

Lesson Plan:

**The Devil Baby: A Story of Immigration and America**

**Grades:** 9-12

**Subject:** United States History & Geography

**Time required:** 2 days

**Author:** Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU

**OVERVIEW**

Primary sources can reveal much about the life, times, and values of the culture that they were produced in. A rumor about a “devil baby” at Jane Addams’ Hull House sparks an investigation not only into the veracity of the story, but more significantly into the lives of immigrants to whom this folk story means so much. This lesson plan will allow your students to explore the broader themes of immigration, culture, and society in the Progressive Era through the mystery of the Devil Baby of Hull House. Your students will solve the mystery and work together in groups to create a larger picture of life in America at the turn of the century.

**UNDERSTANDING GOAL**

Students will understand the unique problems and issues faced by immigrants in the Progressive Era. Students will also understand the impact of social reformer Jane Addams and her Chicago foundation of Hull House.

**OBJECTIVES**

- The student will identify Jane Addams, Hull House, and Addams’ impact on social reform.
- The student will analyze the story of the Devil Baby through primary source texts and images to discover the living conditions of immigrants in America in the Progressive Era.
- The student will document other social issues in America during the Progressive Era.

**INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION**

How can we use the story of the Devil Baby to analyze the conditions of immigrants and social issues in America during the Progressive Era?



[Jane Addams](#) [1914]

**CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

United States History and Geography:

- US.9 Describe the difference between “old” and “new” immigrants and analyze the assimilation process and consequences for the “new” immigrants and their impact on American society, including ethnic clusters, competition for jobs, rise of nativism, the work of Jane Addams, the documentation of living conditions by Jacob Riis, Chinese Exclusion Acts, and the Gentlemen’s Agreement.

English Language Arts:

- Key Ideas and Details 11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Craft and Structure 11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to address or solve a problem.
- Writing: Text Types and Purposes 11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

## Resources

### Group Resources

- [The tenement - a menace to all / Keppler](#). [1901]
- [Little Grandmother](#) [1939]
- [... Immigration figures for 1903. \(From data furnished by the Commissioner-general of immigration. Comparison of the fiscal years ending June 30, 1902 and 1903. \[1903\] pp. 1, 2, 3](#)
- [Back Numbers: American Women Slowest of English Speaking Women](#) [1909]
- [Making hair-goods in a tiny hall-bedroom. Mrs. Chassin, 385 E. 3rd St., N.Y. top floor...](#) [1912]
- [Hull-House maps and papers, a presentation of nationalities and wages in a congested district of Chicago](#) [1895] pp. 206-207, 212-213
- [Life on the lower East Side, cor. Pitt and Rivington Streets, North, N.Y.](#) [1915]
- [Child Labor in the Gulf Coast](#) [1913]

### PowerPoint Resources

- [Jane Addams](#) [1914]
- [Miss Jane Addams declares there is no "devil baby" in Hull House](#) [1914]
- [Devil Baby at Hull-House; Superstition Still Rampant](#) [1916]
- [Devil Child Story Stirs All Chicago](#) [1913]
- [Jane Addams Tells Story of "Devil Baby" of Hull House](#) [1914]
- [This Is They Way That "Devil-Child" Story Is Rumored](#) [1913]
- [Satan Incarnate: A Demonical Monstrosity in a Polish Family](#) [1888]
- [Twenty Years at Hull House](#)
- [City of Chicago. Chicago, as it is, showing the burnt district](#) [1871]

### Materials

- [Devil Baby PowerPoint](#)
- [Devil Baby Worksheet](#)
- [H.I.P.P.O. Worksheet](#)

DAY 1	PROCEDURE
Preparation	<p>This lesson plan will expose your students to primary sources and their ability to tell a broader story of the life and times in which they were created. Because this lesson plan will require frequent teacher intervention and guidance, a good deal of background knowledge regarding this subject will be helpful. The following links from the American Memory Timeline can give you a brief overview of some of the themes your students will be exploring in this lesson plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Immigration to the United States, 1851-1900</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">City Life in the Late 19th Century</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Progressive Era to New Era, 1900-1929</a></li> </ul>
Step 1	Open <a href="#">"The Mystery of the 'Devil Baby' at Jane Addams' Hull House" PowerPoint</a> .
Step 2	Slides 2 & 3: Introduce your students to the two mysteries that they will be solving during class: 1) what was the Devil Baby and 2) why was this "a thing." Allow the students to try to predict the answers to the questions on slide 3.
Step 3	Slides 4 & 5: These two slides contain the earliest newspaper accounts (from Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, 1913) of the Devil Baby story. These will be used primarily to establish background knowledge. You can read them out loud, have the students read them silently, or prepare handouts for the students before class.
Special Note:	While you are going through the lesson, it might be helpful to have the students take notes. This keeps the students accountable while the information is being presented and may help them during their group work. You can then take up the notes at the end of class for a participation/quiz grade. Also, have your students create a graphic organizer for their notes. Have them divide their paper into two columns and label one "What was the Devil Baby" and the other "Why what this 'a thing.'"

