

TIMBER!

Note to teachers: This supplement includes a discussion guide, lessons and Michigan Content Standards to use with the Michigan Time Traveler page. You may reproduce the pages in this supplement to use with students.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- **The Lumberjack's Day.** In the middle 19th century Michigan was swampy with few roads. How did the loggers adapt to those conditions? Describe a logger's typical work day. What did he do on his day off? A "shanty" is a small crudely built dwelling, usually of wood. It probably comes from the Canadian French word *chantier* for lumber camp or hut. Why do you think lumberjacks were often called "shanty boys" or "shantymen?" (SOC 1.3. Analyze and Interpret the Past)
- **Saturday Night Fun.** What did lumberjacks do for fun in camp on Saturday night? In what ways were their activities different or the same as what workers might do today during their free time on an oil rig, at a military outpost or on a space station? (SOC 1.3. Analyze and Interpret the Past)
- **Meal Time.** Describe a logger's breakfast. Why did it need to be his biggest meal of the day? How did his opportunity to have fresh fruit and vegetables differ from yours today? Why? (SOC 1.3. Analyze and Interpret the Past)
- **Dates to Know.** Name some inventions that helped loggers produce more lumber. Do you think these inventions improved Michigan's environment? What first steps did the state take to rebuild Michigan's forests? (SOC.I.1. Time and Chronology)

ACTIVITY ONE: Time Line

(SOC.I.1. Time and Chronology)

Make a classroom time line of the "Dates to Know" on the Time Traveler page. Print each on a poster or card and hang around the classroom. Leave room between dates. Put the events into historical context by adding the events below to the time line. Discuss: How might each event have had an impact on Michigan's lumber industry?

1837	Michigan statehood	(increased people coming to the state, need for lumber)
1861-1865	The Civil War	(men go to war, fewer available to work in woods)
1869	Transcontinental railroad connects East and West	(lumber needed for bridges and ties for tracks)
1871	Great Chicago Fire	(lumber needed to rebuild the city)
1893	Stock market crash, financial panic	(industries, including lumber, affected)

ACTIVITY TWO: 19th Century Lumber Industry Economics

(SOC.IV.1 Economics: Individual and Household Choices; SOC.IV.2 Economics: Business Choices; SOC.V.1 Information Processing; MAT III. Data Analysis and Statistics)

Background: "Michigan's Timber Products" (p. 3) shows the value of the state's sawed lumber products from 1860 to 1920. During the Civil War there were few men of lumberjack age available to cut the trees. The two-man saw was not yet used. Lumberjacks could work in swampy forests only when the ground was frozen. Logs had to be hauled out of the forest using manual and animal power. Beginning in the 1870s, transportation innovations such as the Big Wheels and narrow gauge railroads permitted year-round logging. During the 1870s and 1880s, better saws in the woods and sawmills speeded cutting and processing. The "Four Logging Towns" graph shows the growth and decline of four Michigan towns that grew up around sawmills during Michigan's lumber boom.

Activity: Provide copies of the charts to each student or enlarge and create an overhead transparency of each chart for use with the class. As transparencies, the charts may be overlaid on each other to show how the rise and fall of the lumbering industry impacted community populations. Call students' attention to the rise in the dollar value of

Michigan’s lumbering products until 1890. Discuss how improvements in the industry permitted cutting of more and more trees. Ask, “What happened when the lumberjacks had cut most of Michigan’s trees?” People found other work or moved west or to Canada to log. “How does the “Four Logging Towns” chart show this? If you owned a business that sold food or supplies to the lumber camps, how might the closing of the lumber camps affect your business? After some years, which town on this chart continued to grow again?” (On-line **Extras** [see below] provides more information about Muskegon.) Discuss an industry in your own town or one in the news. How does a company’s decision to move in or out of a town—or the closing/opening of a factory—affect the community?

