Rural Life in a Modern Age

What does it mean to live a modern life?

Where you live has a critical impact on your lifestyle, your options, community services and even your health. Historically, the transition from rural to urban has meant that a household has options to use specialties the community offers and not to rely entirely on its own resources. A bakery can supply bread, a hospital health care, transportation services like buses or taxis, a school graded classrooms and clubs social outlets. On the other hand, rural families avoid urban noise and often pollution, ethnic tensions from different neighborhoods and sometimes the loss of tight-knit neighborhoods and family connections. Depending on one’s priorities, urban or rural living may have more or less appeal.

Rural, Urban Growth

For the first time in American history, the urban population surpassed the rural population in the 1920 U.S. Census. The census showed that 51.2 percent of Americans lived in cities with a population over 2,500 (the definition of urban). In Iowa, rural residents still commanded a distinct majority with 36 percent. But there was a definite trend toward urban living, especially in the big cities in the East, and many Iowans found this disturbing. Descendants of Northern Europeans countries (British Isles, Germany, Scandinavia, Ireland) had traditionally dominated the countryside throughout the 19th century, but Eastern and Southern European immigrants had been swelling Boston, New York, Philadelphia and the manufacturing centers around the Great Lakes. Railroads and automobiles had greatly increased travel exposing Iowa residents to urban values that threatened long-standing traditions. World War I had witnessed the beginning of mass migrations of African-Americans to Northern cities creating new racial tensions. Additionally, due to the collapse of high wartime practices and agriculture growing surpluses created by wartime stimuli, Americans experienced economic hardship.

American values were in flux in the early 1900s. Prohibition was officially the law of the land with the passage of the 18th Amendment but the bootlegging industry and widespread disregard of the law created tensions. The rise of motion pictures and radio brought images of urban life to rural areas. As troops returned home from the fighting in Europe, many hoped that the U.S. could withdraw from international affairs and return to a more isolated foreign policy, but world affairs continued to draw America into diplomatic issues. Technology, economics and political tensions prevented the United States from returning to the pre-war “normalcy” - as President William Harding described it - and the nation would face unprecedented challenges in the coming years with the Great Depression, World War II and the onset of the Cold War in the Atomic Age.
**Supporting Questions**

What did modern life look like at the beginning of the 20th century?
- “Typical Eastern City” Newspaper Article, September 1, 1900 (Document)
- State Street in Chicago, Illinois, 1905 (Image)
- Iowa City, Iowa, 1907 (Image)
- Fort Dodge, Iowa, 1907 (Image)
- Interview of Harry Reece about His First Trip to Chicago, Illinois, November 29, 1938 (Document)

What did rural life look like at the beginning of the 20th century?
- Woman, Man and Child Between a Corn Field and a Stream in Iowa, 1897 (Image)
- Rural Wagon Delivering Mail, 1903 (Video)
- “Country Life,” 1904 (Image)
- Excerpts from the Report of the County Life Commission, 1909 (Document)
- “Special Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Report of the Country Life Commission,” 1909 (Document)
- Family Posed with Haystack and Horse-Drawn Wagon in Dubuque, Iowa, ca. 1910 (Image)
- Children Reading the Sunday Newspaper in Dickens, Iowa, December 1936 (Image)
- Selected Graphs from “Changes in Agriculture,” 1950 (Document)

How did rural people advocate for the conveniences of modern life?
- Excerpt from the Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States, 1891 (Document)
- “Rural Mail Report” Newspaper Article, October 24, 1899 (Document)
- Excerpt from “President's Message” about Rural Mail Delivery, December 3, 1900 (Document)
- “Electricity and the Farm” Newspaper Article, February 28, 1901 (Document)
- “Telephones on Farms” Newspaper Article, December 30, 1902 (Document)

How did rural people advocate for the conveniences of modern life?
- “The Marvelous Vogue of the Automobile,” August 24, 1899 (Document)
- “Is Our Pace Too Fast?” June 18, 1903 (Document)
- “Physical Culture of Beams and Girders,” May 12, 1904 (Document)
- “Woman and Her Ways,” January 10, 1907 (Document)
- “Thomas Edison Prophecies,” July 10, 1907 (Document)
- “Experienced Teacher” and “Newspapers” Article, October 12, 1907 (Document)

*Printable Image and Document Guide*
Additional Resources

“Good Roads and Rural Free Delivery of Mail” by Wayne E. Fuller
This academic journal article was featured in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* and looks at the transition to rural free delivery of mail around the turn of the 20th century.

