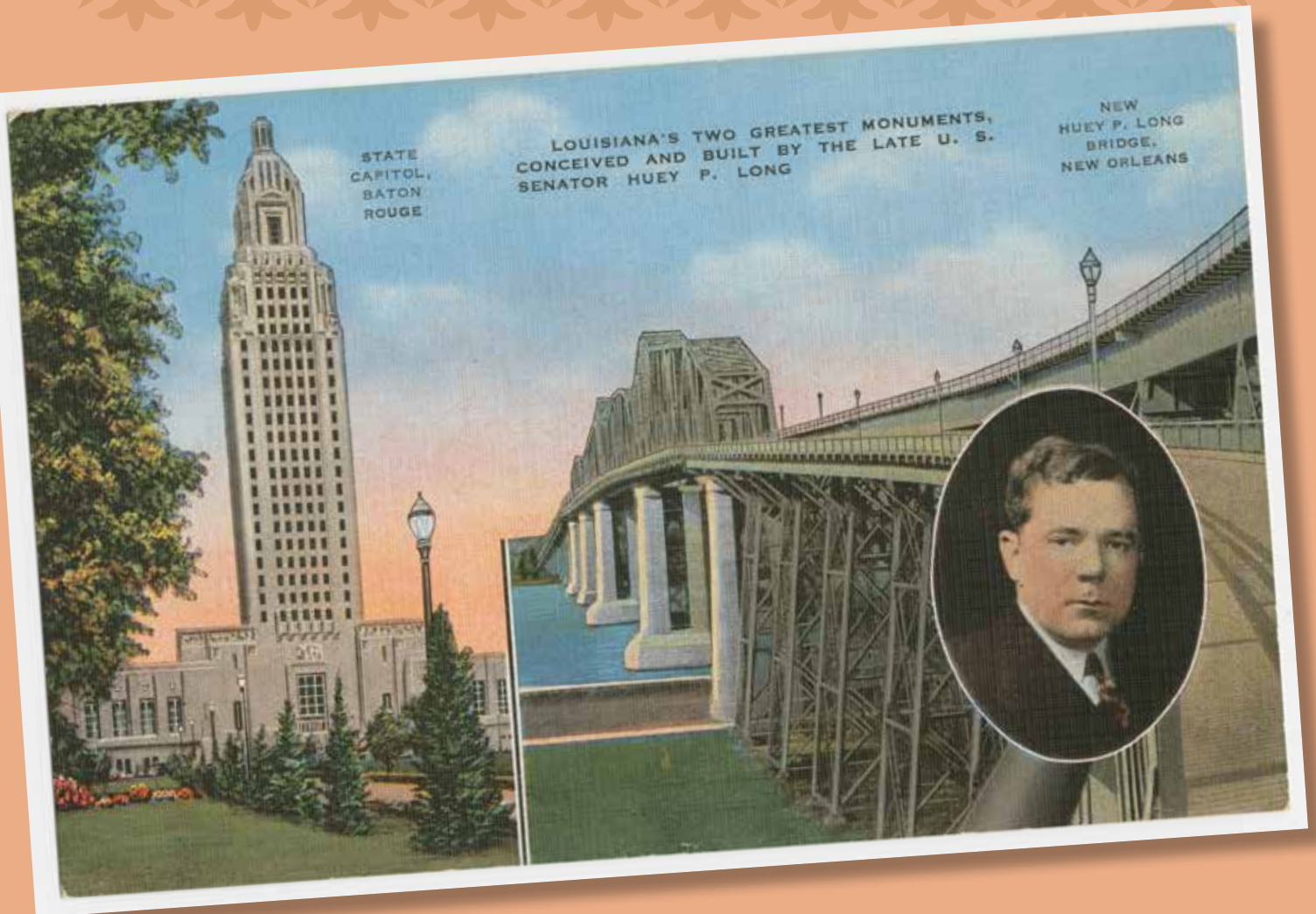




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From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of
HUEY P. LONG



Teacher's guide: grade levels 7–9

Number of lesson plans: 4

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Huey P. Long

Metadata

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Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history / social studies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6: Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.2: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.F: Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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Cover: *Louisiana's Two Greatest Monuments, Conceived and Built by the Late US Senator Huey P. Long*; 1936; postcard by E. C. Kropp Co.; 86-2186-RL

Overview

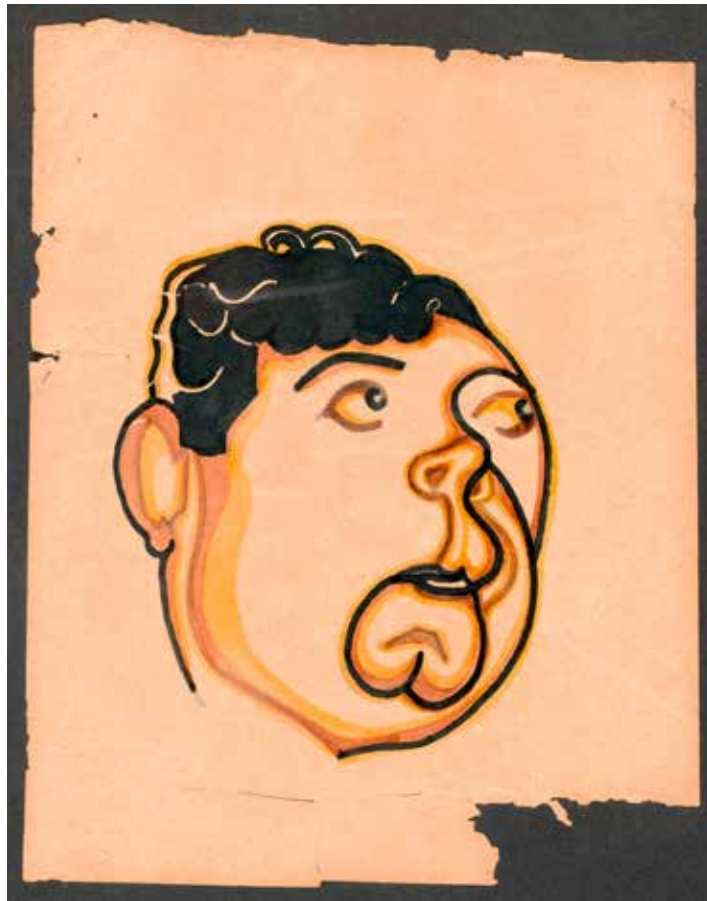
Over the course of four lessons, students will analyze both primary and secondary source documents to gain an appreciation and understanding of Huey Long's life and the deep and, at times, conflicting influence he had on the government and politics of Louisiana and America. Students will read and analyze a rich narrative by scholars and various primary source documents to deepen their understanding of Long and his impact on America.

