

The 1920's

Backwards Planning Curriculum Units

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How To Use This Unit

Backwards planning offers an innovative yet simple approach to meeting curriculum goals; it also provides a way to keep students engaged and focused throughout the learning process. Many teachers approach history instruction in the following manner: they identify a topic required by state and/or national standards, they find materials on that topic, they use those materials with their students, and then they administer some sort of standard test at the end of the unit. Backwards planning, rather than just starting with a required instructional topic, goes a step further by identifying exactly what students need to know by the end of the unit—the so-called “enduring understandings.” The next step involves assessment: devising ways to determine whether students have learned what they need to know. The final step involves planning the teaching/learning process so that students can acquire the knowledge needed.

This product uses backwards planning to combine a PowerPoint presentation, activities that involve authentic assessment, and traditional tests (multiple-choice and essay) into a complete curriculum unit. Although the materials have enough built-in flexibility that you can use them in a number of ways, we suggest the following procedure:

1. Start with the “essential questions” listed on slide 2 of the PowerPoint presentation (these also appear in the teacher support materials). Briefly go over them with students before getting into the topic material. These questions will help students focus their learning and note taking during the course of the unit. You can also choose to use the essential questions as essay questions at the end of the unit; one way to do this is to let students know at the outset that one of the essential questions will be on the test—they just won’t know which one.
2. Next, discuss the activities students will complete during the unit. This will also help focus their learning and note taking, and it will lead them to view the PowerPoint presentation in a different light, considering it a source of ideas for authentic-assessment projects.
3. Present the PowerPoint to the class. Most slides have an image and bullet points summarizing the slide’s topic. The Notes page for each slide contains a paragraph or two of information that you can use as a presentation script, or just as background information for your own reference. You don’t need to present the entire PowerPoint at once: it’s broken up into several sections, each of which concludes with some discussion questions that echo parts of the essential questions and also help students to get closer to the “enduring understandings.” Spend some time with the class going over and debating these questions—this will not only help students think critically about the material, but it will also allow you to incorporate different modes of instruction during a single class period, offering a better chance to engage students.
4. Have students complete one or more of the authentic-assessment activities. These activities are flexible: most can be completed either individually or in groups, and either as homework or as in-class assignments. Each activity includes a rubric; many also have graphic organizers. You can choose to have students complete the activities after you have shown them the entire PowerPoint presentation, or you can show them one section of the PowerPoint, go over the discussion questions, and then have students complete an activity.

5. End the unit with traditional assessment. The support materials include a 20-question multiple-choice quiz; you can combine this with an essay question (you can use one of the essential questions or come up with one of your own) to create a full-period test.

6. If desired, debrief with students by going over the essential questions with them again and remind them what the enduring understandings are.

We are dedicated to continually improving our products and working with teachers to develop exciting and effective tools for the classroom. We can offer advice on how to maximize the use of the product and share others' experiences. We would also be happy to work with you on ideas for customizing the presentation.

We value your feedback, so please let us know more about the ways in which you use this product to supplement your lessons; we're also eager to hear any recommendations you might have for ways in which we can expand the functionality of this product in future editions. You can e-mail us at access@socialstudies.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Aaron Willis
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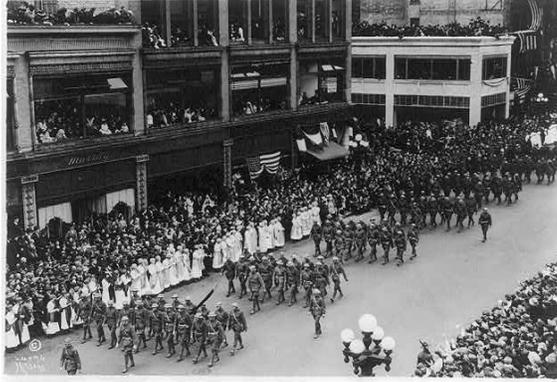
People know the 1920s by various names that imply a certain exuberance in the era: “the Roaring ’20s,” “the Jazz Age,” and “the Ballyhoo Years,” among others. In addition to its lighter side, however, the 1920s also saw sweeping change and the strife that accompanied it. The decade displayed America’s response to the upheaval of World War I with a return to “normalcy” as well as a period of high anti-immigrant and anticommunist sentiment that left a number of innocent victims in its wake. Republican leadership carried the country along on a wave of prosperity, but not without substantial corruption and graft. Industry adopted revolutionary production techniques, spawning an age of consumption and cheap credit. Ordinary Americans found their lives changed dramatically by new labor-saving devices—especially the automobile. Radio became an essential part of everyday life and led the growth of various media. The “noble experiment” of Prohibition, which tried to remedy the perceived social ills of alcohol, ended up instead fueling an explosion of organized crime and speakeasies. While some embraced the permissiveness and anything-goes spirit of the era, others sought stability and familiarity through religion. Women began to change their place in society not only by attaining the right to vote but also by stepping out of established social roles. Finally, the decade’s economic boom did not pay dividends across the board: overconfidence in the stock market and several other factors combined to create the biggest collapse the country had seen, setting the stage for the Great Depression.

Essential Questions

- Why did the U.S. experience so much political and social change during the 1920s?
- Why did the 1920s see the emergence of the “consumer society”?
- What issues led to Prohibition in the 1920s, and what problems contributed to its failure?
- Why did many see the 1920s as a period of rebellion by American youth?
- What changes occurred to marriage and the American family structure in the 1920s?
- How did government economic policies during the 1920s lead to the Great Depression?

America at the Start of the Decade

- Victorious in World War I
- Treaty of Versailles defeated
- Period of isolationism
- Republican ascendancy



Returning WWI soldiers parading in Minneapolis

By the dawn of the 1920s, the United States had emerged from World War I as one of the world's superpowers; however, it remained unwilling to accept the role of world leader. President Woodrow Wilson fell short of his goal of "making the world safe for democracy" with the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations when the Senate rejected the treaty. Without a U.S. presence in the League of Nations, the international organization lacked the credibility needed to maintain world peace.

Unwilling to consider the possibility of sending U.S. soldiers into another foreign war, most Americans favored an isolationist policy in dealing with international affairs. The election of Warren Harding in 1920 began a period of Republican Party dominance that lasted throughout the decade: from 1921 until 1933, Republicans controlled both the White House and Congress.

The Election of 1920



Warren G. Harding

- GOP nominated Ohio Sen. Warren G. Harding
- “Normalcy”
- Democrats ran Ohio Gov. James M. Cox
- Coolidge as GOP VP candidate
- FDR as Democratic VP candidate
- Republican landslide

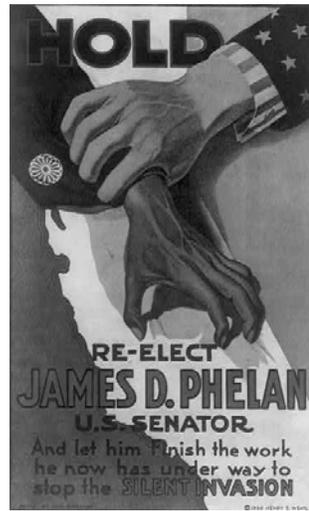
After the Senate’s rejection of the Treaty of Versailles and the defeat of the League of Nations, Republican leaders saw an opportunity to regain the White House after Democrat Woodrow Wilson’s two terms. They nominated Ohio Senator Warren G. Harding for president. Harding, realizing that Americans wanted to put the war behind them, promised to return the nation to “normalcy.” When questioned as to what the term meant, Harding explained that it referred not to the “old order,” but rather to “a steady way of doing things,... normal procedure, in a natural way, without excess.” However, it later became evident that he had little grasp of the major issues facing the country at the time. The Republicans nominated as Harding’s running mate Calvin Coolidge, who as Massachusetts governor had gained fame for breaking the Boston Police Strike.

The Democrats nominated Ohio Governor James M. Cox. His running mate was Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had served as Undersecretary of the Navy after a career in New York state politics. Cox and Roosevelt promised to continue Wilson’s ideas as set forth in the Treaty of Versailles and to join the League of Nations.

The American public proved unwilling to continue the policies that they believed had entangled the United States in World War I, and the Democrats lost in a landslide. Harding and Coolidge received more than 60 percent of the popular vote, and more than 400 electoral votes.

Nativism

- Came out of various worries following WWI
- Prejudice against foreign-born people
- Evident in immigration quotas, rise of the Ku Klux Klan
- Also led to “Red Scare”

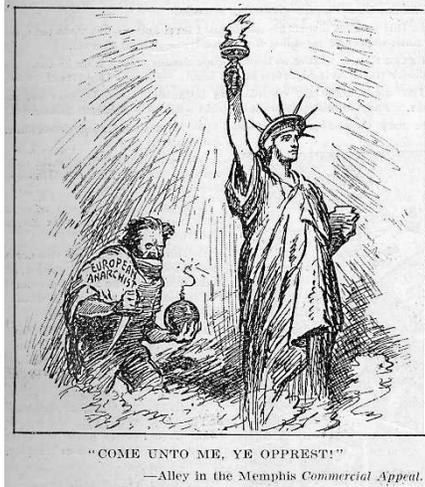


An anti-immigrant poster from California Senator James Phelan's campaign, 1920

Various conditions in the immediate aftermath of WWI led many Americans to turn inward, favoring not just isolationism but nativism as well. The Progressive movement, while fighting for new social and political rights, also stoked suspicions about anyone not perceived as a “native born” American. A post-war recession also fueled nativism: along with the influx of returning servicemen, many became concerned about foreign-born persons taking jobs from Americans in an already difficult economy.

Nativism led to a resurgence of anti-immigrant organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, and to the passage of new laws limiting the number of immigrants allowed in the U.S. each year, based on country of origin. In addition, a “Red Scare” gripped the nation after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Terrorist acts by various radical groups raised fears that a similar revolution might occur in the U.S. Wilson's Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer looked to find and arrest possible communists infiltrators, commonly referred to as “Reds.”

The “Red Scare”



- Begun by Russia’s Bolshevik Revolution (1917)
- Fear of communist revolution in the U.S.
- Heightened by 1919 anarchist bombings
- Passage of various sedition laws

Nativism and the fear of a communist revolution led to what became known as the “Red Scare.” The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, as well as strikes and other activities by anarchists in the U.S., led many to believe that a similar upheaval could happen in America.

In 1919, anarchist bombings targeted several American industrialists and political leaders. Though unsuccessful, the bombings led many Americans to believe that such groups were attempting to overthrow the government. Strikes by radical labor unions, such as the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), also worried many Americans, who believed that foreign radicals had actually orchestrated these unions’ strikes and other activities.

In response to these perceived threats, Congress enacted sedition laws such as the Sedition Act of 1918, and the government arrested and imprisoned several radical leaders, including noted anarchist Emma Goldman and union leader and Socialist presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs. In addition, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer initiated a number of raids in order to round up and arrest suspected radicals.

Note to teacher: You may want to take a couple of minutes to discuss the cartoon in this slide with the class. Ask them questions such as “Who do the figures represent?,” “What is the significance of the caption?,” and “What message is the artist trying to convey?”

The Palmer Raids

- U.S. Attorney General
A. Mitchell Palmer
- Sought to eliminate radical
influence in the U.S.
- Appointed J. Edgar Hoover to
lead investigations
- Many persons jailed or
deported illegally
- Rights of many suspects
violated



A. Mitchell Palmer

Palmer detained thousands of suspected anarchists and radicals. Under his leadership, the Justice Department and J. Edgar Hoover (who had been appointed to lead the investigations) conducted what became known as the “Palmer Raids.” Hoover actively sought out suspected radicals, collecting information on more than 150,000 persons. He had approximately 10,000 of them arrested for sedition and other assorted charges. The government arrested many on little or no supporting evidence and denied them fundamental due-process rights during interrogation. Later commissions ruled that the government had illegally detained or deported many of these suspects.

Palmer asserted that an attempted communist revolution would occur in the U.S. on May 1, 1920. However, many ridiculed him when this predicted revolution never occurred. Once touted as the probable Democratic nominee for President in 1920, Palmer’s popularity declined, and he never became a factor in the race for the nomination.

“The Case Against the ‘Reds’”

...It has been impossible in so short a space to review the entire menace of the internal revolution in this country as I know it, but this may serve to arouse the American citizen to its reality, its danger, and the great need of united effort to stamp it out, under our feet, if needs be. It is being done. The Department of Justice will pursue the attack of these "Reds" upon the Government of the United States with vigilance, and no alien, advocating the overthrow of existing law and order in this country, shall escape arrest and prompt deportation.

It is my belief that while they have stirred discontent in our midst, while they have caused irritating strikes, and while they have infected our social ideas with the disease of their own minds and their unclean morals we can get rid of them! and not until we have done so shall we have removed the menace of Bolshevism for good.

Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer
Forum, issue 63 (1920)

Teacher’s note: As a follow-up question after students have read this quote from Palmer, you may wish to ask how the excerpt from “The Case Against the Reds” might have fueled suspicion against suspected communists and anarchists. You may also want to ask whether students think Palmer makes a rational argument regarding why subversives should be prosecuted, imprisoned, or deported—or if he’s simply making an emotional appeal. Ask students to back up their answers with evidence from the reading.

Student answers to the questions will vary. Some may note that Palmer suggests that all “Reds” should be eliminated because they have “stirred discontent in our midst, caused irritating strikes, and...have infected our social ideas with the disease of their own minds and their unclean morals...” It appears that Palmer is using fairly charged terms (“irritating,” “disease,” “unclean morals”) to rally support for removing the “menace.” However, he does not back the claims up with any evidence or eyewitness accounts to support his argument, instead appealing to his audience’s fear of what he describes.

Immigration Quotas

- Emergency Quota Act (1921)
- Immigration Act of 1924
- Limited annual number of immigrants from a nation to 2% of number of immigrants living in the U.S. in 1890
- Immigration from most Asian nations stopped
- Some groups given preference over others



A cartoon satirizing the quota system

Nativism also led to the establishment of quotas limiting the number of immigrants from each country. Having established the quota system with the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, lawmakers refined it with the Immigration Act of 1924. This law limited immigration from each European nation to two percent of the number of immigrants from that nation living in the U.S. at the time of the 1890 census. In particular, the quota discriminated against persons from eastern and southern Europe, most of whom did not speak English and were mainly Catholic and Jewish. Most immigrants from these nations did not begin arriving in the U.S. in any great numbers until after 1890. By the time the baseline year shifted to 1920, the number of new immigrants allowed in the U.S. had shrunk dramatically as well, so only a few persons from southern and eastern Europe were allowed in.

However, immigrants from northern and western Europe took priority in the system. In addition, the law put no quotas into place on immigration from Latin America. Also, some groups with relatives already in the United States, such as the wives and minor children of U.S. citizens, received non-quota status and could enter the U.S.

The quota system established by the Immigration Act of 1924 remained in place with few modifications until the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965.

Sacco & Vanzetti



Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco

- Charged with robbery and murder
- Convicted on highly circumstantial evidence
- Sentenced to death
- Many protested convictions and sentence
- Both executed in 1927

One of the most sensational examples of anti-immigrant bias in the 1920s was the case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, Italian immigrants who authorities arrested in 1920 on charges of robbery and the murder of a payroll guard in South Braintree, Massachusetts. To many, the pair represented everything that Americans feared. They were not native-born, and they seemed to represent the opposite of American values: both were anarchists, and both had evaded the draft during World War I.

Authorities based the case against the pair on highly circumstantial evidence. Witnesses stated the murderers “appeared to be Italians,” but could not identify Sacco or Vanzetti as the perpetrators. The judge ignored the alibis that both had presented, and even made prejudicial statements regarding their nationality. Found guilty, they were convicted and sentenced to death.

Their conviction resulted in worldwide protest. Many believed that they had been found guilty simply because of their anarchist affiliations, or because they were immigrants. Legal appeals went on for years, but came to nothing. Some petitioned the Massachusetts governor to commute the men’s sentences, but after reviewing the court transcripts and personally interviewing Vanzetti, he decided to let the sentence stand. The men were executed in 1927.

