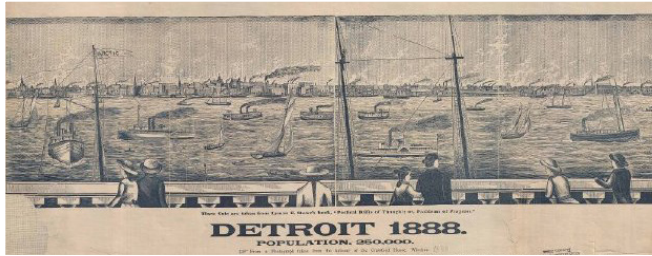


Where
the past
is present

DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TEACHER RESOURCE LESSON PLAN

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS



INTRODUCTION

This lesson helps fourth grade students understand the life and culture in Detroit as it grew into one of the largest cities in the United States. Students will learn about the industrialization of Detroit, as well as the key symbols that still represent the city and its people today. The lesson includes a comprehensive background essay, a list of additional resources, and copies of worksheets and primary sources.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What can we learn about Detroit and the history of its people by looking at maps and street names?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Discover the history of Detroit through the names of its great streets.
- Design a visual display or marker depicting the history of a selected Detroit street.
- Orally present information about a historic Detroit street.

MI GLCES – GRADE FOUR SOCIAL STUDIES

H4 – History of Michigan Beyond Statehood

- 4-H3.0.1 - Use historical inquiry to investigate

the development of Michigan's major economic activities from statehood to present.

- 4-H3.0.2 - Use primary and secondary sources to explain how migration and immigration affected and continue to affect the growth of Michigan.
- 4-H3.0.3 - Describe how the relationship between the location of natural resources and the location of industries (after 1837) affected and continues to affect the location and growth of Michigan cities.

COMMON CORE ANCHOR STANDARDS - ELA

Reading

- 1 - Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- 9 - Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Speaking and Listening

- 1 - Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- 2 - Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

BACKGROUND ESSAY

By the 1860s, Detroit's transformation from frontier outpost to bustling metropolis was almost complete. In 1870, the city's population was 79,577. The city covered almost 13 square miles, and it ranked 18th in size in the United States. The city boasted over 14,000 homes, 52 churches, 24 public schools, and 14 hospitals and asylums. Detroit's streets were littered with horse-drawn streetcars. In 1886, streetcar lines covered 42 miles of streets in the city of Detroit. In 1893, the streetcar horses were replaced by new electric trolleys.

Immigration from foreign countries was beginning to peak. Nearly half of all Detroiters were born outside the United States, with the highest-percentage coming from Germany, Ireland, Poland and Canada.

Detroit's economy was booming. One of the largest industries in the 1870s was copper smelting. Raw copper ore was shipped from Michigan's Upper Peninsula to Detroit, where it was processed in factories. "Smelting" is the process of removing minerals and other contaminants from the ore in order to make pure metal.

The copper was then made into several products, like wiring, pipes, jewelry and other items. By the 1880s, Detroit was also known for its iron foundries. In addition to refining the raw iron ore, several manufacturers melted the iron until it was a red hot liquid, and poured it into molds to make stoves, candle holders, tools, building facades and other products.

The Original "Big 3"

By the 1890s, Detroit had emerged as a center of heavy industry. The availability of iron ore in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and easy access to coal via the Great Lakes made Detroit an ideal place for factories. Manufacturers were building names for themselves and the city in three key industries: railroad cars, stoves and ship building.

The railroad helped jump start Detroit's

development, and Detroit became known for manufacturing railroad cars. It was the largest industry in Detroit in the 1890s. In 1892 several companies, including the Michigan Car Company, Peninsular Car Company, the Russel Wheel and Foundry Company and the Detroit Car Wheel Company merged to become the Michigan-Peninsular Car Company. The company made train wheels and frameworks for rail cars, as well as innovated on car design. In 1868, Detroitier William Davis patented the first refrigerator rail car. He sold the design to George H. Hammond, a Detroit meat packer, who built a set of cars to ship his meat to the east coast. It used ice harvested from the Great Lakes to keep it cool. Even railroad sleeper car innovator George Pullman manufactured his cars in Detroit in the 1870s.

