THE MODERN DAY MUCKRAKER

Introduction

By 1900, the Industrial Revolution had changed life significantly in the United States. The changes resulted in both positive and negative impacts, and inspired a reform movement. The turn-of-the-century movement-called the Progressive Era-grew out of some significant negative social & economic impacts of America's Industrial Revolution.

Instituting change on a large scale is no easy task. It can result from the actions of special interest groups, the arm-twisting efforts of lobbyists or from reactions by the public to the media. Journalists of the Progressive Era who wrote articles or books exposing the problems in American society were known as Muckrakers. The term refers to a character from John Bunyan’s “Pilgrim’s Progress” who fails to raise his eyes to heaven because he is too busy raking up the muck of the world. Noteworthy Muckrakers include Ida Tarbell who exposed the cutthroat business practices of John D. Rockefeller, Lincoln Steffens who wrote a series of articles for McClure’s Magazine on business and political corruption, and Upton Sinclair whose book *The Jungle* sickened Americans when they read what the meatpacking industry was putting on their tables. As a result of their efforts, reform or positive change dominated the first two decades of the twentieth century, and the long-term effects are still felt by us at the dawn of the 21st century.

Early muckrakers exposed the problems that resulted from the vast changes of the Industrial Revolution. Many of those problems still exist and others have materialized as a result of our entrance into a new age--the so-called Technology Revolution. It’s time for the modern day muckraker to come to the forefront and inform the public, much like the Muckrakers of the previous century.

In this assessment you will:

- Select a problem linked to technology
- Conduct research and record data and cite sources
- Write an article in newspaper format

Skills and Knowledge Assessed:

- Integrating research into analytical writing
- Impact of technology
Social Studies Assessment Activity #19: The Modern Day Muckraker

Requirements:
Your newspaper article must contain the following:

1. Identification of the problem accompanied by a brief historical background.
2. Description of the impact on individuals and societies.
3. Identification of a cause-effect link between the problem and some facet of technology.
4. Statement of examples of previous attempts to alleviate (lessen or decrease) the problem by governments, organizations, groups of people or individuals.
5. Explanation of future effects if the problem remains unchecked.
6. Description of a solution to the problem.

Technical aspects of the article: (Not to be assessed)
1. Single space using word processing.
2. Newspaper format that includes a major headline (bold, size 14 print) and division into three columns.
3. A visual aid (photo, chart, graph, etc.) that has been captured from the internet or other approved source.
4. Geneva font (or one that is comparable) with size 10 lettering.
5. 1 to 2 pages in length.
Social Studies Activity #19 Modern Day Muckraker

Standards and Benchmarks:

An “A” in the table below indicates the standards and benchmarks in this assessment activity that have the potential to elicit evidence of student learning. An “I” indicates an instructional strategy that is assumed, but not assessed. An “A*” indicates the standards and benchmarks that are assessed only by the optional component.

Students demonstrate how structures of power, authority, and governance have developed historically and continue to evolve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.1.1    Students describe unique freedoms, rights, and responsibilities of living in a democratic society and explain their interrelationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.2    Students explain and/or demonstrate how to participate in the political processes and express personal beliefs and convictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.3    Students explain the historical development of the U.S. Constitution and how it has shaped the U.S. and Wyoming governmental systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.4    Students demonstrate an understanding of the major distinguishing characteristics of the United States and Wyoming Constitutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.5    Students demonstrate an understanding of the U.S. civil and criminal legal systems and distinguish differences between those systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.2 Culture/ Cultural Diversity
Students demonstrate an understanding of different cultures and how these cultures have contributed and continue to contribute to the world in which they live.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.2.1    Students explain how various cultural influences impact society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2.2    Students communicate how shared cultural experiences influence peoples’ perceptions of prominent historical figures, groups, institutions, and world events.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.3 Production, Distribution, and Consumption
Students demonstrate an understanding of economic principles and concepts and describe the influence of economic factors on individuals and societies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.3.1    Students explain how different economic systems are organized for production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3.2    Students formulate solutions to economic problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3.3    Students describe the impacts of global economic interdependence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3.4    Students demonstrate an understanding of economic principles that influence individual financial planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.4 Time, Continuity and Change
Students demonstrate an understanding of the people, events, problems, ideas, and cultures that were significant in the history of our community, state, nation and world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 11.4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 11.4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 11.4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 11.4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.5 People, Places, and Environments
Students demonstrate an understanding of interrelationships among people, places, and environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.5.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 11.5.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Studies Assessment Activity #19: The Modern Day Muckraker

