



THE PULLMAN STRIKE

FACILITATION GUIDE

PREPERATION BEFORE CLASS

REVIEW BACKGROUND

Here's some background information to help prepare you to lead your students through this role-play.

SUMMARY

This VOXPOP is set in Chicago in 1894, during the Pullman Strike. Students take on the roles of Executives, Union Workers, ARU Allies and Non-Union Workers. Students work together to try and head off the strike by negotiating issues like Pay, Housing and Managment and voting on proposals (see page 5).

KEY QUESTIONS

- Who gets to decide what a fair wage is?
- How much control should a company have over it's employee's lives?
- Who gets to make decisions in the workplace?

STUDENT ROLES

As students log into VOXPOP, they are distributed across the following five groups:

EXECUTIVES	UNION WORKERS	ARU ALLIES	NON-UNION WORKERS
Executives fear that the recession will shut the Pullman company down. Workers don't understand that in lean times, we all have to tighten our belts!	Union Workers want better pay and working conditions. They say it's unfair for the Pullman Company to make millions while its workers live off pennies!	ARU Allies say that the Pullman Company has too much control over workers' lives: not only through wages, but also overpriced housing and abusive bosses!	Non-Union Workers include Black Americans and immigrants who were rejected by the American Railway Union (ARU). If Union Workers don't like their jobs, Non-Union Workers are happy to take them!

SETUP

Prepare to run the role-play in your classroom.

CREATE A SESSION

Create a session for each class period in which you will run the role-play. Go to:

voxpath.io/role-plays/the-pullman-strike

You will be asked to **Name** your session. We suggest naming it after the class period in which you will run it.

Then you will be asked to enter your **email address**, so we can send you an email with the link to the session. Save the email and use it to open the session when the class starts.

VOXPOP saves your progress as you play, so you can run the role-play over multiple days. Just click on the link in the email to re-open it.

DECIDE ON DURATION

In this guide, we suggest timings for a 60-minute session, including notes about sections that you can skip if you are pressed for time.

For a more relaxed experience, you can split the role-play into multiple sessions. Running a VOXPOP over two 45-minute sessions works particularly well. Look for the + in suggested timings to see where it's beneficial to add time. If you split the role-play into two sessions, we suggest ending the first day after the Issues (page 3). You can always revisit the videos the next day if you like. Just hit the Back button at the bottom.

CLASSROOM SETUP

When you're ready to start the role-play, use the link in the email to open the session on your classroom's main screen.

Students should each use an individual device to log in and interact with the role-play. They can use any web-enabled device, including PCs, Chromebooks, tablets and phones.

You can leave desks in their normal configuration, but students will be moving around the class and meeting in different groups throughout the role-play. They should carry their device with them when they move.



INTRODUCTION

During this phase students are introduced to the situation, read their profiles and get into character.

10 minutes total

ASSIGN PROFILES - 3 min

Before class starts, open the VOXPOP session you created on your classroom screen.

As students arrive they can log in on their web-enabled device by going to the **URL**

voxpath.io/student

Students should then enter the 6-character alphanumeric **Code** displayed on the classroom screen.

They will be asked to type in a display name.

- If students are returning to a session that's already in progress, they must type their name exactly as they did before. Names are case- and punctuation-sensitive.
- Names will be displayed on the classroom screen.

As students log in, they will be assigned to **Groups** and their name will appear on the screen.

If students arrive late, you can bring up the **URL** & session **Code** by clicking on 

WELCOME - 1.5 min

A video introduces students to VOXPOP.

THE SITUATION - 4 min

A video provides the historical background that students need to know.

PROFILES - 3 min

Your students receive information about their roles, including their **Group** and a personal **Bio**.

Students should hit the yellow button on their screen when they're done reading.

INTRODUCTIONS - 3 min

In this phase, students get into character by introducing themselves to one another.

Walk around and look at your students' profiles to get a sense of who they are.



VALUES

During this phase students discuss their group's goals and share them with the class.

10 minutes total

VALUES INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

DISCUSS VALUES - 4+ min

Students meet with their **Group** and establish common goals.

Each **Group** has a different question to discuss. The questions are listed below along with their group's perspective on the value. Each **Group** must each select one representative to explain the answer to the class.

UNION WORKERS value RESPECT	EXECUTIVES value FAIRNESS	ARU ALLIES value JUSTICE	NON-UNION WORKERS value FREEDOM
<p>How does the Pullman Company disrespect its workers?</p> <p>The Pullman Company decides how much we make, how we live, and how we're treated.</p> <p>The Pullman Company doesn't care about what we think or want!</p>	<p>Why are union workers' demands unfair?</p> <p>In lean times, we must all tighten our belts.</p> <p>If the factory shuts down, no one will have work - is that what the ARU wants?</p>	<p>How do powerful companies threaten justice?</p> <p>A few big businesses control all the money.</p> <p>Without a strong union, workers can't stand up to big businesses!</p>	<p>How does the ARU threaten freedom?</p> <p>The ARU is an exclusive club for White men.</p> <p>The ARU wants to control who gets to work, and for how much.</p>

SHARE YOUR VALUES - 5 min

In this phase, students practice public speaking and learn about the other **Groups**.