In the middle of the 19th century, Detroiters had to purchase cast iron wood and kitchen stoves from upstate New York. It took a lot of time and a lot of money to ship stoves and repair parts to Detroit. In 1861, Jeremiah Dwyer,

an apprentice stove maker from Albany, New York, began dabbling in the manufacture of cast iron stoves in Detroit. By 1864, his Detroit Stove Company was making stoves that were noted across the country for their quality. By the 1870s, the company had grown so large that it changed its name to the Michigan Stove Company, and declared Detroit the "stove capital of the world."

They commemorated their title at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago with a monumental structure: the world's largest stove, which was a replica of their Garland wood stove that was carved from wood, weighed 15 tons and stood 25 feet tall. (The stove had been restored and erected at the Michigan State Fairgrounds in 1974. It burned to the ground in August 2011 when it was allegedly hit by lightning.) Other stove manufacturers in Detroit included the Peninsular Stove Company.



LESSON PLAN: TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

The availability of natural resources also made Detroit a shipbuilding center by the 1870s. Early entrepreneurs had built “dry docks” on the Detroit River in the 1850s. Dry docks were landings in a harbor next to a pier where ships were loaded and unloaded or repaired. Most had a series of gates to let water in and out. In 1879, the Detroit Dry Dock Company purchased a large shipyard in Wyandotte, Michigan and began building massive fresh water vessels. Factories that made marine engines, steam boilers, and ship parts sprung up all over the city. By 1905, Detroit shipbuilding companies were manufacturing nearly half of all ships – both freight and passenger – on the Great Lakes.

In addition to heavy industry, Detroit was also known for making a host of other consumer goods. Turning lumber from northern Michigan into boards was still an important industry, as well as making leather and fur goods and clothing, cigars and tobacco products, boots and shoes, soap and candles, seeds, and pharmaceuticals.

Dexter Ferry founded the D. M. Ferry & Co., a flower and vegetable seed producer, in Detroit in 1879. People can still buy seeds from the company today. Many common products and businesses that are familiar today got their start in the late 1800s, including Vernor’s ginger ale, Sander’s ice cream shops, Hudson’s department store, Stroh’s beer and Kresge 5 and 10 (now known as Kmart).

Detroiters were hard workers. The new industries required both skilled and unskilled workers. Many of the foreign-born immigrants found jobs in factories. Women would sew or make cigars, and men would work long hours in the factories. A normal work week was ten hours a day, six days a week. Most laborers earned about \$1.00 per day. The city also had many professional jobs. Hundreds of doctors, lawyers, dentists, barbers, merchants, and clerks worked in offices spread across the city.

Progressive Detroit

Hazen S. Pingree was a cobbler who moved to Detroit after serving in the Union Army during the Civil War. In Detroit, he quickly found success as a shoe manufacturer, and by the early 1880s he and partner, Charles H. Smith, were the largest shoe and boot manufacturer in the Midwest.

In the 1880s, Pingree was upset and angry by the corruption he saw in Detroit’s city government. He had a distrust of private companies that did business for the city, such as paving streets, building sewers and supplying electric and gas, which he felt were taking advantage of city contracts and charging exorbitant fees. Pingree ran for the office of Detroit mayor and was elected in 1889.



Pingree’s administration was known for fighting corruption in the city. He challenged the privately-owned electric and gas monopolies by creating municipally-owned competitors. His largest and most public struggle was against the private

Detroit City Railways. He felt they overcharged patrons and demanded they lower their fares to three-cents per ride. He even tried to create a competing municipally-owned streetcar company, but did not succeed because it was prohibited by the Michigan Constitution.