Students will be asked to closely analyze sources with the goal of mastering content and inferring more subtle messages and influences. Graphic organizers, class discussions, and several writing activities will promote student understanding.

Essential Questions

Were the contributions and prevailing influences of Huey Long more positive than negative?

What impact did Huey Long have on the government and the politics of Louisiana and America?



Huey Long; ca. 1932; ink and watercolor by John McCrady;
courtesy of Keith and Millie Marshall

Lesson One**Objective**

Students will read a secondary source text written by scholars that describes Huey Long's life and impact on government and politics. Students will interview the scholars in a role play in order to gain a better understanding of the complexity of Long's character and personality and to examine the key elements and issues presented in the text. Students will create a timeline of the key events in Long's life, discuss their analysis of the text, and justify their conclusions.

Materials

"From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of Huey P. Long" (part 1) by Matt Farah, John H. Lawrence, and Amanda McFillen

Graphic organizer: "Role Play: Interviewing the Scholars (Lesson 1)"

Procedures

Have the students work as partners or in small groups of no more than three or four members.

1. Distribute "From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of Huey P. Long" (part 1).
2. Share read with the students, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Ask the students to join in with the reading after a few sentences, and continue reading.
3. Distribute the graphic organizer "Role Play: Interviewing the Scholars (Lesson 1)"
4. Answer the first critical analysis question as a whole-class activity. Explain to the students that they should approach the activity as if they were questioning the scholars about their conclusions. How would the scholars answer the question in one or two short sentences? What evidence in the text backs up their answer? Make sure that the students use and cite key evidence from the text.
5. Then, working with their partners or groups, students should answer the rest of the critical analysis questions.
6. As an entire class, discuss the various events in Huey Long's life, his beliefs, and the impact he had on both government and politics.

[Handout](#) [Share Read](#)

From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of Huey P. Long (part 1)

by Matt Farah, John H. Lawrence, and Amanda McFillen
THNOC curators

It would be difficult to identify a figure in Louisiana's political history who combined popular appeal and national impact more powerfully than Huey Pierce Long Jr. (1893–1935). Widely known as the Kingfish, he is remembered today as the protagonist in a series of colorful anecdotes, a manipulative and crafty politician, and the victim of a shooting, in Louisiana's capitol building, that still engenders speculation. These portrayals, while grounded in truth, strip him of nuances of thought and behavior, motive and process. His broadly populist political philosophy, Share Our Wealth platform, and strong grip on every detail of the political process were built over the course of his relatively short life, and from a variety of experiences. At the time of his death, Long's message was beginning to attain national momentum.

Huey Long's early life had elements of hardship, but it was not nearly as difficult as the picture he painted of it when campaigning and politicking in Louisiana. His upbringing, while not luxurious, was solidly middle class. In the small community of Winnfield, Louisiana, the Long family's circumstances were better than most. But identifying with the state's poor voters, and especially those in rural areas, was a tactic that Long effectively employed.

The beneficiary of a mixture of formal and self-directed education, Long passed the Louisiana bar, began a family, and, in 1918, achieved his first elected political office, a seat on the Railroad Commission. Five years later, he ran for governor, finishing in third place behind Hewitt Bouanchaud and Henry L. Fuqua, respectively. Fuqua picked up most of Long's supporters in the runoff election to surge past Bouanchaud; upon his death, in 1926, he was replaced by Lieutenant Governor Oramel H. Simpson. The 1924 governor's race was the last election that Long would ever lose. In 1928 he easily won the Democratic primary in the race for Louisiana's top executive office against two opponents and trounced Republican Etienne J. Caire in the general election. In the span of a decade, he had risen from the state railroad commission to the governor's mansion. Once there, his actions would be large, decisive, and lasting.

Louisiana's built environment was radically restructured during Long's gubernatorial regime and his tenure in the United States Senate. Large capital projects embodied his notion of progress. Ribbons of roads began crisscrossing Louisiana, as Long implemented the creation of nearly thirteen thousand miles of improved thoroughfares (paved, asphalt, and gravel). When these roads met the edge of a bayou or river, the governor's mandates often ensured that a free bridge be built to allow journeys to continue across the aqueous barrier. Hospitals, courthouses, schools, and other public structures were built or planned, often in the style of art deco or international modernism. Perhaps no single structure better exemplifies Long's architectural contributions than the Capitol in Baton Rouge. But Charity Hospital and Shushan Airport (present-day Lakefront Airport), both in New Orleans, are indicative that Long's reach was not limited to the halls of government but extended to modern (and free) medicine and the latest form of transportation. As important as the built structures were in proclaiming Louisiana's (and Long's) beneficence, the services dispensed within the buildings—education, nourishment, medical care, justice—were what the voters experienced and remembered.