ACTIVITY THREE: Stories and Songs of Work

(SOC.1.2. *Comprehending the Past*; ELA.5. *Literature*; ELA.2. *Meaning and Communication: Writing*; CES.2. *Career Planning*)

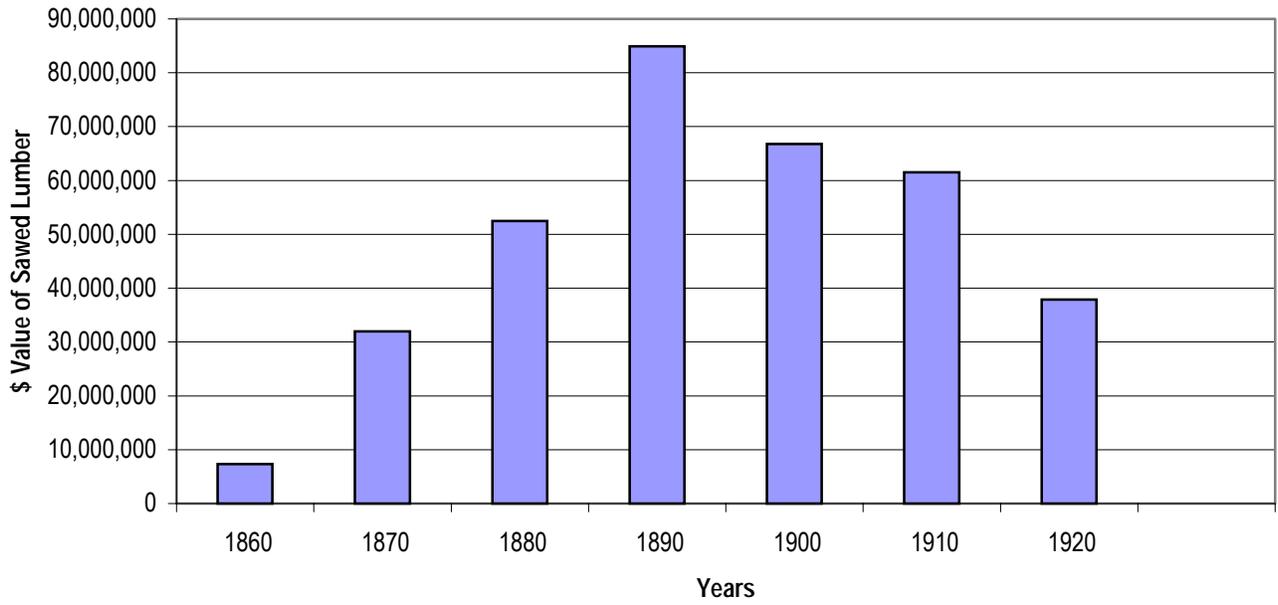
Background: Lumberjacks entertained themselves during the dark winter evenings and on Sundays with music and stories. They retold or made up tall tales about characters such as Paul Bunyan and about real lumberjacks. Here are excerpts from a Paul Bunyan tale and from songs about real lumber camp owners David Ward, Louis Sands and Jim McGee, who logged the Manistee River area. Share these with your students. More songs can be found at your library and on folk music Web sites. Search the Internet using such key words as “lumbering,” “logging,” or “shanty boy” with “folk music,” “ballad,” “songs” or “lyrics.”

<p>From <i>Paul Bunyan’s Big Ox</i></p> <p>Come all you old-time lumberjacks Wherever you may dwell, And listen to my story— The truth to you I’ll tell.</p> <p>It’s of that grand old lumberjack, Paul Bunyan he was called; He was born up in Wisconsin And was thirty-five feet tall.</p> <p>The winter of the deep blue snow He came to Michigan; He logged along the Saginaw And also on the Grand.</p> <p>And then he got his big blue ox, And I’ve often heard them say That every day for dinner He would eat a ton of hay.</p>	<p>From <i>Old David Ward</i></p> <p>‘Twas on a bright morning I started away, And off to the woods I expected to stay. I packed up my turkey When I found a good pard, And we both went a-lumbering For old David Ward.</p> <p>From <i>Louie Sands and Jim McGee</i></p> <p>Who feeds us beans? Who feeds us tea? Louie Sands and Jim McGee. Who thinks that meat’s a luxury? Louie Sands and Jim McGee. We make the big trees fall ker-splash And hit the ground an awful smash; And for the logs who gets the cash? Louie Sands and Jim McGee.</p>
<p>Source: Beck, Earl Clifton. <i>Songs of the Michigan Lumberjacks</i>. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1941, pp. 259, 50, 59.</p>	

