Name: _____ Date: _____

As we have seen, many of the social reformers during the Progressive Era, some were white, middle-class, Protestant, educated women.

Some historians have characterized these social reformers as generous women who wanted to assist the poor. Other historians have characterized them as condescending and elitist people who wanted to make immigrants become more Christian and American.

Today's question is: What were the attitudes of Progressive social reformers towards immigrants?

1. Answer the questions on the worksheet from the following Points of View:

   A. Progressive social reformers were generous and helpful.
   B. Progressive social reformers were condescending and judgmental.

After Activity/ Class Discussion/Homework:

- What consensus did you reach?

- What were the arguments used for each side?

- Most of us were thinking about how we would have felt in this situation. But how might attitudes have differed back then?

- What else would we need to know in order to have a better sense of how people felt?

- Based on these documents, what are some laws and organizations that we have today that came out of the Progressive Era?

Document A (Modified)

As more young immigrants moved from farms in the country to urban areas, dance halls became a popular form of recreation. Many progressive reformers found these dance halls to be inappropriate and pushed to create alternative forms of entertainment for youth, like amusement parks.

One Sunday night at twelve o'clock I walked past a large public dance hall. As I was standing by the rail, a young man approached me and quite simply asked me to introduce him to some 'nice girl,' saying that he did not know anyone there. I replied that a public dance hall was not the best place in which to look for a nice girl, and he said: 'But I'm awfully lonesome since I came to Chicago.' And then he added rather defiantly: 'Some nice girls do come here. It's one of the best halls in town.'

The public dance halls are filled with frivolous and irresponsible young people in a feverish search for pleasure. They are not a substitute for the old dances on the village green in which all of the older people in the village participated. Chaperonage then was not a social duty but natural and inevitable.

Let us fix this modern city so that it shall be free from the wickedness and weakness which tempt the young people who are living in its tenement houses and working in its factories.

Vocabulary
Defiantly: boldly opposing
Frivolous: Not having serious purpose or value
Chaperonage: adult supervision
Tenement: run-down and overcrowded apartment

Source: *Excerpt from Jane Addams,* The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*, 1909.*

Document B (Modified)

The dances are short—four to five minutes; the intermissions are long—fifteen to twenty minutes; thus ample opportunity is given for drinking.

In these same halls obscene language is permitted, and even the girls carry on indecent conversation, cursing a lot, while the less sophisticated girls stand around listening, scandalized but fascinated.

Many of the halls are poorly lighted. There is very little protection in case of fire...

A city law should be passed covering the following points:

1. All dance halls should be made to comply with the regulations of the Building and Fire Departments so as to insure proper sanitation and adequate fire protection....

2. The sale of liquor in dance halls or in buildings connected with them should be prohibited....

7. No immoral dancing or familiarity should be tolerated.

8. People under the influence of liquor or known prostitutes should not be permitted in dance halls....

11. There should be an inspector of dance halls who should have in his department a corps of assistants who would regularly inspect the halls and make reports concerning them to him weekly.

Vocabulary
familiarity: inappropriate or offensive language or behavior

Source: *Excerpts from an article by a Progressive social reformer, Louise de Koven Bowen, called "Dance Halls," published in June 1911.*

Document C (Modified)

An Italian girl who has had lessons in cooking will help her mother to connect the entire family with American food and household habits. That the mother has never baked bread in Italy–only mixed it in her own house and then taken it out to the village oven–makes all the more valuable her daughter's understanding of the complicated cooking stove. The same thing is true of the girl who learns to sew, and more than anything else, perhaps, of the girl who receives the first simple instruction in the care of little children–that skillful care which every tenement-house baby requires if he is to live through his second summer.

Through civic instruction in the public schools, the Italian woman slowly becomes urbanized, and the habits of her entire family change. The public schools in the immigrant neighborhoods deserve all the praise as Americanizing forces.

Source: *Excerpt from Jane Addams' book,* Twenty Years at Hull-House, (1910). *This passage comes from a chapter called "Immigrants and Their Children."*

Document D (Modified)

Several days before Christmas 1896 one of my Irish playmates suggested that I go with her to a Christmas party at Hull-House. I asked her if there would be any Jewish children at the party. She said that there were Jewish children at the parties every year.

I then began to understand that things might be different in America. In Poland it had not been safe for Jewish children to be on the streets on Christmas.

At the party, the children of the Hull-House Music School sang some songs, that I later found out were called "Christmas carols." I shall never forget the sweetness of those voices. I could not connect this beautiful party with any hatred or superstition that existed among the people of Poland.

As I look back, I know that I became an American at this party. I was with children who had been brought here from all over the world, with their fathers and mothers, in search of a free and happy life. And we were all having a good time at a party, as the guests of an American, Jane Addams.

Source: *The document below was written by Hilda Satt Polacheck in the 1950s, in her book* I Came a Stranger: The Story of a Hull-House Girl*. She tells about her memories of Hull House from 1896.*

Structured Academic Controversy: Progressive Social Reformers

SAC QUESTION

During the SAC, you and your group will try to answer the following question:

What were the attitudes of Progressive social reformers towards immigrants?

Team A: Progressive social reformers were generous and helpful.
Team B: Progressive social reformers were condescending and judgmental.

PROCEDURE

30 minutes With your teammate, read the documents. Find three pieces of evidence which support your side.

10 minutes Team A presents. BOTH PARTNERS MUST PRESENT!!! Team B writes down Team A's arguments and then repeats them back to Team A.

10 minutes Team B presents. BOTH PARTNERS MUST PRESENT!!! Team A down arguments of Team B and then repeats them back to Team B.

10 minutes Everyone **CAN ABANDON** their positions. Group of 4 attempts to develop a consensus.

Name: _____ Date: _____

ORGANIZING YOUR EVIDENCE

Indicate your response regarding each Point of View (POV) below:

P.O.V. "A" **Progressive social reformers were generous and helpful:** List the 3 main points/evidence that support this side.

1) From Document _____:

2) From Document _____:

3) From Document _____:

P.O.V. "B" **Progressive social reformers were condescending and judgmental:** List the 3 main points/evidence that support this side.

1) From Document _____:

2) From Document _____:

3) From Document _____:

In the box below, determine whether you agree with POV #1 or POV #2. You may agree for but must supply evidence to back up your decision.