Only two years into his gubernatorial term, Long sought a national audience for his politics. Louisianans elected him to the US Senate in the fall of 1930, but he did not arrive in Washington until January 1932. In the months between winning the election and assuming office, Long worked for the ouster of Lieutenant Governor Paul Cyr, who was

almost sure to terminate many of Long's programs. Lawsuits and court decisions ultimately ensured that his hand-picked successor, Alvin O. King, would keep the programs in place.

Long's election to senator was part of a long-held political plan confided, years before, to his wife: to rise from local office to the role of governor, senator, and finally president. Victorious in 1930, Long was three quarters of the way to his ultimate destination. In the US Senate, Long was initially supportive of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, first rolled out in 1933, but parted ways with the president because he felt the program wasn't focused enough on those who really needed the relief. With his redistributive Share Our Wealth philosophy, launched in 1934, Long began forming his own presidential ambitions for the 1936 election. Thousands of Share Our Wealth clubs sprang up around the country, furthering a grassroots effort to spread the message. Long's presidential campaign even had a theme song. "Every Man a King," the title adapted from a 1900 speech by populist leader William Jennings Bryan, was authored by Long and bandleader Castro Carazo. The national media took notice but mostly characterized Long as a demagogue or crackpot. Like Roosevelt, Long effectively used radio broadcasts to spread his message. He also established a periodical, *The American Progress*, in 1933, to keep supporters informed of his views.

Long officially broke with the Democratic Party when he launched a third-party candidacy for the presidency in 1935. He actively opposed New Deal candidates, and New Dealers sought the defeat of Long partisans in Louisiana. The outcome of this political struggle was made moot by Long's death on September 10, 1935, from a gunshot wound he suffered on September 8 in a melee in the Louisiana State Capitol. Dr. Carl Weiss, identified as Long's killer, died in the considerable gunfire produced by the senator's bodyguards. Long's widow, Rose McConnell Long, was appointed to fill his Senate seat and served until January 3, 1937. The Kingfish's political action plan, *My First Days in the White House*, was posthumously published in 1935. In 1941 Louisiana presented a bronze statue of Huey Long to the National Statuary Hall in Washington, and this monument on view in the rotunda of the US Capitol is among those within the complex representing notables from every state.

The Long political network remained operational but was much diminished without its founder's critical acumen, instincts, and skills. Oscar K. Allen, a Winnfield native and trusted political ally who served as Louisiana's governor from 1932 to 1936, often acted under advice, if not orders, from the Kingfish. When Allen died in office, his term was completed by James A. Noe, another Long supporter. New Orleanian Richard Leche defeated the anti-Long candidate Cleveland Dear in the 1936 governor's race, but he was driven from office by scandal in 1939 before completing his term. Long's younger brother, Earl Kemp Long, Leche's lieutenant governor, finished the term but lost to Sam Houston Jones in the 1940 gubernatorial election. Though Earl Long would return to the governor's mansion for single terms in 1948 and again in 1956, it was Huey Long's son Russell B. Long who had the longest political career in the family. Russell Long was elected US Senator from Louisiana in 1948 and served for thirty-eight years, retiring in 1986.

Although he held office for less than two decades, Huey Long redefined Louisiana politics. His sympathy for the common man and disdain for powerful interests, coupled with peerless political instincts, allowed him to actualize populist and progressive ideals spouted but never attained by his predecessors. Long's legacy continues to color state politics down to the present day—inviting assessments by pundits and politicians that, invariably, say more about the viewer's perspective than they do about the complexities of the man himself.

Graphic Organizer

Role Play: Interviewing the Scholars (Lesson 1)

Name: _____

Date: _____

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 1:

What were Huey P. Long’s professional goals? How successful was he in achieving those goals?

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 2:

How did Long carry out his “notion of progress,” and what were the benefits to Louisiana?

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 3:

Explain why Long parted ways with President Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal.

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 4:

How did Huey Long redefine Louisiana politics? How does his impact continue today?

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

Lesson Two

Objective

Students will continue reading a secondary source text written by scholars that describes Huey Long's life and impact on government and politics with a special focus on his philosophy and programs. Students will interview the scholars in a role play in order to gain a better understanding of the complexity of his character and personality and to examine the key elements and issues presented in the text. In this lesson, students will not only answer questions about the text but also create some of the questions as well.

Materials

“From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of Huey P. Long” (part 2) by Matt Farah, John H. Lawrence, and Amanda McFillen

Graphic organizer: “Role Play: Interviewing the Scholars (Lesson 2)”

Procedures

Have the students work as partners or in small groups of no more than three or four members.

1. Distribute “From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of Huey P. Long (part 2)”
2. Share read with the students, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Ask the students to join in with the reading after a few sentences, and continue reading.
3. Distribute the graphic organizer “Role Play: Interviewing the Scholars (Lesson 2)”
4. Answer the first critical analysis question as a whole-class activity. Remind the students that they should approach the activity as if they were questioning the scholars about their conclusions, as they did in Lesson 1. How would the scholars answer the question in one or two short sentences? What key evidence in the text backs up their answer? Make sure that the students use and cite evidence from the text. Help students brainstorm to create a probing question for the scholars. Then, working with their partners or groups, they should answer the question and cite appropriate evidence.
5. Working with their partners or groups, students should create two additional critical analysis questions.
6. As an entire class, discuss the various events in Huey Long's life, his beliefs, and the impact he had on both government and politics.

