

**No Irish Need Apply**  
words by J. F. Poole

During the nineteenth century, America was seen as the land of opportunity. But many immigrants who came here looking for work found that their services were not wanted. Their color, race, language, or religion was made the excuse to bar them from jobs. This song was written around 1865.

I'm a decent boy just landed from the town of Ballyfad;  
I want a situation (job) and I want it very bad.  
I have seen employment advertised, "It's just the thing says I,  
But the dirty spalpeen(rascal) ended with  
"No Irish need apply."

"Whoo," says I, that is an insult,  
but to get the place I'll try,"  
So I went to see the black-guard (villain) with his  
"No Irish need apply."

Some do think it is a misfortune to be christened Pat or Dan,  
But to me it is an honor to be born an Irishman.

The song has two more stanzas.  
What do you think happened next? Write your own ending.  
It can be in poem, song or story form.

- Does this kind of thing still happen in the United States?
- Is there anything people can do to stop it? What?

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### Union membership in the United States

This information on this chart comes from the United States Bureau of the Census. The Census Bureau also kept records of strikes by workers. In 1897 there were 1,110 strikes. In 1904 there were 2,186 strikes.

Examine the information in the chart. Can you find any kind of pattern in this information. This kind of pattern is called a **trend**.

Year	Union Members
1897	440,000
1898	467,000
1899	550,000
1900	791,000
1901	1,058,000
1902	1,335,000
1903	1,824,000
1904	2,067,000
1905	1,918,000
1906	1,892,000
1907	2,077,000
1908	2,092,000

- 1) Which year were there the most union members? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Which year were there the fewest union members? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Can you discover a pattern or trend with this information?

What is the pattern or trend?

- 4) Can you guess a reason for this pattern or trend? This kind of guess is called a hypothesis.

Extra-credit- Design and draw a line graph to show the information from this chart.

## Should I Join the Knights of Labor?

The year is 1886. You live in Brooklyn, New York. You are a worker in a brewery. A friend asks you if you want to join the Knights of Labor, a union active in the 1880s. You decide you want to learn more about the Knights before you make your decision. You and your friend go to a meeting to learn more.

The first speaker is Terence Powderly. He is a leader of the Knights of Labor. Someone stands up in the audience and asks him, "Who can join the Knights of Labor?"

Terence Powderly answers:

"We take all men who obey the divine injunction 'By the sweat of thy brow shall thou eat bread.'"

You turn to your friend. Your friend asks you, "What do you think of that answer." You respond:

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The next speaker is Richard F. Trellick, an orator and organizer for the Knights of Labor. He reads from a poem (Source: The American Worker).

The time has come to stand erect,  
In noble, manly self-respect;  
To see the bright sun overhead,  
To feel the ground beneath our tread;  
Unled by priests, uncursed by creeds,  
Our manhood proving by our deeds.

You turn to your friend. Your friend asks you, "What do you think of that poem." You respond:

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You look around the room. You see men and woman in the audience. You see people from different races and ethnic groups. You learn that the Knights of Labor doesn't like strikes, but that many members must go on strike anyway. You learn that the Knights claim to have 15,000 local unions including 400 in New York. They claim to have almost a million members. You learn that they won't allow politicians and lawyers to join.

What do you decide to do? Why?

### Mr. Justice Harlan Dissents.

The nine members of the United States Supreme Court decide cases by a majority vote. At the end of the nineteenth century, one judge repeatedly voted against segregation and decisions that supported Jim Crow laws. This was Justice John Marshall Harlan. Justice Harlan was a white man who believed that segregation violated the meaning of the United States Constitution and should not be permitted. It was not until 1954 that Justice Harlan's dissenting ideas became the law of the United States (Source: Civil Rights and the American Negro, ed. by Albert Blaustein and Robert Zangrando, Washington Sq. Press, 1968).

**Instructions:** Read each statement by Justice Harlan and try to explain it in your own words. These statements are from the Plessy v. Ferguson case of 1896.

A) Justice Harlan wrote:

"If a white man and a black man choose to occupy the same public conveyance on a public highway, it is their right to do so, and no government....can prevent it without infringing the personal liberty of each."

B) Justice Harlan wrote:

"But in view of the Constitution, in the eye of the law, there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens."

C) Justice Harlan writes:

"Our Constitution is color-blind...In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law."

D) Justice Harlan writes:

"I am of the opinion that the statute of Louisiana is inconsistent with the personal liberty of citizens, white and black.....Such a system...may be stricken down....by the courts in discharge of their solemn duty to maintain the supreme law of the land."