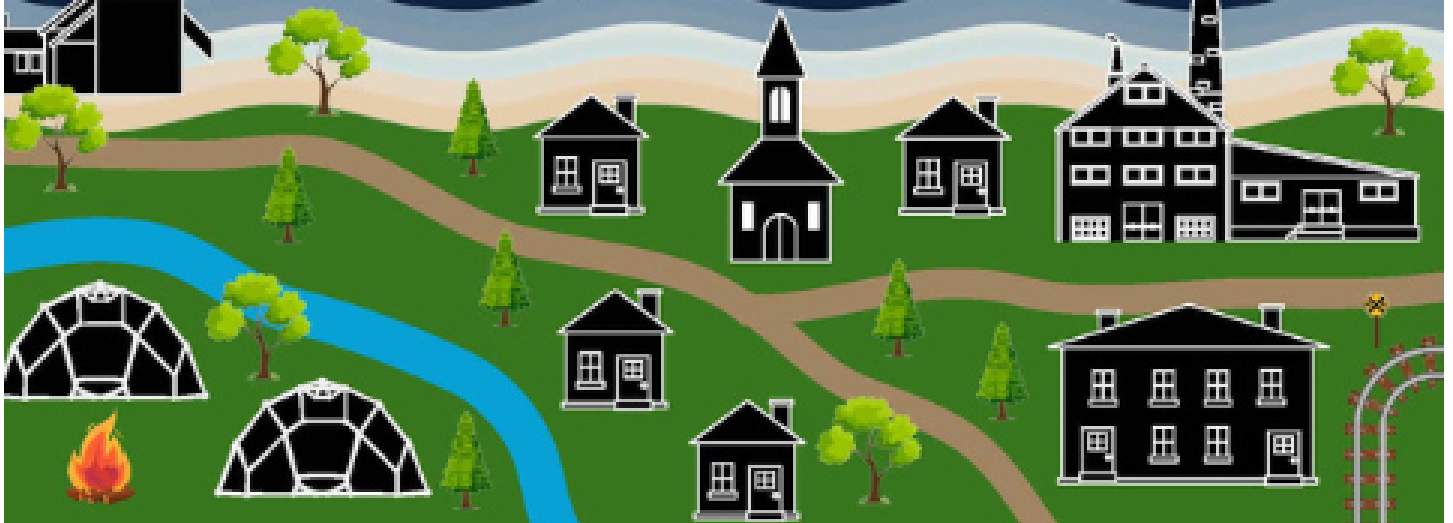
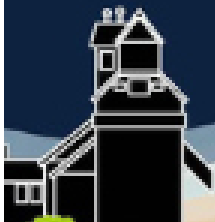
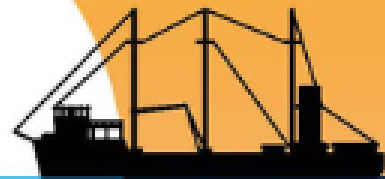


The Making of Milwaukee

Milwaukee is your city

UNIT 4: LOCAL GOVERNMENT





The Making of Milwaukee

The Making of Milwaukee Table of Contents – Unit 4

Unit 4: Local Government; Video Chapters 9 & 15, 10 & 11

Video Chapters 9 & 15: Greater Milwaukee & Exploding Metropolis

Greater Milwaukee & Exploding Metropolis Educator Pages	Page 3
Greater Milwaukee & Exploding Metropolis Student Activities	Page 6

Video Chapters 10 & 11: Trouble in Town & Socialists at Work

Trouble in Town & Socialists at Work Educator Pages	Page 16
Trouble in Town & Socialists at Work Student Activities	Page 18
Unit 4: Engaging in Inquiry	Page 24
Unit 4: Children’s Literature Connections	Page 25



The Making of Milwaukee

Unit 4: Local Government

[Video Chapter 9: Greater Milwaukee \(14:08 min\)](#)

[Video Chapter 15: Exploding Metropolis \(7:56 - 11:48 min\)](#)

Essential Questions:

- What are the purposes of local government?
- Why do we have a city and county named Milwaukee?
- How does the city and county government help people?
- Who makes decisions for the city? For the county?
- What is a socialist?
- Where does Milwaukee government happen?