Handout Share Read

From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of Huey P. Long (part 2)

by Matt Farah, John H. Lawrence, and Amanda McFillen
THNOC curators

Early Life

The seventh of nine children, Huey P. Long Jr. was born on August 30, 1893, to Huey Pierce Long Sr. (1852–1937) and Caledonia Palestine Tison Long (1860–1913), middle-class farmers. His paternal grandfather, John M. Long, had settled in the small town of Winnfield—the seat of government of Winn Parish, in the north-central part of Louisiana—in 1859. Young Huey was initially home schooled and then attended Winnfield public schools through the eleventh grade, but he did not complete the newly instituted twelfth grade. He pursued higher education at the University of Oklahoma’s law school. When he married Rose McConnell, in 1913, he withdrew from school in order to work exclusively as a salesman, a job that took him across Louisiana and other parts of the Deep South. Long’s travels throughout the Pelican State gave him tremendous insight into the differences among Louisiana’s population and foreshadowed his ability to campaign effectively by exploiting these variations.

In 1914 Long lost successive sales positions due to a business reorganization and a nationwide economic downturn. His older brother Julius offered financial support so that his sibling could have a year of further legal education at Tulane University, in New Orleans. In May 1915, after taking and passing a special state examination, the twenty-one-year-old Long was admitted to the Louisiana bar and began practicing law in Winnfield. In 1918 the Longs moved to Shreveport, in the northwest corner of Louisiana. Daughter Rose, born in 1917, was joined by sons Russell, in 1918, and Palmer, in 1921.

On the campaign trail, after beginning a life in politics, Huey Long described his upbringing in Winnfield in terms of hard work and deprivation. Long accomplished two things with this truth-stretching approach: he identified himself with poor voters and created the notion that personal determination was responsible for his rags-to-riches ascent to high political office.

Entry into Politics

The same year that he moved to Shreveport, Long ran successfully for one of three seats on Louisiana’s Railroad Commission, a regulatory body established in the 1898 state constitution that held sway over thousands of miles of railroad tracks and carriers large and small. The commission also regulated most intrastate public utilities, including electrical companies and motor carriers. Long believed that the commission’s actions were controlled by powerful, well-financed business interests—like the ones he encountered in his law practice—and he focused his campaign on the rights of the “little man.” Bypassing established party bosses and political rings, he spoke directly to the voters.

The job provided incumbents with great political visibility—and the opportunity to make decisions that directly affected constituents’ pocketbooks. When elected Third District commissioner, in 1918, Long assumed responsibility for territory spanning twenty-eight of Louisiana’s sixty-four parishes. In 1922 he became chairman of the body, newly renamed the Public Service Commission by mandate of the 1921 state constitution. To this day, the commission remains a stepping-stone in state politics: in addition to Long, three other former Public Service commissioners—James H. “Jimmie” Davis (1944), John J. McKeithen (1964, 1968), and Kathleen B. Blanco (2004)—have ascended to Louisiana’s governorship.

Gubernatorial Elections

Huey Long's early forays into politics aided him greatly in his ability to rally support for his later runs for higher office. No stranger to showmanship, he announced his candidacy for the 1924 gubernatorial election on August 30, 1923—his thirtieth birthday. Long's first campaign for governor in 1924 was marked by a conscious effort to battle Standard Oil and to create tangible infrastructure improvements through the construction of newer and better roads. He had very little, if any, political organization at the statewide level, though he had wide recognition from his time with the Public Service Commission. Long himself later admitted, "I had neither newspaper nor organized political support, other than my own scattered faction"—and the lack of positive press hampered his reach. Nevertheless, Long would amass nearly seventy-four thousand votes, some 31 percent of the total in the Democratic primary, in his first bid for the governor's seat. Although Long did not make the runoff election, this was the best performance by a candidate of his age in the history of the state and provided the young man from Winnfield with ample confidence for another run.

Long was not the only Winn Parish native to challenge incumbent Oramel H. Simpson in the gubernatorial race of 1928. While Long drew the majority of his support from rural Louisiana, Riley Wilson was backed by the urban elite of New Orleans. Their ideological debate, played out over the course of the campaign, would establish the tone for Long's lifelong fight against the state's established political base. On primary day, Long saw a fifty-thousand-vote bump over his 1924 tally. His 44 percent of the vote stood as the highest total ever recorded in a Louisiana primary and discouraged both of his opponents from entering a runoff.

Support in the state legislature aided Long in enacting many of his progressive reforms. He was able to pass a free textbook bill for schools, both public and parochial, and a \$30 million internal improvement bond plan was offered to voters for their consideration. Long's plan to increase taxes on oil companies no doubt led to an effort by Standard Oil supporters in the legislature to impeach the new governor in his first year in office. Yet Long's political savvy and support from a broad statewide base would aid him in beating charges including bribery, corruption, and gross misconduct. Long's stature was beginning to rise nationally as he became a champion of the working people of Louisiana, a stance that would earn him recognition by the highest office in the land.

The National Stage

Huey Long's political star was on the rise following his decisive victory in the 1928 gubernatorial election and his swift defeat of impeachment charges. He had shown incredible efficiency, if not necessarily finesse, with his ability to effect legislative change at the state level. Long's will and charisma allowed him to go from being a small-town lawyer to one of the most powerful politicians in the United States, and his quick rise underlined his exceptional political skill.

Long never gave up on his self-proclaimed position as champion of the common man. After his successful bid for the US Senate gave him joint status as sitting governor of Louisiana and senator elect, he continued to carry forward his progressive agenda. And for the time being, at least, he enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship with the established power structure in the Democratic Party.

Once he arrived in the Senate, Long lost no time in amplifying his national profile. With small regard for congressional traditions respecting tenure, the rookie legislator routinely delivered long, eloquent speeches on legislation he supported and spit incendiary vitriol at those who opposed him. This behavior on the Senate floor made many Democrats very nervous—none more so than President Roosevelt, who came to regard the Kingfish (along with Douglas MacArthur) as "one of the two most dangerous men in the country."