Step 4	Slide 6: This slide is unique because it is an earlier newspaper describing a legend/rumor similar to the Devil Baby. Ask your students what they notice about this newspaper. Is it surprising that this story had already been around for a number of years? Can you think of any legends you know that have been around a while or told in different formats?
Step 5	Slide 8: Have your students complete the <a href="#">Devil Baby worksheet</a> working in pairs with their elbow partners. Worksheets will be turned in at the end of class.
Step 6	Slides 9-15: These slides focus on solving the mystery of the Devil Baby using sources primarily from Jane Addams. Have your students read each text as a class and discuss. When reading the excerpt from <i>Twenty Years at Hull House</i> , have students discuss the passage first and then try to answer how her “eagerness for finding folklore” may factor into the story. However, just because we solved the mystery of the Devil Baby does not mean the story is over. We all knew from the beginning that the Devil Baby wasn’t real. So what is the real mystery? Special note: it may be helpful to define folklore for your students.

**DAY 2 PROCEDURE**

Step 7	<p>Slides 16-17: Introduce (or re-introduce, depending on your curriculum) the students to Jane Addams and Hull House. Prepare a few facts about each. Alternatively, you could have your students read about them. Below are some links you can use. America’s Library links are great for younger readers, while Today in History is great for high school students.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>America’s Library</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Opportunities at the Hull House</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Good Work of Jane Addams</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Activist Jane Addams Was Born September 6, 1860</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Jane Addams, the Peacemaker</a></li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-left: 20px;"> <p><b>Today in History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Jane Addams and the Hull House</a></li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>America’s Library</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Opportunities at the Hull House</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Good Work of Jane Addams</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Activist Jane Addams Was Born September 6, 1860</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Jane Addams, the Peacemaker</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Today in History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Jane Addams and the Hull House</a></li> </ul>
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Step 8	Slides 18-20: These slides depict the areas affected by the Great Chicago fire of 1871, while offering a good map of the neighborhood that Hull House would be established in. Slide 20 shows the location of Hull House in relation to immigrant communities today. Bring your students’ attention to the location of interstate highways, railroads, and warehouses. Ask them why they think the immigrant communities would be close to these structures? Ask them what they see across the river. As it is a nicer part of town, ask them if they think immigrants would have had access to property in that district.
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Step 9	(Slide 21 shows how Hull House Museum is operated by the University of Illinois-Chicago. Follow the link if students are interested in what the museum does today.) Slide 22: This step starts the group work portion of the lesson plan. Students will analyze primary sources that shed light on social, economic, and political conditions of the United States in the Progressive Era.
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Step 10	<p>Divide your students into four groups. Each group will get a primary source packet, and each student within that group will get a <a href="#">H.I.P.P.O. Primary Source Analysis sheet</a>. The sources recommended for each group are as follows:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Group 1</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Group 2</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Group 3</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Group 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><a href="#">The Tenement—a menace to all / Keppler</a> [1901]</p> <p><a href="#">[Little Grandmother]</a> [1939] pp. 1 &amp; 2</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><a href="#">Immigration figures for 1903.</a> [1903] pp. 1–3</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><a href="#">Making hair-goods in a tiny hall bedroom.</a> [1912]</p> <p><a href="#">American Women Slowest of English Speaking Women</a> [1909]</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><a href="#">Life on the Lower East Side</a> [1915]</p> <p><a href="#">Child Labor in the Gulf Coast</a> [1913]</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	<p><a href="#">The Tenement—a menace to all / Keppler</a> [1901]</p> <p><a href="#">[Little Grandmother]</a> [1939] pp. 1 &amp; 2</p>	<p><a href="#">Immigration figures for 1903.</a> [1903] pp. 1–3</p>	<p><a href="#">Making hair-goods in a tiny hall bedroom.</a> [1912]</p> <p><a href="#">American Women Slowest of English Speaking Women</a> [1909]</p>	<p><a href="#">Life on the Lower East Side</a> [1915]</p> <p><a href="#">Child Labor in the Gulf Coast</a> [1913]</p>
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Step 11	Allow time for your students to analyze the sources. Circulate around the room to facilitate group work or answer any questions that the students might have.
Step 12	Once the students are done, have each of the groups present their findings to the class. Each group's sources are included in the PowerPoint for display purposes.
Step 13	After the presentations are over, have them complete the Exit Ticket on slide 27: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did we learn about America at the turn of the 20th century from investigating the Devil Baby?</li> <li>• Explain the importance of Jane Addams and Hull House.</li> <li>• How can primary sources tell us a broader story?</li> </ul>
Step 14	After each group has presented, have them turn their sources, worksheets, notes, and exit ticket in for a grade.

### EXTENSION

There are several options that you can use for extension projects:

- Students can read the full article (PowerPoint slide 28) from *The Atlantic* in which Jane Addams wrote about how the Devil Baby story was embraced by the older women of the immigrant communities and what it meant to them as immigrants in the New World.
- Have your students create a guidebook for immigrants in the late 19th/early 20th century using what they learned in this lesson plan. Be sure to include what the cities were like, what kind of jobs they could get, what forms of recreation were available to them, etc.
- Have your students write a report on social reformer Jacob Riis. The Library of Congress has an excellent exhibit on [Jacob Riis](#).

Evaluation (100 Points):

- Notes: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 15
- Devil Baby Worksheet: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 10
- Primary Source Analysis Sheet: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 50
- Exit Ticket: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 25



Above: [The Barre \(VT\) daily times., November 01, 1913, Page 3, Image 3](#)

Right: [Making hair-goods in a tiny hall-bedroom. Mrs. Chassin, 385 E. 3rd St., N.Y. top floor... \[1912\]](#)

