

Lackawanna Historical Society
“The Story of Scranton”
Local History Curriculum Guide

The City of Scranton has grown and changed in its more than 200-year history, from Indians to immigrants and farms to factories. Below are some questions, activities, and resources to help you to better understand the place we call home.

Key Terms and Ideas

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| -Monsey Indians | -George and Selden Scranton |
| -Early Settlers | -Anthracite Coal |
| -Wyoming Massacre | -T-Rails |
| -Pennamite Wars | -Railroads |
| -Obadiah Gore | -Breaker Boys |
| -Judge Jesse Fell | -1902 Great Anthracite Strike |

Discussion questions

1. Where did the early immigrant groups in Scranton come from? What legacies did they leave behind?
2. Scranton’s history is based on industry. How were the coal, iron, and railroad industries connected?
3. Compare and contrast the coal strikes of 1877 and 1902. Why do you think one was more successful than the other? What changed?
4. In 1886, an electric trolley system was introduced in Scranton. How did it improve life for people in city? What problems did it create?
5. Scranton has been known by many nicknames in its history, from Skunk’s Misery to “The Electric City.” Think about other people or events in the city’s history- what other names could the city have had?
6. Schools were established in the 1830s, but many young children had to go to work. How do you think your life would be different if you lived in Scranton in the 1880s? What would the city look like?
7. How does Scranton’s early history affect your life today? Are there any names of historic figures on street signs in your neighborhood? Do you play on reclaimed mine land?

Activities

1. Take a virtual tour of the downtown using Google Earth. Zoom in on buildings to see clues carved into the stone that give hints of what goes on inside. Or “visit” a neighborhood you’ve never been to before!

Bonus: Take a look at some historic maps are available here:

<https://www.lackawannapagenweb.com/maps/index.html>. How has the city changed?

2. Early schools taught students to write on individual slate chalkboards or small notebooks. Learn to write your name in perfect 1900s penmanship with the Zaner-Bloser handwriting collection available from the University of Scranton here:

<http://digitalservices.scranton.edu/cdm/brewster/collection/zanerbloser/>

Resources

Lackawanna Valley Digital Archives: <http://www.lackawannadigitalarchives.org/>

University of Scranton Digital Collections: <http://digitalservices.scranton.edu/>

Scranton Times-Tribune 150th Anniversary archive: <https://www.thetimes-tribune.com/news/150>

Lackawanna Historical Society: <http://lackawannahistory.org/>

“History Set in Stone” Downtown Scranton guidebook: <https://lhva.org/docs/History-Set-InStone.pdf>

Lackawanna County Genealogy Resources: <https://www.lackawannapagenweb.com/>

Explore PA History: <http://explorepahistory.com/>