This journal article follows the progression of road development and its effect on rural America. This includes the passage of the first state-aid road laws, the creation of the first federal road agency and the growth of a strong urban-rural coalition promoting rural road improvements.

“The Revolution in Rural Telephony, 1900-1920” by Claude S. Fischer
This article from the *Journal of Social History* focuses on the evolution of telephone development and technology in rural America.

“Rural Education Reform and the Country Life Movement, 1900-1920” by David B. Danbom
This article, which was published in the Agricultural History journal, looks at the parallels of education reform and rural America.

*Born in the Country: A History of Rural America* by David B. Danbom
This book features a general history of rural America. Ranging from pre-Columbian times to the enormous changes of the twentieth century, the book integrates agricultural, technological and economic themes with new questions social historians have raised about the American experience.
“Typical Eastern City” Newspaper Article, September 1, 1900

Description
This news article described the towns in Hardin County on a drive from Iowa Falls to Eldora, Iowa. While this account was published in The Eldora Herald, the story was written for publication in the Omaha World-Herald.

Full Transcript of “Typical Eastern City” Newspaper Article

Transcribed Excerpts from “Typical Eastern City” Newspaper Article

Printable Excerpt of “Typical Eastern City” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions
- The title of this article is “Typical Eastern City.” What characteristics of Eldora are included in this story to prove that it is a typical eastern city?
- In Harry Reese’s interview, he described himself and his uncle as feeling out-of-place when they visited Chicago. According to this story, would a visitor from the eastern United States feel out-of-place in Eldora? Cite specific evidence from the text to support your answer.

Citation Information
“Typical Eastern City,” The Eldora Herald, pp. 1, 1 September 1900. Courtesy of Newspaper Archive
State Street in Chicago, Illinois, 1905

Description
This view of State Street in Chicago, Illinois, is presented as a stereographic image. These images were designed to be used in a viewing device so the viewer would see a 3D image. These images were popular as a way to see other places.

Source-Dependent Questions
• Chicago at the beginning of the 20th century would have been considered a modern city. What features in this photo would support that statement?
• Which of these features would have been more profitable in an area with a higher population, like Chicago?

Citation Information
Iowa City, Iowa, 1907

Description
In 1900, Iowa City was the 13th largest city in Iowa. While it saw rapid population growth in the 1850s, population growth slowed after 1860 when the state capital was moved to Des Moines. This image shows a panoramic view of an intersection in the business district of Iowa City. A few pedestrians are standing on the sidewalks, and several horse-drawn buggies are tied at hitching posts. The street is lined with two- to three-story brick buildings. Electrical poles are present on both sides of the center street and on one side of the street to the left. Each pole carries several electrical wires.

Source-Dependent Questions
- According to the image, how accessible was electricity to the people of Iowa City? Cite specific evidence in the image to support your answer.
- Compare and contrast Iowa City with Fort Dodge and Chicago. If Chicago and Fort Dodge could be considered modern cities, could Iowa City be considered a modern city? Cite specific evidence from the images to support your answer.

Citation Information
Fort Dodge, Iowa, 1907

Description
This image shows an intersection in downtown Fort Dodge, Iowa. In 1900, Fort Dodge was the 12th largest city in the state of Iowa. The image shows the streets lined with two- to three-story brick buildings. A few people are walking on the sidewalks. Several horse-drawn buggies are in the street. A couple of cars are driving down one of the streets, and the tracks for a tram run down the middle of one street.