Long's growing disdain for President Roosevelt's New Deal appeared to run counter to his concern for the common man. In fact, Long's critique represented a radical challenge to the essential conservatism of reform politics. It was Long's contention that the New Deal did not go far enough: it would simply enhance the wealth of the already rich by empowering them in different ways. The program he proposed—Share Our Wealth—would tax the wealthiest Americans in an attempt to close the poverty gap. His proposal was especially popular in rural areas of poor states

like Louisiana and extremely unpopular with wealthy urbanites such as the old-guard New Orleanians who had long been the Kingfish's adversaries.

Once Long gained enough power to consider his own run at the White House, the Roosevelt administration took quick steps to distance itself from the Louisiana firebrand. Provided Long's brand of populism propped up Roosevelt's agenda, the president had been willing to tolerate the senator. But by 1934, the alliance was frayed beyond repair, and the Share Our Wealth program completed the break.

"Long Shot, Assailant Slain!"

On the night of September 8, 1935, Senator Huey Long was attending a special state legislative session at the Louisiana State Capitol. Even though he was no longer governor, Long still exerted enormous influence over the legislative process in Louisiana, as evinced by his presence in Baton Rouge. After the session, he and his bodyguards were walking down a narrow corridor when Dr. Carl Weiss Sr., a twenty-nine-year-old doctor from Baton Rouge, stepped in front of Long.

Accounts differ as to what, exactly, occurred next—but the most widely accepted narrative holds that Weiss shot Long in the abdomen. Weiss was then gunned down by Long's bodyguards and died instantly. Transported to Our Lady of the Lake Hospital, Long underwent surgery but succumbed to his injuries two days later, on September 10, at the age of forty-two. The funeral, held in the Louisiana State Capitol on September 12, was attended by an estimated two hundred thousand people.

To this day, theories and doubts linger concerning what happened in the Capitol that night. Many believe that Weiss, angered by Long's interference with the political career of Weiss's father-in-law, Judge Benjamin Henry Pavy, deliberately shot Long. Others believe that Weiss merely intended to confront Long—and that Long's bodyguards overreacted, opened fire, and accidentally shot the senator in the ensuing melee. The full facts surrounding Long's death may never be known.

In the Shadow of the Kingfish

Eighty years after his death, Huey Long's political legacy remains under debate. Whether or not one agrees with his ideology or his questionable methods of leadership, it is difficult to deny the wide scope of his career. In his seventeen-year career in public service, he upended the political ruling class in Louisiana and created his own political dynasty. For decades after his death, citizens of the state would still identify politically as either pro- or anti-Long. Thirteen of his family members would serve in politics, including his brother Earl, a two-term governor of Louisiana, and his son Russell, who had a thirty-eight-year career in the US Senate. In the current makeup of Louisiana's state senate, Gerald Long, representing District 31, continues the family name in politics.

Long's aggressive infrastructure program brought the state thousands of miles of roads and bridges; landmark public buildings such as Charity Hospital, in New Orleans, and the Capitol, in Baton Rouge; and facilities expansions to his beloved Louisiana State University. By abolishing poll taxes and providing free textbooks and school lunches to students, he made a positive impact on the lives of many Louisianans, young and old. Countless books, films, documentaries, and scholarly articles examine Long's life and legacy, while several fictional works, most notably Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, serve as cautionary tales about tyranny and political corruption.

So in the end, what do we make of this charismatic man? Was he the "dangerous" figure abhorred by President Franklin D. Roosevelt or was he, as his friend William Langler observed, "that fearless, dauntless, unmatchable champion of the common people?" Perhaps it is best to look to the Kingfish himself for the final word: Long once declared himself *sui generis*, unique unto himself.

Graphic Organizer

Role Play: Interviewing the Scholars (Lesson 2)

Name: _____

Date: _____

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 1:

What key actions did Huey Long take early in his political life that defined his political philosophy?

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 2:

What is an important question you would ask the scholars?

What is the scholars' answer?

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 3:

What is an important question you would ask the scholars?

What is the scholars' answer?

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTION 4:

What is an important question you would ask the scholars?

What is the scholars' answer?

What is the most compelling evidence that the scholars offer in this paper?

Lesson Three

Objective

Using the scholars' narratives from lessons 1 and 2, students will create a timeline of the key events in Huey Long's life. Then, they will read and analyze excerpts from Long's "Every Man a King" speech, which was broadcast on national radio on February 23, 1934, and unveiled the principles of his Share Our Wealth program. And, finally, using the scholars' narratives and excerpts from the speech, they will complete a table that shows the actions he took to implement his progressive agenda throughout his career.

Materials

"From Winnfield to Washington: The Life and Career of Huey P. Long" (parts 1 and 2) by Matt Farah, John H. Lawrence, and Amanda McFillen

Graphic organizer: "Timeline of Key Events in Huey Long's Life"

"Excerpts from Huey Long's 'Every Man a King' Speech"

Graphic organizer: "Critical Analysis of the 'Every Man a King' Speech"

Graphic organizer: "Critical Analysis of Huey Long's Proposals and Actions"

Procedures

1. Distribute the graphic organizer "Timeline of Huey Long's Life."
2. Lead the students in completing the first event on the timeline. Working in small groups, students should complete the timeline using the scholars' narratives from lessons 1 and 2. Students should describe the impact of key events as directed in the graphic organizer.
3. Lead a class discussion with students to confirm their understanding of Long's political views and the actions he took to implement his progressive agenda.
4. Distribute and share read the "Excerpts from Huey Long's 'Every Man a King' Speech," modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Ask the students to join in with the reading after a few sentences, and continue reading.
5. Distribute the graphic organizer "Critical Analysis of the 'Every Man a King' Speech," and lead the students in describing Long's view on the first issue presented in the table and identifying the evidence from the speech that backs up their description of his view.
6. Working with partners or small groups, students should complete the rest of the table.
7. Lead the class in a discussion of their findings, making certain the students understand Long's position on the issues presented in the table.
8. Distribute the graphic organizer "Critical Analysis of Huey Long's Proposals and Actions," and lead the students in identifying the programs that Long proposed and implemented at the different stages of his career for the first category.
9. Working with partners or small groups, students should complete the rest of the table using the scholars' narratives and excerpts from the speech.
10. Lead the class in a discussion of their findings, encouraging the students to evaluate Long's beliefs and actions.