Ballistics tests unavailable at the time of the trial later showed that the pistol found on Sacco at the time of his arrest indeed fired the shot that killed the guard; however, the tests did not prove that Sacco had pulled the trigger.

In the last letter before their execution, the pair wrote, “Friends and Comrades, now that the tragedy of this trial is at an end, be all as of one heart. Only two of us will die. Our ideal, you our comrades, will live by millions; we have won, but not vanquished. Just treasure our suffering, our sorrow, our mistakes, our defeats, our passion for future battles and for the great emancipation.”

Rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan

- Promoted “100% Americanism”
- Opposed Catholics, Jews, immigrants, unions, and socialists, as well as African Americans
- Membership swelled to nearly 4.5 million by 1924
- Leadership paid Klansmen to recruit new members



Dr. Hiram Wesley Evans, an Atlanta dentist, headed the resurgent KKK

The climate of fear that nativism and the Red Scare fed helped bring back the Ku Klux Klan, all but extinct since Reconstruction. The “new” Klan, founded by Dr. Hiram Wesley Evans, touted itself as supporting “100 percent Americanism,” opposing not only African Americans, but also groups such as labor unions, socialists, Catholics, Jews, and immigrants.

In addition, the Klan supported the prohibition of alcohol and promised to help enforce the law. By 1924, the Klan boasted nearly 4.5 million members, primarily because its leadership encouraged members to find new recruits and gave them substantial kickbacks from the sale of Klan regalia.

From “The Ku Klux Klan Defends Americanism”

“First in the Klansman’s mind is patriotism—America for Americans. He believes religiously that a betrayal of Americanism or the American race is treason to the most sacred of trusts, a trust from his fathers and a trust from God. He believes, too, that Americanism can only be achieved if the pioneer stock is kept pure...”

The second word in the Klansman’s trilogy is ‘white.’ The white race must be supreme, not only in America but in the world. This is equally undebatable, except on the ground that the races might live together, each with full regard for the rights and interests of others, and that those rights and interests would never conflict.

The third of the Klan principles is that Protestantism must be supreme; that Rome shall not rule America. The Klansman believes this is not merely because he is a Protestant, nor even because the Colonies that are now our nation were settled for the purpose of wresting America from the control of Rome and establishing a land of free conscience. He believes it also because Protestantism is an essential part of Americanism; without it America could never have been created and without it she cannot go forward. Roman rule would kill it.”

Dr. Hiram Wesley Evans, in *North American Review*, March–May 1926

Teacher’s note: Ask the class to discuss the Klan’s view of the Catholic Church (the third principle, that “Rome shall not rule America”). Why would the Klan be anti-Catholic? How does this view fit in with the idea of 100 percent Americanism or of white supremacy? Ask students to explain their answers.

Students may note that only in 1960 did a Catholic ever win a presidential race (John F. Kennedy), and that the national parties have nominated very few Catholics (the first was Al Smith in 1928). Explain to students who may not know that Catholics believe that the Pope is infallible regarding church doctrine, so the Klan (and others) believed that a Catholic president’s loyalty might lie first with the Pope, rather than the U.S. Constitution. As such, some assumed that electing a Catholic president would lead to the Church’s direct control of the U.S., a situation clearly in opposition to the Klan’s concept of “100 percent Americanism.”

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Harding win the election of 1920 in a landslide? How did his election reflect changing American values and ideals?
2. Why did the Red Scare take hold in the U.S. in the years following World War I? What events helped to sustain it?

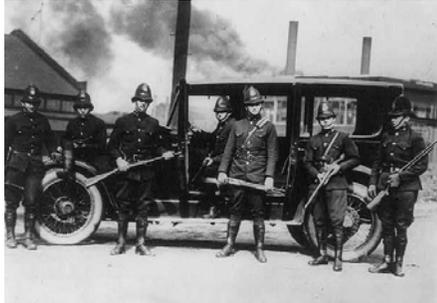
1. Some students may note that most Americans seemed tired of U.S. involvement in foreign affairs after the horrors of WWI, as well as the exhausting fight in the Senate over the Treaty of Versailles. Other students may say that after eight years of Democratic rule under Woodrow Wilson and a host of Progressive reforms, Americans were simply ready for a change of pace and therefore a more conservative administration. Harding's emphasis on "normalcy" appealed to those holding either view, as well as to those with nativist tendencies.
2. Most will note that Russia had experienced a revolution in 1917 by the Bolsheviks, who overthrew the monarchy there in favor of a communist government. Many Americans had strong concerns that communist elements might attempt a similar coup in the U.S. Incidents such as the abortive bombings of American industrialists and politicians in 1919, and strikes by groups such as the Industrial Workers of the World labor union helped to stoke fears of communist infiltration, regardless of any actual connection.

Discussion Questions (continued)

3. Why did the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti generate such protest in the U.S. and around the world? In your view, did they get a fair trial? Why or why not?
4. Why might the Ku Klux Klan have enjoyed such popularity all over the country (i.e., not just in the South) in the 1920s? Why do you think many did not oppose the Klan and its policies at the time?

3. Many believed that Sacco and Vanzetti had been “railroaded” because their convictions relied on circumstantial evidence, and that their ethnicity and political views made them appear guilty before even receiving a trial. Most students will probably feel that the judge’s prejudicial statements about their backgrounds unfairly swayed the jury. Other students may note that, based on the techniques of collecting and analyzing evidence available at that time, the jury made an impartial decision in finding the pair guilty.
4. The Ku Klux Klan enjoyed popularity in the North as well as the South primarily because the Klan broadened its focus from African Americans to “100 percent Americanism,” and also inflamed biases of people across the country against groups such as Jews, immigrants, and Catholics. Also, the visibility of some Klan leaders (such as Hiram Wesley Evans and D.C. Stephenson), put a “human face” on a traditionally mysterious group. Since the Klan was a potent political force in the 1920s, it might have been difficult for any government official to actively oppose the Klan and remain in office; many who did not agree with the Klan may have joined simply to advance their careers or avoid possible retribution.

An Era of Strikes



State troopers stand ready to confront striking workers outside a mill in Pennsylvania, 1919

- Strikes not permitted during World War I
- Several strikes occurred soon after
- Nationwide steel strike
- Coal strike
- Some management officials tried to portray strikers as revolutionaries
- Labor unions in decline

A significant number of labor strikes as well as many conflicts between management and labor marked the decade of the 1920s. During WWI, unions such as the American Federation of Labor had signed a “no strike” pledge in order to not disrupt the war effort. With the war over, two major strikes affected American industry—a nationwide steel strike and a coal strike.

In the steel strike, management hired strikebreakers (or, “scabs”) to replace the striking workers, and used violence against the strikers. Management also tried to portray the strike’s leaders as communists. Eventually a public report on the strike, including the abysmal working conditions in the mills, elicited support for the workers. Management relented and agreed to an eight-hour work day, but still did not recognize the union.

The coal strike began as a protest over poor wages and long hours. The United Mine Workers defied a court order issued by Attorney General Palmer ordering the strikers back to work, closing the mines for a month. President Wilson called in an arbitrator, and the miners received a 27% pay increase. However, management did not address their concerns about the length of the workday and work week; miners did not make any gains in those areas until the 1930s.

Even with these victories, the national labor movement went into decline during the 1920s. Since a great majority of laborers were immigrants used to working in harsh conditions, they did not have as great a need to strike for higher wages and better working conditions. In addition, the sheer number of immigrant groups working in factories made uniting them under a single organization difficult. Most unions also refused to allow African Americans to join, which further hampered the labor movement.

The Boston Police Strike



Copyrighted, 1919, by John T. McCutcheon.
HE GIVES AID AND COMFORT TO THE ENEMIES OF SOCIETY.

- Boston police sought raise
- Officers' representatives fired; police went on strike
- Governor Calvin Coolidge called out National Guard to patrol city
- Coolidge became famous; nominee for VP in 1920

Perhaps no strike gained as much national attention as the 1919 Boston Police strike. Police officers asked for a pay raise, not having received one since prior to World War I. Management fired the officers' representatives who requested raises for the department. The remaining officers decided to strike. In order to maintain safety in Boston, Governor Calvin Coolidge called out the National Guard to patrol city streets. Stating, "There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, anytime," he fired striking officers who tried to return to work, and hired replacements.

Coolidge became a national hero because of his handling of the strike; many believed he had saved Boston from anarchists. The Republicans nominated him as Harding's running mate in 1920; he became president upon Harding's death in 1923.

Note to teacher: Again, you may want to take a couple of minutes here to discuss the cartoon in this slide with the class. Ask them questions such as "Who do the figures represent?," "What is the significance of the caption?," and "What message is the artist trying to convey?"

Foreign Policy in the 1920s

- Washington Naval Conference
- Fordney-McCumber Tariff
- Dawes Plan
- Kellogg-Briand Pact



Coolidge, Hoover, and Kellogg (standing) pose with the negotiating commission for the Kellogg-Briand Pact

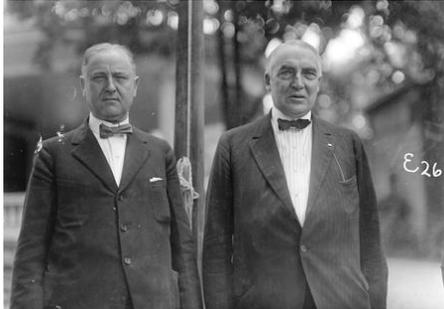
During the Republican presidencies of the 1920s, the U.S. and other countries made several attempts to lessen the chances of another war. At the time, a nation's military strength depended directly on the size of its navy. Representatives of nine nations met in 1921 at the Washington Naval Conference to conduct what amounted to disarmament talks. One agreement that emerged instituted a "5:5:3" ratio for the amount of tonnage of ships the U.S., Britain, Italy, Japan, and France could build. This pact, known as the Five Power Treaty, allowed the U.S. and Britain 500,000 tons each, Japan 300,000 tons, and France and Italy 175,000 tons each.

The Fordney-McCumber tariff raised rates on imported goods to 60 percent in an attempt to protect American industry. However, the tariff hurt Britain and France, both of which had intended to repay war loans from the U.S. by selling goods there. Meanwhile, Germany was dangerously close to defaulting on its reparations to the Allies, which the Allies hoped to use to pay off their own debts.

The problem of trying to collect war reparations from Germany led to the Dawes Plan. This allowed Germany to take out low-cost loans from several nations—including the U.S.—which it could then use to pay reparations; in essence, the United States would be repaying itself with its own money. The issue of repayment hurt relations between the U.S. and its allies: France and Britain believed the U.S. was reaping all the benefits of victory in WWI while not shouldering its fair share of the costs.

The Republican administrations sought to eliminate war as a instrument of national policy through the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Though 61 nations signed the pact, it ultimately proved ineffective without a way for signatories to enforce its terms.

Harding Administration Scandals



Harding with Attorney General Harry Daugherty (left), who resigned under corruption charges

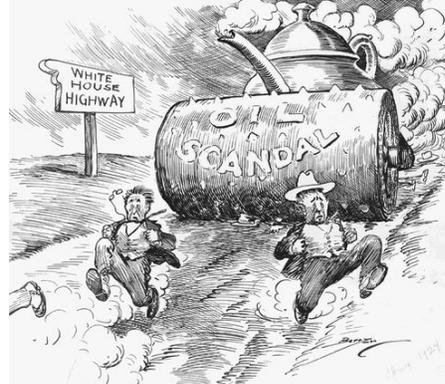
- “Ohio Gang”
- Harding too trusting and disconnected from complex issues
- Several advisers and Cabinet members deeply involved in corruption and graft

Though generally considered a decent man, President Harding had a great deal of difficulty staffing his administration with people not involved in criminal activity. When he took office in 1921, he brought with him a number of friends and advisers from his political career in Ohio. This coterie, known as the “Ohio Gang,” included Harry Daugherty, Albert B. Fall, and Charles R. Forbes, all of whom received high-level political appointments. In addition, Harding did not have much of a grip on the issues of the day, remarking to a friend, “I can’t make a...thing out of this tax problem. I listen to one side, and they seem right, and then...I talk to the other side and they seem just as right, and here I am where I started.” His disconnectedness from complex issues and tendency to trust the undeserving likely led to the major scandals that marked his administration.

Harding did manage to make some significant appointments to his Cabinet, including Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover, Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon, and Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes. However, he also appointed many men of lesser ability and even lower morals, including Veterans’ Bureau head Forbes, who was convicted of selling government hospital supplies to private businesses. His head of the Office of Alien Property also was convicted of bribery. Authorities implicated Attorney General Daugherty in several bribery and corruption scandals; while never convicted, he resigned in disgrace. Secretary of the Interior Fall was convicted of bribery in the Teapot Dome scandal, becoming the first Cabinet member ever sentenced to prison.

The Teapot Dome Scandal

- Naval oil reserve in Wyoming
- Interior Secretary Fall illegally sold reserves to private companies
- Fall found guilty of accepting bribes
- Harding died before scandal became public



A political cartoon depicting the scandal as a steamroller

Of the multiple Harding Administration scandals, probably the 1923 Teapot Dome scandal remains the best known. It involved the illegal leasing of two naval oil reserves (one in Teapot Dome, Wyoming; the other in Elk Grove, California) by Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall. According to subsequent investigations, Fall had convinced Secretary of the Navy Edwin Denby to give control of the oil fields to the Department of the Interior. Fall then sold the reserves to oilmen Harry F. Sinclair and Edward L. Doheny, keeping the money for himself.

When the *Wall Street Journal* noticed Fall suddenly spending large sums of money for personal reasons, it investigated and reported that Fall had sold the reserves illegally. However, Harding defended his Secretary of the Interior, stating that Fall had committed no wrongdoing. The Senate voted to look into the matter further. Soon after, Fall and Denby resigned their positions. The government tried Sinclair on charges of conspiracy, but the judge declared a mistrial and charged Sinclair with jury tampering when it emerged that he had hired a private detective to monitor the jurors. Sinclair was later sentenced to six months in jail. Authorities charged Fall with accepting bribes; he was convicted, sentenced to a year in prison, and fined \$100,000.

Harding died before the Senate could begin hearings, so the extent of any possible personal involvement or how the scandal would have affected his presidency remains unknown to historians, who generally rate his tenure in office a dismal failure.

Harding Dies, Coolidge Takes Office



Harding's body leaving the
White House after lying in state

- August 1923, in San Francisco
- Died before scandals broke; reputation soon destroyed
- Coolidge notified at his father's home
- His father, a notary public, swore him in

President Harding died suddenly in 1923 while returning from a trip to Alaska. His health had become a concern earlier that year, when he had a severe bout of influenza from which he had never fully recovered. In addition, he had nearly collapsed while giving a speech in Seattle earlier in the trip, complaining of violent cramps and indigestion. Doctors thought he had food poisoning and ordered him to San Francisco to rest and recuperate. There he suffered what was most likely a fatal heart attack. Some historians surmise that he had become aware of the extent of his associates' involvement in what emerged later as major scandals and that the stress of this contributed to his illness as well.

Since the scandals that would stain Harding's presidency had not yet surfaced, many mourned his death as the sudden loss of a great president. However, by the time his tomb was constructed in Marion, Ohio, the scandals had become public knowledge and were already diminishing his place in history. The formal dedication of his tomb did not occur until 1930, when the furor over the scandals had subsided.

