Grades: 9-12  
Subjects: United States History & Geography  
Time required: 2 days  
Author: Ethan Holden, Teaching With Primary Sources—MTSU

**Overview**
The era of Prohibition has long captivated America's imagination. Prohibition's origins can be found in the Temperance movement of the early 1800’s. The Temperance Movement wanted to rid society of the evils of liquor and slavery. Ultimately the Temperance Movement could not gain enough support to ban liquor until nearly a century later in 1917, when Prohibition was passed to conserve wheat for the war effort in World War I. The era of Prohibition gave birth to mob bosses like Al Capone and is the genesis for the modern sport of NASCAR. In this lesson plan, students will explore the Prohibition era using a variety of learning methods and resources to answer the investigative question of how the era of Prohibition affected American society.

**Understanding Goal**
Students will understand the causes of Prohibition and recognize the effects of Prohibition on American society.

**Objectives**
The student will:
- recognize the Volstead Act.
- explain the Temperance Movement.
- identify the effects of Prohibition on American society.
- analyze primary sources to determine their significance to the era of Prohibition.
- develop an argument defending/promoting the Prohibition era using primary sources.

**Investigative Question**
How did the era of Prohibition affect American society?

**Curriculum Standards**
United States History and Geography:
- US.37 Describe the impacts of Prohibition on American society, including: the rise of organized crime, bootlegging, and speakeasies

English/Language Arts:
- Key Ideas and Details 11-12.RL.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; support an interpretation of a text by citing and synthesizing relevant textual evidence from multiple sources.
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 11-12.RL.IKI.7 Evaluate the topic, subject, and/or theme in multiple diverse formats and media, including how the version interprets the source text.
- Writing: Text Types and Protocol 11-12.W.TTP.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to analyze and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection and organization of content.
DAY 1

| Step 1 | Pull up the Mountain Dew: Prohibition in America PowerPoint. Have the students answer the following bell ringer (PowerPoint Slide 2):

The United States government just made it illegal to manufacture, sell, or transport soft drinks.
- How do you feel about this new law? What is your initial reaction?
- Do you agree or disagree?
- Why or why not?
- What is something positive that could come from this law?
- What is something negative that could come from this law?

| Step 2 | After giving the students a few minutes to answer the bell ringer, ask them to share their answers. Make sure that they flesh out their opinions.

| Step 3 | Show the students the picture of the crashed touring car. Explain to the students that the modern sport of NASCAR has its beginnings in the Prohibition era. (PowerPoint Slide 3)

| Step 4 | Introduce the investigative question: How did the era Prohibition impact American society? (PowerPoint Slide 4)

| Step 5 | Have the students group up in elbow partners. Hand out the Problem Based Learning worksheet. Each group member gets on worksheet and this can be used for an assessment grade. (PowerPoint Slide 5)
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<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step 6</strong></td>
<td>Have the students complete the “What we know” box with their elbow partners. This box is focused only on what the students know about Prohibition. If the students are having a hard time understanding this box, model an example for them. The number of examples and guidance needed will vary from class to class.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 7</strong></td>
<td>Draw a PBL chart on the board. Bring the students’ attention back to the board. Have the students share what they know about Prohibition. Record their observations on the board. If you get an answer that you know is not right, ask the student how they know their answer to be true. Depending on their explanation, you can reword their answer and put it in the “What we know” box or place their response in the “What we think we know” box.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 8</strong></td>
<td>Have the students complete the “What we think we know” box. This box is going to be different than the first box. Whereas the students were listing what they know about Prohibition, they are now listing what they think they know about the effects that Prohibition had on American society. If the students are struggling, model examples for them. One such example is as follows: if a student knows that Prohibition made the transportation, manufacture and sale of alcohol illegal; ask the student what problems he thinks that could have caused.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 9</strong></td>
<td>Record the students’ answers on the PBL chart.</td>
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| **Step 10** | Complete the “What do we need to do” box as a class. Ask the students what we need to do to prove what we think we know. The students will have varied answers, but make sure that you get the following responses up on the board:  
  - Research  
  - Ask a historian  
  - Use the textbook  
  - Online websites  
Once completed, allow them to immediately begin researching. |
| **Step 11** | Discuss the Mountain Dew: Prohibition in America content slides. If there are students that need additional support, hand out the Origins of Prohibition note taking guide. (PowerPoint slide 6 &7) |
| **Step 12** | The students will now complete the last box, “What we learned”. The students will use their textbooks or this article to prove what they think they know in addition to recording any new findings. Upon completion, have the students share their answers. Record any findings on the board. |
| **Step 13** | If time permits, have the students respond to the following prompt as an exit ticket. If not, assign it as homework: “Summarize the effects of Prohibition.” |

**Day 2**

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<th>Step</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td>Start the class off with this bell ringer: “Describe the immediate consequences of Prohibition on American Society” Have the students discuss their answer with the class. If you assigned the exit ticket from yesterday as homework, you can take that up now. (PowerPoint slide 8)</td>
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<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td>Review the previous day’s lesson.</td>
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| **Step 3** | Divide the students up into six groups with the following roles. (PowerPoint slide 9)  
  1. Recorder: Records group responses on the H.I.P.P.O. Worksheet  
  2. Presenter: Present group’s findings to the class  
  3. Reader: Read aloud the text  
  4. Interpreter: Identify vocabulary and phrasing they have questions about (You may assign this role to multiple students depending on group size.) |
Step 5  Hand out the H.I.P.P.O Worksheets and the primary source packets to the appropriate groups. Each primary source requires a H.I.P.P.O worksheet to complete.

