



The Entertainment Capital of L.A.™

# FACTS & INFORMATION INVESTIGATION

## Lesson Plan

### DURATION

INTO SEGMENT: Teacher's Discretion (1-2 Days)

THROUGH SEGMENT: Universal Studios Hollywood visit (1 Day)

BEYOND SEGMENT: Teacher's Discretion (1-2 Days)

### OBJECTIVE

*Students identify facts, take notes, and research information through written, visual, and supplemental materials available at Universal Studios Hollywood.*

### Materials

The Early History of Universal Studios Hollywood article – Page 4

Clues to the History of Universal Studios Work Sheet – Page 5

Studio Tour Investigation Activity – Page 5

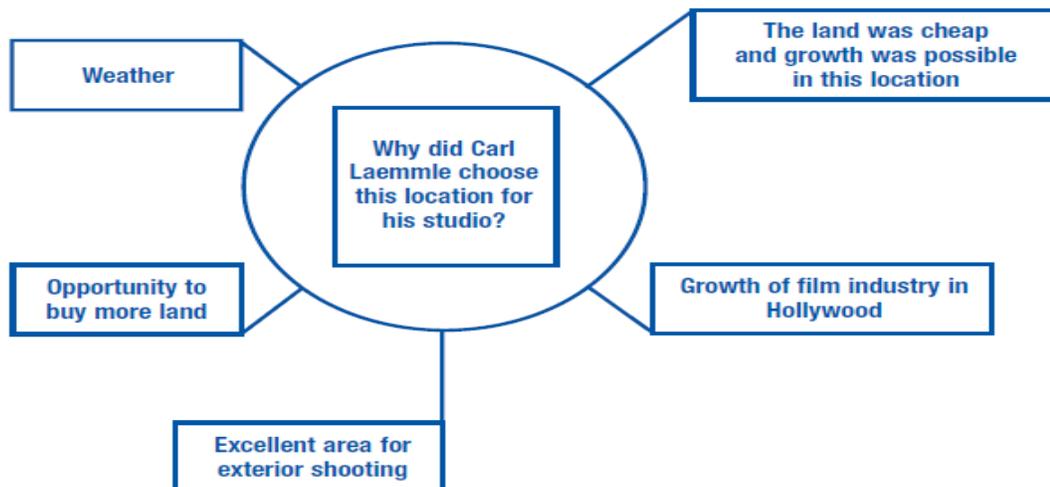
### INTO ACTIVITY

Students read *The Early History of Universal Studios Hollywood page 3*. Students take notes concerning the historical information given in the Student Activity.

The teacher initiates brainstorming with the question:

*“Why did Carl Laemmle choose this location for his studio?”*

Here are some examples:



Students do a “Quick write” relating to the growth of Hollywood as the “Film Capitol of the World.”

- *Why was this area ideal for early filming?*
- *When did filmmakers start coming to California?*
- *What effect did this have on the state of California and on the city of Los Angeles in the early 1900s?*

Students answer the questions provided on the Clues to the History of Universal Studios Activity.

### THROUGH ACTIVITY

#### At Universal Studios Hollywood<sup>sm</sup>

Students collect information by taking notes on the *World Famous Studio Tour*, by asking Studio Guides questions, and by observing the attractions throughout the studio. Students take the *Studio Tour Investigation Activity* page 5 and a pencil with them on the field trip. A set of ten investigative questions are to be answered by students individually or by working within cooperative groups. Students formulate three to five additional questions of their own and add them to the Studio Tour Investigation Activity.

#### Classroom Assignment

Students work in cooperative groups to check their answers for the first ten questions. The class then reviews the questions and answers together. Students are not to share their original investigation with other members of the class. Students are given three index cards. On each index card, the student writes their own question on one side and the answer on the other side. Each student will have three index cards with one question and answer per card. The teacher collects the cards (no names). The teacher arranges the cards on a simulated “Jeopardy” board (see example below). Each column goes from ten to one hundred points. (The teacher may wish to add their own investigation cards.) The game is played by the entire class. Winners are those with the highest points at the end of the game.

| A   | B | C | D | E | F |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 50  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 100 |   |   |   |   |   |

## **BEYOND ACTIVITY**

Students write about their experience at Universal Studios Hollywood. They analyze the facts and information collected during the trip and apply the material to an essay.

## **ASSESS STUDENTS**

Measure your students understanding of the subject.

Suggested Methods: Questions & Answers among the students. Students write a paragraph describing their trip, written test, verbal report, team assessment report.

### **English Learners Program Component\*\***

Students in the English Learners Program or Sheltered programs read and locate facts from *The Early History of Universal Studios Hollywood Activity* (page 4). Each question has four possible answers from which to choose in order to test the students' ability to read and to comprehend the material. Students draw a picture of the most memorable site at Universal Studios Hollywood.