Encourage **Groups** to cheer for each other and show support for the **Values** that align with theirs.

As you click **Next**, the software will call up the **Groups**, in this order:

- UNION WORKERS
- EXECUTIVE
- ARU ALLIES
- NON-UNION WORKERS

ISSUES

During this phase, we break the challenge facing the class into three issues.

8 minutes total

ISSUES INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

THE ISSUES - 7+ min

VOXPOP divides the conflict into three main **Issues**. There is one video per **Issue**.


These are the **Issues**:

PAY	HOUSING	MANAGEMENT
<p>Pullman executives argue companies have to find a balance between the high wages that workers want, and the lower wages that companies can afford to pay. Because different companies are competing for the same workers, they have to offer good money.</p> <p>Union supporters say companies collude to set wages low. They argue workers must organize and set their own wage standards.</p> <p>Executives argue that in a depression wages have to go down or the factory will have to close.</p> <p>Who gets to decide what a fair wage is?</p>	<p>George Pullman, founder of the Pullman Palace Car Company, also founded a town called Pullman where his workers could live. Unlike surrounding areas, which have high crime rates and shoddy housing, Pullman town is beautiful and clean.</p> <p>Union Workers believe they should have more say in the amenities offered in Pullman.</p> <p>The Executives at the Pullman Company argue that Pullman Town is designed to improve the lives of the workers. If they really want to live elsewhere, nobody is stopping them.</p> <p>Should a company control how its workers live?</p>	<p>In factories, groups of workers are led by foremen. While some foremen are good leaders, others exploit their positions. Union Workers complain that some foremen are abusive and play favorites.</p> <p>Union Workers want a way to get rid of foremen who treat their workers badly.</p> <p>Executives say that the company already fires bad foremen.</p> <p>Who gets to make decisions in the workplace?</p>

POST-VIDEO DISCUSSIONS - Time-permitting

A discussion question will appear after each video plays, with suggestions for groups to call on. These classwide discussions are a good way to review the **Issues** and establish alliances between **Groups**.

However, **they are not necessary, and discussion is not included in the time estimates** given in this guide.

If you choose to answer the questions with your class, remind students to click the **Perspective** button  to learn more about what their group thinks.

COMMITTEES

During this section, students are divided into committees to work on one of the three issues.

10 minutes total

COMMITTEE INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

WORK IN COMMITTEES - 9 min

In this phase, students must work with members of other **Groups** to select proposals that address the crisis.

Students from each **Group** are distributed across three **Committees**.

In their **Committees**, students:

- Vote on their individual devices to select one **Proposal** for a whole class vote,
- Pick a representative to explain and argue for their **Proposal** to the class,
- If applicable, pick a representative to present arguments against the proposal.

These are the **Proposals**:

COMMITTEE ON PAY	COMMITTEE ON HOUSING	COMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT
<p>WAGES SET AT MARKET RATES</p> <p>The Pullman Company sets worker wages at market rates – high enough to compete with other companies, but no higher.</p> <p>Supporters: EXECUTIVES, NON-UNION WORKERS</p>	<p>NO EVICTING PULLMAN WORKERS</p> <p>Pullman workers who don't pay their rent can stay in their Pullman housing as long as they keep working for the company.</p> <p>Supporters: EXECUTIVES, NON-UNION WORKERS</p>	<p>COMPANY OVERSEES FOREMEN</p> <p>Pullman executives use their own judgment to hire and fire company foremen.</p> <p>Supporters: EXECUTIVES</p>
<p>WAGES SET BY PULLMAN/ARU DEAL</p> <p>Worker wages will be set by a committee that includes Pullman executives, government officials, and union reps. Supporters: UNION WORKERS, ARU ALLIES</p>	<p>TOWN RESIDENTS PICK BUSINESSES</p> <p>Residents of Pullman Town get to vote on what businesses and special services come to their town.</p> <p>Supporters: ARU ALLIES</p>	<p>FORMAL COMPLAINT SYSTEM</p> <p>Create an official channel for workers to report abusive foremen to higher-level managers at Pullman.</p> <p>Supporters: EXECUTIVES</p>

Your students' devices have more information about the proposals they can access by clicking



Ask your students to tell you more about the proposals.

VOTE & EPILOGUE

During this section, students debate the solutions, cast votes, learn about what really happened and reflect on the experience.

17 minutes total

VOTE INTRO - 1 min

A video explains the next activity.

DEBATE & VOTE - 9 min

The class decides by majority vote whether to pass the **Proposals** selected by the **Committees**.

This is an opportunity for students to practice public speaking as they attempt to persuade classmates to vote for or against proposals.

Encourage debate! This is the last chance to address the crisis.

As you click **Next**, the website will prompt a **DEBATE** and then a **VOTE** on each proposal, in this order:

COMMITTEE ON PAY

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

COMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT

WHAT HAPPENED - 7+ min

An **Epilogue** video explains what really happened.

When the video is done playing, these suggested discussion questions appear:

- What similarities do you see between the Pullman Strike and labor conflicts today?
- How should we balance company and worker power?

The post-activity discussion gives students time to decompress from the role-playing experience.