunities, occupations and professions among women.

Objectives: Students will

- analyze historical photographs in detail
- apply their observations and knowledge they already possess to form hypotheses
- learn about the different types of work done by women in Montana during different eras in the state's history
- compare work done in one time period with work done in other time periods
- draw conclusions about how women's work (and opportunities) has (and has not) changed over time

Time:

- Part A: Photo Analysis—30 minutes
- Part B: PowerPoint presentation, "Clothesline Timeline" assembly and discussion—45 to 60 minutes.
- Part C: Wrap-up Discussion—15-30 minutes

Content Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

MSSS 4.1. Identify and use various sources of information (e.g., artifacts, diaries, photographs, charts, biographies, paintings, architecture, songs) to develop an understanding of the past.

MSSS 4.2. Use a timeline to select, organize, and sequence information describing eras in history.

Materials:

Part A: Photo Analysis

“Women at Work” photographs (printed from PowerPoint, online at <http://mhs.mt.gov/Portals/11/education/Women/WomenWorkPowerPoint.pptx>)
Worksheet (below, pages 6 and 7)
Clipboards
Pencils

Part B: Clothesline timeline

Clothesline and clothespins
“Women at Work” PowerPoint presentation (online at <http://mhs.mt.gov/Portals/11/education/Women/WomenWorkPowerPoint.pptx>)
PowerPoint Script (below, beginning on page 12)
Decade cards (below, beginning page 7-11)
Photographs and completed worksheets (from Part A)
Strips of white paper about 2” x 8” (one per photo) or index cards
Dark markers (not the skinny ones)
Paperclips
Laptop and projector

Part C: Wrap-up Discussion

Completed Clothesline Timeline (from Parts A and B)

Pre-Lesson Preparation

Part A: Print 35 copies of the worksheet (one per photograph) and photographs from PowerPoint presentation.

Part B: Print out PowerPoint script and review PowerPoint presentation; string clothesline in classroom (along a wall or somewhere else it can be left for a few days and in a place where students can easily reach it to add and view material). Print decade cards and gather other material; set up PowerPoint.

Part C: Review discussion questions.

Procedure

Part A: Photo Analysis

1. Tell your students: “Women did different types of work during different time periods. In this activity, you will be examining a historical photograph of a woman working. In the photo are clues as to what is happening, what time period this work is taking place, and where the work is occurring. Clues may be things like the style of clothes the woman is wearing, the furniture or tools in the picture, or the activity itself. Your job is to look for these clues and then to fill them in on the worksheet.”
2. Randomly distribute one photograph and one worksheet to each student (don’t keep them in order). Tell them they have about 10 minutes to observe the photograph and write down their speculations on the top half of the worksheet (Part One). Students may work independently, but it may also be helpful for them to interact with one another or work in pairs.

Give them an additional few minutes to complete Part Two of the Worksheet (top of page 2). Reassure them that—even if they ultimately do not accurately identify the occupation or time period—if they form a hypothesis (educated guess) based on evidence, they have done this part of the assignment correctly.

Some students work more quickly than others (and some occupations are more obvious than others), so use “extra” photos (each with a new worksheet) for students who finish quickly.

3. Ideally, all of the photos should be used. If not, keep the “extras” and add them to the Clothesline Timeline after completing Part B.
4. If you are doing Part B immediately, proceed with it once the students are ready and done with their worksheets. If not, make sure all students have completed their worksheets and paper-clipped them to the corresponding photograph.

Part B: Clothesline Timeline

Make sure the students have their photos and worksheets from Part A.

1. Give the PowerPoint presentation. The slides are presented in chronological order. At each slide, the teacher should ask students, “Who had this photo? What do you think is going on here?”
2. After the student has presented his/her interpretation of the photo, read the script aloud so that all of the students can learn from the information.
3. Have each student write down the DATE and the OCCUPATION of the woman from his or her photograph on the worksheet (last question). Note: Not all photographs have exact dates.

Explain to your students that “circa” means “about”; students should use circa dates where needed.

