*“[T]he meat would be shoveled into carts, and the man who did the shoveling would not trouble to lift out a rat even when he saw one—there were things that went into the sausage in comparison with which a poisoned rat was a tidbit. There was no place for the men to wash their hands before they ate their dinner, and so they made a practice of washing them in the water that was to be ladled into the sausage. There were the butt-ends of smoked meat, and the scraps of corned beef, and all the odds and ends of the waste of the plants, that would be dumped into old barrels in the cellar and left there. Under the system of rigid economy which the packers enforced, there were some jobs that it only paid to do once in a long time, and among these was the cleaning out of the waste barrels. Every spring they did it; and in the barrels would be dirt and rust and old nails and stale water—and cartload after cartload of it would be taken up and dumped into the hoppers with fresh meat, and sent out to the public’s breakfast.”*

* An excerpt from Chapter 14 of *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair, 1906

1. What do you think the public’s reaction was to reading this passage?
2. How would you describe the work completed at the meat packing plant?
3. “I aimed at the public’s heart, and by accident I hit it in the stomach” What do you think Sinclair meant by this?
4. How would you correct the situation at the packing plant?
5. What are some examples of how the laws and customs have changed since 1906 when The Jungle was published?