At the time of Harding's death, Vice President Calvin Coolidge was visiting his father's home at Plymouth Notch, Vermont. A phone call in the middle of the night notified him, urging him to take the presidential oath of office as soon as possible to succeed the late president. Coolidge called Attorney General Daugherty to get the exact wording of the oath, which Coolidge's father (a licensed notary public) administered by the light of a kerosene lantern. Later, as insurance that he had officially assumed the presidency, a federal judge administered the oath in order to forestall any controversy that a father could not legally swear in his son as president.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think management tried to portray union members as communists during the steel strike? Was this approach effective? Why or why not?
2. Why did the U.S. want to limit the building of its and other nations' naval vessels during the 1920s? How successful was this plan? Explain.
3. Why do you think so many high-ranking members of the Harding Administration were involved in scandals? Who should take the blame, Harding or his appointees? Explain.

1. Above all, management wanted the steel mills to continue production, hence the hiring of strikebreakers to replace striking workers. The tide of anti-communist sentiment following the Russian Revolution had already made the public wary of possible communist infiltration. Since Russian communism considered workers the backbone of society, and labor unions derived their power to improve conditions for workers by joining them into a single cohesive group rather than as individuals, management hoped to destroy public support for the strike by linking strikers to a particularly suspect ideology. In the end, however, the public did side with the strikers, especially after hearing reports of horrible working conditions at the steel mills. Students will likely note that in this case, the approach was not effective.
2. In the early 1920s, a nation's military power depended on the strength of its navy. Limiting a nation's shipbuilding ability would limit its military power and hopefully its willingness to fight with other nations. By providing a ratio system to limit tonnage of ships built, the participants in the Washington Conference hoped to avoid another war while still essentially maintaining the status quo of world powers. Students will likely say that this plan did not work, since the nations involved in the conference all participated in WWII less than 20 years later.
3. The majority of the Harding Administration scandals involved members of the Ohio Gang, with whom Harding had much political experience. Harding knew these men well and probably assumed they could handle the posts he assigned them to. However, Harding wasn't particularly interested in (or able to understand) complex issues, so he likely gave his subordinates more autonomy than they deserved, trusting them to honestly fulfill their duties. Students may say that Harding's appointees abused their power as well as the president's trust in being involved in illicit activities, and that they should shoulder the blame. Others may say, however, that Harding must have (or should have) known about the quality of people he associated with and shouldn't have rewarded their personal loyalty to him with positions of power in the federal government; ultimately, then, the responsibility for the corruption rested with the president.

Coolidge as President

- Pro-business economic policies
- Continued high tariff rates
- Wanted to give businesses tax credits to spur growth
- “Silent Cal”



Coolidge signing a tax bill, 1926

President Coolidge adhered to many of the same Republican pro-business policies, and frequently made mention of his economic philosophy in his writings and speeches. His more-famous quotes bear this out: “The chief business of the American people is business,” and, “The man who builds a factory builds a temple—the man who works there worships there.” He continued Harding’s policy of high tariff rates and supported tax credits for businesses as a way of encouraging industrial growth and increasing employment, a forerunner to the “trickle-down” theory of economics that became popular more than half a century later.

Coolidge tended to be introspective and spoke relatively infrequently, hence his nickname “Silent Cal.” Once, a reporter who had bet another correspondent that he could get Coolidge to say more than two words asked the president to make a statement. Aware of the bet, Coolidge replied, “You lose.” The humorist Dorothy Parker, in reference to Coolidge, once remarked, “He must have been weaned on a pickle.”

The Election of 1924



John W. Davis

- Republicans nominated Coolidge
- Democrats ran John W. Davis
- La Follette named as Progressive candidate
- Coolidge won handily without the Southern vote



Robert M. La Follette

After serving the remainder of Harding's term, Coolidge ran in 1924 for his own four-year term. He easily received the Republican nomination and selected Charles G. Dawes as his running mate. The Democrats nominated West Virginia Congressman John W. Davis as their presidential candidate, with Charles W. Bryan (younger brother of former presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan) as his prospective vice president. Davis's conservative voting record in Congress led many liberal Democrats to leave the party, aligning with the Progressives led by Senator Robert M. La Follette.

Coolidge won the election easily, carrying most of the country except for the Democratic "Solid South." La Follette won only his home state of Wisconsin. Overall, Coolidge garnered 72 percent of the electoral vote and 54 percent of the popular vote.

Mellon's Economy



Andrew W. Mellon

- Served as Treasury Secretary under three presidents
- Sought to increase revenue and cut spending
- Pushed through substantial tax cuts
- Became unpopular at start of Depression

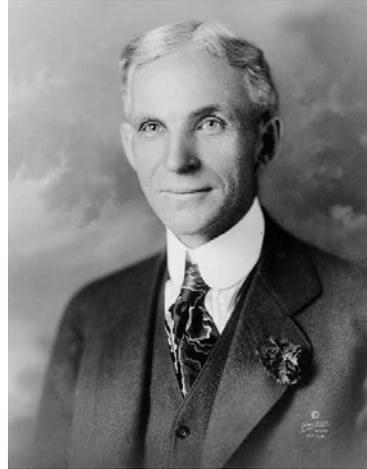
Andrew W. Mellon—the only person to serve as Secretary of the Treasury under three presidents (Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover)—had a great deal of influence on U.S. monetary policy during the 1920s. Under Mellon, the government took strides to increase revenue and cut spending, while at the same time providing substantial tax cuts for most income brackets.

Mellon believed that persons in higher tax brackets would be more likely to pay their fair share if tax rates were “reasonably” set. In Mellon’s view, by lowering taxes on businesses, the extra income would filter down to other sectors of the economy. While middle- and lower-class taxpayers also benefited from Mellon’s tax cuts, many of those taxpayers felt that Mellon’s economic policies favored the wealthy almost completely.

With the 1929 stock market crash and subsequent Great Depression, many blamed Mellon and his policies for the economic decline, and his popularity waned. Shortly before Franklin Roosevelt’s election in 1932, Mellon resigned to become U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain. FDR eliminated many of Mellon’s tax and budget cuts in order to help pay for his New Deal programs.

Henry Ford

- Introduced mass-production techniques to auto industry
- Could produce more cars for less money
- Anti-union
- Used thugs and spies to enforce plant discipline



Henry Ford

No person in the industry did more to make the automobile a necessity for most Americans than Henry Ford. In order to make automobiles affordable for the average person, he developed mass-production techniques that put the price of the Model T in reach of middle-class Americans. By 1925, Ford's assembly lines were turning out more than 9000 cars per day, and the cost of the vehicle had dropped below \$300 (around \$3700 today). The Model T worked well enough for the American public, but for many years the company only produced black cars (in Ford's words, "The customer can have a car painted any color as long as it is black"). In actuality, Ford painted the cars black because of its shorter drying time on the assembly line than any other color.

Quickly becoming a billionaire, Ford was revered as a giant of capitalism. Many, however, despised him for refusing to allow his workers to unionize and for employing thugs to enforce "plant discipline." Workers learned to use the "Ford whisper"—talking softly without moving one's lips—to make it harder for Ford's spies to overhear their conversations.

By the end of the 1920s, other manufacturers (especially General Motors) were selling comparable vehicles at lower prices. In 1927, Ford shut down his entire operation in order to retool for the Model A. His competitors overtook Ford in sales, and while he continued to make a great deal of money selling cars, he never regained the position of market superiority he once had.

The Assembly Line



Workers at individual stations on an assembly line at Ford Motor Company

- Became widespread due to its success in the auto industry
- Improved efficiency by breaking tasks into small steps
- Industry itself created specialized divisions
- Productivity increased dramatically

As demand for automobiles increased, Ford, General Motors, and other manufacturers looked for ways to provide enough supply to meet demand. These companies realized that they could produce many more automobiles in much less time by adopting the assembly line production method in their factories. To do this, manufacturers would first break a complex task (such as building an automobile) into several simpler, repetitive tasks. Therefore, an individual worker would need little specialized knowledge to do his job. If he were ill, quit, or was fired, management could easily put another worker at that station and continue with production.

As the success of the automobile assembly line became known, other industries followed suit and began to develop their own assembly lines. Similarly, many industries started to compartmentalize functions of the business itself into various departments, each with its own manager and dedicated team of employees.

By the end of the decade, industrial productivity had increased dramatically, more than 30 percent from its pre-1920 level. However, wages rose at a much less robust rate—only eight percent from the end of World War I. Many workers essentially became replaceable cogs in the great machinery of manufacturing, as many of the skills craftsmen had developed over the years practically died out.

“Welfare Capitalism”

- Many industrialists worried about creation of unions
- Created programs to give workers mostly non-wage benefits
- Ford’s “\$5 per day” plan
- Reduced absenteeism and employee turnover



Henry Ford standing between the first and ten millionth Fords produced, 1924

Many industrialists began to offer workers greater benefits to steer them away from the powerful lure of labor unions. In many relatively high-wage jobs, such as those in the automobile industry, management sought to placate workers by providing them with non-wage benefits, including health care, housing, in-house training, recreational sports teams, and social clubs. This approach became known as “welfare capitalism.” While some philanthropic rationale might have existed behind it, its purpose above all was to ensure workers did not quit, and that they did not form unions.

In order to purposely make his workers happy while keeping them on task, Henry Ford created what was known as the “\$5 per day” plan. Ford Motor Company increased the daily wage of workers to \$5, more than twice the going rate of most automotive companies. However, workers didn’t actually make \$5 per day: They received \$2.34 per day, plus \$2.66 if they could demonstrate that they lived a “good life.” The company assessed this through its Sociological Department, which investigated workers for qualities such as sobriety, thrift, “family values,” and “good morals.”

Following Ford’s example, many businesses began to offer higher pay, shorter workdays, and other benefits to workers. The practice of welfare capitalism greatly reduced absenteeism, as well as the rate of employee turnover. On the other hand, companies—Ford in particular—sometimes relied on spies to make sure that workers were living up to their end of the welfare-capitalist concept (i.e., that they weren’t trying to unionize).

The Automobile: Positive Effects



A typical Ford advertisement

- Created jobs; spawned related industries
- Tourism
- Sense of freedom
- Allowed rural people to connect with towns and cities
- Helped to create suburbs

The widespread acceptance of the automobile had a greater impact on American life than any other invention or innovation of the 1920s. Mass production by Ford and other automobile manufacturers made cars more affordable, and the ability to buy them on an installment plan put them in reach of most families.

The automobile not only created jobs for factory workers, but also gave rise to a number of related industries. Gas stations provided cars with essentials such as fuel, oil, and tires. The auto-glass and steel industries boomed. Drivers finding themselves far from home frequented fast-food restaurants and “motor hotels,” which soon became known simply as “motels.”

The automobile changed American society as well. Teenagers could now go on dates more or less unescorted. People could travel to places farther away more easily, allowing residents of rural areas to visit cities (and vice versa). Families could pile into the car and vacation throughout the country. Above all, the automobile gave a sense of freedom to their owners, who now could move about more quickly and essentially at will, rather than being tied to a train schedule and a designated route.

Whereas trails and dirt roads once crossed the American landscape, modern highways of crushed stone or asphalt took their place. Since people could drive to work, they could live farther away from densely populated urban areas, in less populated surrounding areas that became known as “suburbs.”

The Automobile: Negative Effects

- Increased accident rates
- Traffic jams
- Decline of public transportation systems in cities
- Air pollution from auto exhaust
- Cluttering of roadsides with billboards



An early 1920s automobile accident

Along with its many benefits, the automobile generated its fair share of problems. A major increase in the number of cars on the road resulted in the inevitable rise in the number of car accidents. Over the course of the decade, hundreds of Americans died; thousands suffered injuries.

In addition, people began to realize that city streets and highways could not effectively deal with all of the vehicles now traveling them. Traffic jams and gridlock became common in many American cities, with cars unable to move for hours during the so-called “rush hour.” Regardless of this increase in street traffic, the development of public transportation systems in many major cities began to drop off. Urbanites turned away from the scheduled, regular routes of streetcars, cable cars, and the like toward the perceived autonomy and convenience that cars represented.

Negatives also included certain byproducts of automobile usage: Many cities and communities saw a rise in air pollution due to the exhaust released by cars’ internal-combustion engines. Smog soon became a problem in many American cities. As populations became more mobile, advertising signs and billboards began to clutter the landscape.

Discussion Questions

1. What characteristics of Calvin Coolidge do you think helped make him an effective candidate for his own term as president? Explain.
2. From the results of the election of 1924, what conclusions can you make about the effectiveness of the Harding and Coolidge administrations? Why do you think the areas that voted for the Democrats or Progressives did so?
3. How did Henry Ford help make the automobile obtainable for so many more people? Why do you think the automobile essentially became a necessity in American life?

1. Most students would probably look at Coolidge's quiet manner and his lack of charisma as being good qualities for a 1920s-era president, given the success of Harding's campaign to restore "normalcy" to American life after WWI. Others may see Coolidge's handling of the Boston Police Strike as a sign of his overwhelming concern for public safety over the rights of workers, which might have appealed to voters who already associated workers' rights with communist tendencies.
2. Students may point to Coolidge's overwhelming victory as overall approval by the voters of the Republican administrations of the 1920s. Coolidge carried all states but Wisconsin and the South. Other students may perceive that Davis did not provide Coolidge with strong opposition, so some voters may have voted for Coolidge simply for a lack of an appealing alternative. La Follette, the Progressive candidate, won Wisconsin probably because he hailed from there; presumably a state that had elected him to the Senate would support him for president. The Democrats won the South—the "Solid South," for its reliability as a voting bloc—which had been a stronghold for the party since Reconstruction.
3. Ford figured out how to build reliable cars quickly through the use of the assembly line, which greatly lowered prices and boosted sales. Once the average family could afford an automobile, more wanted to buy one for its benefits to daily life: the automobile made people more mobile, allowing them to live in the suburbs and not in the shadow of factories or bustle of big cities, as well as giving them an opportunity to see more of the country. In addition, people in rural areas could connect with more people and visit or commute to work in a more urban environment.

Consumerism

- Economic boom due to mass production
- Increase in per capita income; cost of living still low
- Appliances
- Installment plan
- Rising demand for electricity



Consumer items from the 1920s

The advent of mass production sent corporate profits soaring. Many Americans now enjoyed a higher standard of living than ever before. Per capita income increased by nearly 35 percent in the 1920s, while the cost of living remained low. However, the fruits of the economic boom didn't spread to everyone: blue-collar workers saw their wages rise much less significantly than their white-collar counterparts.

With more money to spend, consumers could more easily buy luxury (or “big ticket”) items. The typical 1920s homeowner saw significant changes to their daily lives through the invention of modern appliances such as ranges, toasters, hair dryers, vacuum cleaners, washing machines, and other labor-saving devices that made chores easier and life more enjoyable for many.

However, many of these conveniences were relatively expensive. To more easily attract customers, manufacturers came up with the installment plan. Consumers could make a small down payment and pay off the balance in monthly installments, plus interest. While cheap credit made many goods affordable to many, it also created “paper profits,” which made it appear that companies earned much more money than they actually did.

The advent of alternating electric currents helped further the proliferation of appliances. Alternating currents could be transmitted more easily and more efficiently over long distances, which meant that small towns and suburban areas could also get cheap electric power. Only 14 percent of American homes had electricity in 1910; by 1930, the number had grown to 70 percent. However, many rural areas went without power until the New Deal's electrification program.

Advertising of the 1920s



An ad for Lux soap flakes typical 1920s magazine ads

- Bruce Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows*
- Color printing, glossy paper, radio, and TV
- Soap operas
- Brand recognition

To attract customers from the newly expanded pool of consumers, advertisers had to develop new techniques. With the advent of full-color, glossy-page magazines, “ad men” began to use colorful images, catchy slogans, and customer testimonials to sell their products. One of the best known advertising men of the 1920s, Bruce Barton, wrote a book titled *The Man Nobody Knows*, in which he called Jesus the first ad man as well as the “founder of modern business,” who “picked up 12 men from the bottom ranks, and forged them into an organization that conquered the world.”

