



## Charles M. Schwab | Lesson Plan

How do innovation and leadership shape industries and influence society?

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Students will understand how Charles M. Schwab's leadership and innovative business practices transformed the steel industry and how his approach to incentives and efficiency helped shape modern industrial practices.

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify key life events of Charles M. Schwab.
- Explain how Schwab revolutionized the American steel industry.
- Analyze Schwab's profit-sharing business model and its impact on workers and production.
- Evaluate Schwab's role in the development of Bethlehem Steel and his contributions during World War I.

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Entrepreneur:** A person who works to start a business; often, someone innovative and willing to take risks.
- **Revolutionize:** To radically transform an industry or business.
- **Innovate:** To invent new products or methods.
- **Open-hearth process:** A 19th-century steel-making technique by William Siemens that reuses furnace heat to increase flame temperature, producing higher-quality steel. While mostly replaced by modern methods, it still accounts for about one-sixth of global steel production.

**Educational Standards:** CCRA.R.7, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.W.9, CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

**Academic Subject Areas:** Biography, Investors, Historical Figures

### What You'll Need

- Video: *Guess or Mess: Charles M. Schwab* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Guess or Mess: Charles M. Schwab* (Click [Here](#))
- PragerU Kids *Builders of America* biographical book: *Charles M. Schwab* (Download [Here](#))
- Large paper or poster board for each group, along with markers

## Lesson Plan: Read and Complete (60 minutes)

### Introduction to Charles M. Schwab (5 minutes):

1. Begin with a brief discussion about individuals who revolutionize industries. Ask students if they can name any innovators who changed the way business was done.

Scan to watch episode:



2. Display the *Charles M. Schwab* digital book using an electronic device. Briefly highlight Schwab's role in transforming the steel industry and his development of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. Show images from the digital book to give a visual overview of his life and achievements.

### **Schwab's Journey: Group Activity (25 minutes):**

1. As a class, read the "Meet Charles M. Schwab" section on page 1 of the digital book. The teacher should lead the reading to model fluent reading and set the tone for the lesson.
2. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a different section of the digital book to explore:
  - Group 1: Humble Beginnings, A Star Is Born (page 2)
  - Group 2: Steel Town, Standout Worker (page 3)
  - Group 3: U.S. Steel, Personal Struggles (page 4)
  - Group 4: The "Bethlehem Beam" (page 5)
  - Group 5: Innovation Through Incentives, Adapting the System (page 6)
  - Group 6: World War I, Government Tensions (page 7)
  - Group 7: Later Life, Fascinating Facts about Schwab (page 8)
3. Allow time for each group to read their section aloud and discuss key points.
4. Provide each group with large paper or poster boards and markers. Each group should write down key facts, ideas, and quotes they find.
5. Allow each group 1-2 minutes to present their findings to the class, followed by a brief discussion.

### **Worksheet Workshop (15 minutes):**

1. Distribute individual worksheets to students and explain how to complete them.
  - **Timeline:** Plot key dates and events from the digital book. Some suggestions:
    - 1862: Birth of Charles M. Schwab
    - 1901: Schwab helps create U.S. Steel
    - 1904: Schwab takes over Bethlehem Steel
    - 1939: Death of Charles M. Schwab
  - **Innovator's Gears:** In this section, students will identify a problem or need in their community, brainstorm solutions, and then draw an invention that could solve the problem based on one of their ideas. They could add labels or descriptions to explain how their invention works.
  - **Vocabulary Builder:** Choose a word from the glossary on page 11 and use it in a sentence that clearly conveys its meaning.
  - **Multiple Choice:** Allow students to complete the multiple-choice section of the worksheet individually. (Note: The multiple-choice section corresponds to the *Guess or Mess* episode about Charles M. Schwab and can also be used to play along while watching the game show video. See "Extension Activity" below.)

### **Reflection Round-Up (10 minutes):**

1. Summarize key points about Charles M. Schwab's life, his role in the steel industry, and his contributions to innovation and business.
2. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to recall one fact about Schwab and discuss its significance with a partner.
3. Give each student a sticky note or index card and ask them to answer one of these sample reflection questions:
  - What did you find most interesting about Charles M. Schwab?
  - How do you think his innovations impacted the steel industry and the U.S. economy?
4. **Bonus Activities:** If time allows, have students complete the "How to Solve Big Problems" writing activity on page 9 and the "What Do You Know" and "Detect the Difference" activities on page 10.

**Extension Activity** (20 minutes):

*Guess or Mess* Trivia Show: After the lesson, students can participate in the *Guess or Mess* trivia show for Charles M. Schwab, using the multiple-choice section of the worksheet to play along.

**Don't have time for a full lesson? Quick Activity (30 minutes)**

Read the *Charles M. Schwab* book together as a class, with students taking turns reading aloud. Then, watch the *Guess or Mess* video and play along with the trivia questions.