Video Chapter Overview:

These selected video sections highlight Milwaukee's government history at the beginning of the twentieth century. Milwaukee was the first city in the United States to elect a socialist mayor. After years of corruption and lack of action by the city government, a series of socialist mayors accomplished dramatic improvements in the city of Milwaukee, both in development and social change. Please pay attention to the specific minutes of the video chapters for use in the classroom. The video sections noted above for the following lessons are the most appropriate for elementary levels.

Standards:

SS.BH1: Students will examine individual cognition, perception, behavior and identity.

SS.BH2: Students will investigate and interpret interactions between individuals and groups.

SS.BH3: Students will assess the role that human behavior and cultures play in the development of social endeavors.

SSGeog1: Students will use geographic tools and ways of thinking to analyze the world.

SS.Geog2: Students will analyze human movement and population patterns.

SS.Hist1: Students will use historical evidence for determining cause and effect.

SS.Hist2: Students will analyze, recognize, and evaluate patterns of continuity and change over time, and contextualization of historical events.

SS.Hist3: Students will connect past events, people, and ideas to the present; use different perspectives to draw conclusions; and suggest current implications.

SS.Hist4: Students will evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources to interpret the historical context, intended audience, purpose, or author's point of view.



The Making of Milwaukee

Local Government Overview

Learning Goals:

Students will learn about local government for the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County.

Objectives:

Students should be able to identify where local government takes place and the power structure for local and county government.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- Who leads a city?
- What does a mayor do?
- What is a city council?
- How do things get changed in a city?
- What is a socialist?
- Who runs our city now?
- Who is my representative?
- Why do we have a representative government?

Additional Resources:

[City of Milwaukee Website](#)
[Milwaukee Mayor History](#)
[Milwaukee, Current Mayor](#)
[Milwaukee Common Council Page](#)
[Milwaukee City Hall 360 Tour](#)
[Viewaukee Milwaukee City Hall](#)

Vocabulary:

representative	ordinance	council
government	corrupt	city hall
mayor	voter	suburb
executive	socialist	leader
judicial	county	election
legislative	city	

Local Government Activities Overview

Overview:

Students will be able to identify what local governments do.

Materials Needed:

The Making of Milwaukee student journals (digital or paper)

[What does a Mayor Do?](#)

[ICIVICS Local Government and County Government](#)

Learning Activities Overview:

This introductory section should be completed before the history of Milwaukee government videos are watched. These activities provide students basic information they will need to understand how local governments work.

Some premade resources are included in this lesson for your convenience. There are other activities included in this lesson that you can use to spark your students' interest from ICIVICS. ICIVICS is a free nonprofit and nonpartisan website that offers excellent resources in civic education. The local and county government lessons and activities are labeled for grades 6-8, but you may find that some of these activities are appropriate for your 4th and 5th graders.

Activities in this section:

- *Local Government.* Students should read the section explaining local government and analyze the flow chart highlighting the duties. Then on the following page, students can sort out the responsibility cards individually or in small groups. Encourage students to share and ask for clarification when needed. There is a video called, "What Does a Mayor do?" from Indiana Public Television that is age appropriate for use with this lesson.
- *My Local Government.* After familiarizing themselves, the teacher should introduce students to the City of Milwaukee website. At the top of the page there is a tab called Directory and under that tab you and your students can find the elected official section. In small groups or individually, students should go through the website to answer the questions in this activity about who represents them in the government and what they do. You may want to use the representative that represents your school or students' neighborhoods if it is not the same. If you are teaching this from outside the City of Milwaukee, you can find the same information on your local city government website.
- *Milwaukee City Hall.* An article with information and pictures about city hall is included. You may use and read this with your students or use as a piece of evidence for the government inquiry questions.