Teacher Supplement

Description: Students write a muckraker article relating cause and effect to a modern-day problem that is connected to technology. The article must be completed in word processing and duplicate a newspaper format. Content must include the following:

1. Brief historical background
2. Link to technology
3. Impact on individuals and society
4. Predictions about future impacts on societies
5. A possible solution

Prerequisite Skills:
- familiarity with the role of muckrakers during the Progressive Era
- understanding of cause-effect relationship
- ability to organize and write an article in a newspaper format
- basic technology skills associated with research and word processing

Intended Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Levels

Newspaper Article: Level 3
- Analyze and synthesize from multiple sources
- Common themes across time and place
- Make predictions with evidence
- Develop solution to problem

Suggested Use in the Body of Evidence System and curriculum:
This assessment activity is best used for the Body of Evidence for high school graduation in courses that deal with United States History or Current Events.

Suggested Instructional Procedures:
1. Conduct lessons over the Progressive Era in U.S. History in the manner you choose.
2. Review the methods employed to bring about reform:
   a. Start special interest clubs or organizations
   b. Employ lobbyists
   c. Start a new political party
   d. Maximize the use of available media
   e. Conduct organized legal protests (pickets, boycotts)
3. Discuss the role of muckrakers in bringing about reform during the Progressive Era emphasizing how they appealed to readers’ emotions. (Refer to excerpt from The Jungle.) This can be used to instruct students on cause-effect. In the process remind them that muckrakers concentrated on details; they didn’t assume their readers knew a lot about the problems. They were educating their public!
Social Studies Assessment Activity #19: The Modern Day Muckraker

4. Introduce the assessment and hand out the student supplement. Explain the activity fully. Don’t forget to pinpoint the roles of the Research Guideline Sheet and the rubric.

5. Conduct a brainstorming activity by having students volunteer to list on the blackboard problems that exist in the U.S. or other societies that are related to technology (in cause-effect). If there seems to be difficulty coming up with a list of possibilities, refer to the list provided.

6. Have students sign up for a topic/problem on a first come-first served basis. Once a topic has been taken, it is no longer available in that class. (This reduces the opportunities for cheating.)

7. Take students to a computer lab to conduct research and write the article. The Guideline Sheet should be used to record the information they find. (Encourage students to help each other with the technical aspects of the assignment.) Remind students to refer to both the rubric and the checklist as they write their article.

8. Share student learning by either (1) allowing students to volunteer to read their articles aloud with all the emotional zeal of a true muckraker (enrichment) or (2) having an organized class discussion related to the topics students selected for the articles and posting (with student permission) articles on the bulletin board.

Teacher’s Note: Teachers should plan for 4 days in the library to conduct research and complete the article in word processing. If additional time is necessary, the teacher can supervise makeup sessions after school.
NAME ____________________________

MUCKRAKER RESEARCH GUIDELINE SHEET

I. Problem (subject of research): _____________________________________

II. Technology Link and Historical background.

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________

III. Examples of the impact on individuals and societies. (cause - effect)

A. __________________________ ___________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

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IV. Previous attempts to alleviate the problems by individuals, groups or government.

A. 

B. 

C. 

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B. _____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

C. _____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

V. Future Projections If Unchecked
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

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VI. Possible solutions (Yours included.)

Sources (need at least 2): website address (and publication, date of, title of article & author if provided)  EXAMPLE: www.problem.com; Time Magazine, March 20, 2001; The Greenhouse Effect by A thorough Researcher.

