

Making a Living

In 1897, the Levine family ran a small garment factory in their home. Factories like this one sparked a national debate about acceptable working conditions. Participants will learn about how past immigrants made a living and organized for better working conditions, and make comparisons to working conditions today. **Can be adapted for Beginner Level ESL students.*

Pre-Visit Materials:

Part I.

Vocabulary Pictionary

Before visiting the Museum, students can familiarize themselves with the vocabulary words on Pg. 2 and 3. This activity will help your students gain a better understanding of life in a Tenement of the past. You can expect these key words to be used by Museum Educators during your students' visit.

Part II.

Your Story, Our Story Connection

During their visit, students will learn stories of immigrants, migrants, and refugees from long ago. Our Your Story, Our Story digital collection offers students the opportunity to make deeper connections. On pg. 4 you will find one YSOS story that complements the theme discussed during the workshop. Students are also welcome to use these stories as inspiration to write their own stories of immigration as well.

Part I. Vocabulary Pictionary



TENEMENT: a building that houses three or more families.



GARMENT SHOP: a place where clothing is made.



PIECEWORK: work paid by the number of pieces you make, not by the hour.



JOB SKILLS: the abilities someone has to do their work.

Manufacturer

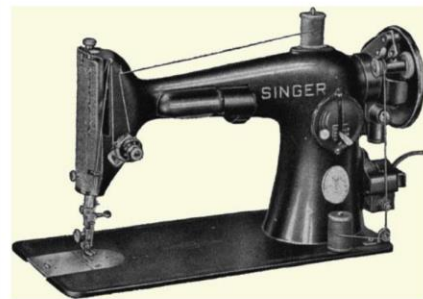


Contractor



Retailer (store)

MANUFACTURER: a company that employs people to make a product.



SEWING MACHINE: a device used to make clothes more quickly.



UNION: an organization of workers formed to protect their rights.



STRIKE: When workers stop working so they can get an employer to change their workplace.



FACTORY: a building where products are made.



INSPECTION: an official visit to check conditions in a workplace.



REFORMER: a person who works to improve a government or society (shown: Frances Perkins).

NOTES:

Part II. Your Story, Our Story Connection

Toyota Tacoma



This is my mom's red Toyota Tacoma. My mom immigrated from Mexico undocumented in the late 1990s with my five-year old sister and my aunt. She worked delivering newspapers every morning.

Finally, she was able to buy a truck. After that, she did many different types of work, including catering (serving food at parties). She usually had to work two jobs, so my aunt took care of my sister. Later she met my dad and then I was born.

This truck took us everywhere—all four of us in this three-seat car. My mom has worked so hard and risked so much. This truck represents her journey. Her hard work is finally rewarding her now that my sister is currently attending college. I'm not far from college myself.

-Your Story, Our Story Submitter

Your Story, Our Story, a national project, explores American immigration and migration through crowd-sourced stories of everyday objects. You and your students can explore curated collections on the website and add stories of their own. Visit yourstory.tenement.org.