The Making of Milwaukee Video Notes

Chapter 9: Greater Milwaukee

Chapter 15: Exploding Metropolis

While you watch the video, write words you think are important or make quick sketches of things you see that you want to remember. This could be names, places, dates, things from nature, things manmade, artifacts, quotes - whatever you take away from the video.

A large rectangular area with a light gray dot grid pattern, intended for students to write notes or make sketches during the video.



My Milwaukee Journal: Greater Milwaukee

What qualities should a leader have?

What kind of person should a leader be?

Would you make a good leader? Why?

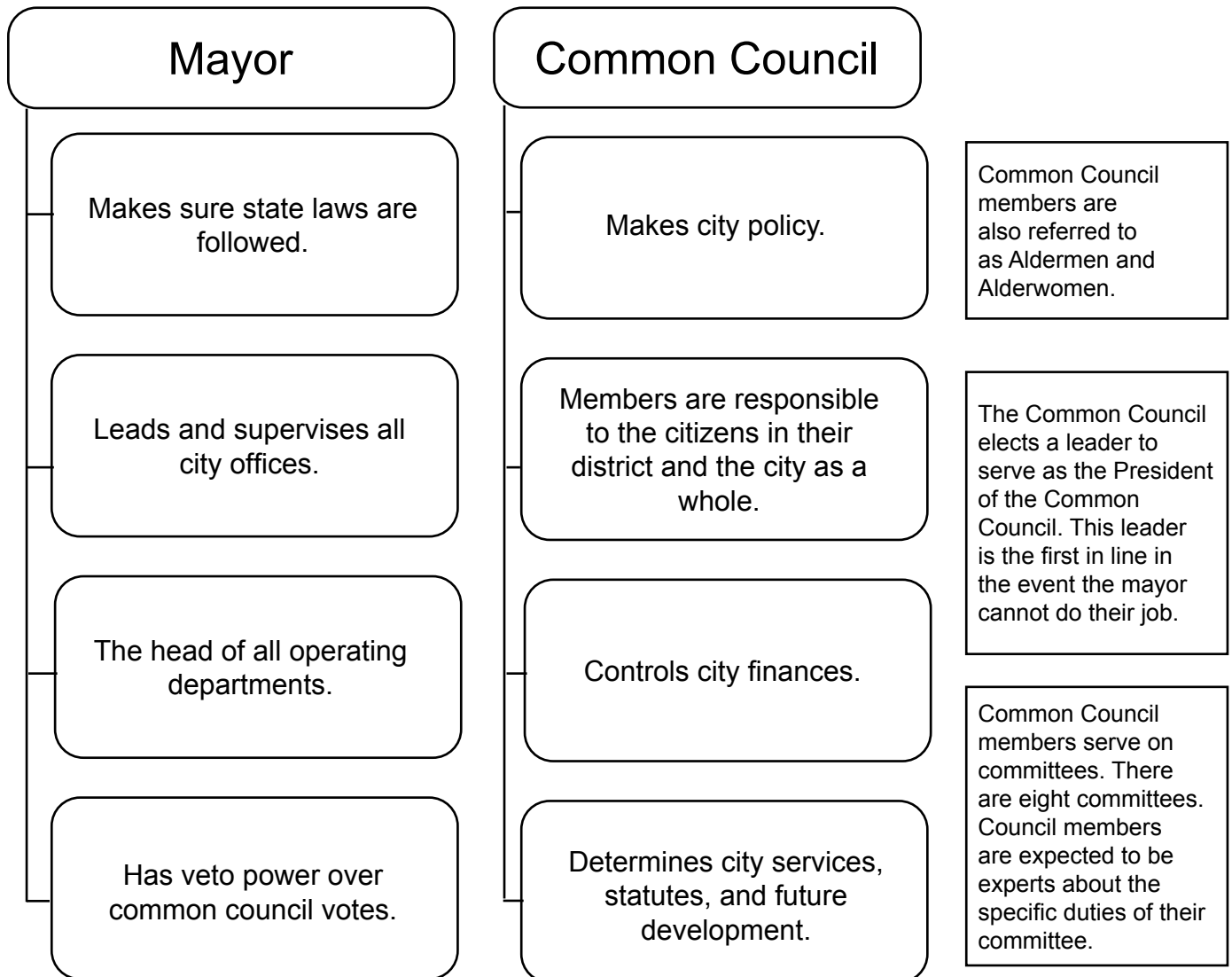
What feedback would you give Milwaukee leaders about our city? Why?