4. Each slide will take between 1 and 2 minutes. Because of the large number of slides, time will be a concern, so you will have to keep discussion to a minimum. *There will be more time for discussion after the presentation.*
5. After you have completed the PowerPoint presentation, have the students use the markers to write in LARGE print the date and occupation onto the 2” x 8” strip of paper and paperclip the label to the top of the photo.
6. Distribute the Decade Cards and have students post those on the timeline in order, leaving space between each decade.
7. Then, using the clothespins, have students pin the photos within the appropriate decade on the Clothesline Timeline.

Part C: Wrap-up Discussion

Follow the PowerPoint presentation with a class discussion, using the following questions:

- Which occupations were easiest, or hardest, to identify? Why?
 - Which photographs were easiest to place in the right time period on the Clothesline Timeline? Why?
 - What surprised you most about any particular type of work being done by women at any given time? Why?
 - Identify at least three kinds of work that women did that they did *not* always get paid for. Why not?
 - Which types of women’s work were common in Montana’s past, but not today? Why?
 - Identify three or four types of work that are done differently today, but which remain the same in their overall purpose.
 - Historically, how and why were women limited in the kinds of work they were allowed to do?
 - Which kinds of work/professions have remained the most common among women over the last 130 years?
 - What historical events lead to women doing types of work that formerly had been dominated by men or created new employment opportunities for women?
 - How do you think ethnicity, economic background, or education affect women’s work opportunities?
8. After this activity is completed, you can leave the Clothesline Timeline up in your classroom for students to observe for a few days.

Extended Learning Resource: (Particularly good for 5th-8th grades.)

“The Way We Worked.” <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/twww/>

This website provides historical photographs and text from an exhibit called “The Way We Worked.” It documents Americans at work from the late 1800s through the 1980s. Included are photographs of types of occupations, clothes worn for specific types of work, and images of dangerous types of work Americans have done over the years. A large percentage of the photographs are from the mid-20th century (1930-1950s). Descriptive captions provide information on labor laws, working conditions, women in the workforce and changes in occupations over time. There is also a four-and-a-half minute video.

Historical Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Part One

WORKSHEET

Name: _____

Instructions: Using your skills of observation and speculation, determine what kind of work the woman in your photograph is doing and what her occupation (job) is. Look for clues by answering the following questions to help you with your photo analysis.

1. This photo takes place: ___ inside; or ___ outside. Define the setting:

2. Explain what is going on:

3. Describe what the woman is wearing:

4. List any tools or other objects in the photo that might help you with your analysis:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5. What more can you find? (Other details that may help with your analysis)

Part Two

My analysis of this photograph is:

I think her occupation is _____ because _____

I think this photo takes place around _____ (year or era), because _____

Part Three

What I learned from the Power Point Presentation

Actual Date of photograph: _____

Actual Occupation: _____

1870

1880

1890

1900

1910

1920

1930

1940

1950

1960

1970

1980

1990

2000

2010

Text for Power Point Presentation on Montana Women at Work

Explanation for Teacher:

This PowerPoint presentation accompanies the Clothesline Timeline activity. It provides information about all of the images for the Clothesline Timeline in chronological order. A brief description explains the type of work being done, when it was done, and changes over time (technological, social, political, etc.) that affected women in that particular occupation. Additionally, the descriptions provide historical information regarding women's work in Montana and the historical context of this work.