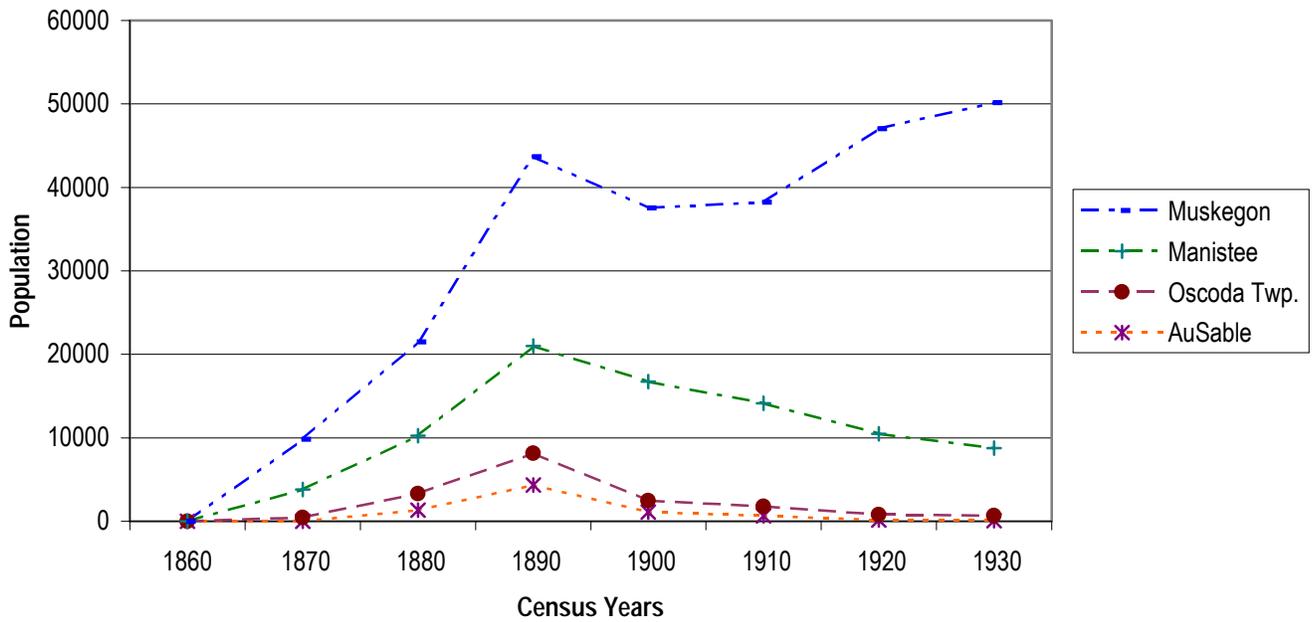
Activity: Talk with students about how work becomes part of popular culture. Voyageurs, lumberjacks, sailors and cowboys sang and told stories. Today’s popular rock and rap songs include references to work. Stand-up comedians do occupation-related routines. The *Dilbert* comic strip focuses on the cubicle world of office workers. (Can students see how both Dilbert and Paul Bunyan stories use exaggeration in their portrayals of work?) Encourage students to suggest other songs, stories and comics that focus around work. Distribute the “Lumberjack’s Alphabet” (p. 4) to students. Read and discuss. Brainstorm and make a list of modern occupations in which students are interested. Divide the class into several groups. Ask each group to select an occupation and write an alphabet for it patterned after the “Lumberjack’s Alphabet.”