What would you like Milwaukee leaders to change about our city? Why?

The Making of Milwaukee

Student Activity: Local Government

The City of Milwaukee is a municipality in the State of Wisconsin. All cities in Wisconsin must first follow the laws stated in the state constitution. Each city in Wisconsin has the power to write specific rules for the people of their city. The state allows this because each city is different; they all have different needs. Milwaukee's government leaders include a mayor and the Common Council members or district representatives. There are 15 city council members that represent people in their district. The mayor and the city council work together to make sure the city runs well. They work in the city hall.



Read through the duties of the mayor and the common council on the previous page. Cut out the following duty cards, and with a partner or a small group, sort them into categories based on the headings, Mayor Jobs, Common Council Jobs.

Mayor

Common Council

There are 20 departments in the City of Milwaukee. I decide who gets the job as the head of the department.

Has veto power.

Can make proclamations in honor of people or events in the city.

Represents the city when a major event happens.

Approves the final budget for the city.

Take calls from citizens in their district about services they receive.

Controls the finances of the entire city.

Approves licenses in the city including domestic partnership, home improvement, alcohol sales, loading zones, and pets.

Oversees roads and alleys, sewer and water services, garbage pickup, and public building maintenance.

Oversees the reports from the fire, police, and health departments. Makes decisions on public safety.

Makes decisions on contracts from the city, pensions, city salaries, insurance, and labor.

Responsible for making the city a safe and great place to live for all citizens.

Determines how people are taxed on their properties and how much sales tax is in the city.

The Making of Milwaukee

My City Common Council

Use the city website: www.city.milwaukee.gov.

Find the following information for where you live or where your school is located.

The City Common Council Member/Alderman for my school is:

How long have they been a City Common Council Member?

When are they up for reelection?

An Alderman/City Common Council member is elected every _____ years.

Go to the City Common Council member's page that represents you. What are some important issues for your district/neighborhood that your City Common Council member has worked on?

Go to the section on the website for your City Common Council member. Read their latest newsletter and find what committees they are on and the work they are currently doing.