Step 6  Set up the following scenario for the students:

The year is 1925. The passing of the Volstead Act and the beginning of Prohibition has been highly controversial. There are those that believe that Prohibition should be maintained and those that believe it should be done away with. As a result of this division, a secret meeting has been called to hear out each group and determine if Prohibition should be done away with. You are the delegates of those groups. Inside your briefing packet you will find a H.I.P.P.O. worksheet and a primary source packet. You will fill out the H.I.P.P.O. as you analyze your primary source. In addition, you have been given a mission statement for your group. As you analyze your primary source and complete your H.I.P.P.O. worksheet you will use information from your sources to back up your mission statement. You will then be responsible for presenting your findings to the rest of the delegation as we try to determine the future of Prohibition.

Step 7  After presenting the scenario, let your students get to work. Monitor their progress and provide assistance and support where needed.

Step 8  Allow each group to present their findings to the class. Allow about 2 to 3 minutes for each presentation. If you are good on time, allow the other groups to ask questions of the ones that are presenting.

Step 9  When all groups are done presenting, have the students move their desks back to their original positions.

Step 10  Have the students get a slip of paper and vote either “nay” or “yay” for Prohibition. After you receive all of their responses, lead a classroom discussion about Prohibition. Ask some of the following questions as a closure technique:
- What parallels can you draw between the Prohibition era and modern day issues?
- Would you have supported or been against Prohibition?

Step 11  Before class ends, announce the outcome of their vote for Prohibition.

**EVALUATION**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Total possible points: 100</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bell ringers (2) &amp; Exit ticket: 10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Based Learning Worksheet: 40 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.I.P.P.O. Worksheet: 40 points</td>
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<td>Group Participation: 10 points</td>
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**EXTENSION**

To extend the lesson there are several projects that you can do. These projects are excellent for stimulating student creativity and providing reinforcement opportunities.

- Create an advertisement for or against Prohibition. (You can post this outside in the hallway or around your classroom)
- Write a poem/song that is either anti or pro Prohibition. (You can find examples like this song on the Library of Congress)
- Write a letter to an editor of a newspaper stating if you are for or against Prohibition. (You can use this activity in lieu of a research paper)
**Investigative Question:** How did the era of Prohibition impact American Society?

**What we learned:** What did we learn about the effects of Prohibition on American Society?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we think we know:</th>
<th>Prohibition had on America?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What effects do we think we know?</td>
<td>Know about Prohibition?</td>
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</table>

**What we need to do:** What can we do to prove what we think we know?

**What do we need to do:** What can we find out about Prohibition?
Section I: The Origins of Prohibition

The idea of Prohibition was not just a product of the 20th century. The origins of Prohibition can actually be found in the early 1820’s and 1830’s. During the 1820’s and 1830’s, ___________ ____________ swept across the United States. This increased level of revivalism led to calls for “__________ ___________” such as ___________ and the abolition of slavery. The first state to pass a Prohibition law was ________ in ________. Other states followed suit, and by the time the Civil War started there were several states with Prohibition laws in place. For every state that passed Prohibition laws, there were many others that had strong Temperance communities. Women played a large part in forming these Temperance movements because they saw alcohol as a destructive force in the family.

_________ saw a renewed attack on the sale and ___________ of liquor. This second wave of attack was led by the ____-_________ League, ________, and _______ owners. Each group had their own reasons for attacking the sale and distribution of liquor. For example, factory owners were in favor of Prohibition because they believed that it would improve the work force morale and that it would reduce the number of call outs from liquor related sickness or injury. Though there was some powerful public opposition to the sale and distribution of liquor, Prohibition would not become law for another 13 years.

Section II: The Passing of Prohibition

The United States entered World War I in 1917. To save _______ for the war effort, President Woodrow Wilson issued a temporary ban on the sale and distribution of _______. In that same year, Congress submitted the ___th Amendment. This would make the ________, transporta- tion, and ________ of liquor illegal. Congress had allowed a seven year time limit for the process of ratification but it only took 11 months to receive the necessary support for the 18th Amendment. On _______ , _______, the 18th Amendment was ratified. One year later it would go into effect. In October of 1919 the ___________ ___________ Act was passed. This Act laid the groundwork for enforcing the 18th Amendment and was commonly known as the ________ Act due to Representative Andrew Volstead of Mississippi who championed its cause. Prohi- bition went from being an idea in a few states to being a nation- wide phenomenon. Americans would have to come to terms with their new status as a dry country, and the impact of Prohibition on American society would manifest itself almost immediately.

Prohibition ultimately failed. On December 5th, _______, the 21st Amendment was passed which repealed the 18th Amendment and ended ______________.