Source-Dependent Questions
• Carefully examine this view of downtown Fort Dodge. What features of modern life are visible?
• Compare and contrast this image with photo of State Street in Chicago. If Chicago is assumed to be a modern city in 1900, could Fort Dodge be considered a modern city? Use evidence from the images to support your answer.

Citation Information
Interview of Harry Reece about His First Trip to Chicago, Illinois, November 29, 1938

Description
This interview was collected in 1938 by the Federal Writers' Project, a component of the Work Projects Administration. In the interview, Harry Reece described his first trip to Chicago around 1900. Reece was born and grew up in rural Illinois.

Full Transcript of Harry Reece's Interview

Transcribed Excerpt from Harry Reece's Interview

Source-Dependent Questions

- According to Harry Reese, why were telephones, electricity, the phonograph and trolley cars such a curiosity to him?
- According to Reese, why is his Uncle Bill Brandon well respected at home? Cite specific evidence from the document to support your answer.
- How did Uncle Bill Brandon react to seeing a trolley car in Chicago? According to Reese, why did Brandon react that way?

Citation Information
Bowman, Earl, “[Harry Reece (Daca)...His Story],” 29 November 1938. Courtesy of Library of Congress
Woman, Man and Child Between a Corn Field and a Stream in Iowa, 1897

![Image of a stereograph showing a man, woman, and young boy standing at the edge of a corn field. The corn is on the left, and a tree-lined stream runs on the right. All three people are dressed up, not in work clothes.]

Description
This image is intended to be used in a stereograph viewer. The side-by-side images in the viewer would provide a 3D image. Stereograph images were popular ways to see the world. This image was sold in the United States, Canada, and Britain. These side-by-side images show a man, woman, and young boy standing at the edge of a corn field. The corn is on the left of the picture. It has tassled out and is almost twice as tall as the two adults. The two adults are looking towards a tree-lined stream that runs on the right side of the picture. All three people are dressed up, not in work clothes.

Source-Dependent Questions
- According to this image’s description, this photo is supposed to be a typical scene in the corn belt. According to the image, what typically happens in the corn belt?
- Compare this image to the image of the family posed with a haystack. What features of this stereograph image suggest it was constructed by non-farming people? Use specific evidence from the images to support your answer.
- Compare this image to the description of Eldora. How were both of these sources creating something that non-farm people would have found familiar? (Hint: Consider the clothes in the stereograph image.)

Citation Information
Rural Wagon Delivering Mail, 1903

Description
In the early 1890s, Postmaster General John Wanamaker proposed the extension of mail delivery service into the countryside. In U.S. cities, mail delivery to homes began in the 1860s. Wanamaker's proposal gained wide support in rural areas where farm families often went without mail for days and even weeks at a time. This video created in 1903 showed a typical rural delivery. The subject of the video is the delivery of the U.S. mail in a rural area. The camera was positioned in full sight of a standard rural free delivery post box located in front of a well-kept house and garden. A small boy and girl walk past the camera position in front of the mail box. At that moment, a standard rural horse-drawn postal delivery wagon comes into sight. The postman places the mail in the box, and the wagon continues on its way.

Source-Dependent Questions
- If this video shows a “typical” farm family, what were the characteristics of that family? List specific details about the people and the grounds.
- One of the strongest objections to John Wanamaker's proposal for rural free delivery of the mails was the cost. If the U.S. post office created this video to challenge those objections, what details in the presentation of this farm family could justify the expense of rural free delivery?

Citation Information
“Country Life,” 1904

Description
This “Country Life” image was published as part of a collection about rural life. The collection was published in 1904. The bottom third of the image shows a “typical Arabian horse” and a “typical Percheron horse.” The top of the image shows a scene with pastures on the left and grain fields on the right. One pasture has hogs and the other sheep. The grain fields show a wheat field after harvest and a corn field growing. The left side of the image reads, “Sheep In Pasture. Hogs In Clover. A Typical Arabian Horse.” The right side of the image reads, “Wheat In Shock. Growing Corn. Typical Percheron Horse.”