In 1893, Detroit and the country faced a severe economic depression. Pingree took action by creating public welfare programs and initiating public works projects for the unemployed which built new schools, parks, and public baths. In 1894, Pingree won national acclaim for his “potato patch plan.” He arranged for vacant city land, both public and private, to be converted to vegetable gardens that would provide food for the city’s poor. Pingree even funded part of the garden plan with his own money.

In 1896, Pingree was elected Governor of Michigan. He still had one year left as mayor of Detroit, and he intended to serve in both positions

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at the same time. However, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that he could not hold two elected offices at once because it created a conflict of interest. As a result, Pingree resigned as mayor. During his four years as Michigan's governor, Pingree advocated for several reforms, including direct election of U.S. senators, an eight-hour workday and a regulated income tax.

Conclusion

Detroit at the turn of the 20th century was an exciting and overwhelming place. The city had grown from a mainly agrarian place to a bustling industrial city in less than 75 years. The population skyrocketed as foreign and native immigrants arrived in the city to work in the factories. Detroit grew faster than it could handle, and politicians like Hazen Pingree worked hard to ensure that the growth was regulated and fair, and that the citizens' interests were considered and protected.

With its three key industries – cast iron stoves, railroad cars, and marine engine and ship building – providing ideal infrastructure, Detroit was primed to take on the 20th century's newest industrial innovation, the horseless carriage. Although Detroit was not the only city building automobiles in the early 1900s, key innovators like Ransom Olds, Henry Ford and the Dodge Brothers ensured that 20th century Detroit would become known as the "Motor City."

MATERIALS USED:

Data Elements

- *Taking it to the Streets*
- *Detroit Street Names Honor Early Settlers*

LESSON SEQUENCE:

1. Have the students discuss the origins of their own names. For example, are they named after a family member? Do their last names show a specific heritages? Discuss how cities, streets and buildings (including the school, if applicable) are often named after people.
2. Provide students with the *Detroit Street Names Honor Early Settlers*. It presents information on several Detroit street names.
3. Ask the students if they have ever seen a historic marker. Explain that they will be designing a visual display or historical marker for one of the six streets they will be studying.
4. Divide students into six groups to study selected Detroit streets. They may use information from *Taking it to the Streets* and the school library.
5. Ask each group to create a visual display for their historic street. Use paper or poster board and include artwork, flowers, statues, and historical markers.
6. Have each group present their visual display or historical marker to the rest of the class.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Present the displays at a school assembly during Michigan Week in May.
2. Do a study on the origins of other street names or the names of buildings in the community.

LESSON PLAN: TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Soo Locks Webcam. Soo Locks Boat Tours. 23 November 2011. <http://www.soolocks.com/cam.phtml>

TEACH Great Lakes. Great Lakes Information Network. 23 November 2011. <http://www.great-lakes.net/teach/>

Tilden Mine Tour. Hunt's Guide to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. 23 November 2011. http://hunts-upguide.com/ishpeming_tilden_mine_tour.html

For more information about the **Detroit Historical Society**, or to schedule a field trip to the **Detroit Historical Museum** or **Dossin Great Lakes Museum**, visit detroithistorical.org

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

The streets of Detroit tell the story of local history. Many of the streets are named after local settlers, farmers, merchants, mayors, and statesmen who were the civic and economic leaders in historical and contemporary Detroit. These men and women contributed financially, socially and culturally to Detroit and Michigan.

Judge Augustus B. Woodward created the original plan for the layout of Detroit streets. It was to be patterned after Washington, D.C. and included two hundred foot wide boulevards, running north and south and east and west at right angles. Diagonal streets between the boulevards intersected to form circular plazas, or “circuses,” that would look like the spokes of a wagon wheel. Some of these same features can be seen today.