1. _______________________________________________________________________

2. _______________________________________________________________________

3. _______________________________________________________________________

4. _______________________________________________________________________
Social Studies Assessment Activity #19: The Modern Day Muckraker

Possible Muckraker Topics

Health Care
* Obesity or diabetes caused by sitting in front of computer or TV all day long
* Medicine prolonging lives--breaking Medicare/Social Security banks
* Keeping premature babies with major health problems alive

Government
* 2000 elections/voting problems
* Tracking of welfare recipients under the “welfare to work” program
* National Security Act--will big brother be watching our every move?
* Antitrust issues with Microsoft
* Airport security changes

Media
* Copycat killing after sensational TV coverage of crimes
* Telemarketing
* Access to bomb making information

Computers/Internet
* Purchase of drugs & alcohol without restrictions on Internet
* Computer hacking
* Identity fraud/theft
* Napster/copyright issues
* National security--ability to shut down nation’s electricity, etc.
* Handwriting/spelling deterioration due to computer use
* Stalking over Internet
* Internet/computer addiction
* Online gambling
* Computer viruses
* Trading in stock market

Science/Other
* Cloning
* Choosing genes/traits in offspring
* Unemployment due to computers taking over jobs
* Ability to attack other nations with biological warfare
* Bioengineering of food
* Cryonics (freezing Ted Williams)
* Robotics
* Nanotechnology
* Industrial waste
* Coalbed methane mining’s effects on the environment
* Nuclear warfare
* Cell phones causing brain cancer
### Assessment Guide: Social Studies Assessment Activity #19: The Modern Day Muckraker

**Criterion:** Evaluates in essay format.

**Standards and Benchmarks:** 11.4.1; 11.4.2; 11.4.3; 11.4.4; 11.5.3

**Source:** Newspaper Article

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Depth of Knowledge: Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets requirements of level 3,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a detailed, in-depth, and analysis of the elements with logical, valid conclusions with fresh perspectives on the issue.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANCHORS - SOCIAL STUDIES ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY #19: THE MODERN DAY MUCKRAKER

This section contains sample student work that has been assessed by Wyoming teachers who participated in the Wyoming Assessment Activities Consortium. Using the rubrics for this assessment activity, each example has been assigned score levels and includes accompanying annotated student work and “justifications” explaining assignment of scores.

The examples represent a range of student work collected as a result of piloting in Wyoming high schools during the 2004-2005 school year. In some cases sample student work for particular score points or for particular parts of assessment activities was not available at the date of publication.

Anchor papers in this set include:

MM1-001
MM1-002
MM1-035
### Social Studies Assessment Activity # 19: Modern Day Muckraker

**Anchor #:** MM1-001

| **Criterion:** Newspaper Article  
**Level:** 3 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The response is a Level 3. The author identifies the problem of reliance on fossil fuel and provides a historical perspective. (“Throughout the nineteenth century the technology of using fossil fuels for energy increased dramatically.”) Other required elements are present as well. The author presents multiple examples of the impact of the problem: (“… price of gasoline soared…; …giving off harmful gases…”), attempts to alleviate the problem (“… pushed nuclear power…; … standards improved gas mileage…; …program funds hydrogen research…”), future problems if left unchecked (“If the Department of Energy spends all their time….”) and proposes possible solutions: (“…more research in finding renewable energy sources…; …designing with better emissions…”). This is a level 3 and not a level 4 because the author does not explain long-term impacts for the future or present fresh perspectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Article: Identifies the problem and provides a historical perspective.

The Energy Crisis and Power Demand
By
Before the industrial revolution we relied on the sun and fire for heat, and muscle and wind for transportation and work. But in the early 1800’s when Thomas Newcomen and James Watt invented the first steam engine a world of new possibility’s opened up. Throughout the nineteenth century the technology of using fossil fuels for energy increased dramatically. Now out was being processed into gasoline to power the many combustion engines, and Henry Ford’s assembly-line methods allowed for mass production of affordable automobiles. Massive power plants were built and electrical lines spread across America. Throughout the early to mid twentieth century the efficient use of energy simply was not a concern.

In the mid 70’s, political developments brought about by our government caused the oil producing countries to stop supplying us with unlimited amounts of oil which impacted everyone as the price of gasoline soared. This angered consumers and brought on concern for a more efficient energy source. Using non-renewable fossil fuels also began impacting society environmentally. Vehicles and power plants were giving off harmful gasses that were and still are causing havoc on our planet. These gasses cause many problems such as global warming and contaminated environments. Luckily this also impacted the thoughts and beliefs of many people and now is slowly starting an increase of awareness for the need of a cheap, clean, renewable energy source. For the first time, Americans began thinking of conservation.