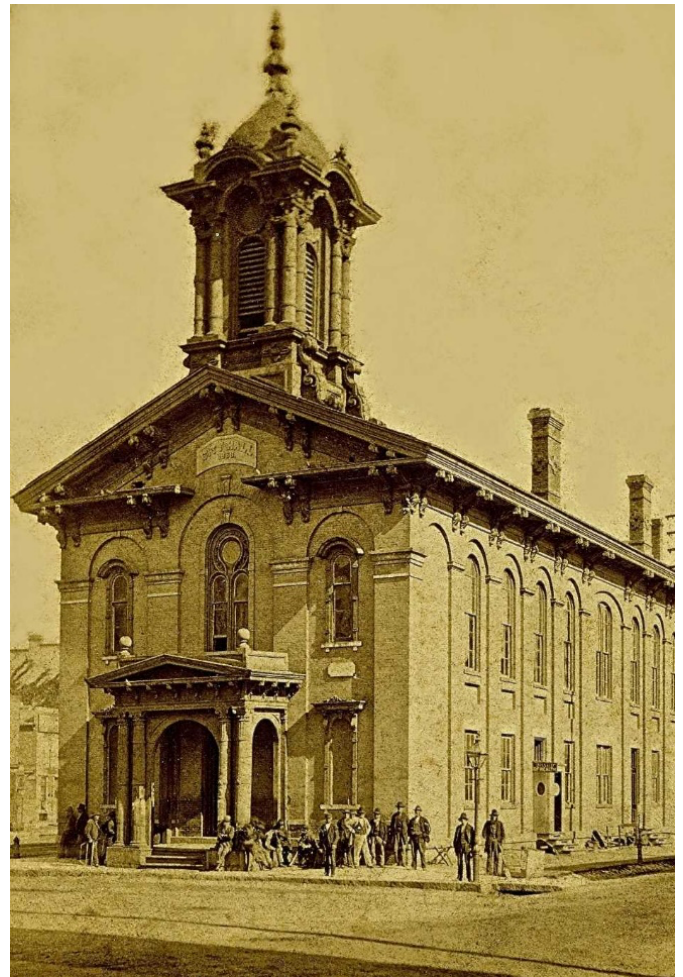
The Making of Milwaukee

City Hall

The history of Milwaukee City Hall dates to the founding of Milwaukee itself. The City of Milwaukee was officially founded in 1846. For the first 40 years of its existence, the Milwaukee Common Council, the group of Milwaukee's 15 elected leaders, met in a variety of locations around the city, including churches, hotels, public marketplaces, and even a horse stable. Finally, in 1890, after several fires and getting tired of having City Council members working in rooms all over the city, the Common Council voted to build a new city hall. In 1891, the Council held a contest to see who would design the new building. The Council received 11 different designs from people all over the United States, but eventually selected Henry C. Koch's design. Construction on the building began in February 1894 and was completed in December 1895. The project cost roughly \$1 million (about \$36 million in today's money). At the time of its completion, the new Milwaukee City Hall was the tallest habitable building in the United States and the tallest building in Milwaukee.



Market Hall was Milwaukee City Hall from 1861–1872 in the same place as the current city hall.



The Clock and Bell Tower

One of Milwaukee City Hall's most notable features is its large clock and bell tower. The large bell is named after Solomon Juneau, Milwaukee's founder and first mayor. The bell weighs 22,500 pounds and was made of melted copper from old church and firehouse bells. The bell first rang on New Year's Eve, 1896, and can still be rung today. "Solomon Juneau" remains the 11th largest bell in North America.

The clock on Milwaukee's City Hall was added to the building in 1896. The clock is made of thick pieces of glass and measures 18 feet across. At the time it was built, the City Hall clock was the third largest in the world.



Architecture

- Milwaukee City Hall is a Flemish Renaissance Revival design, a type of architectural style inspired by buildings constructed in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany during the 1400-1600s.
- From the base of the street to the tip of the flagpole, Milwaukee City Hall is 393 feet tall – Milwaukee's 6th tallest building.
- Approximately eight million bricks were used to build City Hall.
- The entire building weighs about 41,000 tons or 82 million pounds.
- Inside, there is approximately 47,000 square feet of mosaic and marble flooring.
- Milwaukee City Hall was one of the first buildings to have an open atrium. From inside the main lobby, you can look up and see all eight floors.



Milwaukee City Hall Fun Facts

The original base of City Hall was not concrete, brick, or steel, but wooden logs. A total of 2,584 white pine logs were used to build City Hall's foundation. They were driven into the marshy soil surrounding city hall. In 2018, some steel tubes were also added to the base to keep City Hall from sinking.

Several terra-cotta (a type of clay) and stone statues line the outside of City Hall and depict things like cherubs, serpents, lions, and other unique faces. When City Hall was renovated in 2006, each statue had to be carefully recreated using stones that were put in place when City Hall was first built.

The stained-glass windows in the entrance to City Hall were created in the 1930s. The windows depict things like City Hall, Milwaukee's city seal, and the Wisconsin state seal.

The Milwaukee Common Council Chamber, located on the 3rd floor, is the largest chamber of its kind in the entire United States.