1. 1875—Photographer's assistant. Phebe Train, Helena. From 1866 to 1876, Phebe Train worked as an assistant photographer with her husband at their stylish portrait studio in Helena. One of her duties was the time-consuming task of touching up the glass negatives, removing blemishes from people's faces. Being a portrait photographer was considered a respectable profession for a woman, particularly if she worked mainly as her husband's assistant. (MHS Photo Archives 951-967)
2. 1880-1890—Laundry workers. Broadwater Hot Springs Hotel Laundry Room, Helena. Working as a laundry maid at the spectacular Broadwater Hotel near Helena in about 1890, a woman earned about \$2.00 per week, which was half of what men earned in similar work. At this time, women were provided with few options for wage-paying work, and many jobs were in domestic services such as laundry, cooking, cleaning, and caring for children. (MHS Photo Archives 945-789)
3. 1893—Artist and teacher. Mary Cecelia Wheeler, Helena, 1893. Mary Cecelia Wheeler, shown in her art gallery in Helena in 1893, founded the Helena School of Art. For more than 40 years, Miss Wheeler taught painting, drawing, sculpting, metal arts, woodwork, crafts, and pottery. Mary Wheeler's art was collected by many prominent citizens, including Dr. Maria Dean, Helena's first woman doctor and Mary's good friend. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 95-11.3)
4. Ca. 1895—Prospector. Millie/Milly Ringold, Weatherwax Mine, Utica. Like her contemporary Mary Fields, Millie Ringold was born a slave, coming to Montana after the Civil War and emancipation. Once here, she staked a claim and operated the Weatherwax Mine near Utica in Fergus County. She operated the gold mine from the 1870s until her death in 1906. (MHS Photo Archives 944-586)
5. Ca. 1897—Postal carrier. Mary Fields, circa 1895-1900. Born into slavery, Mary Fields came to Montana in 1885 to work as a carpenter and gardener at St. Peter's Mission school. From about 1895 to 1905 she delivered the mail through the rough countryside outside of Cascade. Nicknamed "Stagecoach Mary," this brave woman seemed fearless in the face of danger and carried a rifle while driving the postal wagon. (MHS Photo Archives 942-178)

6. 1896—Dentist. Anna Mae Pankey, far right, dental school. Not many women had the opportunity to become doctors or dentists in the nineteenth century, but Anna Mae Pankey was one of the few who did. She attended dental school back east in the 1890s and then moved to Virginia City around 1897, where she became that town's—and perhaps Montana's—first woman dentist! (Museum of the Rockies x85.3.573)
7. Ca. 1900—Culinary instructor and students at Montana State College, Bozeman. When it opened in 1893, Montana State College, now MSU-Bozeman, admitted women – something that many colleges of that time did not do. The college also employed women to teach such classes as stenography and culinary arts. This image shows a woman culinary instructor (in about 1900) monitoring the food preparation of her students, some of whom became professional cooks. (Museum of the Rockies x80.6.60, Schlechten collection)
8. Ca. 1900—Seamstresses. Blackfeet students at Cut Bank Indian Boarding School learn dressmaking, n.d. At the end of the nineteenth century, the United States placed thousands of Native American Indian children into boarding schools, such as the Cut Bank Boarding School in Glacier County. Girls were specifically trained in domestic duties such as laundry, cooking, cleaning, and sewing in the belief that they would not have any greater career ambition than to become domestic servants. These Blackfeet girls are being trained as seamstresses and dressmakers in about 1900. (UM Photo Archives; Mss 638/Sherburne Collection, photo 638.128)
9. 1905—Teacher. Miss May Butler, Mitchell School, 1905. Teaching is one profession that continues to employ more women than men in the United States. When Americans moved west, many of their communities had small one-room schools with only a handful of students and one teacher. Here is Miss May Butler with her students at the Mitchell School in 1905, which is now the Sieben Ranch in Lewis and Clark County. Before 1940, many women teachers were not permitted to marry, and if they did marry they risked being fired from their jobs—and given a rolling pin as a “gift” to remind them that their new “job” was at home as a wife and mother! (MHS Photo Archives PAc 94-44.4)
10. 1908—Dry goods store proprietors. Hannah and Mary McGovern, Virginia City, 1908. Hannah and Mary McGovern ran the Virginia City Dry Goods Store from 1908 to 1945. Women who owned businesses could earn money, but many women and girls who worked in family businesses (owned by men) were expected to work without pay. (MHS Photo Archives 956-138)
11. 1909—Surgical nurses. Sister Camille and Sister St. Charles, St. Joseph's hospital, Lewistown. Many nuns were also nurses. Here Sister Camille and Sister St. Charles assist in the first surgery at St. Joseph's Hospital in Lewistown in 1909. Nuns helped to establish many of the hospitals and nurse-training programs in Montana. Alongside teaching, nursing remains one of the most women-dominated professions in our state. (MHS Photo Archives 949-002)