The first attempt to alleviate the problem of our Energy crisis came about after World War Two. The government pushed nuclear power as a clean and cheap energy source until the Three Mile Island accident caused an almost complete shutdown of nuclear development. Another attempt to alleviate this problem was the Corporate Average Fuel Economy or CAFÉ standards in 1975. The CAFÉ standard was a law passed to double new car fuel economy. These standards improved gas mileage from 13.5 mpg in 1975 to about 20 mpg in 1983. Finally, a recent attempt to help alleviate our dependence on fossil fuels is the Freedom Car program. This federal program funds hydrogen research and development for hydrogen powered cars with the three big American car-makers, requiring them to develop a hydrogen car by 2008.

Hydrogen is being sold to the world as a prefect cure for our dependence on fossil fuels and a cure to global warming. But scientist are finding other wise, and are warning that the technology has a long way to go. Right now it takes more energy to create hydrogen power then hydrogen power provides, therefore actually causing more pollution. If our Department of Energy spends all their time and energy on hydrogen development and if politicians continue to force the first possible

Article: Presents the impact of the problem.

Article: Presents future problem if left unchecked.

Article: Describes an attempt to alleviate the problem.
Article: Presents future of problem if unchecked.

Article: Proposes possible solutions.

| Solution to our energy crisis then this problem is most likely to remain unsolved for along time.  
The National Research Council says that near future prospects for a hydrogen economy is dim. They say that the solution is in tougher laws on tail-pipe emissions and for more funding for research and development. Technology in the Gas and Electric Hybrid vehicles is promising and ultra light materials and lighter engines are being developed which will reduce power demands.  
I believe that more research in finding renewable energy sources is the solution to our energy crisis. We should spend more time in designing vehicles with better emissions, and looking further into electric vehicles. I also believe that our main problem in global warming is not caused thoroughly by vehicles. Power plants are responsible for almost twice the bad emissions. Our politicians and government both need to look at all the facts before trying to sell the American people on a solution that may actually slow down our progress towards a successful energy program. | Article: Proposes possible solutions. |
Bibliography


http://www.fueleconomy.gov

“Warning: The Hydrogen Economy May Be More Distant Than It Appears”, By, Michael Behar, January 2005, Popular Science

MM1-001
D6
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Studies Assessment Activity # 19: Modern Day Muckraker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchor #: MM1-002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion: Newspaper Article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The response is a Level 2. The author presents a credible problem (&quot;Identity theft is a problem.&quot;), a historical perspective (&quot;In the year 2001.&quot;), the impact of the problem (&quot;...identity theft victims lost an average.&quot;) and attempts to alleviate the problem (&quot;The government established a special branch.&quot;). The author does not address the future of the problem if left unchecked and no possible solutions are offered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identity Theft Strikes Hard in ‘03

Identity theft is a problem that has taken the United States by storm and is growing at a rapid rate; yet we seldom take action to prevent it. According to the dictionary, identity theft is the co-option of another person’s personal information without their knowledge and the fraudulent use of such knowledge. In the year 2001 there were only 66,212 identity theft complaints and in 2002 there were 161,256 identity theft complaints; in 2003 there were 247,905 complaints, almost a 75% increase from 2001. As technology increases so do the techniques of identity thieves. In 2003, 78% of the identity thefts reported were internet-related. Whether we like it or not, technology is assisting a large amount of identity thieves.

Identity thieves struck hard in 2003. Twenty-eight percent of identity theft victims were between the ages of 18-29 and 25% were between the ages of 30-39. Internet-related identity theft victims lost an average of $1,350. Internet related fraud victims reported losses of almost $200,000,000 in 2003. In 2003, all fraud victims reported losses of over $437,463,950.

There are a number of companies and organizations that have attempted to tackle the identity theft issue in the United States, but it continues to grow. The government established a special branch of the Federal Trade Commission that specializes in providing information and assistance to identity theft victims. There are also various workshops that teach citizens how to protect themselves from identity theft. Along with the FTC there is the Identity Theft Resource Center. Most banks and credit card companies also offer solutions to identity theft problems and can freeze accounts when identity theft is suspected.

The issue of identity theft is not magnified due to a lack of facilities, it is overtaking our country because many citizens are unaware of the potential risk. The facilities to help are plentiful, but they cannot assist until people opt for assistance. The problem of identity theft is not as hard as one might think to solve. Identity theft is becoming a greater issue for Americans everyday, but with simple precautions it could be eliminated almost entirely.