Technology made advertising better able to market particular products. Color-press techniques made magazine advertisements more eye-catching and appealing. Also, both radio and print ads sported simple but easily remembered slogans, such those for Ivory soap’s “It Floats” (a reference to the soap’s lightness and purity) and Lucky Strike cigarettes’ “It’s Toasted” (about their purported lack of throat irritation or coughing). As radio gained popularity, radio stars became ad pitchmen. For example, *Amos and Andy* included ads for Rinso detergent interwoven into the plot. Other radio shows followed suit. Soon, advertisers including Procter and Gamble were producing daily serials called “soap operas.” Product identification also became a crucial element, leading to instantly recognizable product logos such as the Jantzen “Diving Girl” and the Pontiac “Indian Head.”

Middletown



Robert Lynd

- Robert and Helen Lynd
- 1924 sociological study of a “typical” American town
- Actually Muncie, Indiana
- Pioneered use of social surveys
- Studied impact of modern living on residents
- Follow-up study in 1935

In 1924, the husband-wife team of Robert and Helen Lynd began a comprehensive sociological study of an unnamed, “typical” American city. Though they did not mention the name of the city in their book *Middletown* (1929), the Lynds later revealed that they had used Muncie, Indiana (a town of roughly 35,000 in east central Indiana) for their study. The Lynds collected data about the residents of Muncie through the use of personal surveys. Using themes such as “Getting a Living,” “Making a Home,” “Training the Young,” “Using Leisure,” “Engaging in Religious Practices,” and “Engaging in Community Activities,” the Lynds gathered data in order to determine the impact of industrialization on Muncie by studying trends in the city from 1890 to 1924.

The study made several conclusions about the “average American town.” Americans, they said, had a strong national pride. Very many had labor-saving appliances and other luxury goods in their homes by 1924, including furnaces, running water, washing machines, and refrigerators. The automobile had a large impact on the morality of young Americans, in that they could interact essentially unchaperoned, and that their newfound mobility changed the concept of the Sabbath to the “Sunday holiday.” The Lynds also noted significant distinctions between the “working class” and the “business class,” suggesting that they in a sense made up different “tribes.” However, the introduction of labor-saving devices gave poorer people many of the same conveniences, making their lives more similar to the wealthy.

In 1935, the Lynds conducted a follow-up study, this time to measure the impact of the Great Depression on “Middletown.” In their second book, *Middletown in Transition*, they described residents as optimistic about the future, and not interested in revolutionary change.

Urban vs. Rural Life

- For the first time, urban dwellers outnumbered rural ones
- Ethnic and social differences
- Rural and urban dwellers clashed on issues such as religion and alcohol consumption



New York City in the 1920s

In the 1920s, for the first time more Americans lived in cities (at the time, areas of 2500 or more) than in rural areas. Fifty-four million out of a total population of 106 million claimed urban residence. More than 16 million lived in cities with 500,000 or more people. The trend continued through the decade, with more than 19 million moving to cities.

City life engendered significant changes in the lives of new residents. Fewer children worked because of compulsory education laws, and fewer women worked outside the home. Generally, middle-class women in the workforce worked in professional jobs and were married without children.

In general, rural dwellers described themselves as primarily white and Protestant, holding traditional moral and religious values. They viewed their counterparts in the cities as mostly immigrant and saw cities dominated by Catholics and Jews, as well as full of corruption. In contrast, city residents saw their rural counterparts as backwards “hicks.” Two of the biggest issues on which rural and city dwellers disagreed were fundamentalist religious beliefs and the legal consumption of alcohol. The conflict would continue throughout the decade.

Fundamentalism



A Fundamentalist service

- Refers to elements “fundamental to belief” in a religion
- Frequently dealt with literal interpretation of an inerrant Bible
- Tent shows and religious revivals

While many sought to lose themselves in the consumer society and prosperity of the 1920s, still others saw a need to return to older, simpler concepts of religion and basic morality. While the term “fundamentalism” originated in 1920, the ideas of the Fundamentalist movement actually had their origins in a series of Bible conferences that began in 1876. The movement flourished with the release of a 12-volume publication (later distilled to four volumes) called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of the Truth* (1909), which covered several basic tenets of Christian belief and sought to move away from more-liberal views that natural scientific phenomena could explain many of the events of the Bible. Instead, Fundamentalists believed in the literal interpretation of an inerrant Bible.

While Fundamentalism existed prevalently in the southern and western United States and thrived in rural areas, the original movement emerged from an urban setting. In areas where the movement flourished, tent shows and religious revivals celebrating Fundamentalist beliefs became common. Fundamentalist preachers such as Billy Sunday and Aimee Semple McPherson became national celebrities.

Fundamentalist Preachers

Billy Sunday



Aimee Semple
McPherson



Two of the most influential and charismatic preachers of the Fundamentalist movement were Billy Sunday and Aimee Semple McPherson. Both used flamboyant, theatrical sermons to entertain and educate their audiences.

Following his conversion to Fundamentalism, Sunday left his job as a professional baseball player to become a preacher. He led revival meetings in towns across the country on what was called the “Kerosene Circuit” because many of the towns he visited had no electricity. In his sermons, Sunday urged support for Republican political candidates and staunchly backed prohibition. Sunday saw his following decline in the late 1920s, and by the time he delivered his final sermon in 1935, he could draw only 44 people. He died in late 1935.

McPherson used techniques and props indicative of the entertainment industry (such as fighting a giant cutout of a gorilla representing the menace of evolution) and mass media to spread her message. By the mid-1920s, she had not only preached on the radio but also established her own radio station, becoming the first woman granted a broadcasting license. She eventually established and led the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel in Los Angeles, often delivering fiery, dramatic sermons that featured speaking in tongues and faith healing. In 1926, McPherson was the victim of an alleged abduction in which kidnappers demanded a \$500,000 ransom for her return. She turned up slightly more than a month later, although many concluded that the kidnapping had never occurred and that she had simply disappeared as a publicity stunt. McPherson died of a drug overdose in 1944.

Discussion Questions

1. How might the introduction of various home appliances have changed family life during the 1920s? Explain.
2. What role did advertising play in consumerism and the American economy of the 1920s?
3. Do you think the conclusions of the *Middletown* study were representative of life in a typical 1920s town? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think Fundamentalism found so wide an audience in the 1920s? What aspects of it might have made it so appealing?

1. Some students may note that labor-saving devices such as vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, or washing machines provided women more free time, allowing them to be more active in the community or have a job outside the home. In addition, some students may add that these appliances might have made it easier for other family members (husbands or children) to do much of the daily chores previously considered “woman’s work.”
2. Advertising became much more pervasive during the 1920s. Print ads evolved dramatically during the decade due to new printing techniques and design concepts, to the point that ad illustration practically became an art form. Since many could see ads in popular magazines or hear ad pitches on radio, the introduction of more advertising avenues made consumers more aware of certain goods, and the overall rise in disposable income made them more willing to buy.
3. Answers will vary, as students may disagree as to whether a town in the Midwest would have provided results representative of towns across the country. Students may suggest that data on religious affiliation or incomes, for example, might have been much different in other regions, such as the South.
4. Some people may have felt threatened by the rampant consumerism that emerged in the era, as well as disgusted with the various political scandals of the time, and may have sought refuge in the more stable world of religion. Perhaps some took Harding’s call for “normalcy” to heart and saw religion as a way to return to the basic values of American society.

Prohibition: Origins

- Origins in Jacksonian era
- Anti-Saloon League, Temperance League, Women's Christian Temperance Union
- Influence of WWI
- State and local prohibition laws
- The 18th Amendment (1920)



An 1874 cartoon about the Temperance League

While many think of Prohibition as simply a 1920s phenomenon, the movement actually had its roots in the early 19th century, as far back as the Jacksonian era. Groups such as the Anti-Saloon League, the Temperance League, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union sought to outlaw the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages as far back as the Gilded Age. During the Progressive Era, many reformers perceived a link between alcohol and many of the nation's social problems.

America's entry in World War I also helped fuel the trend towards Prohibition. Many saw the manufacture of alcoholic beverages as a waste of grain which could be used to feed civilian populations, or could be used to help feed doughboys in the field. In addition, many equated drinking with foreign populations—especially Germans, America's enemies in the war—and sheer patriotism helped reduce consumption in the U.S. The Lever Food and Fuel Control Act of 1917 prohibited the use of grain in manufacturing alcoholic beverages, and many state and local governments passed laws making their jurisdictions “dry” even before the 18th Amendment was ratified.

On January 29, 1920, the 18th Amendment went into effect, and national prohibition of alcohol became law.

The 18th Amendment



A newspaper announces ratification of the amendment

Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

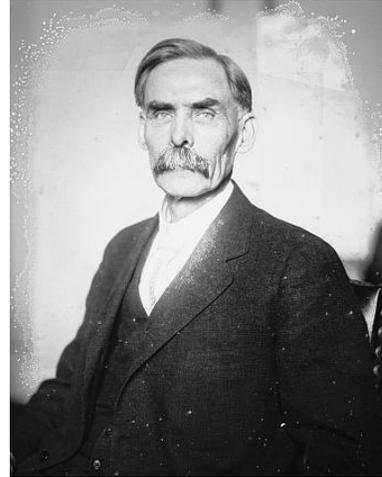
Congress first approved the 18th Amendment in 1917, and then sent it to the states for ratification. It reached the required two-thirds mark on January 16, 1919, when the state government of Nebraska passed it. Forty-six of 48 states eventually voted to ratify, with only Rhode Island and Connecticut voting against. It became law on January 29, 1920, one year after its ratification.

Many states and local government agencies had already established prohibition laws on their own, but the 18th Amendment instituted the first and only nationwide prohibition in America. The amendment forbade the sale, manufacture, transportation, or importation of alcoholic beverages. However, the amendment did not ban the consumption of alcoholic beverages, and establishments and individuals could still serve or enjoy liquor as long as they had a bill of sale proving that they had bought the spirits before the 18th Amendment took effect.

The 18th Amendment instituted Prohibition, but did not specify any means for enforcing it. However, it did allow federal and state governments to enact legislation for providing enforcement. In addition, for the first time in U.S. history, the text of the amendment specified a seven-year time limit for ratification. Most subsequent constitutional amendments would also include similar language.

The Volstead Act

- Also known as the “National Prohibition Act”
- Sponsored by Rep. Andrew Volstead
- Defined an “intoxicating liquor”
- Set penalties for violation of the act



Representative Andrew Volstead

While the 18th Amendment permitted Prohibition in 1920, it did not specify what constituted an “intoxicating liquor,” nor did it establish penalties for violations. The National Prohibition Act—more commonly known as the Volstead Act, after its sponsor, Representative Andrew Volstead—attempted to answer these questions.

According to the Volstead Act, any beverage that contained more than 0.5 percent alcohol violated the act. However, “liquors” that contained more than 0.5 percent alcohol not designed for human consumption were allowed. In addition, the act kept legal any alcohol used for medicinal purposes (prescribed by a physician and provided by a pharmacist), as well as for religious observances by ministers, priests, and rabbis.

Persons who violated the Volstead Act faced fines up to \$1000, as well as six months imprisonment. Persons convicted of subsequent violations could be fined up to \$2000 and sentenced up to five years imprisonment. The Volstead Act did not bar the consumption of alcoholic beverages purchased prior to ratification of the 18th Amendment. Soon after the Volstead Act became law, the Bureau of Internal Revenue legalized certain quantities of homemade alcohol stronger than 0.5 percent, stating that home brew was legal as long as it “cheered” and not “intoxicated.”

Speakeasies



Patrons bellying up to the bar for illegal intoxicants

- Establishments that sold illegal liquor
- Highly profitable
- “Blind pigs”
- Law enforcement often bribed

While Prohibition closed many saloons, breweries, and distilleries, those who still wanted to drink usually found a way to do so. Speakeasies were underground saloons which sold illegal liquor and frequently provided a place for people to drink, mingle, and listen to music. The term “speakeasy” had actually come into use before Prohibition, allegedly first used by a Pittsburgh woman who wanted to sell liquor without a license. When her customers wanted to buy more whiskey, she advised them to “speak easy.”

As Prohibition became less and less popular, many speakeasies not only provided alcohol, but served food and hosted live bands and floor shows. Some of the seedier establishments became known as “blind pigs.” These establishments provided a place to drink, and not much else; their operators would often charge admission for a lawful attraction (such as an animal exhibit) and “give” patrons drinks.

Owners of speakeasies ran the risk of arrest and punishment for violating state and federal law. However, the profits proved so great that many were willing to run the risk. Authorities arrested few speakeasy owners, since many of them bribed police and other law enforcement officers not to investigate their establishments, or to at least provide advance warning of an imminent raid.

Prohibition: Enforcement

- Bureau of Prohibition
- Originally a division of the Treasury Dept., later moved to Justice Dept.
- Enforcement proved nearly impossible
- Underfunded
- Use of alcohol for medicinal and religious purposes still legal



Plainclothes and uniformed officers posing with an illegal still

While many believed in Herbert Hoover's assessment of Prohibition as a "Noble Experiment," the government did not accurately predict the costs or effort needed for enforcement. The Volstead Act created the Prohibition Unit, devoted to enforcement as a division of what today is the IRS. By 1927, it had become the Bureau of Prohibition, an entity in the Treasury Department. Both versions of the organization indicated the government's approach to enforcement as a tax-evasion issue. In 1930, the Justice Department folded the bureau into the FBI. Originally, the government appropriated only about \$5 million for enforcement; estimates later ballooned to about \$300 million. At any rate, the government never had more than 2500 agents devoted to enforcing Prohibition.

However, some Prohibition agents had moderate success. New York agents Izzy Einstein and Moe Smith frequently used disguises to infiltrate bootlegging rings, at times dressing as husband and wife looking to buy illegally manufactured liquor.

In some instances, people found ways of legally skirting the Prohibition laws. Pharmacists, for example, could legally dispense medications based on alcohol. The consumption of sacramental wine increased by nearly one million gallons in Prohibition's first two years.

Al Capone



Capone's mugshot

- Chicago “furniture dealer”
- Headed the Chicago Outfit
- Powerful bootlegging empire
- Believed to have masterminded St. Valentine’s Day Massacre
- Eventually convicted of income-tax evasion

Perhaps no one person is more associated with the Prohibition era than Alfonse “Al” Capone. Although his business cards identified him as a Chicago furniture dealer, he actually headed an extremely lucrative organized-crime syndicate based around bootlegging (the illegal smuggling and sale of alcohol). By some estimates, his “business interests” grossed more than \$60 million a year.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1899, Capone started out as a member of a street gang led by Johnny Torrio. Capone later followed Torrio to Chicago, where they and others built up the organization that became known as the “Chicago Outfit.” Capone became boss after a rival gang seriously wounded Torrio in an assassination attempt. The Chicago Outfit soon became a major force under Capone, and its money bought him a large amount of political clout. However, after the 1929 “St. Valentine’s Day Massacre,” in which seven members of a rival gang were gunned down in a Chicago garage, Capone lost a lot of his support among government and law-enforcement officials because of the increased and very public violence. While Capone was in Florida at the time of the massacre, most attributed the murders to the Capone gang.

Law-enforcement officials could never pin Prohibition violations against Capone, but federal officials managed to convict Capone on charges of income-tax evasion in 1931. Sentenced to 11 years in federal prison, he was also fined \$50,000 as well as forced to pay \$215,000 plus interest in back taxes. While in prison, his health declined significantly due to late-stage syphilis. He served seven-and-a-half years of his sentence and was released for good behavior. Capone died of a heart attack in 1947.

St. Valentine's Day Massacre

- February 14, 1929
- Murder of seven members of the rival Moran gang
- Turned public support against organized crime
- Capone never directly implicated
- Prosecutors began to go after Capone



A Thompson submachine gun ("Tommy gun"), similar to those favored by 1920s gangsters

Of all of the gangland violence in 1920s Chicago, perhaps the bloodiest (and highest-profile) incident was the murder of seven members of the Moran Gang called the "St. Valentine's Day Massacre." "Bugs" Moran led a rival gang who provided the only real competition to Capone's control of the entire Chicago area.