12. Ca. 1910 —Domestic servants. Charlotte Bachman, cook, with unidentified servant at Alfred Smith house, 618 Madison, Helena. Domestic servants earned a wage working for well-to-do families as cooks, house-keepers, and nannies. Here are Charlotte Bachman (the cook) and another woman servant (probably a nanny or housekeeper) minding the children at the home of Alfred Smith in Helena in about 1910. At that time, approximately twenty percent of American women worked for wages, and forty percent of women wage workers worked as domestic servants. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 83-90.1)

13. 1910—Telephone exchange operator and baker. Beck Bakery and Telephone Exchange, Basin. The woman who owned and ran the Beck Bakery and Telephone Exchange in Basin in 1910 took advantage of a new technology—telephones—to increase her money-making success. In those days, you could not call directly to another phone. Instead, phone calls had to be manually connected by telephone exchange operators. In many Montana communities, combined businesses such as this Bakery and Telephone Exchange were essential for making a living. (MHS Photo Archives 940-785)

14. 1912—Homesteader/farmer. Rosie Roesler at the plow, 1912, Eastern Montana. The Homestead Boom hit Montana at the beginning of the twentieth century, but it was hard work to make a homestead a success. Sometimes men had to leave their homestead claims to take wage-paying work elsewhere, leaving women and children behind to do the homesteading. Women also homesteaded on their own. About 18 percent of homesteaders in Montana were single women, including Rosie Roesler, shown here in 1912, working behind the plow. (Evelyn Cameron, photographer. MHS Photo Archives PAc 90-87.65-6)

15. 1913—Pilot. Photograph by R. H. McKay, Missoula, Montana, taken in Helena. Pilot Katherine Stinson performed at the Montana State Fair in 1913. Among other stunts, she flew bags of mail from the fairgrounds, which she dropped onto Helena's downtown post office, thus becoming one of the first people to deliver airmail in Montana. Although there were many women stunt pilots, there were very few female commercial pilots. In 1928, Esther Vance became the first Montana woman to receive her pilot's license and the twenty-second woman in the United States to receive a limited commercial pilot's license. There are still relatively few women pilots today; of the 53,000 members of the Air Line Pilots' Association, only 5 percent are women. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 949-885)

16. 1914—Postmistress. Hattie Brown Stewart, Melrose. Between 1890 and 1920, Hattie Brown Stewart ran the post office in Melrose (pictured here in 1914). Like telephone exchanges, post offices allowed women to earn a small salary. Postmistresses also had the chance to visit with their neighbors and people from out in the country who only came to town from time to time. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 94-11.23)

17. 1919—Railroad mechanics. Women working at Northern Pacific Railroad train yard, Great Falls, World War I, 1919. World War I brought some changes, mostly temporary ones, to women's work in Montana. As men left for the war, there was a greater need for laborers at home. These women found jobs as mechanics at the Northern Pacific Railroad train yard in Great Falls. In 1919, there were very few women doing this type of mechanical labor in Montana but, because railroad work was unionized, the women received the same pay as men—which was unusual during this period. After the war, most of these women returned to their roles as housewives. (National Archives, Records of War Department, General and Special Staffs 165-WW-595-D-14)

18. Ca. 1920—Boarding house or hotelkeeper. Gertrude Carey Cornelius, Cornelius Hotel, ca 1920, Alzada. Gertrude Carey Cornelius helped operate the Cornelius Hotel in Alzada, a job that required cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry. Women at home did the same kinds of work for their families, but did not get paid for it. Instead, they often had to find other ways of earning enough money to make ends meet. Sometimes stay-at-home women earned money by making dresses, mending clothes, taking in laundry, selling eggs or butter, or making and selling soap. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 83-97.13)