The columns in the Common Council Chamber have Latin phrases on them. Each of the phrases and their translations are listed below:

- Veritas: truth
- Vox populi: the voice of the people
- Fiat justitia: let justice be done
- Vox viadocet: let the voice show the way
- Pax vobiscum: peace be with you
- Pro patria: for our country
- Mens legis: the spirit of law

In 1973, Milwaukee City Hall was added to the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2005, was made a National Historic Landmark, a building officially recognized by the U.S. government for representing "an outstanding aspect of American history and culture."

The Making of Milwaukee

Student Activity: Who is the Mayor?

Using the city website www.city.milwaukee.gov access the mayor's page along with local news sources to learn about the current mayor of Milwaukee.

Who is the current mayor?

What year were they elected and for how long?

What issues did the mayor campaign on when they wanted people to vote for them?

What is the mayor currently addressing to improve the City of Milwaukee?



The Making of Milwaukee

Trouble in Town and Socialists at Work Framework

Learning Goals:

Students will learn about the socialist government leadership in the city of Milwaukee at the beginning and throughout the twenty-first century.

Objectives:

Students should be able to identify what the socialist leaders did to improve the City of Milwaukee.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What is a socialist?
- What was happening in Milwaukee when David Rose was the mayor?
- What ideas did socialists bring to Milwaukee?
- What improvements did the socialists make?
- What is a “Sewer Socialist?”
- What do opponents of socialism dislike about their political ideas?
- What current political parties are most dominant in our city today?
- Do we still see evidence of the impacts of the Socialist era?

Additional Resources:

[UWM Digital Collection: Milwaukee Socialism](#)

[MPL Socialist Collection](#)

Vocabulary:

government	leader	legislative
county	election	ordinance
city	socialism	corrupt
council	mayor	voter
city hall	executive	socialist
suburb	judicial	

Trouble in Town and Socialists at Work

Overview:

Students will be able to identify what local government does.

Materials Needed:

The Making of Milwaukee student journals (digital or paper)

The Making of Milwaukee Video Sections

[Chapter 10: Trouble in Town \(8:49-14:40 min\)](#)

[Chapter 11: Socialists at Work \(10:55 min\)](#)

Learning Activities Overview:

- **Learning activities** in this section will help students develop knowledge of local government and the Socialist era in Milwaukee.
- **Learning activities** can be taught after or during the viewing the sections of video chapters 10 and 11.
- A **video notetaking guide** encourages students to write, draw, and record images during their viewing of the video. The teacher should strategically stop the video to allow students to write and discuss.
- The way in which the following learning activities are used with students is the teacher's choice. The goal is for students to discuss and think critically about Milwaukee's history.
- **My Milwaukee Journal.** Activates student thinking and background knowledge. It allows students to make connections to Milwaukee history while making connections to their own lives.
- **Meet a Milwaukeean.** Meta Berger, Socialist, Milwaukee School Board Member.
- **Milwaukee Socialists.** Students will be introduced to early Milwaukee politics and Socialism. There is a short reading passage introducing the concept of Socialism and a quote from the first Socialist mayor of Milwaukee to analyze the mayor's intentions.
- **What Did the Socialists Do?** There are a few large projects that greatly improved life for Milwaukee citizens highlighted in this activity. Students should analyze why these services were important at this time. Students should be reminded of the lessons about the dirty water in Lake Michigan and Milwaukee's rivers.



The Making of Milwaukee Video Notes

Chapter 10: Trouble in Town

Chapter 11: Socialists at Work

While you watch the video, write words you think are important or make quick sketches of things you see that you want to remember. This could be names, places, dates, things from nature, things manmade, artifacts, quotes - whatever you take away from the video.

A large rectangular area with a light gray dotted grid pattern, intended for students to write notes or make sketches during the video.



Student Journal: Socialists at Work

What are your favorite parts of Milwaukee?

Do you think government should keep neighborhoods safe or the people that live there?

What does Milwaukee need to be better?