While Capone was never directly linked to the murders, most believe that he masterminded the massacre. Four men burst into a Chicago garage that Moran used as a liquor distribution center; Moran himself was not present. Two of the gunmen were dressed as Chicago policemen; Moran's men likely believed they were being raided. The gunmen forced Moran's men against a wall in the garage and fired 90 bullets into them. Capone was in Florida at the time, and while many believed that he ordered the massacre, authorities filed no charges against him or any of his associates.

However, the carnage shocked the city of Chicago, and many of those who had previously tolerated gangland violence now saw it in a different light. Moran's tenure as a major gangland figure in Chicago ended. Prosecutors, once in awe of Capone's power in Chicago, began to aggressively investigate the gangster for illegal activities.

“The Untouchables”



Elliot Ness

- Special federal Prohibition-enforcement group in Chicago
- Led by Elliot Ness
- Group destroyed over two dozen breweries and distilleries
- Called “Untouchables” because of their incorruptibility
- Helped to secure indictments against Al Capone

Prohibition-era gangsters often made enough money from their operations to bribe corrupt law enforcement agents into ignoring their illegal activities. However, one group of federal agents in the Chicago area became known for their integrity and determination. Elliot Ness, an agent for the Bureau of Investigation (the forerunner of the FBI), hand-picked nine agents—bachelors with strong records and impeccable reputations—to fight Prohibition violators in the Chicago area. Using informants, wiretaps, tips, and surveillance, Ness’s agents shut down more than two dozen illegal breweries and distilleries in the Chicago area. According to Ness, one of the group’s targets was responsible for producing more than 20,000 gallons of alcohol per day.

The group’s reputation for being immune to graft or corruption led a *Chicago Tribune* reporter to begin calling them “the Untouchables.” Ness and his agents helped to gather enough evidence against Al Capone to indict him on charges of violating Prohibition. However, federal prosecutors decided they had a stronger case against Capone on tax-evasion charges and ultimately did not pursue the Prohibition indictments.

Prohibition: Successes and Failures

Successes:

- Per capita consumption of alcohol decreased
- Public drunkenness arrests declined
- Deaths from alcoholism dropped
- Fewer workers squandered paychecks on drinking

Failures:

- “Drys” insisted on abstinence, forcing many moderates to become lawbreakers
- Strict enforcement nearly impossible
- Skyrocketing enforcement costs
- Rise of organized crime
- Some poisoned by homemade liquor

While many might argue that Prohibition failed outright, it did have several positive results. Per capita consumption of alcohol dropped from 2.6 gallons per year in the years prior to World War I, to less than one gallon by the early 1930s. Arrests for public intoxication declined dramatically, and the number of deaths due to alcoholism dropped by 80 percent. In addition, fewer workers squandered their paychecks on liquor, and financial stresses on marriages and families were somewhat reduced.

However, the failures of the “Noble Experiment” far outweighed its successes. In many locations (especially big cities), liquor was available to anyone willing to pay for it. The “drys” (those in favor of Prohibition) forced many moderates into illegal behavior by demanding complete abstinence; many saw drinking beer and wine as an integral part of their culture and not an illegal act. The federal government greatly underestimated manpower and funding necessary for enforcement. At no time did the federal government have more than 2500 Prohibition agents nationwide. It had allocated \$5 million for enforcement costs, but later estimated those costs close to \$300 million. In New York, authorities arrested more than 7000 persons for violating the Volstead Act, but secured only 17 convictions. By 1925, several states had enacted laws forbidding local police to investigate Prohibition violations.

Another serious problem concerned the quality of illicit alcohol. In some instances it proved toxic, causing several cases of blindness or other related illnesses. By 1927, more than 50,000 people nationwide had died from drinking poisonous liquor.

Repeal of the 18th Amendment



A “wet” poses with an anti-Prohibition sign

- An election issue in 1928 and 1932
- Wickersham Commission
- 21st Amendment ratified in 1933
- Federal prohibition laws repealed
- State laws remained “local options”

Democrats realized in the late 1920s that Prohibition repeal could work as an election issue and incorporated it into their party platform. While the Republicans retained the White House in 1928, the following year’s stock market crash and onset of the Great Depression made repeal an even greater issue to many. Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 1932 Democratic nominee, promised to repeal the 18th Amendment if he became president.

By 1932, it became obvious to many that enforcement of Prohibition was at best ineffective. In order to study and make recommendations regarding the future of Prohibition, President Herbert Hoover established the National Committee on Law Observation and Enforcement, more commonly known as the “Wickersham Commission.” As the 11-member commission compiled its final report, many expected it to recommend repeal of the 18th Amendment. Instead, the Wickersham Commission recommended that the 18th Amendment remain, and that more aggressive and extensive law-enforcement efforts could force compliance.

Congress proposed the amendment shortly after FDR’s first inauguration, and enough states had ratified it by December to end national prohibition. However, the amendment allowed state laws to remain in force as the “local option,” in which a community or county can opt to be a “dry” area under local law. The 21st Amendment remains the only constitutional amendment that specifically repealed another amendment. In addition, it was the only amendment to be ratified by state conventions rather than by state legislatures. Its proponents likely saw conventions as bringing about a quicker result, though they may also have had concerns that conservatives in many state legislatures would defeat the amendment.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some reasons for Prohibition's popularity in the early 1920s?
2. In your view, would Prohibition's successes have been reason enough to continue it? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Prohibition led to the rise of organized crime during the 1920s?

1. While temperance had been a Progressive cause prior to the 1920s, several factors helped make it even more popular. Many supporters saw prohibition as a way to curb social problems associated with alcohol (such as fathers who spent their paychecks on liquor rather than supporting their families), and deaths due to alcoholism. Also, the existence of organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union indicated religious objections to alcohol, likely on "moral" grounds. During World War I, prohibition became associated with patriotism in that many saw alcohol as wasting grain that could be used to feed soldiers or civilian populations. Finally, some associated drinking with Germans, whom the U.S. had recently fought in WWI.
2. Many students will probably say that Prohibition's failures—the rise of organized crime, the money spent on ineffective enforcement, deaths due to poisonous alcohol, and the criminalization of an extremely common and mostly benign practice—outweighed its successes. On the other hand, some may cite statistics showing a decrease in alcohol use and a decline in the number of alcohol-related deaths and arrests for public intoxication as often-overlooked successes; they may also believe that Prohibition might have been successful had the government been more effective in enforcing it.
3. Most students will probably note that while crime syndicates existed long before Prohibition, there hadn't been as much demand for their services as in the 1920s. Alcohol had been a part of most people's lives (as opposed to hard drugs or gambling, which had a much smaller customer base), so more were willing to buy it regardless of the immediate costs; moreover, many seemed willing to tolerate the activities of organized crime if it ensured a steady supply of liquor.

The Scopes Trial: Origins

- Tennessee's Butler Act (1925) prohibited teaching Darwinian evolution
- ACLU offered to defend any teacher who violated the law
- Biology teacher John Scopes agreed to test the law
- Scopes taught evolution in class and was arrested



John T. Scopes

In rural Dayton, Tennessee, a biology teacher named John T. Scopes tested the prevailing Fundamentalist control of education in the state. Passed in 1925, Tennessee's Butler Act forbade the teaching of Darwinian evolution in state-funded schools. The American Civil Liberties Union looked to challenge this law in court and offered to defend any teacher willing to become the defendant in such a case. Scopes readily agreed, and reading aloud from a state-mandated textbook, said, "We have now learned that animal forms may be arranged so as to begin with the simple one-celled forms and culminate with a group that includes man himself." Shortly after teaching the lesson, authorities arrested Scopes and charged him with violating the Butler Act. His trial was scheduled in Dayton for July 1925.

Scopes: The Attorneys



Clarence Darrow

- William Jennings Bryan for the prosecution:
 - Former Secretary of State and three-time presidential candidate
 - “Expert witness” on the Bible
- Clarence Darrow for the defense:
 - Noted defense attorney
 - Staunch agnostic



William Jennings Bryan

As the date for Scopes’s trial neared, the World Christian Fundamentals Association invited William Jennings Bryan to serve as special prosecutor. Bryan had been Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson and a three-time Democratic candidate for president, and was a strict Fundamentalist and outspoken critic of evolution. Once Bryan had joined the prosecution, the ACLU secured the help of noted defense attorney Clarence Darrow to represent Scopes. Darrow, famous for his acceptance of controversial cases such as the previous year’s Leopold and Loeb murder case, had a reputation as a staunch agnostic.

As soon as it began, the trial blossomed into a national sensation and was covered by several major media outlets. Thousands flocked to Dayton to watch the action unfold. But as it progressed, it became less of an issue of a teacher’s rights than a fight over the roles of science and religion in society.

Scopes: The Trial



A scene from the trial

- Extensively covered by newspapers and radio
- Trial held on courthouse lawn
- Circus-like atmosphere; prosecution frequently the butt of jokes
- High point of trial occurred when Darrow questioned Bryan as “expert witness” on Bible

As the trial opened in June 1925, it quickly became the talk of the nation. News media from across the country sent reporters to cover the trial, and Chicago’s WGN radio provided on-air coverage of testimony. Noted writer and journalist H.L. Mencken also provided analysis of each day’s testimony for the *Baltimore Sun*.

The oppressive heat and the size of the crowd led to holding the trial on the courthouse lawn. The event took on a circus-like atmosphere: Locals set up lemonade stands to cater to thirsty witnesses and audience members. Trained chimpanzees were brought in to perform.

Correspondents and cartoonists tended to poke fun at and ridicule Bryan and the prosecution more frequently than Darrow and the defense. Mencken, for example, called the citizens of Dayton “hillbillies” and “peasants,” portraying Fundamentalists in a less than flattering light.

However, the high point of the trial occurred when Darrow called Bryan as an “expert witness” on the Bible. Darrow skillfully forced Bryan to admit under questioning that not everything in the Bible could be taken literally, severely damaging Bryan’s credibility.

Darrow Questions Bryan

DARROW: Do you claim that everything in the Bible should be literally interpreted?

BRYAN: I believe everything in the Bible should be accepted as it is given there. Some of the Bible is given illustratively; for instance, "Ye are the salt of the earth." I would not insist that man was actually salt, or that he had flesh of salt, but it is used in the sense of salt as saving God's people.

DARROW: Does the statement, "The morning and the evening were the first day," and, "The morning and the evening were the second day," mean anything to you?

BRYAN: I do not think it necessarily means a 24-hour day.

DARROW: You do not?

BRYAN: No.

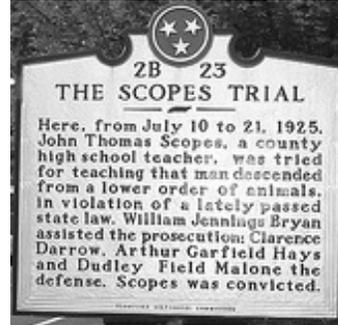
DARROW: What do you consider it to be?

BRYAN: I have not attempted to explain it. If you will take the second chapter—let me have the book. The fourth verse of the second chapter says, "Those are the generation of the heavens and of the earth, when they were erected in the day the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." The word "day" there in the very next chapter is used to describe a period. I do not see that there is necessity for considering the words, "the evening and the morning" as meaning necessarily a 24-hour day in the day when the Lord made the heavens and the earth.

In this famous exchange, Darrow forces Bryan to admit that not everything in the Bible can be taken literally. Here Bryan concedes that the "days" mentioned in the book of Genesis which describes the creation of the Earth may not have been actual 24-hour days.

Scopes: Verdict and Aftermath

- Trial lasted eight days
- Jury found Scopes guilty in nine minutes
- Scopes fined \$100
- Verdict overturned on technicality in 1927
- Butler Act repealed in 1967
- Supreme Court ruled laws against teaching evolution unconstitutional in 1968



A historical marker in Dayton, Tennessee

After eight days of testimony, the Scopes Trial ended in a guilty verdict. The jury took only nine minutes to find Scopes guilty of violating the Butler Act, and the judge imposed a fine of \$100.

After the verdict, Bryan remained in Tennessee, traveling hundreds of miles giving speeches. Five days after the end of the trial, however, Bryan died suddenly in his sleep, probably due to exhaustion from the strain of the trial as well as the summer heat.

In 1927, the Tennessee Supreme Court overturned Scopes' conviction on a technicality because the judge had set the sentence in the case (the \$100 fine) and not the jury; Tennessee law barred judges from levying fines over \$50. State authorities elected not to retry the case. The Butler Act remained state law in Tennessee until 1967, when the state legislature repealed it.

The U.S. Supreme Court in *Epperson v. Arkansas* (1968) ruled unconstitutional all state laws forbidding the teaching of evolution in schools for violating the First Amendment's establishment of religion clause.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the Scopes trial generated so much national attention?
2. What impact do you think the trial's publicity and its verdict had on Fundamentalism? Explain.

1. Many students will probably point to the idea that while Scopes was the nominal defendant, the trial really concerned the subservience of science to religion; many people likely had their own strong opinions on the subject. For some elsewhere in the country, the uproar in Dayton might have been their first exposure to Southern culture, and its novelty and unintentional humor (especially as communicated by journalists such as Mencken) made the trial seem like a show. Some students may also see the case as an issue of free speech or academic freedom, since the Fundamentalist-leaning Tennessee state government had passed the law that Scopes intentionally violated. Others may note that having well-known figures such as Darrow and Bryan squaring off created a sort of drama that people enjoyed watching.
2. While Scopes lost the case, many regarded the trial and verdict as the beginning of the end for Fundamentalism. Many of the national media figures who covered the trial ridiculed the Butler Act as well as the state of Tennessee (and essentially its culture). As a result, many likely saw (or began to see) Fundamentalism as a backwards, parochial set of beliefs. In addition, since the verdict was later overturned on a technicality, some might have nonetheless taken it as a sign Fundamentalism's weakness as a movement.

Flappers



1920s actress Louise Brooks poses in typical flapper attire

- Symbolic “new woman” of the 1920s
- Called “flappers” after their unbuckled galoshes
- Bobbed hair, makeup, short skirts
- Smoked and drank in public
- Frequently featured in 1920s literature, such as Fitzgerald

While many in America’s heartland clung to the idea of Fundamentalist religious views and support for Prohibition, still others sought to liberate themselves from Victorian-era ideas and culture. The “flapper” became emblematic of the “new woman” of the 1920s. The nickname became popular due to a 1920s-era fad in which women wore unbuckled galoshes, regardless of the weather conditions. In symbolic rebellion against the traditional culture and dress carried over from the late 19th century, flappers bobbed their hair, wore short skirts and makeup, and frequently smoked or drank in public. Some derided flappers as immature, but the literature of the time frequently included characters inspired by the flapper lifestyle, as in the work of F. Scott Fitzgerald.

The Double Standard

- Relationships between the sexes evolved
- Society's "double standard" gave men more sexual freedom than women
- Women frequently found themselves pulled between Victorian morals and 1920s lifestyles



While popular media of the 1920s tended to dramatize all young women as flappers or “flaming youth,” the reality was less radical than what many thought. Many Fundamentalist ministers and scholars spoke out against 1920s clothing and dancing, as well as women smoking or drinking in public.

As the decade progressed, dating and relations between the sexes evolved. Rather than dating specifically to find a spouse, men and women became more likely to date casually. However, American society enforced a sort of double standard, which allowed men greater sexual and moral freedom than women. Since women were held to a much different set of rules, they found themselves frequently torn between society's expectations and the much freer lifestyle of the 1920s.

Feminism in the 1920s



- More women worked outside the home
- Feminists worked for laws benefiting women
- Sought to gain voting rights
- Fought for an equal rights amendment

During the 1920s, women frequently sought to break free from traditional roles of earlier generations. Popular literature of the period frequently featured women who wore provocative clothing and engaged in behavior widely deemed scandalous. More women worked outside the home, and many also attended college. While fewer women worked in factory jobs, more were employed in occupations such as secretaries, teachers, and telephone operators. As women generally became more affluent, their disposable income prompted businesses to provide goods targeted towards women.

