

# LAURA'S DOCUMENTARY STORYBOARD BRAINSTORM



When participating in History Day in 1999, Laura Zeccardi created a documentary, enjoying the combination of a script and images together to tell great stories about the past. The theme was "Science and Technology in History: Impact, Influence, and Change." Laura chose to focus on new milling technology and its impact on the city of Minneapolis. She went on to work as a Minnesota History Day staffer and wanted to share her storyboard as an example for other students.

Staying organized is the key to success! This worksheet will take you through some of the planning steps for organizing your project. As you fill out this worksheet, look at Laura's examples to see what kind of information you should include in each section of your documentary. Brainstorm which images would best fit your narration.

## Title and Subtitle (15 Seconds)

The main title is usually short and attention-grabbing. The subtitle usually explains your topic in a little more detail. Try to use the theme words if you can!

### Laura's Title

**From Folly to Fortune**

### Laura's Subtitle

**New Flour Milling  
Technology, its  
Impact on the Industry, and  
the Change it Brought to  
Minneapolis**

## Introduction/Thesis Statement (1 minute)

The thesis is your historical argument - and the roadmap for your entire project. State the thesis at the beginning of your documentary to let your audience know what you are going to discuss. Thesis statements are usually about 50 words and you should try to incorporate theme words. You don't have to label it "thesis" or show it on the screen.

Consider the images that would be best to illustrate the ideas you are talking about in the text. Be creative! Think about photos, drawings, portraits, newspaper articles, or other documents from the time period.

### Laura's Introduction/Thesis

In 1869, flour mills in Minneapolis, Minnesota produced a poor quality flour. Entrepreneurs like C.C. Washburn had an impact on flour production because consumers demanded improved flour with superior bread baking qualities. New process flour became possible with the water power at St. Anthony Falls, the coming of the railroad to Minneapolis, and changes in milling technology. With increased mill capacities, job specialization, and the growth of other industries, Minneapolis earned the title of the world's flour milling capital for fifty years.

### Laura's Images

- Aerial view of Minneapolis in the late 1860s
- Portrait of C.C. Washburn
- Magazine ad for "new process flour"
- Photo of St. Anthony Falls in late 1860s
- Photo of railroad car in Minneapolis
- Photo of middlings purifier (new technology)
- Photo of Washburn mills in late 1880s

# Background/Buildup (2 minutes 30 seconds)

Place your topic in historical context. What historical information does your audience need to know to understand your topic? What other people, ideas, or events happened to influence your topic? Who are the main players and what are they doing to prepare for the main events of your topic? What events led up to your topic?

## Laura's Background/Build-Up

In Minneapolis, the St. Anthony Falls provided a source of potential power for mills, but the Mississippi River was not an option for shipping wheat to the East during the winter months.

Introduction of railroads during the 1850s and 1860s in Minneapolis allowed for cheaper and more efficient ways to ship goods.

The only wheat that could be grown in Minnesota's harsh climate was hard winter wheat, which was difficult to process.

Existing technology made it difficult to separate fine flour from the bran and this resulted in a lesser quality flour product. Minneapolis still relied on flour from the East.

## Laura's Images

- Photo of St. Anthony Falls in 1860s with image of barges shipping goods
- Photo of the railroad in Minneapolis during this time period
- Photo of a field of Minnesota hard winter wheat
- Diagram demonstrating the process required to separate bran from middlings
- Photo of a mill in Buffalo, New York

# Main Event/Heart of the Story (2 minutes 30 seconds)

It's time to get to the main point of your project by including specific details about the most important people and events related to your topic.

## Laura's Main Event/Heart of the Story

In 1870, Edmund La Croix installed the middlings purifier in Washburn's Minneapolis mill, which allowed for easier separation of bran from middlings and produced a higher quality flour product.

1878, William D. Gray invented and installed the first effective steel roller mill, which is more efficient than traditional millstones.

Advancements in milling technology allowed for the construction of Washburn's six-story mill, known as "Washburn's Folly."

Charles Pillsbury constructed his mill at St. Anthony Falls.

By 1880, the middlings purifier and roller mills allowed for the increased production of "new process flour" and Minneapolis replaced Rochester, NY as the milling capital of the United States.

## Laura's Images

- Photograph of La Croix. Diagram of middlings purifier and how it processed wheat. Historic photo of middlings purifier in Washburn's mill.
- Photo of a roller mill and image of technology it replaced—millstones
- Photo of Washburn's Folly from several angles
- Portrait of Pillsbury. Photo of construction of mill in Minneapolis. Photo of inside of mills and flour production.
- Ad for "new process flour." images of barrels of flour ready to be shipped.

# Short and Long-Term Impact (2 minutes 30 seconds)

This is where you start to explain the “so what” of your topic and the impact that it had on history—both immediately after the main event and in the long-term. Think about how your topic influenced politics, economics, social views, government, agriculture, medicine, technology, environment, education, etc.

## Laura’s Shot and Long-Term Impact

### Short Term Impacts

As the milling industry grew, mills became more dangerous. Miller’s cough became a health risk.

Washburn A Mill explodes in May 1878 due to excess of dust in air.

Dust collector was invented, attaching to the middlings purifier.

### Long Term Impacts

Dangerous conditions and lack of safety standards caused many workers to lose limbs.

The prosthetics industry in Minneapolis grows to meet demand.

After flour was milled, it needed to be packaged and distributed in barrels. Barrel companies opened in Minneapolis, increasing the employment of immigrants.

Wheat production increases in MN. The seed industry grew and expanded varieties of wheat.

Railroads and grain elevators charged farmers exorbitant fees. The Grange was founded to protect farmers.

## Laura’s Images

- Photo of dust buildup in Washburn. Workers in mills
- Illustrations of mill explosion and destruction
- Photo and diagram of dust collector in flour mill
  
- Photo of miller without arm, prosthetic catalog and advertisement
- Photo of coopers barreling flour and German immigrants arriving in Minneapolis
- Photo of wheat field, cover of seed catalog
- Photo of barrels loaded onto rail car and political cartoon

# Conclusion (1 minute)

The conclusion of your project is your chance to restate your thesis and focus on the main points of your project that you want your audience to remember.

## Laura’s Conclusion

In the 1860s, flour mills in Minneapolis produced a mediocre product.

New technology, such as the middlings purifier, allowed for easier and higher quality production of flour.

Entrepreneurs like C.C. Washburn and Charles Pillsbury provided consumers with the superior flour they desired.

Growth of the milling industry in Minneapolis provided new jobs, increased job specialization, and contributed to the growth of other industries.

Minneapolis maintained its reputation as the world’s flour milling capital until the 1930s.

## Laura’s Images

- St. Anthony Falls in the 1860s prior to Washburn mills
- Advertisement for middlings purifier in newspaper
- Images of Washburn, Pillsbury, and their respective mills
- Photo of mill production—several shots of workers
- Aerial view of Minneapolis mills in 1930s
- Political cartoon or advertisement boasting Minneapolis as flour milling capital

# End Titles/Credits (15 seconds)

Source credits are required at the end of your documentary.

## Laura's Image/Audio Credits

### Images

Visual Resource Database at the Minnesota  
Historical Society  
Wilson Library at the University of Minnesota  
Mill City Museum

### Audio

## Laura's Special Thanks

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