

**Grade Level:**

4th-8th

**Subject Area:**

Social Studies  
Language Arts

**WI Model Academic Standards:**

Social Studies:  
A.4.4, B.4.1, B.4.4;  
E.4.4; B.8.1

Language Arts:  
C.4.2; C.8.2

# Streets of Old Milwaukee

## Lesson Guide

**Overview:**

Students will examine the reasons why Southeastern Wisconsin attracted diverse immigrant populations and how this influenced Milwaukee, primarily during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Students will learn of life during this time period as they compare and contrast it with life in Milwaukee today.

**Background:**

The land that became the city of Milwaukee was blessed with an abundance of natural resources. Just as the Native Americans before them, the early French traders and immigrant settlers made this bounty the foundation of their economy. By 1846 Milwaukee was a vibrant young city. Early Milwaukee boasted ample labor, great harbor potential, and visionary leaders. The city attracted diverse immigrant groups, including farmers, laborers, and tradesmen from New England, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Poland and African Americans from the South. Milwaukee, in the late 1800's and early 1900's was a bustling "city of nations", a renowned cultural and industrial center. Our Streets of Old Milwaukee exhibit takes you back to these days of our city's development and lets you experience daily life during the period from approximately 1880-1917.

**Student Objectives:**

1. Develop an awareness of the vast natural resources of Southeastern Wisconsin and how this determined the early industries of Milwaukee.
2. Understand the role immigrants played in the development of Milwaukee.
3. Compare and contrast the life in the days of Milwaukee's early development with life in Milwaukee today.

**Assessment and Extension:**

1. Students will share examples of the natural resources available in Southeastern Wisconsin and why they attracted immigrants to Milwaukee
2. Students identify 2-3 key immigrant populations and a role each played in the development of Milwaukee.
3. Students will provide examples of how life in "Old Milwaukee" differs from their experiences of life today.

**Program Vocabulary:**

Artisan: a skilled manual worker who practices a trade or handicraft using traditional methods and tools.

Replica: an exact or very close copy of something.

Whetstone: a stone for sharpening edge tools.

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Typesetting: the composition of texts – printing - by means of types.

Immigrant: A person who moves to a country to live there.

Nickelodeon: an early movie theater to which admission was usually five cents.

Optometrist: a person whose profession (job) is to examine people's eyes to determine if they need eyeglasses and/or medical treatment.

**Enrichment Vocabulary:**

Barter Economy	Commerce	Demographics	Economic System
Explorers	Fur Trade	Immigration	Industrialization
Settlers	Supply and Demand	Suffrage	Urbanization

**Procedure:**

Meet Museum educator in front of the elevator on the first floor five minutes before your scheduled program start time.