The Making of Milwaukee

Student Activity: Milwaukee Socialists

Between 1900 and 1910, Milwaukee was becoming known as a city that was very polluted and very corrupt. Corrupt means that our city government, the mayor, and city leaders were not doing good things for all the citizens. The city leaders at the time, including the Mayor David Rose, spent more time trying to figure out how to make money off the people of Milwaukee than doing good things for the city. In 1910, Milwaukee citizens were ready for a change in leadership. In the 1910 mayoral election, the citizens of Milwaukee with their vote, elected Emil Seidel, a socialist to lead the city. Socialism is a political belief that government should be run democratically for the good of all people and that the government should provide for the people. The Socialists had a plan to make Milwaukee better. Emil Seidel and the next two mayors of Milwaukee, Dan Hoan and Frank Zeidler, made many improvements to Milwaukee. They called it working for “The Greater Good.” Milwaukee citizens showed how important it was to vote for positive change. The Socialists led our Milwaukee government for the next 50 years.



Read this quote from the memoir of Emil Seidel:

“Some eastern smarties called ours a Sewer Socialism. Yes, we wanted sewers in the workers’ homes; but we wanted much more, oh – so very much more than sewers. We wanted our workers to have pure air; we wanted them to have sunshine; we wanted planned homes; we wanted living wages; we wanted recreation for young and old; we wanted vocational education; we wanted a chance for every human being to be strong and live a life of happiness. And we wanted everything that would give them that: playgrounds, parks, lakes, beaches, clean creeks and rivers, swimming and wading pools, social centers, reading rooms, clean fun, music, dance, song and joy for all. That was our Milwaukee Social Democrat movement.”

The Making of Milwaukee

Read the quote from Mayor Seidel on the previous page. What evidence can you find from the quote that would help you figure out what kind of Milwaukee a Social Democrat mayor would want?

Why is it so important for people to pay attention to what leaders in the government do?
Why is it important to vote?

What are the most important things a leader of a city can do?

The Making of Milwaukee

Student Activity: What Did the Socialists Do?

Socialist leadership changed Milwaukee for the better. After several years of corrupt government and scandal, Milwaukee was ready for a change. Look at the list below of changes initiated by the socialists in Milwaukee; some of them are still a part of Milwaukee today.

Fill out the rest of the chart with your thoughts.

Contribution to Milwaukee	Why do you think it's important?	Is it still a part of Milwaukee?
Milwaukee Park System		
Milwaukee Health Department		
Milwaukee Sewage Treatment Plant on Jones Island		



Meet a Milwaukeean: Meta Berger

Meta Schlichting Berger was born in Milwaukee in 1873 to German Immigrants. She received her teaching degree in 1894 from the State Normal School, which would eventually transform into the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. In 1897, Meta married Victor Berger. Victor Berger was the co-founder of the Socialist party and the first US Socialist Congressman. Meta was very supportive of her husband's politics and became interested in politics herself. She ran for the Milwaukee School Board in 1909 and won, eleven years before women had the right to vote. Meta was a champion for teachers and students. She encouraged building playgrounds, penny lunches, free textbooks, and nurses in schools. She was a school board member for 30 years. She was a member of the Wisconsin Board of Education, vice president of the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association, and on the Board of Regents for the University of Wisconsin. Meta was not afraid to speak her mind and stood up for what was right, even in a time when many women were not given that chance. She was a woman for the people.



What kind of qualities do you think Meta had to have as a leader with her husband?

Do you think it was easy to be a woman leader in Milwaukee? How do you think people treated her?



The Making of Milwaukee

Unit 4: Local Government Engaging in Inquiry

Students can do a research project on one of Milwaukee's mayors.

Students can write a letter to their alderman and/or mayor to address issues near their home or school.

Write a story about what Milwaukee would look like today under different leadership than Socialists. Would we have parks, beaches, sidewalks?

Students can campaign to run for local office. They can identify the issues they would focus on.

Invite your local leader to your classroom or school and discuss local government with them.

Take a trip to City Hall.

Do a project on architecture of City Hall. What else happens at City Hall?