Source-Dependent Questions
- According to this image, what does life in the country include? Does this image suggest a positive view of country life? Use specific details to support your answer.
- If electricity allowed for lighting the darkness, telephones for communicating across long distances and railroads for shortening distances, what do the gravel road and the fences in the center of the image allow for?

Citation Information
Excerpts from the Report of the County Life Commission, 1909

In this summary of their final report, the Commission on Country Life provided information about the strengths of country life but spent most of the report identifying the weaknesses of country life and making recommendations for resolving those problems. This excerpt from their introduction briefly outlines that information.

Transcribed Excerpts from the Report of the County Life Commission

Source-Dependent Questions

- The County Life Commission began with the ways in which rural life was “prosperous and the conditions...are improving.” What evidence did the Commission provide to support this statement? (Include at least five.)
- Then the Commission pointed out that farm life should not be measured by how it is better than the past, but how it compared to what farm life could be. To what did the Commission attribute the failure of farm life to live up to its possibilities? (Include at least two.)
- The Commission included the list of questions asked of rural people as part of their study. How could these questions be categorized around different aspects of rural life? If the number of questions are an indication of the Commission’s level of concern, about which aspects of rural life was the Commission most concerned? Provide evidence to support your answer.

Citation Information

“Special Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Report of the Country Life Commission,” 1909

Description

In 1890, two events indicated the changing nature of American life. For the first time, the value of manufactured goods was greater than the value of agricultural goods produced that year. And following the 1890 census, the Census Bureau declared the frontier closed since no “empty” lands remained to be settled. Thirty years later, the 1920 census showed that more Americans lived in urban areas than in rural areas. In this moment, when industrial urban life was overtaking rural agricultural life, President Theodore Roosevelt created the Commission on Country Life to investigate rural life and to make recommendations for improving it. In this excerpt from Roosevelt’s introduction to the Commission’s report, Roosevelt identified some of the benefits and weaknesses of rural life.

Full Transcript of “Special Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Report of the Country Life Commission”

Transcribed Excerpts from “Special Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Report of the Country Life Commission”

Source-Dependent Questions

- What had the Commission found about country life in comparison to earlier time periods?
- What did President Theodore Roosevelt think of farmers and country life? Provide evidence from the text.
- What problems did Roosevelt identify about country life? Identify at least three.
- Roosevelt stated, “One of the chief difficulties is the failure of country life, as it exists at present, to satisfy the higher social and intellectual aspirations of country people.” What is Roosevelt implying about farm people in this quote? Which of the images in this text set might support that position? Explain your reasoning using evidence.

Citation Information

Family Posed with Haystack and Horse-Drawn Wagon in Dubuque, Iowa, ca. 1910

Description
This posed image was taken near Dubuque, Iowa, in the first decade of the 20th century. A postcard was created using this image. Postcards were a relatively new invention at the beginning of the 20th century, and a variety of different images were used to create them. A farm family can be seen in the foreground of the photograph. Two adults on the left each hold a small child. Two members of the family pose with pitchforks and hay on the wagon. A fifth member of the family poses on a tall ladder leaning against the pile of hay in the background, and a sixth family member stands next to the wagon. A matched pair of horses are harnessed to the wagon.

Source-Dependent Questions
• Describe the work being done in this image. What type of technology is being used to complete this work?
• Does this image show the effects of modern life? Explain your answer with specific details.

Citation Information
“Family posed with haystack and horse-drawn wagon, Dubuque, Iowa, 1900s,” ca. 1910. Courtesy of University of Iowa Library and Archives
Children Reading the Sunday Newspaper in Dickens, Iowa, December 1936

Description
This photograph was taken in the 1930s, a couple of decades after the other images in this set. The photograph came from the U.S. Resettlement Administration and was taken during the Great Depression. The agricultural sector was an area of concern for the U.S. government during the Depression, and several programs were established to address rural issues.