Graphic Organizer

Timeline of Key Events in Huey Long's Life

Name: _____

Date: _____

Note key event (and impact if applicable) beside each date.

August 30, 1893 _____

1913 _____

1915 _____

1918 (1) _____ (2) _____

1922 _____

1924 _____

1928 _____

1930 _____

1930–32 _____

1933 _____

1934 _____

1935 _____

September 8, 1935 _____

September 10, 1935 _____

Handout Share Read

Excerpts from Huey Long’s “Every Man a King” Speech

Delivered in a national radio address on February 23, 1934; reproduced from Robert C. Byrd, Classic Speeches, 1830–1993, vol. 3 of The Senate, 1789–1989 (1994)

It is not the difficulty of the problem which we have; it is the fact that the rich people of this country—and by rich people I mean the super-rich—will not allow us to solve the problems, or rather the one little problem that is afflicting this country, because in order to cure all of our woes it is necessary to scale down the big fortunes, that we may scatter the wealth to be shared by all of the people.

Is that right of life, my friends, when the young children of this country are being reared into a sphere which is more owned by 12 men than it is by 120 million people?

But the Scripture says, ladies and gentlemen, that no country can survive, or for a country to survive it is necessary that we keep the wealth scattered among the people, that nothing should be held permanently by any one person, and that fifty years seems to be the year of jubilee in which all property would be scattered about and returned to the sources from which it originally came, and every seventh year debt should be remitted.

So, we have in America today, my friends, a condition by which about ten men dominate the means of activity in at least 85 percent of the activities that you own. They either own directly everything or they have got some kind of mortgage on it, with a very small percentage to be excepted. They own the banks, they own the steel mills, they own the railroads, they own the bonds, they own the mortgages, they own the stores, and they have chained the country from one end to the other until there is not any kind of business that a small, independent man could go into today and make a living, and there is not any kind of business that an independent man can go into and make any money to buy an automobile with; and they have finally and gradually and steadily eliminated everybody from the fields in which there is a living to be made, and still they have got little enough sense to think they ought to be able to get more business out of it anyway.

It is necessary to save the government of the country, but is much more necessary to save the people of America. Now, we have organized a society, and we call it “Share Our Wealth Society,” a society with the motto “every man a king.” Every man a king, so there would be no such thing as a man or woman who did not have the necessities of life, who would not be dependent upon the whims and caprices and *ipse dixit* of the financial martyrs for a living. What do we propose by this society? We propose to limit the wealth of big men in the country. . . . We do not propose to divide it up equally. We do not propose a division of wealth, but we propose to limit poverty that we will allow to be inflicted upon any man’s family. We will not say we are going to try to guarantee any equality, or \$15,000 to families. No; but we do say that one third of the average is low enough for any one family to hold, that there should be a guaranty of a family wealth of around \$5,000; enough for a home, an automobile, a radio, and the ordinary conveniences, and the opportunity to educate their children. . . . We have to limit fortunes. Our present plan is that we will allow no one man to own more than \$50 million. . . . Another thing we propose is old-age pension of \$30 a month for everyone that is sixty years old.¹

We will limit hours of work. There is not any necessity of having overproduction. I think all you have got to do, ladies and gentlemen, is just limit the hours of work to such an extent as people will work only so long as is necessary to produce enough for all of the people to have what they need.

¹ Inflation can be measured in many ways, but one formula equates \$50 million in 1934 with almost \$900 million in 2015. Using the same formula, the monthly pension of \$30 would be only \$532 (<http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>).

We will not have any trouble taking care of the agricultural situation. All you have to do is balance your production with your consumption. You simply have to abandon a particular crop that you have too much of, and all you have to do is store the surplus for the next year, and the government will take it over.

Get together in your community tonight or tomorrow and organize one of our Share Our Wealth societies. If you do not understand it, write me and let me send you the platform; let me give you the proof of it.

We have got a little button that some of our friends designed, with our message around the rim of the button, and in the center "Every man a king." . . .

Share Our Wealth societies are now being organized, and people have it within their power to relieve themselves from this terrible situation.

Graphic Organizer

Critical Analysis of the "Every Man a King" Speech

Name: _____

Date: _____

In the following chart, indicate Long's views on the subject and then provide evidence from the speech.

Issue	Long's Views	Evidence from speech
Wealth		
Limiting wealth		
Old age pensions		
Work hours		
Agriculture		

Graphic Organizer

Critical Analysis of Huey Long’s Proposals and Actions

Name: _____

Date: _____

Draw upon Long’s speech and upon the scholars’ narratives to identify examples of Long’s proposals and actions during different periods of his life: his early political career with the Louisiana Railroad Commission (1918–24); his years campaigning for and serving as governor (1924–32); and his tenure as a US senator and presidential hopeful (1930–35).

Categories	Louisiana Railroad Commission 1918–24	Campaign for and serving as governor 1924–32	US Senate and campaign for president 1930–35
Government’s responsibility to the “common man”			
Powerful interests			
Infrastructure improvements			
Public services			

Lesson Four**Objective**

Students will analyze images of Huey Long and his programs and then demonstrate their understanding of Long's impact on the government and politics of Louisiana and America.