EXTRAS: The on-line edition of this guide features **extra materials** with MEAP-style questions to use with the charts, vocabulary words for Stories and Songs of Work, the “Lumberjack’s Alphabet” melody and a list of books about lumberjack ballads. Find the on-line teachers guide (PDF format) at <http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/museum/techstuf/nie.html>.

Michigan's Timber Products



Four Logging Towns



Lumberjack's Alphabet

The folklore of various occupations includes alphabet songs. The *Lumberjack's Alphabet* is patterned after a ballad that sailors sang. It probably came to Michigan with Maine lumberjacks. It was also sung in Canada. Different copies of the song show that different singers used slightly different lyrics.

- A** is for axes you very well know.
- B** is for the boys who use them just so.
- C** is for chopping, and now I'll begin. And
- D** is for danger we often are in.

Chorus

So happy, so happy, so happy are we,
No mortals on earth are as joyful as we.
Hi-derry-hi, hi-derry-down,
Give a shanty boy grub and there's nothing goes wrong.

- E** is for echoes that through the woods ring.
- F** is for foreman, the head of the thing.
- G** is for grindstone, so swift it does turn. And
- H** is for handle, from elm you will learn.

- I** is for iron to mark the pine's end.
- J** is for jobber who no money can lend.
- K** is the keen edge our axes do keep. And
- L** is for lice that work while you sleep.

- M** is for moss we stag our camp with.
- N** is for needle we patch our pants with.
- O** is for owl that hoots in the night. And
- P** is the pine that always falls right.

- Q** is for quarrels we never allow.
- R** is the river our logs they do plow.
- S** is for sleigh so stout and so strong. And
- T** is for teams to haul them along.

- U** is the use we put our teams to.
 - V** is for valley we haul our logs through.
 - W** is for woods we leave in the spring.
- Now I've ended my song; no more will I sing.

SOURCE: Beck, Earl Clifton. *Songs of the Michigan Lumberjacks*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1941, pp. 22-23.

On-line Extras

19th Century Lumber Industry Economics

The “Michigan’s Timber Products” and “Four Logging Towns” charts can help prepare students for questions on the MEAP test. Use these questions and/or create your own about the information provided. You may also wish to have students create their own graphs using the raw data provided on this page.

1. When Michigan produced its largest amount of lumber products, they were worth
 - a. Between \$30,000,000 and \$40,000,000
 - b. Between \$50,000,000 and \$60,000,000
 - c. Between \$60,000,000 and \$80,000,000
 - d. Between \$80,000,000 and \$90,000,000

2. Between 1860 and 1910, all of these logging towns had the most people in the year
 - a. 1870
 - b. 1880
 - c. 1890
 - d. 1900

3. This logging town lost people after the lumbering boom, but started to grow again
 - a. Muskegon
 - b. Manistee
 - c. Oscoda Township
 - d. AuSable

4. These charts show that
 - a. There was no relationship between the growth of the lumbering industry and the size of the town
 - b. There was a relationship between the growth of the lumbering industry and the size of the town
 - c. A town will never grow again after an industry closes.
 - d. We don’t need to conserve our natural resources.

5. Have students make educated guesses about why Muskegon’s line on the graph is different from the other towns. Then have students read the following excerpt. Which of their educated guesses are confirmed by history?

Answers: 1. d, 2. c, 3. a, 4. b

Data for the “Four Lumbering Towns” and “Michigan’s Timber Products” Charts

CENSUS:	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
CITY								
AuSable		--	1,328	4,328	1,116	648	171	61
Oscoda Twp.		476	1,998	3,848	1,349	1,130	617	642
Manistee		3,343	6,930	12,812	14,260	12,381	9,694	8,078
Muskegon		6,002	11,262	22,702	20,818	24,062	36,570	41,390
Value of Michigan’s Timber Products	7,303,404	31,946,306	52,449,928	84,935,709	66,760,057	61,513,560	37,869,230	

Muskegon County History

In 1893, Muskegon responded to the decline of [lumber] milling by organizing a chamber of commerce to attract new industry to the county. To circumvent laws that prohibited the use of public funds for such endeavors, the chamber devised a plan to have the city purchase eighty acres of land for a park for \$100,000. As residents went to the polls to approve the bond issue, they knew that the money paid for the land would be used to attract new industries. The voters overwhelmingly supported the proposal.