Take an inventory of all of the offices and people that work at City Hall.



The Making of Milwaukee

Children's Literature Connections

Adler, D. (2015). *Golda Meir: A Strong, Determined Leader*. Puffin Books.

A biography of Golda emphasizing her early childhood and youth in Russia and America. J BIO MEIR, GOLDA (MPL)

Barton, C. (2018). *What do You do With a Voice Like That?* Beach Lane Books.

A picture book of lawyer, politician, and civil rights leader Barbara Jordan. 92 J8175B (MPL)

Brown, L. (2022). *Democracy for Dinosaurs*. Brown Books for Young Readers.

A simplified explanation of democracy and what it means to be a citizen. FIC BRO (MPL)

Eggers, D. (2018). *What Can a Citizen Do?* Chronicle Books.

Rhyming text explores citizenship, showing readers how unrelated actions can create community. 323.65 E295 (MPL)

Feroze, J. (2016). *How Cities Work*. Lonely Planet

From Waterworks to government this book details how a city works. 307.76 H234 (MPL)

Foster, J. (2020). *For Which We Stand: How Government Works and Why it Matters*. Scholastic.

A nonfiction explanation of how government works and how we can bring change in our communities. 320.472 F755 (MPL)

Fuentes, C. (2020). *A Small History of a Disagreement*. Greystone Kids.

This is a story of civil debate through a story of elementary aged children who are divided on an issue. PIC FUENTES (MPL)

Harris, K. (2019). *Superheroes are Everywhere*. Philomel Books.

Superheroes are citizens who improve their communities! 92 H31435A (MPL)

McNamara, M. (2020). *Vote For Our Future*. Random House Studios.

Students learn how to use their voice for change in their city. FIC MCN (MPL)

Mihaly, C. (2020). *Ask the Mayor*. Rourke Educational Media.

What does a mayor do for a city? 352.23216 M636 (MPL)



The Making of Milwaukee

Children's Literature Connections

Murphy, F. (2024). *A Voice Like Yours*. Sleeping Bear Press

Students learn that using their voice and opinions will help change the world. FIC MUR (MPL)

Paul, C. (2018). *You are Mighty: A Guide to Changing the World*. Bloomsbury Books.

Good Citizenship means standing up for what is right and this book tells you how to start. 206 P324 (MPL)

Roosevelt, E. (2018). *When You Grow Up to Vote: How Our Government Works for You*. Roaring Book Press.

Originally published in 1932 this updated version brings a contemporary view of community improvement.

324.6 R782 (MPL)

Sanders, R. (2020). *Mayor Pete: The Story of Pete Buttigieg*. Henry Holt Books for Young Readers.

A picture book biography of Pete Buttigieg, mayor of South Bend, Indiana. 92 B9887S (MPL)

Shulman, M. (2020). *I Voted: Making a Choice Makes a Difference*. Holiday House.

This book explains the concept of choosing, individually, and as a group, from making a simple choice and then comparing that concept to a larger choice like representation in government. 324.6 S562 (MPL)

Sotomayor, S. (2022). *Just Help! How to Build a Better World*. Philomel Books.

A fun and meaningful story of improving the community and being good citizens. PIC SOTOMAY (MPL)

Stevens, M. (2016). *The Family Letters of Victor and Meta Berger, 1894-1929*. Wisconsin Historical Society Press.

Stevens has chosen a representative sample of the correspondence between America's first elected Socialist congressman and his wife, a longtime member of the Milwaukee public school board. The letters chronicle Berger's rise in the Socialist Movement, his view of other party leaders and luminaries, and his private doubts and second thoughts about the path he had. 92 B496f (MPL)

Weatherford, C (2006). *Dear Mr. Rosenwald*. Scholastic Press.

The decision of a town to build rural school for community children. INT WEA (MPL)

Woodard, B. (2022). *One Crayon at a Time*. Scholastic Press.

A student can make a decision that will change the world for others. FIC WOO (MPL)