Source-Dependent Questions
• The full label with this photograph is “Untitled photo, possibly related to: Children reading Sunday papers, Rustan brothers’ farm near Dickens, Iowa. Note convenience of running water in background. This farm was formerly owner operated but they are now tenants of Metropolitan Life.” According to this label, what improvement to rural life did this photo document? What ongoing difficulty with rural life was identified in this label?
• Does this image reflect a similar message as that of the Commission of Country Life? Explain your answer with evidence from the documents.
• How do we know this is a rural home? In what ways could this be considered a modern home?

Citation Information
Lee, Russell, “Untitled photo, possibly related to: Children reading Sunday papers, Rustan brothers’ farm near Dickens, Iowa. Note convenience of running water in background. This farm was formerly owner operated but they are now tenants of Metropolitan Life,” December 1936. Courtesy of Library of Congress.
Selected Graphs from “Changes in Agriculture,” 1950

Description

This series of graphs are from a 34-page document published in 1950, detailing the changes that had occurred in agriculture over the previous 50 years. The report covered changing land use patterns and the major agricultural products produced in the United States during that period, including grain crops, fruits, and livestock. These particular graphs highlight changes to daily life.

Graph 1: This is a line graph showing the decline of the number of horses and mules on farms as the number of tractors on farms increased.

Graph 2: This is a bar graph comparing the number of tractors in use in agriculture to the number of mules and horses. Tractors are reported in the hundreds of thousands and steadily increase from 1920 to 1950. Mules and horses are reported in the millions and steadily decline in numbers in the same time period.

Graph 3: This is a bar graph comparing the number of horses, mules, and tractors in use from 1850 to 1950. The number of horses peaked in 1920 with 20 million. Mules peaked in 1925 at 6 million. Tractors first appear on the graph in 1920 and steadily increase.

Graph 4: This is a bar graph comparing the percentage of reporting farms using a tractor, motor truck, or automobile. In 1920, 30 percent of reporting farms had an automobile, while less than five percent of reporting farms had a motor truck or tractor in 1920. All three categories increased steadily after 1920.

Graph 5: This is a bar graph comparing the percentage of farms with electricity and telephone service. In 1920, almost 40 percent of reporting farms had telephone service. In 1940 that percentage had declined to less than 25 percent before increasing to around 40 percent in 1950. In 1920, less than 10 percent of reporting farms had electricity. That percentage steadily grew to almost 80 percent of reporting farms had electricity in 1950.

Graph 6: This is a line graph comparing the total U.S. population to the farm population beginning with 1910. The graph shows a steady increase in U.S. total population from around 90 million people to around 150 million people by 1950. Meanwhile, farm population declined from around 30 million people to around 25 million people in the same forty years.
Selected Graphs from “Changes in Agriculture,” 1950 continued

Description continued

Graph 7: This is also a line graph, comparing agricultural workers to non-agricultural workers from 1850 to 1950. In 1850, agricultural workers made up over 60 percent of the U.S. workforce. By 1900, agricultural workers were less than 40 percent of the total workforce. By 1950, they were less than 15 percent of the workforce.

Source-Dependent Questions

• According to the Commission on Country Life, farm families were doing better than they ever had before. What evidence in these graphs would support that claim?
• The Commission on Country Life also indicated that farm life was not living up to its possibilities. What evidence in these graphs would support that claim? Cite at least three of the graphs to support your claim.
• Review the features from Chicago, Fort Dodge and Iowa City that were identified as indications of modern life. Were farmers before 1920 sharing in those features of modern life? Provide evidence to support your answer.
• Based on these graphs, would farm life after 1920 have likely lived up to its possibilities? Use evidence from at least three graphs to support your answer.

Citation Information

Excerpt from the Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States, 1891

Description
In the 1890s, the U.S. Post Office began the rural free delivery of mails. The program began as a few test cases in various places around the country. Rural people very quickly saw the benefits of this service and advocated strongly for the expansion of the program. This account was included in the U.S. Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1891, to show the support for the program.

Full Transcript of Excerpt from the Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States

Transcribed Excerpt from Selected Section of the Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States

Source-Dependent Questions
- According to the author, how would rural free delivery affect farm life? (Identify at least three.)
- The Commission on Country Life argued that some of the problems of country life were due to inequity and injustice. What evidence in this account would support that claim? Cite specific evidence.