19. 1921—Photographer. Photograph by Evelyn Cameron. By the early twentieth century, Montana had several professional photographers who were women. Not all of them worked in studios. Some, like Evelyn Cameron, traveled widely, taking photographs of rural life. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 90-87.L008)

20. 1925—Switchboard operator. Helen (last name unknown) at Many Glacier Hotel. Glacier National Park considered its Blackfeet employees part of the “cultural attraction” of the Park and required that they “dress the part.” This is Helen, one of the switchboard operators at the Many Glacier Hotel in 1925. Other American Indians worked in Glacier, some as models for artists who wanted to paint the Indians’ traditional way of life. (Bain News Service, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.)

21. Ca. 1930—Musician/pianist. Eileen Brazelton, pianist with Beaudry Brothers’ Orchestra, possibly at the Broadwater Hotel, Helena. Eileen Brazelton was the pianist with the Beaudry Brothers’ Orchestra, a popular Helena dance band in the 1920s and 1930s. By that time, women entertainers and performers were fairly common and it was not unusual for women to make a living in the entertainment world. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 74-104.98N)

22. Ca. 1930—Ranch hands. Margaret Michener Kelly and Mrs. F. Johnson on Ms. Michener’s father’s dude ranch, at Karst Camp, Gallatin Canyon. During the Great Depression some ranch families were able to use their land in a new way to make money—as dude ranches. Tourists from the East and from Europe came to spend time in the country, ride horses, fish, and enjoy the natural beauty. Margaret Michener Kelly and Mrs. F. Johnson (shown here in the early 1930s) worked as ranch hands at Margaret’s father’s dude ranch in Gallatin Canyon. (Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, x84.4.511)

23. Circa 1935—Poultry specialist. Harriette Cushman. Shown here “testing poultry,” Harriette Cushman worked as the Montana extension office's poultry specialist from 1922 to 1955. She was one of the first women in her field. She helped many farmers survive the Great Depression by forming cooperative turkey marketing pools and by helping to upgrade state poultry flocks and improve egg marketing. (Photo from Harriette Cushman Extension Service Records, 1898-1975. Image 20. Courtesy of Merrill G. Burlingame Special Collections, Montana State University Library)

24. 1938—Artist. Elizabeth Lochrie, artist WPA program, 1938, Dillon post office. Elizabeth Lochrie was an artist from Deer Lodge. Near the end of the Great Depression, the federal government established the Works Progress Administration or WPA to put writers, artists and craftsmen back to work. As part of the WPA program, Montana artist Elizabeth Lochrie was hired to paint this mural at the Dillon post office in 1938. (MHS Photo Archives PAC 80-61)

25. 1942—Bacteriologist/medical technician. Woman putting typhus vaccine into centrifuge at Rocky Mountain Laboratories, Hamilton, 1942. Jobs opened up for women interested in science during World War II. With the war came a new need for vaccines to protect soldiers against diseases overseas. Women worked as bacteriologists and medical research technicians at Rocky Mountain Laboratories in Hamilton in the 1940s, helping to develop a new vaccine against typhus, a deadly disease. (Library of Congress FWA-OSI sd03584r)

26. 1943—Marine Corps Women’s Reserve. Minnie Spotted Wolf, at Camp Le Jeune. Women also joined the military in World War II, serving in women’s auxiliary units of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and National Guard. Some joined as nurses, while others became pilots, war correspondents, or worked in military intelligence. The first American Indian woman to join the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve was Blackfeet tribal member Minnie Spotted Wolf, who left her family’s ranch at Heart Butte to serve. (Photo courtesy Geradetta England)

27. Ca. 1960—Manufacturing. Montronics Manufacturing Co., Bozeman. During World War II, many women had worked as mechanics or in manufacturing (making things). After the war, women continued to be employed in assembly lines, such as this electronics manufacturing company, Montronics, in Bozeman. Women employees were paid less than men. They were also in high demand because of their perceived attentiveness to detail and ability to do careful, repetitive work. (MHS Photo Archives PAC 84-91.61)

