



Who Was Milton Hershey?

Lesson Plan

Grade Levels: Elementary/Middle School

National Social Studies Themes: People, Places, Environments, Individual Development and Identity

Pennsylvania Standards: PA Academic Standards for History: 8.2 A, B, C

Big Idea: Primary source documents help us learn about people, places and events from the past.

Essential Questions: How do historians learn about the past? How can primary sources help us to understand the past?

Objectives:

- Students will examine primary source documents in search of clues to gain an understanding about the life of a person from the past.
- Students will use evidence to make predictions.

Time Frame: 1-2 class periods. This has been designed so that you can choose to do the complete lesson plan or select parts with your students based on your schedule and objectives.

Materials Needed:

- [Who Was Milton Hershey PowerPoint](#)
- Milton Hershey Photo Worksheets – one/student or one/group (links below)
- [Exit ticket – one/student](#)
- Pencils
- Optional - Magnifying glasses, one/student or group, for close observation of the photos on the worksheet

Part 1: Introduction

Explain to students that in today's lesson they will be doing the work of historians. Define historian and help students to understand that historians tell stories of the past. Sometimes the stories are like mysteries and historians search for clues to help make sense of them. Primary source documents can be a source of clues to the past. Primary sources are a first-hand account of an event by an eye-witness or a participant. Examples are diaries, letters, photos, maps, speeches, objects, and newspaper articles. Students will have an opportunity to investigate some primary sources and look for clues about the life of Milton Hershey.

Part 2: Activity

If possible, project the PowerPoint presentation to guide students through the process of examining primary sources. They can complete the worksheets as a whole class while viewing the slides. An option would be to project the second slide and use it as an example of taking a close look at a primary source, leading the students through [See Think Wonder](#). The images from the PowerPoint can be copied (copy without the notes on each slide) and students can work on the worksheets in small groups, each group using a different image. Magnifying glasses are a helpful tool for small groups.

- **Display the second slide** – image of Milton Hershey about age 16 as an apprentice to Joseph Royer, a candy-maker in Lancaster, PA.
 - Invite students to examine the image and share their observations or take notes on [Worksheet 1](#). Guiding questions might include:
 - What do you notice about the way he is dressed? What type of job might he have?
 - What can we learn from the text on the receipt? Where was this receipt from? When? How might it be connected to the photo of young Milton Hershey?
- **Display the third slide** – Chocolate Factory in 1905
 - Invite students to examine the image and share their observations or take notes on [Worksheet 2](#). Guiding questions might include:
 - What do you see in this photo? What do you wonder about?
 - What type of transportation do you see? Why was this important for the factory?
 - What might it have been like to work in the chocolate factory?
- **Display the fourth slide** – Milton Hershey's passport
 - Invite students to examine the image and share their observations or take notes on [Worksheet 3](#). Guiding questions might include:
 - What kind of document might this be?
 - What does it tell us about Milton Hershey?
- **Display the fifth slide** – High Point Mansion – Built for Mr. and Mrs. Hershey in 1908. The house had 22 rooms with an open floor plan that was unusual for its time. The gardens were open for the public to enjoy.

- Invite students to examine the image and share their observations or take notes on [Worksheet 4](#). Guiding questions might include:
 - What do you see in this photo?
 - Who do you think lived in the mansion on the hill? What makes you think that?
 - What do you notice about the people in the photo? What are they doing?
- **Display the sixth slide.** This image is of Milton and Catherine Hershey in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in 1901. The Hersheys traveled the world, looking for ideas to bring back to the model town they were building, in Hershey, PA, and also hoping to find a diagnosis and cure for the unknown neurological disease that Catherine suffered.
 - Invite students to examine the image and share their observations or take notes on [Worksheet 5](#). Guiding questions might include:
 - What do you see in this photo?
 - What do you notice about their dress?
 - What do you see in the background? Where might they be?
 - What might they be doing?
 - Who do you think they might be?
- **Display the seventh slide.** This is a photo of Milton Hershey with students at the Hershey Industrial School, which was started in 1910, for orphaned boys. They were provided with a stable home life, a rigorous academic program, and agricultural and vocational training. Milton and Catherine Hershey signed a Deed of Trust in 1909, endowing the school with land and money to maintain the school forever.
 - Invite students to examine the image and share their observations or take notes on [Worksheet 6](#). Guiding questions might include:
 - Who do you see in the photo? What do you wonder about the children? Where might they be? Why are they gathered here? Who is the gentleman in the photo?
 - Notice their facial expressions and dress. How do you think they might be feeling about having this photo taken? Why?
 - When do you think this might have been taken? What makes you think that?

Part 3: Assessment

Facilitate a wrap-up discussion about the experience of using primary source documents to tell the story of a person from the past. Guiding questions might include:

- What were you able to learn about Milton Hershey by examining primary source documents?
- What questions about his life do you still have? How might you find answers to these questions?
- Review the students' worksheets.
- Exit ticket: Name a primary source. Write one thing that surprised you about Milton Hershey's life.