Many feminists sought to force Congress to pass legislation improving the lives of women, including laws providing for equal pay for equal work, and a constitutional amendment stating that “men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States” in order to obtain the right to vote. The amendment was defeated, but women turned to organizations dedicated to gaining equal rights.

The 19th Amendment

- Several states granted women suffrage in late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Constitutional amendment proposed in 1918
- Ratified in 1920
- Guarantees the right to vote regardless of gender



Cartoons such as this one highlighted the arguments of woman suffrage leaders

The feminist movement of the early 20th century had women's suffrage as one of its main goals. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several states in the western U.S. (including Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah) granted women the right to vote in state and local elections. Congress passed legislation in 1918 proposing a constitutional amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. President Woodrow Wilson threw his support behind the amendment. In August 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the amendment, making it the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Its wording specifically states that the right to vote shall not be denied or abridged because of sex.

Women and Politics



1920 magazine cover urging women to vote

- Male dominance of political parties
- Lack of female political candidates
- Lack of voting experience
- African American women kept from voting in the South
- Feminist groups had divergent goals

Although the 19th Amendment guaranteed women the right to vote, several factors kept women from becoming much of a viable political force during the 1920s. Males dominated both major parties, and frequently party platforms ignored or excluded the goals and interests of women. In addition, few women were nominated for office, and therefore women felt isolated from helping to form government policy.

Women, especially those who recently had immigrated to the U.S., had limited experience with democratic practices, including voting. Since they didn't understand the procedure, they frequently did not vote or even register to vote. In the South, many African American women experienced discrimination for being black as well as female. There, whites used literacy tests and poll taxes to deny African Americans of both sexes the right to vote; the Ku Klux Klan used terror and intimidation for the same purposes.

A split within the feminist movement constituted perhaps the most important reason for women's lack of political power in the 1920s. While some feminists demanded that women and men be treated equally under the law, others believed that women deserved special treatment and protection, such as laws that protected women from having to work nights. Since various factions could not agree on one specific course of action, the women's movement splintered, diluting the influence that a united front might have had.

Changing Family Life

- Birthrate declines due to birth control
- Marriages based more on love
- Technology made household labor easier; most household necessities “ready-made”
- Public agencies began to care for elderly
- New labor laws allowed children to stay in school



Margaret Sanger

The nation's birthrate declined as more and more women became familiar with birth control methods. Through the work of Margaret Sanger, who founded the American Birth Control League in 1921, doctors could discuss family planning with their patients.

As the decade continued, husbands and wives found themselves viewing each other as equals, and they frequently shared child-rearing duties and household chores. Men and women tended to marry more for love and companionship rather than for financial reasons or producing children. Some social scientists even went as far as suggesting a sort of trial marriage in which couples could test their relationship before becoming legally married. If they found themselves to be incompatible, laws would allow them to easily separate before starting a family.

In addition, technological innovations allowed wives to focus on other activities rather than housework. Stores sold “ready-made” clothes, which reduced the need for women to sew. Refrigeration, canned foods, and various appliances reduced the time needed for preparing meals.

For the first time, public programs were developed to benefit the elderly. While private charities and similar organizations made up the bulk of assistance to the elderly, some state agencies began to provide some care. Major federal assistance would not come about, however, until the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935.

Children found their lives dramatically changed as well. Parents began to use new “scientific” approaches to child rearing, and with the decline of child labor, children could spend more time in school or with their families. Progressive reforms in the early 20th century helped to reduce the number of working children to about half the rate in the period before the 1920s.

The “Great Migration” and the “New Negro”



Alain Locke

- Many blacks moved to Northern cities for better opportunities
- Tended to live in ghettos
- Many saw just as much discrimination in the North
- Alain Locke
- Described changes in attitudes and beliefs of African Americans

During the 1920s, attitudes of African Americans changed dramatically. Questioning their place as second-class citizens, many blacks began to actively pursue equal rights. In some instances, this led to an increase in discrimination by reactionary whites, as well as deadly race riots in cities such as Chicago.

Beginning around 1910, large numbers of blacks left the deep South and relocated to Northern cities in what is now called the “Great Migration.” They sought better lives in the North, where they expected to find more economic and social opportunities, as well as educational. However, many found their lives in Northern cities just as difficult as in the South. African Americans tended to live concentrated in ghettos. Frequently, schools for blacks were inferior to largely white schools, while segregation policies barred them from most public accommodations. However, African Americans managed to draw some benefits from living in their own communities. As they more fully exercised their voting rights, they tended to elect African Americans to city, state, and national offices. Significantly, blacks also began to develop a separate African American culture. In New York City, a collection of black literary, musical, and artistic talent blossomed into the Harlem Renaissance. In 1925, African American writer Alain Locke described the ideal of a “New Negro” who would rise from slavery and segregation to be recognized for creative talent.

The “Back to Africa” Movement



Marcus Garvey

- Marcus Garvey
- Founded Universal Negro Improvement Association
- Black separatism
- Many “mainstream” blacks saw Garvey as too flamboyant
- Black Star Line

One of the most visible black activists during the 1920s was Marcus Garvey. Born in Jamaica, he founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which promoted the idea of black separatism. Garvey saw the black race as superior to whites, and believed that in order to “work out [their] salvation,” blacks must return to Africa. Many mainstream African American leaders of the period saw Garvey as extremely flamboyant. He typically dressed in an elaborate braided uniform, wore a plumed hat, and drove a limousine. He also asserted that the Christian god was black. The following quotes illustrate his worldview:

- “Our success educationally, industrially and politically is based upon the protection of a nation founded by ourselves. And the nation can be nowhere else but in Africa.”
- “Africa for the Africans... at home and abroad.”
- “The Black skin is not a badge of shame, but rather a glorious symbol of national greatness.”

Garvey promoted the Black Star Line of steamships that would ferry African Americans back to their homeland. However, the Black Star Line went bankrupt in 1923, and Garvey was convicted for fraud and sentenced to prison. His concept of black separatism did not die out, since African American leaders of the later 20th century such as Malcolm X would also preach similar philosophies.

Discussion Questions

1. What elements of the flapper lifestyle did older Americans and Fundamentalists object to most? Is the flapper a fitting symbol of the 1920s as a whole? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think national women's suffrage became a reality during the 1920s? Why did women still hold little political power? Explain.

1. The fact that flappers tended to wear relatively revealing clothing instead of Victorian styles would be a concern, as well as the behavior many flappers displayed, such as smoking or drinking in public. Students may disagree as to whether the flapper accurately symbolizes the decade itself, or if she simply embodied typical rebellion against the older generations. For example, students may consider Fundamentalism as strong a movement in the decade as anything related to the "flaming youth" of the 20s.
2. Students may note that several states had already granted women the right to vote in state and local elections, and that once that barrier had fallen, national suffrage would soon follow. In addition, the feminist movement had slowly been evolving into a greater political force in the previous decade, and the major parties possibly saw advantages in having women vote. Most students will probably point out the splintering of the feminist movement as a major obstacle to achieving greater political power, and that for any movement to be successful, it must present a unified front. Some may mention women's general inexperience with voting, male domination of political parties, and the resulting lack of women candidates as reasons that women held so little power.

Discussion Questions (cont.)

3. What significant changes occurred to the family structure in the 1920s?
4. Do you think Marcus Garvey and his “Back to Africa” movement benefited African Americans in the 1920s? Why or why not?

3. Owing to the development of many household conveniences and appliances, women now found they had more free time to bond with their children as well as to become involved in outside social activities. In addition, couples tended to base marriages on romance and sexual attraction rather than financial security. Husbands and wives increasingly considered one another equal partners in the marriage, with men sharing in housework as well as in childcare.
4. Many students may feel that Garvey was too flamboyant a figure to be taken seriously by many mainstream blacks or by whites sympathetic to African American concerns. Others may look at the failure of the Black Star Line as well as his conviction for fraud as enough to have hurt the cause of blacks during the 1920s. Still others may see his views and writings as early examples of “black pride” that blossomed decades later into the civil rights movement.

The Advent of Radio

- Pittsburgh's KDKA began broadcasting in 1920
- More than 500 stations operating nationwide by 1922
- National Broadcasting Company formed in 1926
- News, music, sports, and live comedies and dramas



Broadcasting from the KDKA studios, 1920

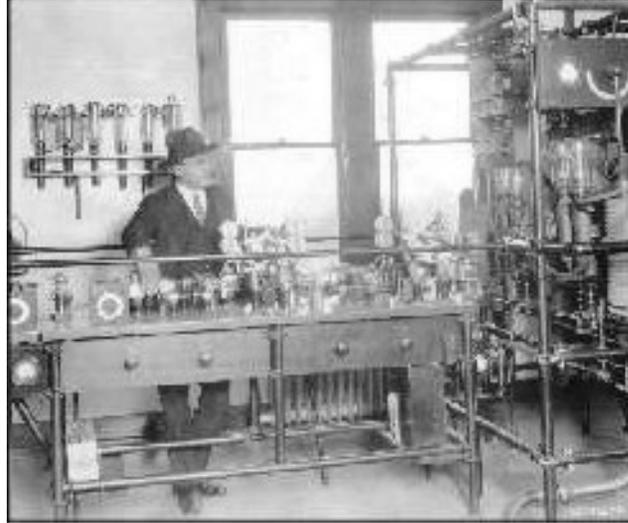
Radio became a staple of American life and culture in the 1920s. While some hobbyists had “wireless” units prior to World War I, radio soon became more mainstream when the first commercial radio station in the U.S.—Pittsburgh’s KDKA—began regular broadcasts in November 1920. Radio sales exploded as more and more stations began to operate. Within two years of KDKA’s first broadcast, the number of radio stations in the U.S. topped 500. The National Broadcasting Company, the first national radio network, began operations in 1926.

As radio grew in popularity, broadcasters developed more varied programming. Stations could air news reports practically as the events unfolded, and many radio stations turned to remote broadcasts of music, news, and sports events. Live radio shows grew in popularity as stations started to feature comedy, drama, and children’s programming. Popular shows during the 1920s included *Amos ‘n Andy*, *The Guy Lombardo Show*, and *The Rudy Vallee Show*.

The First Commercial Radio Broadcast



Westinghouse engineer Frank Conrad founded KDKA, the first radio station. Its first broadcast gave results of the 1920 presidential election.



Teacher's note: Play the sound clip of the first KDKA broadcast, which includes coverage of the 1920 presidential election. After students listen to the clip, ask them to speculate why the broadcast would have interested people at the time.

Student answers might include that radio allowed the listener to receive important information much faster; with election returns aired as they came in, for instance, the listener might have felt more connected to events; or perhaps knowing “instantly” how national, state, and local totals were changing up to the minute gave the program a feeling of urgency not unlike a horse race. Another reason that this broadcast (or any radio broadcast) would have interested persons involved the newness of the technology. With radio in its infancy, the number of broadcasts was quite limited, and people might have been interested in listening to nearly anything for the sheer novelty of it.

Radio Programming

- Early broadcasts featured live music
- By 1924, news events and election coverage
- Later, comedies, dramas, and sports
- Major corporations sponsored programming
- Federal regulation



Radio programming evolved nearly as quickly as the number of stations broadcasting a signal. At first, radio specialized in live events, such as symphony performances or dance music. As time went on, radio became an indispensable part of every home.

By 1924, radio was covering both the Republican and Democratic parties' national conventions from gavel to gavel, as well as that year's election coverage. Soon, however, advertisers discovered radio to be a great medium for advertising and soon began sponsoring shows, as well as producing their own programming to hawk their products.

Regular programming featured on radio in the late 1920s (and into the 1930s) included *Burns and Allen*, *The Happiness Boys*, *The Goldbergs*, *The Fleischmann Yeast Hour* (featuring Rudy Vallee), and *Easy Aces*. Perhaps the best-known radio show of the late 1920s was *Amos 'n Andy*, a comedy revolving around two black men who had moved from Georgia to Chicago in search of a better life. While the premise around the show revolved around African American characters, the actors who starred in the radio show were white.

By the late 1920s, the growing number of radio stations forced the federal government to assign radio frequencies to stations in order to ensure that each could broadcast without interference. By 1934, the government created the Federal Communications Commission to ensure that stations operated fairly and in the public interest.

Charles Lindbergh



Charles A. Lindbergh

- Wanted to win Orteig Prize for first nonstop transatlantic flight
- *Spirit of St. Louis*
- Flew solo from New York to Paris in 33½ hours
- International celebrity

While the 1920s would have many heroes in the areas of sports and entertainment, perhaps the era's greatest one was Charles A. Lindbergh, an airmail pilot who in 1927 became the first person to fly nonstop across the Atlantic Ocean.

Lindbergh was one of many fliers competing for the Orteig Prize, named after a French hotel owner who offered \$25,000 to the first person to complete the flight from New York to Paris. Unlike several European and American aviators who sought the prize, Lindbergh had almost no name recognition and limited commercial backing. In addition, Lindbergh was also the only person who planned to fly solo.

In May 1927, Lindbergh took off from New York's Roosevelt Field in his plane, the *Spirit of St. Louis*. Using dead-reckoning for his navigation system, and frequently flying just a few feet above the ocean waves in order to avoid wing icing, Lindbergh landed 33½ hours later at Le Bourget Field in Paris.

Lindbergh became an overnight sensation. Within a year, millions of Americans had seen Lindbergh and his plane as he barnstormed across the country. Applications for passenger plane licenses tripled before the end of 1927, and aviation became much more popular worldwide. However, as a very private person, Lindbergh had a difficult time dealing with the immense fame he'd earned.

Sports' "Golden Age"



Babe Ruth shakes hands with President Harding on Opening Day, 1921

- Baseball, football, and golf extremely popular
- Radio made professional sports accessible
- Pro athletes became heroes
- Endorsement deals

Americans' interest in professional sports exploded during the 1920s. Baseball, football, and golf enjoyed the greatest popularity, although others sports became big as well.

The advent of radio and its presence in many American homes had a major impact on professional sports. People who might not have been able (geographically or financially) to attend a sporting event such as a baseball game could listen to their teams play from Opening Day through the World Series. Sports stars such as Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and Red Grange became household names, and those who could travel to ballparks and arenas went to see these stars in person. Huge venues, such as New York's Yankee Stadium, overflowed with spectators.

The endorsement boom of the late 20th and early 21st centuries got its start in the 1920s. Advertisers latched on to athletes' popularity, paying professional sports heroes to put their names on products of all kinds, including breakfast cereals and footwear.

Movies



Foreground, from left: D.W. Griffith, Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, and Douglas Fairbanks

- Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*
- Enormous popularity
- Big budgets
- *The Jazz Singer*: the first sound film
- Concern about impact of movies on society

Movies continued to become more popular throughout the decade of the 1920s, due to advances in technology and more in-depth plots, as well as the glamorous stars who acted in these films. Prior to World War I, patrons visited theaters called “nickelodeons,” with admission of five cents (hence the name). The patron would view the film through an eyepiece. Films were generally short and covered a wide range of subjects, from dramas and comedies to boxing matches to wildlife footage, but usually did not meet with critical acclaim.

The release of D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* in 1915 not only increased the length of a feature film, but also marked an artistic leap forward, although many criticized Griffith's favorable treatment of Reconstruction and the Ku Klux Klan. By mid-decade, Hollywood was churning out feature films at a rapid pace. Productions costing more than a million dollars became common. At the same time, daily ticket sales in movie theaters topped \$10 million.

In 1927, movies entered the “sound age” with the release of Warner Brothers' *The Jazz Singer*, starring Al Jolson. Now, movies could include dialog, which not only allowed for more complex and nuanced stories but also helped the moviegoer understand the plot of the film more completely. However, some movie actors found their careers at an end when audiences found their voices didn't match their suave personalities on the silent screen.