Citation Information
Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States of America, pp. 125, 1891. Courtesy of University of Michigan
“Rural Mail Report” Newspaper Article, October 24, 1899

Description
Newspapers regularly reported on the expansion of rural free delivery with the opening or surveying of new routes. These news stories often included information about the program and its success. This report came from one of the government officials responsible for developing and overseeing the routes.

Full Transcript of “Rural Mail Report” Newspaper Article

Transcribed Excerpts from “Rural Mail Report” Newspaper Article

Printable Excerpt of “Rural Mail Report” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions
• What effects does W.F. Conger claim rural free delivery has on rural life? Support your answer with specific evidence.
• What reasons did Conger use to argue against city delivery and for rural delivery of the mail? Provide specific evidence to support your answer.
• In the article, Conger stated, “Every community served by rural delivery feels itself set a long distance forward in the scale of civilization and brought into closer touch with the life and progress of the world.” Is he implying that rural families are missing out on modern life? Provide specific evidence to support your answer.

Citation Information
“Rural Mail Report,” The Ottumwa Courier, pp. 6, 24 October 1899. Courtesy of Library of Congress
Excerpt from “President’s Message” about Rural Mail Delivery, December 3, 1900

Description
In this address, reported in Marshalltown's *Iowa Times Republican*, President William McKinley acknowledged the benefits of rural free delivery for farm families.

Transcript of Excerpt from “President’s Message” about Rural Mail Delivery

Printable Excerpt of “President’s Message” about Rural Mail Delivery

Source-Dependent Questions
- According to President William McKinley, what have been the benefits of rural free delivery? Does he consider these improvements as part of the overall changes to the U.S.? Provide specific evidence from the document to support your answer.
- One of the strongest objections to rural free delivery was the potential cost. How does McKinley address that objection? Does he refute it? Provide specific evidence to support your answer.

Citation Information
“Electricity and the Farm” Newspaper Article, February 28, 1901

Description
At the beginning of the 20th century, several new inventions were changing life for many Americans, especially in the cities. Some changes were spreading to the countryside, like rural free delivery, while others would take longer to spread through the countryside. While not all of this author’s predictions would hold true, they did provide a justification for the spread of modern life to the countryside.

Transcript of “Electricity and the Farm” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions
• What predictions are made in the first half of the news story? How accurate do you think those predictions are? Support your answer with specific evidence.
• How does the author describe the farmer? Does this description justify efforts to expand modern life into the rural areas? Provide specific evidence to support your answer.
• Does the description of the farmer in this article support the idea that farmers deserved access to a modern life? Provide specific evidence to support your answer.

Citation Information
“Electricity and the Farm,” The Ames Times, pg. 1, 28 February 1901. Courtesy of Newspaper Archive
“Telephones on Farms” Newspaper Article, December 30, 1902

Description
As modern innovations spread in the cities, rural residents also desired access to those conveniences of modern life. Rural life, in particular, was often viewed as isolated, and the telephone seemed a good remedy. This newspaper article looks at the influence and use of telephones on farms.

Transcript of “Telephones on Farms” Newspaper Article

Printable Excerpt of “Telephones on Farms” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions

- According to the author, what are the benefits of telephones for rural life?
- Why would the phone benefit farm families? Use evidence to support your answer.
- How does this story support the Commission on Country Life’s claim that country life suffered from inequity and injustice? Provide specific evidence to support your answer.

Citation Information
“The Marvelous Vogue of the Automobile,” August 24, 1899

Description
The first automobiles were introduced in the late 19th century. They became more commonly available after 1900 when Henry Ford developed his assembly line production for the Model T.

Full Transcript of “The Marvelous Vogue of the Automobile” Newspaper Article

Transcribed Excerpts from “The Marvelous Vogue of the Automobile” Newspaper Article

Printable Excerpt of “The Marvelous Vogue of the Automobile” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions
• What were the benefits of the automobile?
• Was the author concerned with the costs of the automobile? Why or why not? Use evidence from the article to support your answer.
• The author described the automobile as one of the “marvelous contrivances which modern inventive ingenuity has devised.” What definition of “modern” can be inferred from this quote?