28. 1965—Clerical workers. Montana State Department of Highways Advertising Department. By the 1950s, many of Montana’s women worked outside their homes. In the 1950s and 1960s, women often took low-paying clerical jobs as secretaries, receptionists, and book-keepers. Many women at this time worked until they had children, quit working until their children were old enough to go to school, and then went back to work in offices, banks, and businesses. Over time, some women moved up into higher paying office jobs. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 86-15, 6520-01)

29. Ca. 1965—Librarian. Alma Jacobs. From 1954 until 1973 Alma Jacobs was the head of the Great Falls Public Library. She became the first African American woman to serve as the State Librarian of Montana. She was also a civil rights advocate and community builder. Like teachers and nurses, librarians were often women. In fact, women founded an estimated 75 percent of the libraries in Montana and the United States. (Photo courtesy Great Falls Public Library)

30. 1975—Broadcasters. Norma Ashby and Maida McCartney. Montana’s first woman radio broadcaster was Maida McCartney, who hosted “The Chinook Hour” on KOJM from 1947 to 1966. The radio station was located in Havre, about twenty miles away, but Maida had a family to care for at home, so she insisted that a radio transmitter be installed in an unused bedroom of her farmhouse. Every day for one hour Maida left off her role as mom, wife, and housekeeper and took to the airwaves of North-Central Montana, offering tidbits of advice, stories, and music to entertain and cheer her many listeners. She’s shown here talking to early T.V. broadcaster Norma Ashby, who hosted and produced *Today in Montana* for KRTV in Great Falls from 1962 to 1988. (Photo courtesy Norma Ashby)

31. 1995—Legislators. Women of the 1995 Montana State Legislature, Helena. Montana’s women won the vote in 1914. In 1916, Montanans elected Jeannette Rankin to be the first women in Congress and Maggie Smith Hathaway and Emma Ingalls to serve in the state legislature. However, it was many years before more than just handful of women were elected to our state government. Here are Montana’s women legislators in 1995. (MHS Photo Archives PAc 95-25.2)

32. 1998—District court judge. Susan Watters, District Court Judge, 13th Judicial Court, Billings. The first woman to serve as Montana state district court judge was Diane Barz, who was appointed in 1979. Even in the 1990s Montana had very few female judges. Montanan Susan Watters, pictured here, was appointed state district court judge in 1998. In 2013, she became the first woman federal district court judge in Montana. (Photo courtesy Casey Page/*Billings Gazette*.)

33. 2005—Accountant and tribal treasurer. Elouise Cobell, accountant. Pictured here circa 2005, Elouise Cobell was accountant and treasurer for the Blackfeet Nation in the 1990s. She successfully sued the federal government for billions of dollars on behalf of many Indian people who had not been paid money owed them by the government for natural resources like oil and gas. (Photo courtesy Robin Loznak/*Great Falls Tribune*)
34. 2011—Aerospace engineer. Dava Newman. Dava Newman grew up in Helena and became a professor at MIT. She is also an Aeronautics and Aerospace Engineer and the designer of the BioSuit—a slim, technologically advanced space suit—for NASA. The suit was still in development in 2011 when this photo was taken. (Photo by Douglass Sonders, courtesy Professor Dava Newman, MIT: Inventor, Science and Engineering; Guillermo Trotti, A.I.A., Trotti and Associates, Inc. (Cambridge, MA): Design; and Dainese (Vincenza, Italy): Fabrication)
35. 2013—Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction. Denise Juneau. Denise Juneau, a lawyer and an enrolled member of the Three Affiliated Tribes (Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara), became the first American Indian woman elected to a statewide office anywhere in the United States when Montanans chose her to be their State Superintendent of Public Instruction (first in 2008 and again in 2012). Here she is in 2013, talking with Browning students about the importance of graduating from high school. (Montana Office of Public Instruction)