INTRODUCTION

World War II offered many American women the opportunity of a lifetime. Good paying jobs were suddenly available to females in industries who had previously denied them entry. Instead of being frowned upon, working outside of the home was seen as patriotic. But with opportunity also came discrimination.

Bring your 9th - 12th grade students to the movie screen to judge for themselves if the United States government was looking out for the best interest of women or was guilty of perpetuating the second class status of females.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

• Gain perspective about industrial working women during WWII
• Recognize difficulties male workers faced working with women for the first time
• Formulate a position on work place discrimination during WWII
• Evaluate and analyze a primary source

ERA

USHG Era 7- The Great Depression and World War II (1920-1945)

MI GLCES

HSCE 7.2.3 Impact of WWII on American Life – Analyze the changes in American life brought about by U.S. participation in World War II including

• mobilization of economic, military, and social resources
• role of the home front in supporting the war effort (e.g., rationing, work hours, taxes)

ELA COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

ANCHOR LITERACY STANDARDS

• CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
• CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

DETROIT DURING WWII: WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

CREATED BY

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Women working at the Willow Run plant, c. 1943. Courtesy of the Library of Congress
LESSON PLAN: WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

• CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

TIME REQUIRED
One class period, depending on the discussion and if the extension activity is completed.

MATERIALS USED
• Computer/Smartboard/projector to display a video linked to the internet
• Follow link to the “Problems in Supervision: Supervising Women Workers” video http://www.signalalpha.com/SupervisingWomenWorkers_1944_320x240.wmv
• Primary Source Analysis Sheet or Student Comparison Organizer

LESSON PREPARATION
• Prior to the lesson, the teacher should decide which activity they will use to analyze the training video.
• The teacher should also become familiar with the need for industrial workers during WWII.
• The following link to the National Park Service study of Rosie the Riveter offers a nice overview to help teachers understand the issues women faced while working during World War II. http://www.nps.gov/pwro/collection/website/rosie.htm

LESSON SEQUENCE
Activity One
1. Ask students, “What challenges do you think women faced working in war production plants during WWII?” Discuss with students their answers.
2. Pass out the Primary Source Analysis Tool from the Library of Congress.
3. Introduce the “Problem in Supervision: Supervising Women Workers” video. Make sure the students understand that the video was created by the U.S. Government under the U.S. Office of Education as a training film for new male supervisors in war production plants.
4. Have students fill out Primary Source Analysis Tool while they watch the video.
5. Allow the students to discuss with a partner their answers from the Primary Source Analysis Tool.
6. As a class, ask students to share their reaction to the movie.
7. Discuss with the class why female workers were treated this way. What roles in society encouraged this kind of treatment?
8. Discuss with students their answers to the Further Investigation section. Allow students to expand on other student’s ideas.

Activity Two
1. Ask students, “What challenges do you think women faced working in war production plants during WWII?”
2. Pass out the Comparison Organizer and allow students to brainstorm this question with a partner. Have them record their ideas on the Comparison Organizer.
3. Introduce the “Problem in Supervision: Supervising Women Workers” video. Make sure the students understand that the video was created by the U.S. Government under the U.S. Office of Education as a training film for new male supervisors in war production plants.
4. Have students fill out the What You Saw column of the Comparison Organizer while they watch the video.
5. Allow the students to discuss with their partner how their answers were the same or different from what they predicted women would be treated like during World War II.
6. As a class, ask students to share their reaction to the movie. Allow students to volunteer the answers they predicted during the brainstorming session.
7. Discuss with the class why female workers were treated this way. What roles in society encouraged this kind of treatment?
8. Discuss with students and allow them to record on their Comparison Organizer how the workplace has changed or stayed the same today. Reflect with students about their answers.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY
Allow students to watch the video again. This time, have students document every attribute female workers brought to the workplace. Have students create a skit of a new training video from the WWII era which highlights the attributes female workers brought to the workplace.

EVALUATION
- Primary Source Analysis Tool or the Comparison Organizer
- Feedback shared by students to the class during the activity.
- Extension Activity skit

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
Rosie the Riveter, [http://www.history.com/topics/rosie-the-riveter](http://www.history.com/topics/rosie-the-riveter)

For more information about the [Detroit Historical Society](http://detroithistorical.org), or to schedule a field trip to the [Detroit Historical Museum or Dossin Great Lakes Museum](http://detroithistorical.org), visit detroithistorical.org
Directions: Before watching the video, “Problems in Supervision: Supervising Women Workers”, write down three predictions of how you believe new male supervisors will be trained to deal with female workers during World War II. As you watch the training video, write down at least five forms of biased treatment toward female workers. After watching the video, reflect with your classmates and provide examples of how female workers are treated today.