Citation Information
“Is Our Pace Too Fast?” June 18, 1903

Description
This newspaper article, entitled “Is Our Pace Too Fast?” focuses on the words of a New Haven physician. The doctor said at an address before the American Therapeutic Society that weakness of the heart and the circulatory system are common among certain classes of men and women to the high tension of modern life.

Transcript of “Is Our Pace Too Fast?” Newspaper Article

Printable Excerpt of “Is Our Pace Too Fast?” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions
- According to the doctor mentioned in the article, why were some people unhealthy? Provide evidence from the text to support your answer.
- What does this article suggest about the costs of modern life? Use specific details to support your answer.

Citation Information
“Physical Culture of Beams and Girders,” May 12, 1904

With Bessemer process and later Open-Hearth process, steel could be mass produced and began to be used in a wide variety of ways. In cities, steel girders were used to build much taller buildings.

Full Transcript of “Physical Culture of Beams and Girders” Newspaper Article

Transcribed Excerpts from “Physical Culture of Beams and Girders” Newspaper Article

Printable Excerpt of “Physical Culture of Beams and Girders” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions

- The author uses the phrase “Modern Building Construction” in the title. Based on this article, what were the characteristics of modern buildings and their construction? Use specific evidence to support your answer.
- What does the author consider “modern?” Use evidence to support your answer.
- What are the costs and benefits of “modern building construction?”

Citation Information

“Physical Culture of Beams and Girders,” Iowa County Democrat, pp. 7, 12 May 1904. Courtesy of Library of Congress
“Woman and Her Ways,” January 10, 1907

Description
This essay by Estelline Bennett looks at the roles and “ways” of a woman in a modern age. The publication was printed in the *Wood County Reporter* in 1907.

Full Transcript of “Woman and Her Ways”

Transcribed Excerpt from “Woman and Her Ways”

Source-Dependent Questions
- Which women would have been able to lead the life described in this article? What would women in some other classes have been doing? Use specific evidence from the text to support your answer.
- What does this article imply about modern life? How does this description compare to the other descriptions of modern life?
- What benefits were gained by this modern life? What were the costs of this modern life?”

Citation Information
Bennett, Estelline, “Woman and Her Ways,” *Wood County Reporter*, pp. 9, 10 January 1907. Courtesy of Library of Congress
"Thomas Edison Prophesies," July 10, 1907

By the early 20th century, Thomas Edison was a well-known inventor whose work on the incandescent lightbulb, as well as the phonograph and other inventions would have been well known.

Full Transcript of “Thomas Edison Prophesies” Newspaper Article

Transcribed Excerpts from “Thomas Edison Prophesies” Newspaper Article

Printable Excerpt of “Thomas Edison Prophesies” Newspaper Article

Source-Dependent Questions

- How did Thomas Edison invision modern life? Provide specific evidence to support your answer.
- What does this article imply about the benefits of modern life? What would be lost in Edison’s vision of modern life? Would the benefits outweigh those losses?

Citation Information

“Thomas Edison Prophesies,” Manchester Democrat, pp. 1, 10 July 1907. Courtesy of Library of Congress
“Experienced Teacher” and “Newspapers” Article, October 12, 1907

Description
By the end of the 19th century, many children were attending primary school, but most did not attend high school and even fewer attended college or university. The newspaper industry was highly competitive. Major urban areas had multiple papers representing a variety of political viewpoints while smaller towns would have had at least one paper to report on local affairs.

Transcript of “Experienced Teacher” and “Newspapers” Article

Source-Dependent Questions
• Why does this teacher believe that newspapers are important for modern life?
• What definition can be inferred from this article? Is it similar or different from its use in “The Marvelous Vogue of the Automobile?” Explain your answer using evidence from the articles.

Citation Information