FRAUD COMPLAINTS BY CONSUMER STATE
January 1 - December 31, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Per 100,000 Population</th>
<th>Number of Complaints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Alaska</td>
<td>179.6</td>
<td>5,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hawaii</td>
<td>131.0</td>
<td>5,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Wyoming</td>
<td>128.3</td>
<td>6,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Washington</td>
<td>119.6</td>
<td>5,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Colorado</td>
<td>114.5</td>
<td>5,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Nevada</td>
<td>113.7</td>
<td>2,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. New Hampshire</td>
<td>132.5</td>
<td>1,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Oregon</td>
<td>121.7</td>
<td>4,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Arizona</td>
<td>122.5</td>
<td>6,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Montana</td>
<td>111.3</td>
<td>6,083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods of Payment Reported by Consumers
January 1 - December 31, 2003

*Percentages are based on the total number of consumers who reported the method of payment for fraud complaints. 70% of consumers reported this information.

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Works Cited

(Americanexpress.com)

(creditreporting.com)

(sovereignbank.com)
Social Studies Assessment Activity # 19: Modern Day Muckraker

Anchor #: MM1-035

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion: Newspaper Article</th>
<th>Level: 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The response is a Level 1 because although the author presents the subject of cryonics in a newspaper format, a specific related social problem is not clearly identified (“there are three good reasons…”) and the author does not provide support for any of the required elements stated in the rubric at a Level 3. In addition, the author includes conflicting evidence in the article, at one point it states the cost of the cryonic process (“between $30,000 and $300,000…”) and later states the cost ranges (“from $2 million to $6 million”).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are Cryonics Really the Answer?

Ted Williams-Cryonics

Recently, it has been said that legendary Hall of Fame baseball player, Ted Williams, placed under cryonic suspension. Cryonic suspension is a new technology when a person is declared legally dead, but they are specially treated and cooled to temperatures where physical decay essentially stops. The body will be maintained until a time when science is able to restore the body back to good health.

After asking "The Cryonics Institute," we have came to the conclusion, it is true. They have said many times that they cannot discuss names of their members, under a strict policy. Also, they said that they are unable to let out patients information so obviously Ted Williams was a patient of "The Cryonics Institute."

Cryonics is said to be just a money-making scam, but there are three good reasons say that cryonics is not just a scam. (1) Many biological specimens have been frozen, stored at liquid, for example, a human embryo, which later was grown into a healthy child. (2) Even though cryonics is still controversial, many well respected mainstream scientists have looked and joined in, on the research to this project. (3) This process is a win, win situation. A person can die and just be buried, or they can be frozen and be able to live again one day as healthy as can be. There are really no risks because a person is already dead going into this process.

Cryonics is a life support technology that preserves human life in a state that will be regarded as viable and treatable by medicines in the future. It is said that the ability to heal at molecular levels are yet to come in the future. The cost of "Cryonic Suspension" is said to be between $10,000 to $500,000 for the whole process. Different institutes differ in price. There are many things that have to be paid for before the procedure and while the procedure is going on. Throughout the whole process, it is said to cost form two million dollars to six million dollars. Really, coming back to life in fifty to one hundred years and stay alive pretty much as long as you want. I feel that it really isn't much money to ask for.

All in all, "Cryonic Suspension" is a very useful technique for saving lives. The process is very simple.

If Ted Williams did get put under "Cryonic Suspension," many others and I are totally behind his decision and are backing him one hundred percent. I feel that it was extremely awesome decision on his part. If he were able to get new organ or repair the body parts that he had, it would be an outstanding slap in the face to critics that thought this process would never work. He could come back and be an even better baseball "Hall of Famer" than he was the first time he played.

This was an amazing discovery in science, and with Ted Williams giving "Cryonic Suspension" a try, this process is going to blow people's minds away. All I have to say is "Try it, see if it works and what do

Article: Does not organize information with 5 clearly identified elements.

Article: Promotes an idea, but doesn't identify a problem clearly.

Article: Misleading to refer to cryonics as "saving lives."

Article: Does not comment on impact on society, if cronics became a common practice.

Article: Presents conflicting evidence.
Bibliography

2. www.merkle.com December 13, 2003 Cryonics
3. www.cryonics.org/prog.html July 30, 2004 Basic Introduction to Cryonics