## **IT'S A WRAP EVALUATION**

Review and evaluate your students' success in meeting the objectives for this lesson.

# THE EARLY HISTORY OF UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

Carl Laemmle immigrated to the United States in the late 1800's when he was a teenager. He learned English while passing time in numerous poor paying jobs in the clothing industry. Years later, when Laemmle was searching for a building in which to open his own clothing store, he came across a moving picture show or "nickelodeon." He noticed a large number of people standing in line, waiting for the next performance. Laemmle decided to open his own movie theater which quickly proved to be very profitable.

At a time when Laemmle was expanding his movie theater chain, inventor Thomas Edison formed the Motion Picture Patents Company, or the "Trust," as it came to be known. The Trust controlled nearly all aspects of motion picture production and exhibition through a series of patents. Laemmle did not want to pay the big license fees required by the Trust to show their films. Instead, he decided to produce his own films and started a motion picture production company in New York called IMP (Independent Motion Picture Company) which soon averaged one new film per week.

In 1912, after years of Laemmle fighting furious battles to overcome the monopoly of the Trust, the United States government filed a petition demanding the dissolution of the Trust. In the same year, Laemmle's IMP joined other independent film production companies to form Universal Moving Pictures which became the world's biggest film producing outfit at the time.

In 1914, Laemmle purchased Taylor Ranch in Lankershim Township on the north side of the Hollywood Hills where he would build Universal City, the only city in the world dedicated solely to film-making. On March 15, 1915, Laemmle opened Universal City to the world—over twenty thousand people arrived from all over the country to take part in the opening-day festivities and to view the techniques of film-making. It occurred to Laemmle that there was no reason why he shouldn't continue having organized tours of his new studio—for a fee. Admission would cost twenty-five cents a head, including a boxed lunch, and visitors would be permitted to watch filming from specially erected bleachers. Visitors hissed, booed, and cheered for actors during the filming. Universal City also had a studio zoo which included lions, leopards, elephants, and monkeys, as well as your basic dogs and cats. Visitors and animals were fine when noise control was not a problem and even added to the merriment of film-making. However, by 1927, silent pictures would begin to fall out of favor with the introduction of "talkies." With the introduction of microphones and the need for "quiet on the set," sound (proof) stages were built and visitors were no longer allowed on movie sets. Tours of Universal City would not commence again until 1964. Today, Universal Studios Hollywood is the World's Largest Movie Studio and Theme Park.

# Clues to the History of Universal Studios

1. What was a moving picture show called in the early 1900s?  
a. Theater    b. Cineplex    c. Studio    d. Nickelodeon
2. The Motion Picture Patents Company was also known by what other name?  
a. Universal Studios    b. the Trust    c. Hollywood    d. MCA
3. Who was the founder of the Motion Picture Patents Company?  
a. Carl Laemmle    b. Thomas Edison    c. Alexander G. Bell    d. Orville Wright
4. What was the name of the area Laemmle purchased in 1914?  
a. Canoga Park    b. Encino    c. The San Fernando Valley    d. Taylor Ranch
5. Why did the tours stop in 1927?  
a. Poor attendance — people did not like them    b. Carl Laemmle quit  
c. The zoo animals ate the tourists    d. The use of microphones “talking” pictures
6. Before opening a movie theater, Carl Laemmle was originally interested in opening a \_\_\_\_\_ store.  
a. department    b. clothing    c. toy    d. grocery
7. IMP stands for \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Independent Motion Picture Company    b. International Moving Pictures  
c. Inside Motion Pictures    d. Independent Media Productions
8. The popular phrase used while filming “talkies” is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. timber!    b. E.T., phone home    c. may the force be with you    d. quiet on the

## Essay Clues to the History of Universal Studios

1. How large is Universal Studios today?
2. What fact makes Universal Studios different from other studios in the area today?
3. When did Universal Studios Hollywood reinstate the Studio Tour?
4. What is the name of the unique walkway leading from the upper lot to the lower backlot?
5. What is the number of the Universal Fire Station?
6. Who was the famous mystery director with the office number 5195?
7. What puts the collapsing bridge back together?
8. What is the term for building fronts made of foam rubber?
9. What TV show used the Jaws set as Cabot Cove, Maine?
10. What movie was first filmed on spooky stage 28?

Write your 3-5 original questions on the back of this sheet.

# ANSWER KEY

## Studio Tour Investigation Sheet

1. 415 acres
2. Largest working studio backlot
3. 1964
4. The Starway
5. 51
6. Alfred Hitchcock
7. Hydraulic Lifts
8. Facade
9. Murder, She Wrote
10. Phantom of the Opera