- **WOODWARD AVENUE:** This major street splits Detroit in East and West sides. It starts downtown, just beyond Hart Plaza and the statue of Joe Louis’ Fist and goes all the way to Pontiac. It was the site of an important civil rights march in the 1960s led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It is also the location of the annual Woodward Dream Cruise, and has elated many a child in November as the venue of the annual Thanksgiving Day Parade. This important avenue was named after Judge Augustus Woodward. Judge Woodward is credited with designing Grand Circus Park, the circular area of intersecting streets between Cass and Randolph streets, after the area was totally destroyed by a fire in 1805. Judge Woodward modeled the interesting design after the plan for Washington, D.C., which was laid out by Pierre Charles L’Enfant and Benjamin Banneker. Woodward Avenue also became the nation’s first concrete highway when the Wayne County Road Commission paved the section between Six Mile Road (McNichols) and Seven Mile Road in 1909.
- **CASS AVENUE:** This street, which is parallel to and one block west of Woodward, was the front border of the Cass Farm Company,

a ribbon farm that extended all the way to the Detroit River. It belonged to the family of Governor Lewis Cass, listed in many sources as Michigan’s most famous citizen.

- **MICHIGAN AVENUE:** When it was paved, Michigan Avenue was the longest street in the country. It began as a Native American footpath known as the Sauk Trail and extended from Fort Ponchartrain (Detroit) to Fort Dearborn, which was the founding site of Chicago. Today, Michigan Avenue is known in Chicago as Chicago Road. In the 1950s, Michigan Avenue had the nickname of “Skid Row” because of its many dirty bars, troublemakers, and cheap housing for former prison inmates. In the 1960s, urban renewal projects cleaned up the street.
- **GRAND BOULEVARD:** Early in the 1900s, wealthy Detroit citizens decided that they “deserved a scenic road around the city upon which pleasant Sunday drives might take place.” The location they chose was Grand Boulevard, which makes a semi-circle around Detroit, three miles north of Grand Circus Park. Later, in the 1950s, it became the home of Motown Record’s Studio A. Many Detroiters refer to Grand Boulevard simply as “The Boulevard.”
- **PINGREE STREET:** This street was named after one of Detroit’s most famous mayors, Hazen S. Pingree. In the 1890s, when the country was suffering from an economic recession, Pingree helped feed the poor and hungry by creating vegetable gardens around the city. He earned the nickname of Hazen “Potato Patch” Pingree.

Today, when new street names are proposed, they are approved by the City Council. City heroes and important people are remembered with honorary street names.

DETROIT STREET NAMES HONOR EARLY SETTLERS (PAGE 1)

By Mary Bailey / The Detroit News

<http://apps.detnews.com/apps/history/index.php?id=199>

Some of the names of the earliest streets of Detroit are obscure in origin, but most will tell their own story of the founders and builders of Detroit.

Michigan territorial judge Augustus B. Woodward was the author of the plan to rebuild Detroit after a fire in 1805 nearly destroyed it. The Woodward Plan was modeled after Washington, D.C. It called for 200-foot-wide boulevards to run north and south and east and west at right angles. Diagonal streets running between the boulevards would intersect at the same points, forming circular plazas, or “circuses,” much as a hub of a wagon wheel does with its spokes. Disputes modified the plans a bit, but remnants of the original plan are still visible in Detroit today. Woodward Avenue was named after Woodward, who, in addition to being a judge, was president of one of Detroit’s earliest banks and a colonel in the First Regiment of the Territorial Militia. He insisted that the street was not named in his honor but simply because it “ran towards the woods.