Films at the time were subject to little regulation regarding content. A rating system did not yet exist, and films often explored themes such as sex and crime. Some critics charged movies with glorifying material aspects of life as well as damaging the morals of the young.

Some 1920s movie stars became enormously popular. Rudolf Valentino starred in several films as the archetypal “Latin Lover” of the 1920s, and when he died in 1927, some women committed suicide out of despair. Clara Bow, the best known female star of the era, was simply known as the “It girl” (“it” meaning sex appeal). Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. embodied the swashbuckling action hero. As the bumbling “Little Tramp,” Charlie Chaplin became possibly the greatest film star of the era.

Jazz

- Originated in New Orleans
- Roots in ragtime and blues
- Considered the only truly “American” music
- Frequently played in speakeasies; many saw it as corrupting youth



Louis “Satchmo” Armstrong, considered one of the finest jazz musicians of the era

While people enjoyed many types of music in 1920s, none captured the public’s attention like jazz. Many point to the roots of jazz in ragtime music, which had first appeared in the late 1800s. Blues music, which had emerged from the St. Louis and Memphis areas, also had an enormous influence on the development of jazz. African American musicians in New Orleans began to combine the instrumentation of marching bands with these forms and spread the new music throughout the South and into the North along the vaudeville circuit.

Many music historians look at jazz as the only truly American form of music, with its roots entirely in the United States (until later in its evolution, when Europeans added to its vocabulary). Many of the same experts consider trumpet player Louis Armstrong an extremely (if not the most) influential figure in jazz, while other musicians such as Edward “Duke” Ellington, Bix Beiderbecke, Joe “King” Oliver, Earl “Fatha” Hines, and Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton as prominent figures of the 1920s.

Jazz became popular with white audiences through its frequent presence in speakeasies. Since it tended to break tradition with much of the music that older Americans might have listened to, young people particularly enjoyed it; conservatives and Fundamentalists saw jazz as a corrupting influence on young people.

Literature



F. Scott Fitzgerald

- Many 1920s authors disillusioned by WWI
- The “Lost Generation”
- Ernest Hemingway
- F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Other authors included Wharton, Mencken, and Lewis

Events in the 1920s—such as the rise of Fundamentalism, Red Scare hysteria, and the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti—convinced many writers of the era that American society was corrupt and decrepit. These writers, nicknamed the “Lost Generation” by expatriate author Gertrude Stein, frequently captured the frustration and anger of the decade. Many of the Lost Generation saw themselves as aimless and wandering, disillusioned by the horrors of World War I that only shattered their belief that a person’s virtuous acts led to a good life. These authors believed that the best of the world’s youth had gone off to war with intentions of saving the world only to be killed, maimed, or mentally disabled.

The writer most closely identified with the Lost Generation was Ernest Hemingway, who left America and relocated to Paris during the 1920s. His work *The Sun Also Rises* concerned the essentially meaningless lives of American expatriates in Europe. His antiwar novel *A Farewell to Arms* emerged from his experiences in WWI. Hemingway’s style caused significant controversy in the 1920s. He tended to write in simple, direct sentences, and avoided the use of multiple adjectives. His writing evoked, rather than described, emotion.

The writer most identified with 1920s culture, however, was F. Scott Fitzgerald. He became famous in 1920 with the publication of *This Side of Paradise*, a novel which many saw as capturing the new spirit of 1920s youth. Fitzgerald and his stylish wife, Zelda, became social celebrities. His masterpiece, *The Great Gatsby*, was published in 1925 and highlighted the materialism and shallowness of 1920s society. *Gatsby*, while a critical success, did not sell as well as some of Fitzgerald’s earlier works. His career began to decline; chronic alcoholism and attendant health problems contributed to his death at 44.

Other famous authors of the 1920s included Edith Wharton (*The Age of Innocence*); H.L. Mencken, who frequently wrote cynical, satirical articles about Fundamentalists in his *American Mercury* magazine; and Sinclair Lewis, known for his novels *Babbitt* and *Elmer Gantry*.

The work of Mencken and Lewis highlighted the cynicism of the times. Both attacked society and culture of the times. Mencken wrote scathing critiques of fundamentalists and Prohibition. Lewis’s *Babbitt* highlighted what many believed was the typical businessman of the 1920s, without specific opinions and beliefs, but full of bluster.

The Harlem Renaissance

- Flourishing of African American musical, literary, and artistic talent
- Centered in black district of New York City
- Changed many Americans' perception of blacks
- Major figures included Hughes, Johnson, Hurston, Cullen, and McKay



Langston Hughes

While many African Americans found they still had to confront prejudice and discrimination after the “Great Migration” to Northern cities, some also found opportunities for meaningful and lasting artistic expression. Harlem—the Manhattan district home to the largest black community in the nation—became the center of the artistic world for African Americans. Historians refer to this flourishing of musical, literary, and artistic talent as the Harlem Renaissance.

While many white authors of the time felt alienated and disillusioned, most Harlem Renaissance artists did not. Langston Hughes, one of the best known authors of the Harlem Renaissance, wrote about his arrival in Harlem in 1921, “Harlem! I dropped my bags, took a deep breath, and felt happy again.” In addition to Hughes, several other black artists came to national prominence during the Harlem Renaissance, including James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, Countee Cullen, and Claude McKay.

The Harlem Renaissance had other important consequences as well. The work of these artists caused many white Americans to look at African Americans differently—not as impoverished and uneducated, but as worldly and accomplished. Many sociologists and psychologists, impressed with the quality of the work from Harlem, proposed that not heredity but economic issues kept blacks from achieving on the same level as whites.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did radio become the dominant medium of the 1920s?
2. Why do you think Charles Lindbergh became such a major celebrity? Why might many have seen him as more of a hero than the great athletes of the era?

1. First, radio provided varied programming for every member of the family, including news, sports, music, and entertainment, as well as giving families programs they could share. It also allowed families and individuals to stay at home and be entertained. Advances in technology made the units themselves affordable for most families. Federal regulation assigned broadcasters to specific frequencies, lowering the chances of interference and generally improving broadcast quality. Finally, major advertisers put money into various shows and series, allowing for bigger stars and better programming.
2. Put simply, Lindbergh pulled off an extremely dangerous feat and did it by himself, in an age when just getting into a plane seemed as an act of bravery. While he did fly across the Atlantic for monetary reward, he seemed more driven by the adventure of being the first to do something big; his shy, quiet demeanor made him seem even more deserving of the fame. Most people probably held him up over contemporary athletes because he literally risked his life, a more “heroic” act than any on a baseball diamond or football field.

Discussion Questions (cont)

3. What drove movies' popularity in the 1920s?
4. What influenced the trend of white American writers relocating to Europe? How did the tone of their work differ from the writers of the Harlem Renaissance?

3. Advances in technology made movies better and more accessible. Audiences no longer had to peer into nickelodeons and instead could watch films in large, palatial theaters. Directors such as D.W. Griffith shot longer films with more involved plots, but the introduction of the movie soundtrack in 1927 revolutionized filmmaking, bringing in nuance and complexity that silent films couldn't match.
4. Authors of the so-called Lost Generation railed against the perceived shallowness and commercialism of the era; the senseless carnage of WWI made them question the point of living a virtuous life. They rejected American culture and society, moving to Paris and other European cities in order to write in a manner they saw as less polluted by American life. Writers of the Harlem Renaissance, on the other hand, celebrated the opportunity for meaningful self-expression as if released from the burdens of American culture. While authors such as Hughes, Cullen, and Hurston didn't necessarily write about light subjects, they felt a freedom to create that the Lost Generation could only achieve overseas.

The Election of 1928



Herbert Hoover

- Coolidge chose not to run
- Republicans nominated Herbert Hoover
- Democrats ran Al Smith
- Many suspicious of Smith for being “big city” and Catholic
- Hoover landslide, but Smith proved Democrats still strong



Al Smith

Many expected President Calvin Coolidge to seek a second full term in 1928. However, Coolidge shocked Republicans when he chose not to run. With no incumbent, Republicans looked for another candidate to hold the White House. They chose Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover. Few candidates had his credentials: Not only had he served in Coolidge’s Cabinet, he had also assisted in the rebuilding of Europe after World War I. Known as a great leader and a humanitarian who had pulled himself up by his own bootstraps, Hoover had made a fortune as a mining engineer before entering public service.

The Democrats nominated New York Governor Al Smith. Many were doubtful of Smith’s chances, as a product of New York City’s Tammany Hall political machine and the first Catholic nominated for the presidency. As a “wet,” he supported the repeal of Prohibition.

Hoover won the election in a landslide. Some historians deny that Smith’s “big city” image or religious affiliation cost him the election, but rather that the “Coolidge prosperity” kept many voters squarely in the Republican column. However, As Hoover would find out after taking office, this prosperity was largely superficial. In addition, changes were sweeping the nation that would help the Democrats in upcoming elections: Many working-class voters came out for Smith and deserted the Republicans. Most major metropolitan areas, having been strongly for Coolidge in 1924, voted for Smith in 1928. Agricultural states also saw marked increases in Democratic votes.

Economic Problems

- Decline in agriculture, textiles, coal
- High tariffs and poor European economic policies
- Uneven distribution of wealth
- Overproduction
- Overuse of credit
- Overspeculation in real estate and stocks



An ad for real estate during the Florida land boom of the 1920s

Certain major industries declined during the 1920s, including agriculture, coal mining, and textiles. A great deal of the decade's industrial growth occurred in only a few industries. Three automobile companies accounted for 90 percent of all production; a small number of bankers controlled nearly 50 percent of the banking industry.

Money pouring out of Europe to repay debts from World War I left little at home to buy American-made goods; meanwhile, high tariffs on European imports kept much revenue from flowing back to Europe. American and European businesses suffered.

Although many viewed the 1920s as an "era of prosperity," the vast majority of people in America were middle class or poor. Since most of the real wealth in the country lay in the hands of only a few people, most citizens didn't have the cash to purchase goods. Coolidge only made the discrepancy worse by cutting taxes on the wealthy.

American industry produced much more than consumers could buy. Installment buying helped maintain demand, but at a high price. Many consumers overextended themselves and could not repay their debts. In addition, many companies' profits existed only on paper—not the money itself, merely the promise of payment.

Many believed that speculation in real estate—and especially in stocks—would result in easy money. Many investors in the stock market bought stock "on margin," in which they paid 10 percent of the stock's value and owed the other 90 percent on credit. If the stock continued to climb in value, the investor was safe. However, if the value of the stock declined the broker would make a "margin call," demanding payment for the rest of the amount owed. If the investor couldn't pay the other 90 percent, the broker would sell the stock, hoping to recoup his losses. As the market as a whole declined in value, this process became a vicious circle, further driving down stock prices.

The Stock Market Crash



A crowd gathers outside the New York Stock Exchange following the crash

- Panic started on October 24
- Biggest decline on October 29
- \$14 billion lost that day; \$30 billion that week
- A mostly steady decline until 1932
- Businesses began to lay off workers
- Many banks failed

The bubble finally burst in the fall of 1929. On October 24th, a market panic began called “Black Thursday.” Brokers frantically tried to unload shares of rapidly declining stocks, but the market righted itself to some extent by the end of the day as bankers poured millions into the market. On October 29—forever known as “Black Tuesday”—the bottom dropped out. In one day, the market lost \$14 billion in value; for the week, close to \$30 billion. Within six months, the market had lost nearly 85 percent of its value. Short periods of stability notwithstanding, the market continued to decline, and in July 1932, it closed at its lowest value since the 19th century.

Many companies lost a great deal of value as stocks collapsed had began to lay off much of their workforce, which raised the unemployment rate. Also, many banks had unwisely bought stocks on margin with much of their depositors’ money; when the crash occurred, a large number of banks failed, their depositors’ money gone.

The Depression Begins

- Hoover believed in limited government involvement
- Opposed direct aid in favor of charitable organizations
- “Trickle-down” economic theory
- Unemployment skyrocketed
- Economy continued to decline



Children in front of signs blaming Hoover for the country's economic woes

While the crash did not cause the Depression, it marked the end of the boom years of the 1920s. Hoover, in office only seven months at the time of the crash, found the country sinking into an economic calamity that he could not solve.

While his administration did provide some relief, Hoover believed in limited government involvement. He also opposed direct relief payments to individuals, feeling that it destroyed self-worth. Instead, he supported private relief efforts, such as those by churches and groups such as the American Red Cross.

In practical terms, Hoover believed in what would later be called “trickle-down economics,” in which money pumped into the “top” of the economy (e.g., industry, banks, railroads) would “trickle down” to the working class because of more research and development as well as increased salaries. Unfortunately, little of this money reached those most in need.

However, Hoover's actions were too little, and too late. By the time he left office, more than 25 percent of the American workforce was unemployed. More than 9000 banks had closed, losing more than \$2.5 billion in deposits. Clearly, more dramatic action would need to be taken in order to solve the problems of the deepening Great Depression.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Hoover win the election of 1928 so easily? What inroads against Republican dominance did the Democrats make?
2. What underlying economic problems did the nation face in the last years of the 1920s? Why do you think so many allowed these problems to worsen?
3. What caused the stock market to crash in 1929? What immediate impact did it have on the nation's economy?

1. Some students may note that Hoover's opponent in 1928, New York Governor Al Smith, symbolized much that mainstream America found suspicious: Smith came from New York's big-city political machine and was a Catholic, neither of which middle America found especially appealing. However, Hoover probably won due more to the overall prosperity of the age rather than anyone's overwhelming distaste for the Democratic nominee. The Democrats made strong inroads in most metropolitan areas, as well as in the farm belt and with working voters. Although Smith lost the election, the Democrats had shown they would be a force to be reckoned with in the 1930s and 1940s.
2. In many industries, only a few businesses controlled a large share of production. Essentially, a mere handful of people controlled a huge share of the country's wealth. Consumers found credit all too easy to get, leading many to purchase expensive items that they couldn't actually afford and businesses to report paper profits. Technological advances contributed to overproduction, and businesses couldn't sell their inventory. In addition, overspeculation in real estate and stocks inflated the value of land and securities; buying stock on margin also artificially raised stock prices. Some were unwilling to confront mounting economic problems; they had no immediate reason to suggest change as it might have adversely affected their wealth. Also, many Americans likely knew too little about economics to see the signs and react constructively.
3. Many investors panicked as they saw stock values decline in the fall of 1929. Unloading their stock caused prices to drop further. Brokers made margin calls; investors lost the stock they couldn't pay for, and the flood of stocks lowered demand and prices slipped even lower. Investors frantically sold their stock as it fell, and the cycle repeated. Most students will probably note that the crash did not have a significant immediate impact, but as time went on, businesses now short on cash had to lay off workers, and banks that had invested heavily in the market closed because they had lost a great deal of money as well. People who poured their life savings into stocks or real estate lost everything.



Essential Questions

- Why did the U.S. experience so much political and social change during the 1920s?
- Why did the 1920s see the emergence of the “consumer society”?
- What issues led to Prohibition in the 1920s, and what problems contributed to its failure?
- Why did many see the 1920s as a period of rebellion by American youth?
- What changes occurred to marriage and the American family structure in the 1920s?
- How did government economic policies during the 1920s lead to the Great Depression?

