



## Pre-Post Museum Visit Activities

We at the Steelworks Museum understand that this may be your students' first experience visiting a museum or this may be their first exposure to industrial history. We have prepared the following activities to prepare your students for their museum visit and follow up activities when you return to the classroom to extend the lessons. If you have any further questions or if we may provide any additional assistance within the learning environment, do not hesitate to contact the museum curator at (719) 564-9086 ext. 108.

### Before the Visit:

- Ask the students if they know what a museum is and if they have ever been to a museum. If so, what types of things did they see? If not, ask them what they think they might see, hear, or smell at a museum. A museum **collects, preserves, protects, studies, exhibits** and **educates** about different kinds of historical artifacts, art, or scientific specimens. Ask your students what kinds of objects they collect. Have the students draw a picture or verbally explain why an object that is important to them, and which they would put in a museum. Why was this object chosen? Does it have special significance or historical value?
- Have each student draw a picture of a museum that they have visited or what they imagine a museum to look like on the outside and the inside. Look at pictures of our museum's building on our website at [www.steelworks.us](http://www.steelworks.us). List comparisons between the museum today and what the building was used for in the past. Have students look at pictures available on our website that relate to CF&I's mines, mills or railroad. There are many other photographs from the Steelworks Archive collection on our website to assist in lessons that can serve as discussion starters. Contact our museum curator for many other lesson plans or ideas.
- The Steelworks Center of the West preserves, exhibits and educates about the history of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company and the Bessemer neighborhood. Your students will learn that CF&I was a company of incredible importance to the history of Pueblo, Colorado and the American West. Ask students if they know of anyone who worked for CF&I (possibly grandparent, parent or neighbor) Ask if the student knew what their job was at the mill, the railroad, or in the mines and how long they worked for the company.
- The main exhibits in the gallery focus on the years 1915-1936. From the beginning of the company in the 1880's until the late 1930's, CF&I had towns that were associated with their mines. Each town had homes for the workers, schools for their children, churches, stores, and YMCA's to entertain the workers in their free time. Ask students to imagine what life was like for these workers who lived in a town where your employer owned everything in the town.
- Discuss with your students that CF&I was an organization made up of many different departments:
  - Mining: CF&I owned more than 60 different coal and iron ore mines and quarries during the life of the company. Mining was an important part of CF&I because it was from those minerals that steel was created. The main minerals used in the steel making process were **coal, limestone and iron ore**. CF&I also

mined other minerals that were used in other types of operations and were sold to other companies.

- The Colorado & Wyoming Railroad: Once the minerals were taken from the ground, they were transported to Pueblo's steel mill in large box cars on CF&I's railroad, the Colorado & Wyoming. The C&W also was used to transport heavy materials and equipment around the mill yard.
- Steel production: Once the minerals were unloaded from the box cars, they were turned into steel. During the focus years of our main exhibit, 1915-1936, after the minerals were processed, they were dumped into a large cylinder called a blast furnace and melted to very hot temperatures of 3000° f. The melted liquid was called pig iron and was heated again in another furnace called the open hearth. The melted steel was then poured into molds called ingots. The ingots were cooled and removed, leaving a large block of steel called a billet. When it came time to make the various products, the billet was heated up again to a consistent temperature, and put between rollers to change its shape into the desired product. Over CF&I's lifetime, it made hundreds of different steel products.
- Personnel and administration: it took many people to work for such a large company. Not all the workers worked in the mill itself. Many worked in CF&I's offices as secretaries, accountants, salespeople, and telephone operators. CF&I need people to do other jobs such as veterinarians to care for the mules that worked in the mines and doctors and nurses to care for the injured or sick workers. Some people worked in the company stores or as teachers in the company schools. All the people who worked for CF&I had to work together as a team to make the operations smooth.
- Once the steel products were made, they were sold to companies and people all over the country and eventually, all over the world.
- Today, a company called EVRAZ operates the steel mill. The workers recycle steel by melting it in a furnace and make new rods, bars, and seamless tubes. Discuss recycling with your students and what materials they recycle and how it impacts our environment.

#### **Post Visit/Back in the Classroom:**

- Students create their own visual timeline poster of the history of CF&I from the beginning of the company through its end in 1993 using pictures or graphics gathered from internet sources, newspapers or magazines. Parallel this timeline with one made relating to major events in American history also using clippings or graphics.
- Have students write about what they would include in a museum of their own. This could also be used as a 'time capsule' activity. Have students present their contributions to the class and explain why it is important to their sense of being. Objects may include historic artifacts, student crafted sample artifacts, models, pictures, maps, or stories from their family.
- Have students discuss and write about how people today and from different time periods are similar and/or different.

- Role Play/Put on a Play based on concepts learned in the museum. Students can create characters based on what they learned about people of the period in general. Examples might include: John D. Rockefeller, coal miner, those who worked on the railroad, baseball players/others at the Steel Y, and those who worked in the production areas of the mill....This might be especially appropriate when trying to include people who were not politically powerful and were not given much coverage in historical nonfiction.
- Have students write a newspaper article for the Steelworks Blast, writing about a significant item they learned about in the museum in journalistic form.