Materials

Graphic organizer: "Analyzing Images Relating to Huey Long"

Procedure

1. Distribute the graphic organizer "Analyzing Images Relating to Huey Long," and ask students to have their work from the first three lessons on their desks.
2. Working with partners or small group, students should study each image and discuss and record visual elements that illustrate details or facts they have learned in the first three lessons. They must cite evidence for each image.
3. Lead a discussion of the various interpretations of Long's actions and impact on government and politics in Louisiana and America.
4. Have students write an evidence-based essay that fully addresses one of the Essential Questions posed at the beginning of this lesson plan: Were the contributions and prevailing influences of Huey Long more positive than negative? What impact did Huey Long have on the government and the politics of Louisiana and America?

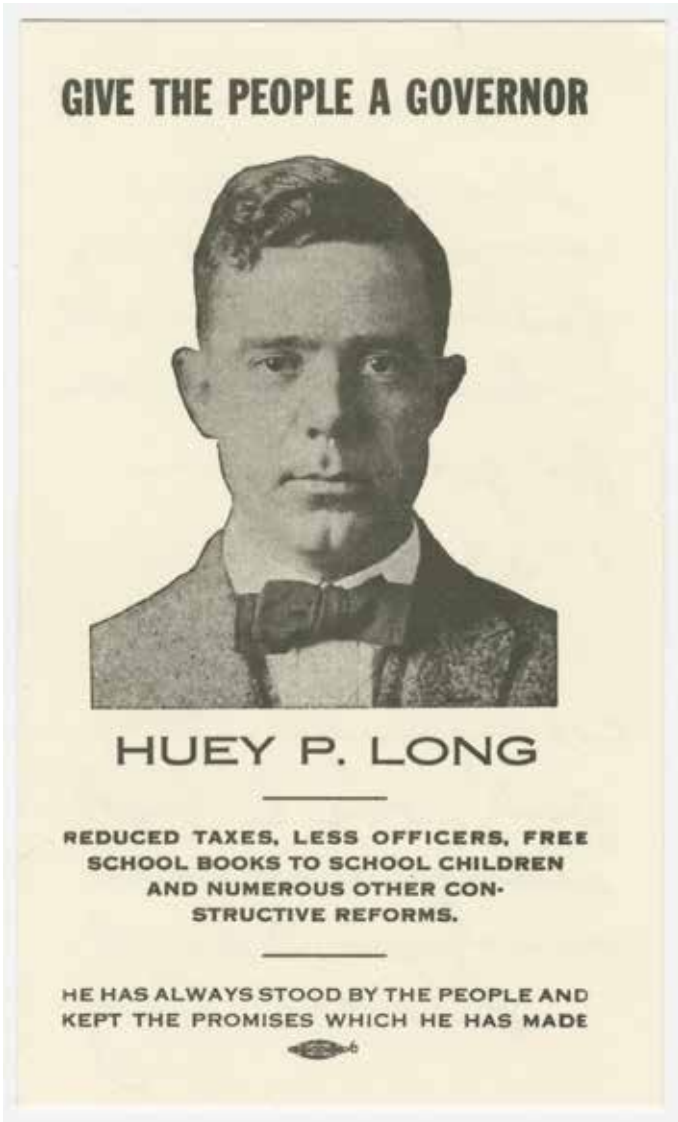
Graphic Organizer

Analyzing Images Relating to Huey Long

All images are in the holdings of *The Historic New Orleans Collection*.

Name: _____

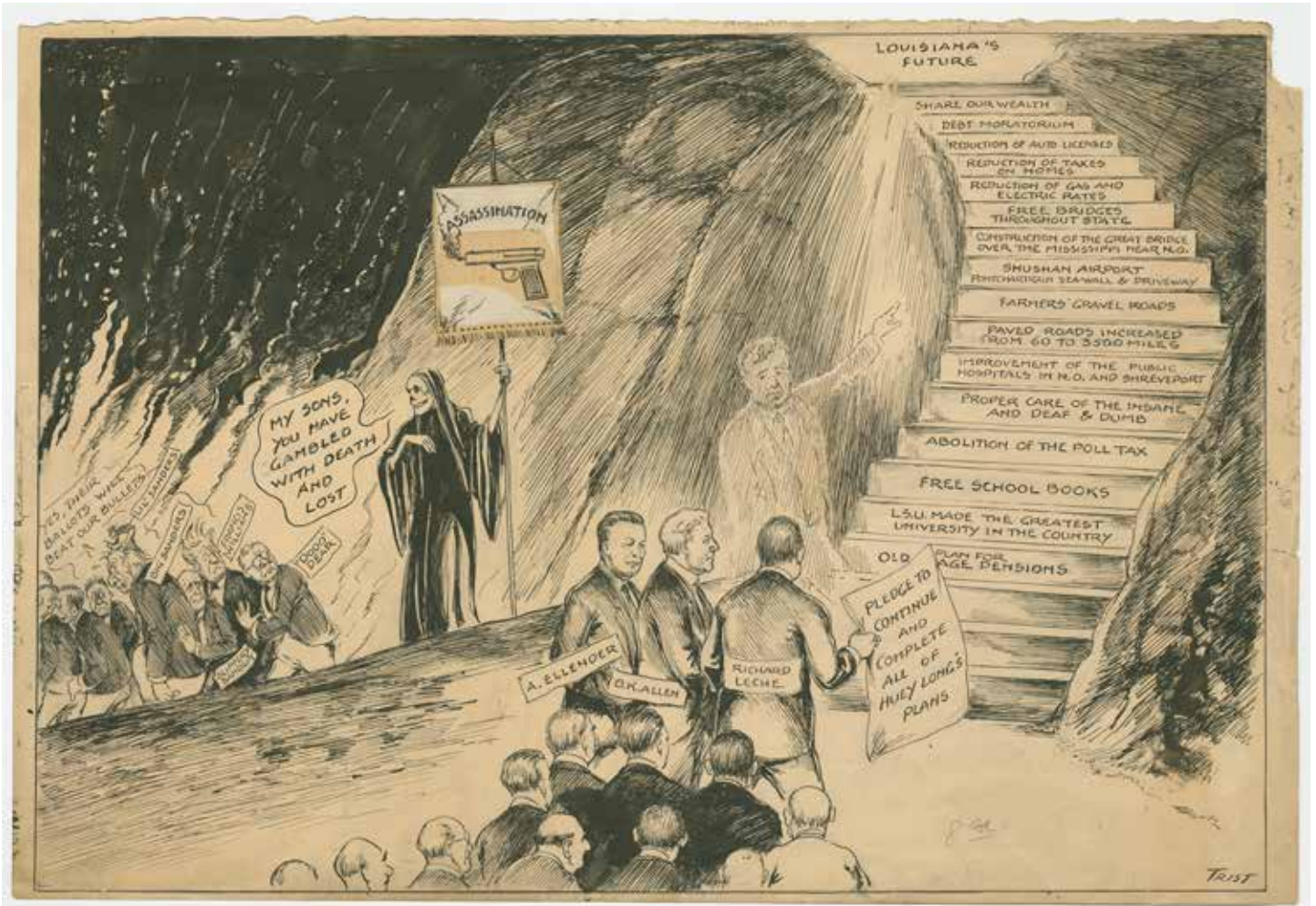
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Huey P. Long campaign card; 1923; halftone; *The Anna Wynne Watt and Michael D. Wynne Jr. Collection*, 2013.0027.2.166