[Charles] Hackley and several other former lumber barons were selected to administer the funds. Hackley opposed subsidizing new, unproven industries. Instead he favored using the money, known as the bonus plan, to bring existing industries to Muskegon. A company was allowed \$100 for each person it expected to employ. The bonus became a mortgage that was cancelled if after seven years of operation the factory's average number of employees equaled or exceeded the estimated number. If the average number of employees could not be maintained, the company was to return part of the bonus. If the company failed, the chamber of commerce took over the plant.

The first company to move to Muskegon under the bonus plan was the Julius Loeschner Tannery of Chicago. It came in 1894 and remained in business until 1934.

The efforts to bring new industry to Muskegon were remarkable. During the late 1890s—a time of national depression and closing mills—Muskegon's population stabilized and even increased slightly. By 1902, of 41 area industries employing 4,700 workers, only 13 with 810 workers had existed prior to 1889. An early nineteenth century observer estimated that bonus plan firms brought to Muskegon \$4,185,000 in wages and nearly \$100,000 in taxes.

SOURCE: Rosentreter, Roger L. Michigan's 83 Counties: Muskegon County. *Michigan History Magazine*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (May/June 1988), 8-11.

Stories and Songs of Work

Words to Know

Grindstone: a flat circular stone of natural sandstone that revolves on an axle and is used for smoothing and sharpening axe blades

Iron: Axe or marking hammer used to put the owner's mark (brand) into the end of a cut log

Jobber: Man who contracts to get out lumber within a certain time.

Lice: Plural of (body) louse, which feeds on the body and lives in the clothing of humans

Pard: Partner

Plow: Move through water; logs were banked along rivers, then floated to the sawmill in spring as rivers rose and rushed with the addition of melted snow and spring rains

Shanty boy: lumberjack, woodsman

Sleigh: an open, usually horse-drawn, vehicle with runners for use on snow or ice; used to transport logs from the forest to the banking ground along the river's edge

Stag: to chink or fill holes in the walls of a log building (such as the lumberjack's bunkhouse) to keep out the wind and cold

Turkey: Bag or pack containing clothing and other supplies

Song Melody

Lumberjack's Alphabet



A is for ax - es you ve - ry well know.



B is for the boys who use them just so.



C is for chop - ping and now I'll be - gin. And



D is for dan - ger we of - ten are in.

[Click here to play the tune \(midi file\).](#)

Selected Books about Lumbering Songs
(Library of Michigan catalog numbers)

- Beck, Earl Clifton (Compiler). *Songs of the Michigan Lumberjacks*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1941. (M1629.B34 S6 1942)
- Donohoe, Kitty and Pasqua Cekola Warstler. *Bunyan and banjos: Michigan Songs & Stories*. St. Johns, MI: Kidfolk Press, 1987. (F 566.3 .D6 1987)
- Eckstorm, Fannie Hardy and Mary Winslow Smyth (Compilers). *Minstrelsy of Maine: Folk-Songs and Ballads of the Woods and the Coast*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927. (398.8 E19)
- Fowke, Edith (Compiler). *Lumbering Songs from the Northern Woods*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1970. (784.4 F78I)
- Gardner, Emelyn Elizabeth, and Geraldine Jencks Chickering (Compilers). *Ballads and Songs of Southern Michigan*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1939. (M1629.G23 B18)
- Gray, Roland Palmer (Compiler). *Songs and Ballads of the Maine Lumberjacks with Other Songs from Maine*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924. (811.04 G78)
- Rickaby, Franz (Compiler). *Ballads and Songs of the Shanty-Boy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926. (M1628.R54)