- **John R, Elizabeth and Columbia Streets** are named for personal reasons. John R. Williams was a landowner, merchant and bank president in the first half of the 19th century, who named the street after himself. Baptized John Williams, he adopted the letter “R” to distinguish himself from another John Williams in Detroit. Some of his business ventures, such as publishing an early newspaper, included his uncle, Joseph Campau. Williams was a general in the Territorial Militia, a member of the board of trustees at the “new” University of Michigan and the first elected Detroit mayor in 1824. Williams named Elizabeth after his daughter and Columbia after a street where he lived in Albany, New York.
- **Witherall** was named after James Witherall, who succeeded Frederick Bates as one of the first Michigan territorial judges in 1808. He was a major in the War of 1812 and commanded General William Hull’s army in Detroit. He was Territorial Secretary in 1828 and prompted the establishment of a public school system.
- **Abbott Street** was opened in 1835 and was named for James Abbott Jr., born in Detroit

in 1776. His father, James Abbott Sr., came to Detroit in 1768 and organized a fur trading partnership with several local men. James Jr. was educated in Montreal, and followed his father into the fur business. His first Detroit store was near the southwest corner of Woodward Avenue and Woodbridge. He also was postmaster from 1806 to 1831. His home, store, post office and fur warehouse were all located below Woodbridge on Woodward. Abbott was also the first to grow tomatoes in the area.

- **Randolph Street** was named after John Randolph, the Virginia statesman and orator in the early 1800s.
- **Brush** was named after Edmund Askin Brush, son of Elijah Brush, who was a leading lawyer and Detroit’s second appointed mayor. Brush Street was also the Brush property boundary. Edmund studied law, as did his father before him. He was Secretary to the Governor and judge of the Michigan Territory in 1823, a private secretary to Lewis Cass in 1826, a court recorder, a member of the City Planning Commission and a police commissioner.
- **Beaubien and St. Antoine** originated from the two Beaubien brothers, Lambert and Antoine, each of whom received half of the family farm after the death of their father, Jean Baptiste Beaubien, one of the first white settlers on the river, opposite Fort Dearborn. Lambert was a colonel in the First Regiment of Detroit’s militia. He fought in the War of 1812. Antoine chose to name his property after his patron saint, St. Antoine. Antoine was a lieutenant colonel in the Michigan Territorial Militia. He donated a chunk of his land for the Sacred Heart Academy, once located at the corner of Jefferson and St. Antoine.
- **Griswold** was named by Michigan Territorial governor William Woodbridge in honor of Governor Roger Griswold of Connecticut.
- **Park Avenue** received its name in 1835 because of its starting point at Grand Circus Park.
- **Fort and Shelby Streets** were named after Fort Shelby, which was located there. The western point of Fort Street was opened and named

DETROIT STREET NAMES HONOR EARLY SETTLERS (PAGE 2)

in 1827 when the remains of Fort Shelby were razed. The fort was named after Gov. Isaac Shelby of Kentucky, who aided Michigan in the War of 1812 with troops from his home state.