Name: _____

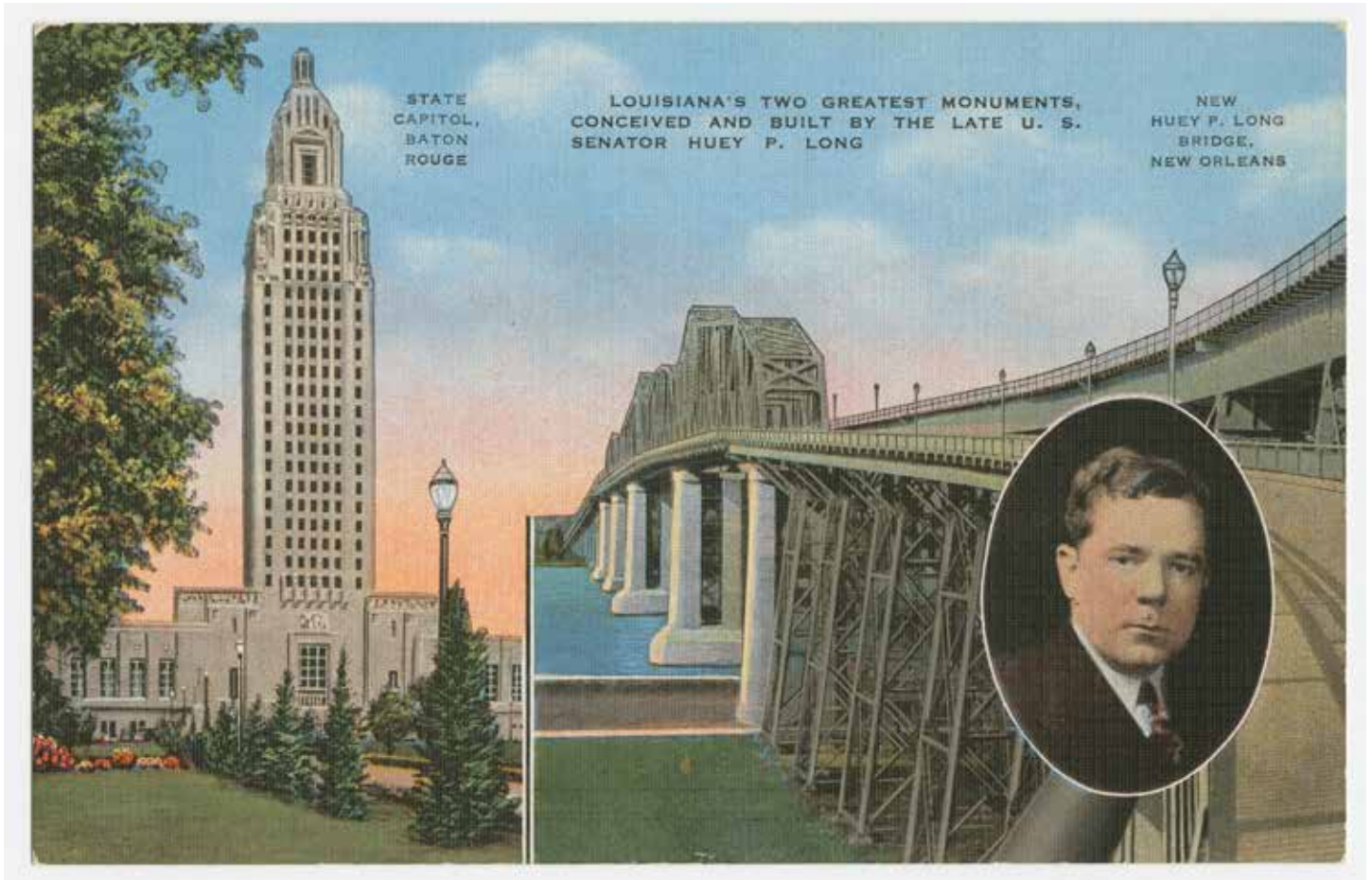
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Louisiana's Future; 1935; cartoon by Trist Wood; 1980.77.21

Name: _____

Date: _____



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