- **Clifford** has a bit of humor attached to its name. Thomas Cliff owned the only home in this area of the city and ran a tavern where the David Whitney Building now stands. A creek crossed the road near the tavern and overflowed onto the road in the spring. When the festive set of Detroit wanted some merry-making, they usually went up to Cliff's place and crossed over the creek by means of stepping stones. When the roisterers returned they had great difficulty keeping on the stones, so they would return to town wet to their knees (sometimes even elbows). The townspeople referred to the crossing as "Cliff's ford." It first appeared on a map published by John Farmer in 1835.
- **Washington Boulevard** was originally named Washington Grand Avenue after General Washington, according to the Woodward Plan. In 1828 it was renamed Wayne after General Anthony Wayne, the American commanding officer at Detroit in 1796. The street was later renamed again after the first president.
- Like a number of other streets located west of Woodward, **Cass** was once a farm boundary line. The Lewis Cass farm, purchased from the Macomb family, was one of the largest Detroit farms, the width of Cass to Third Street and north from the Detroit River to Grand Boulevard in length. The 500 acres bought for \$12,000 and the subsequent growth of Detroit made Cass a very wealthy man. Cass came to Detroit as a schoolmaster in the early 1800s and became a lawyer, a colonel in the militia, and a general in the U.S. Army. In 1813 President James Madison appointed Cass the second governor of the Michigan territory, a post he held for 18 years. He became a U.S. Senator from Michigan in 1845. In 1848 he ran for president as a Democrat, but lost to Whig Zachary Taylor. He served in the Senate until 1857 and was President James Buchanan's Secretary of State. Cass Street was located immediately west of Fort Shelby, and after Cass the streets were named numerically First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, signifying their order west from the fort.
- **Atwater** was named for Reuben Attwater (the spelling was different but early Detroiters didn't seem to care) and because the street was "at the water." Attwater was Secretary of the Michigan Territory in 1808 and was acting governor in the absence of Gov. William Hull in the 1800s.
- William Woodbridge owned land west of the Cass farm and was active in early Detroit government. He was secretary of the Michigan Territory in 1814, a Michigan representative to Congress in 1819, territorial judge in 1827, governor of Michigan in 1839 and U.S. senator in 1841. His legacy is remembered in **Woodbridge Street**.
- **Jefferson Avenue** was named for President Thomas Jefferson, who appointed the first Michigan territorial officials and was a good friend of Augustus Woodward. It was first surveyed in 1807 and named "Main Street," but soon renamed for Jefferson. At its intersection with Griswold it passes through the heart of the old cemetery of St. Anne's Church where the remains of Detroit's earliest inhabitants are buried.
- **Joseph Campau** was named for one of the wealthiest and best known citizens of Detroit. His grandfather came here with Cadillac, the founder of Detroit, and established what were afterwards known as James Campau, Chene and Poupard farms. Joseph Campau was a descendant of the third generation, born in Detroit in 1769. He opened a store on Atwater and became the first Detroit merchant to buy goods in Boston. He was the first real estate promoter of Detroit, who made a business of buying vacant lots and building homes on them to sell or rent.
- **Larned's** namesake was General Charles Larned. He settled in Detroit after assisting General William Henry Harrison in ridding the town of the British in the War of 1812. He became a U.S. attorney in 1814 and served in local government.
- **Congress** was named in honor of the 1826 Congress. In that year, Congress granted to

DETROIT STREET NAMES HONOR EARLY SETTLERS (PAGE 3)

Detroit the military reserve through which the street ran.

- **Macomb** owes its name to the Macomb family, one of Detroit's earliest settlers. They owned large parcels of land and at one time owned Hog Island, later named Belle Isle.
- **State Street** was named in 1835, the year the State of Michigan was organized. The capitol was on the street until 1847, when it was moved to Lansing.
- **Cadillac Square** and the street were named after Detroit's founder, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac.
- **Gratiot** originally led to Fort Gratiot, near Port Huron. The fort was named after Colonel Charles Gratiot of General William Henry Harrison's army.
- **Bagley Avenue** commemorates John J. Bagley, who served two successive terms as Michigan governor from 1877 to 1881. Bagley made Detroit a chewing tobacco leader in the 1840s with Mayflower chewing tobacco. He was also the first president of Michigan Mutual Life Insurance in 1867, a bank trustee, and police commissioner in 1865.
- **Grand River** was part of the original road that led west from Detroit to the Grand River at Grand Rapids.

- **Chandler** is the namesake of Senator Zachariah Chandler, a leading merchant, former mayor of Detroit (1851) and founder of the Republican party. The Detroit News building on Lafayette was built on the site of his former home.

These are just some of the street names that were given by common consent and without official sanction. Today, street names are proposed by the City Planning Commission and approved by the City Council and mayor. The city still honors Detroit heroes by bestowing honorary names on streets.

In the 1970s Twelfth Street was changed to Rosa Parks Boulevard, to honor the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement," and Cherry Street was renamed Kaline Drive, in honor of Tigers great Al Kaline. More recently, Linwood Boulevard was called Elijah Muhammed Boulevard, after the former Nation of Islam leader, in one area, and C.L. Franklin Boulevard in another to commemorate the founder of New Bethel Baptist Church, the father of Aretha Franklin.

Whatever the name, the city's streets are a visible outline of Detroit's political, geographical and industrial history.