America at the Start of the Decade

- Victorious in World War I
- Treaty of Versailles defeated
- Period of isolationism
- Republican ascendancy

Returning WWI soldiers parading in Minneapolis

The Election of 1920



Warren G. Harding

- GOP nominated Ohio Sen. Warren G. Harding
- “Normalcy”
- Democrats ran Ohio Gov. James M. Cox
- Coolidge as GOP VP candidate
- FDR as Democratic VP candidate
- Republican landslide

Nativism

- Came out of various worries following WWI
- Prejudice against foreign-born people
- Evident in immigration quotas, rise of the Ku Klux Klan
- Also led to “Red Scare”



An anti-immigrant poster from California Senator James Phelan's campaign, 1920

The “Red Scare”



- Begun by Russia's Bolshevik Revolution (1917)
- Fear of communist revolution in the U.S.
- Heightened by 1919 anarchist bombings
- Passage of various sedition laws

The Palmer Raids

- U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer
- Sought to eliminate radical influence in the U.S.
- Appointed J. Edgar Hoover to lead investigations
- Many persons jailed or deported illegally
- Rights of many suspects violated



A. Mitchell Palmer

“The Case Against the ‘Reds’”

...It has been impossible in so short a space to review the entire menace of the internal revolution in this country as I know it, but this may serve to arouse the American citizen to its reality, its danger, and the great need of united effort to stamp it out, under our feet, if needs be. It is being done. The Department of Justice will pursue the attack of these "Reds" upon the Government of the United States with vigilance, and no alien, advocating the overthrow of existing law and order in this country, shall escape arrest and prompt deportation.

It is my belief that while they have stirred discontent in our midst, while they have caused irritating strikes, and while they have infected our social ideas with the disease of their own minds and their unclean morals we can get rid of them! and not until we have done so shall we have removed the menace of Bolshevism for good.

Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer
Forum, issue 63 (1920)

Immigration Quotas

- Emergency Quota Act (1921)
- Immigration Act of 1924
- Limited annual number of immigrants from a nation to 2% of number of immigrants living in the U.S. in 1890
- Immigration from most Asian nations stopped
- Some groups given preference over others



A cartoon satirizing the quota system

Sacco & Vanzetti



Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco

- Charged with robbery and murder
- Convicted on highly circumstantial evidence
- Sentenced to death
- Many protested convictions and sentence
- Both executed in 1927

Rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan

- Promoted “100% Americanism”
- Opposed Catholics, Jews, immigrants, unions, and socialists, as well as African Americans
- Membership swelled to nearly 4.5 million by 1924
- Leadership paid Klansmen to recruit new members



Dr. Hiram Wesley Evans, an Atlanta dentist, headed the resurgent KKK

From “The Ku Klux Klan Defends Americanism”

“First in the Klansman’s mind is patriotism—America for Americans. He believes religiously that a betrayal of Americanism or the American race is treason to the most sacred of trusts, a trust from his fathers and a trust from God. He believes, too, that Americanism can only be achieved if the pioneer stock is kept pure...”

The second word in the Klansman’s trilogy is ‘white.’ The white race must be supreme, not only in America but in the world. This is equally undebatable, except on the ground that the races might live together, each with full regard for the rights and interests of others, and that those rights and interests would never conflict.

The third of the Klan principles is that Protestantism must be supreme; that Rome shall not rule America. The Klansman believes this is not merely because he is a Protestant, nor even because the Colonies that are now our nation were settled for the purpose of wresting America from the control of Rome and establishing a land of free conscience. He believes it also because Protestantism is an essential part of Americanism; without it America could never have been created and without it she cannot go forward. Roman rule would kill it.”

Dr. Hiram Wesley Evans, in *North American Review*, March–May 1926

The Klan in Indiana

- Grand Dragon D.C. Stephenson
- Helped the Klan control state politics and government
- Boasted, “I am the law in Indiana”
- Klan lost influence after his conviction for rape and murder



Klan Grand Dragon D.C. Stephenson poses for his mugshot upon beginning a sentence at the Indiana State Prison for rape and murder

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Harding win the election of 1920 in a landslide? How did his election reflect changing American values and ideals?
2. Why did the Red Scare take hold in the U.S. in the years following World War I? What events helped to sustain it?

Discussion Questions (continued)

3. Why did the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti generate such protest in the U.S. and around the world? In your view, did they get a fair trial? Why or why not?
4. Why might the Ku Klux Klan have enjoyed such popularity all over the country (i.e., not just in the South) in the 1920s? Why do you think many did not oppose the Klan and its policies at the time?

An Era of Strikes



State troopers stand ready to confront striking workers outside a mill in Pennsylvania, 1919

- Strikes not permitted during World War I
- Several strikes occurred soon after
- Nationwide steel strike
- Coal strike
- Some management officials tried to portray strikers as revolutionaries
- Labor unions in decline

The Boston Police Strike



Copyright, 1919, by Edith T. Bachman.
HE GIVES AID AND COMFORT TO THE ENEMIES OF SOCIETY.

- Boston police sought raise
- Officers' representatives fired; police went on strike
- Governor Calvin Coolidge called out National Guard to patrol city
- Coolidge became famous; nominee for VP in 1920

Foreign Policy in the 1920s

- Washington Naval Conference
- Fordney-McCumber Tariff
- Dawes Plan
- Kellogg-Briand Pact



Coolidge, Hoover, and Kellogg (standing) pose with the negotiating commission for the Kellogg-Briand Pact

Harding Administration Scandals



Harding with Attorney General Harry Daugherty (left), who resigned under corruption charges

- “Ohio Gang”
- Harding too trusting and disconnected from complex issues
- Several advisers and Cabinet members deeply involved in corruption and graft

The Teapot Dome Scandal

- Naval oil reserve in Wyoming
- Interior Secretary Fall illegally sold reserves to private companies
- Fall found guilty of accepting bribes
- Harding died before scandal became public



A political cartoon depicting the scandal as a steamroller

Harding Dies, Coolidge Takes Office



Harding's body leaving the White House after lying in state

- August 1923, in San Francisco
- Died before scandals broke; reputation soon destroyed
- Coolidge notified at his father's home
- His father, a notary public, swore him in

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think management tried to portray union members as communists during the steel strike? Was this approach effective? Why or why not?
2. Why did the U.S. want to limit the building of its and other nations' naval vessels during the 1920s? How successful was this plan? Explain.
3. Why do you think so many high-ranking members of the Harding Administration were involved in scandals? Who should take the blame, Harding or his appointees? Explain.

Coolidge as President

- Pro-business economic policies
- Continued high tariff rates
- Wanted to give businesses tax credits to spur growth
- "Silent Cal"



Coolidge signing a tax bill, 1926

The Election of 1924



John W. Davis

- Republicans nominated Coolidge
- Democrats ran John W. Davis
- La Follette named as Progressive candidate
- Coolidge won handily without the Southern vote



Robert M. La Follette

Mellon's Economy

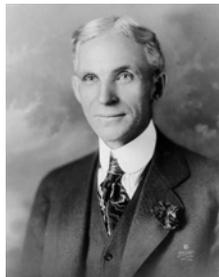


Andrew W. Mellon

- Served as Treasury Secretary under three presidents
- Sought to increase revenue and cut spending
- Pushed through substantial tax cuts
- Became unpopular at start of Depression

Henry Ford

- Introduced mass-production techniques to auto industry
- Could produce more cars for less money
- Anti-union
- Used thugs and spies to enforce plant discipline



Henry Ford

The Assembly Line



Workers at individual stations on an assembly line at Ford Motor Company

- Became widespread due to its success in the auto industry
- Improved efficiency by breaking tasks into small steps
- Industry itself created specialized divisions
- Productivity increased dramatically

“Welfare Capitalism”

- Many industrialists worried about creation of unions
- Created programs to give workers mostly non-wage benefits
- Ford’s “\$5 per day” plan
- Reduced absenteeism and employee turnover



Henry Ford standing between the first and ten millionth Fords produced, 1924

The Automobile: Positive Effects



A typical Ford advertisement

- Created jobs; spawned related industries
- Tourism
- Sense of freedom
- Allowed rural people to connect with towns and cities
- Helped to create suburbs

The Automobile: Negative Effects

- Increased accident rates
- Traffic jams
- Decline of public transportation systems in cities
- Air pollution from auto exhaust
- Cluttering of roadsides with billboards



An early 1920s automobile accident

Discussion Questions

1. What characteristics of Calvin Coolidge do you think helped make him an effective candidate for his own term as president? Explain.
2. From the results of the election of 1924, what conclusions can you make about the effectiveness of the Harding and Coolidge administrations? Why do you think the areas that voted for the Democrats or Progressives did so?
3. How did Henry Ford help make the automobile obtainable for so many more people? Why do you think the automobile essentially became a necessity in American life?

Consumerism

- Economic boom due to mass production
- Increase in per capita income; cost of living still low
- Appliances
- Installment plan
- Rising demand for electricity



Consumer items from the 1920s

Advertising of the 1920s



An ad for Lux soap flakes typical 1920s magazine ads

- Bruce Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows*
- Color printing, glossy paper, radio, and TV
- Soap operas
- Brand recognition

Middletown



Robert Lynd

- Robert and Helen Lynd
- 1924 sociological study of a “typical” American town
- Actually Muncie, Indiana
- Pioneered use of social surveys
- Studied impact of modern living on residents
- Follow-up study in 1935

Urban vs. Rural Life

- For the first time, urban dwellers outnumbered rural ones
- Ethnic and social differences
- Rural and urban dwellers clashed on issues such as religion and alcohol consumption



New York City in the 1920s

Fundamentalism



A Fundamentalist service

- Refers to elements “fundamental to belief” in a religion
- Frequently dealt with literal interpretation of an inerrant Bible
- Tent shows and religious revivals

Fundamentalist Preachers

Billy Sunday



Aimee Semple McPherson



Discussion Questions

1. How might the introduction of various home appliances have changed family life during the 1920s? Explain.
2. What role did advertising play in consumerism and the American economy of the 1920s?
3. Do you think the conclusions of the *Middletown* study were representative of life in a typical 1920s town? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think Fundamentalism found so wide an audience in the 1920s? What aspects of it might have made it so appealing?

Prohibition: Origins

- Origins in Jacksonian era
- Anti-Saloon League, Temperance League, Women's Christian Temperance Union
- Influence of WWI
- State and local prohibition laws
- The 18th Amendment (1920)



An 1874 cartoon about the Temperance League

The 18th Amendment



A newspaper announces ratification of the amendment

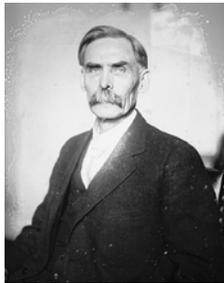
Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

The Volstead Act

- Also known as the “National Prohibition Act”
- Sponsored by Rep. Andrew Volstead
- Defined an “intoxicating liquor”
- Set penalties for violation of the act



Representative Andrew Volstead

Speakeasies



Patrons bellying up to the bar for illegal intoxicants

- Establishments that sold illegal liquor
- Highly profitable
- “Blind pigs”
- Law enforcement often bribed

Prohibition: Enforcement

- Bureau of Prohibition
- Originally a division of the Treasury Dept., later moved to Justice Dept.
- Enforcement proved nearly impossible
- Underfunded
- Use of alcohol for medicinal and religious purposes still legal



Plainclothes and uniformed officers posing with an illegal still

Al Capone



Capone's mugshot

- Chicago "furniture dealer"
- Headed the Chicago Outfit
- Powerful bootlegging empire
- Believed to have masterminded St. Valentine's Day Massacre
- Eventually convicted of income-tax evasion

St. Valentine's Day Massacre

- February 14, 1929
- Murder of seven members of the rival Moran gang
- Turned public support against organized crime
- Capone never directly implicated
- Prosecutors began to go after Capone



A Thompson submachine gun ("Tommy gun"), similar to those favored by 1920s gangsters

"The Untouchables"



Elliot Ness

- Special federal Prohibition-enforcement group in Chicago
- Led by Elliot Ness
- Group destroyed over two dozen breweries and distilleries
- Called "Untouchables" because of their incorruptibility
- Helped to secure indictments against Al Capone

Prohibition: Successes and Failures

Successes:

- Per capita consumption of alcohol decreased
- Public drunkenness arrests declined
- Deaths from alcoholism dropped
- Fewer workers squandered paychecks on drinking

Failures:

- "Drys" insisted on abstinence, forcing many moderates to become lawbreakers
- Strict enforcement nearly impossible
- Skyrocketing enforcement costs
- Rise of organized crime
- Some poisoned by homemade liquor

Repeal of the 18th Amendment



A "wet" poses with an anti-Prohibition sign

- An election issue in 1928 and 1932
- Wickersham Commission
- 21st Amendment ratified in 1933
- Federal prohibition laws repealed
- State laws remained "local options"

Discussion Questions

1. What are some reasons for Prohibition's popularity in the early 1920s?
2. In your view, would Prohibition's successes have been reason enough to continue it? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Prohibition led to the rise of organized crime during the 1920s?

The Scopes Trial: Origins

- Tennessee's Butler Act (1925) prohibited teaching Darwinian evolution
- ACLU offered to defend any teacher who violated the law
- Biology teacher John Scopes agreed to test the law
- Scopes taught evolution in class and was arrested



John T. Scopes

Scopes: The Attorneys



Clarence Darrow

- William Jennings Bryan for the prosecution:
 - Former Secretary of State and three-time presidential candidate
 - "Expert witness" on the Bible
- Clarence Darrow for the defense:
 - Noted defense attorney
 - Staunch agnostic



William Jennings Bryan

Scopes: The Trial



A scene from the trial

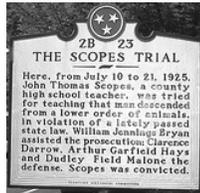
- Extensively covered by newspapers and radio
- Trial held on courthouse lawn
- Circus-like atmosphere; prosecution frequently the butt of jokes
- High point of trial occurred when Darrow questioned Bryan as “expert witness” on Bible

Darrow Questions Bryan

DARROW: Do you claim that everything in the Bible should be literally interpreted?
BRYAN: I believe everything in the Bible should be accepted as it is given there. Some of the Bible is given illustratively; for instance, “Ye are the salt of the earth.” I would not insist that man was actually salt, or that he had flesh of salt, but it is used in the sense of salt as saving God’s people.
DARROW: Does the statement, “The morning and the evening were the first day,” and “The morning and the evening were the second day,” mean anything to you?
BRYAN: I do not think it necessarily means a 24-hour day.
DARROW: You do not?
BRYAN: No.
DARROW: What do you consider it to be?
BRYAN: I have not attempted to explain it. If you will take the second chapter—let me have the book. The fourth verse of the second chapter says, “Those are the generation of the heavens and of the earth, when they were erected in the day the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.” The word “day” there in the very next chapter is used to describe a period. I do not see that there is necessity for considering the words, “the evening and the morning” as meaning necessarily a 24-hour day in the day when the Lord made the heavens and the earth.

Scopes: Verdict and Aftermath

- Trial lasted eight days
- Jury found Scopes guilty in nine minutes
- Scopes fined \$100
- Verdict overturned on technicality in 1927
- Butler Act repealed in 1967
- Supreme Court ruled laws against teaching evolution unconstitutional in 1968



A historical marker in Dayton, Tennessee

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the Scopes trial generated so much national attention?
2. What impact do you think the trial's publicity and its verdict had on Fundamentalism? Explain.

Flappers



1920s actress Louise Brooks poses in typical flapper attire

- Symbolic “new woman” of the 1920s
- Called “flappers” after their unbuckled galoshes
- Bobbed hair, makeup, short skirts
- Smoked and drank in public
- Frequently featured in 1920s literature, such as Fitzgerald

The Double Standard

- Relationships between the sexes evolved
- Society's “double standard” gave men more sexual freedom than women
- Women frequently found themselves pulled between Victorian morals and 1920s lifestyles



Feminism in the 1920s



- More women worked outside the home
- Feminists worked for laws benefiting women
- Sought to gain voting rights
- Fought for an equal rights amendment

The 19th Amendment

- Several states granted women suffrage in late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Constitutional amendment proposed in 1918
- Ratified in 1920
- Guarantees the right to vote regardless of gender



Cartoons such as this one highlighted the arguments of woman suffrage leaders

Women and Politics



1920 magazine cover urging women to vote

- Male dominance of political parties
- Lack of female political candidates
- Lack of voting experience
- African American women kept from voting in the South
- Feminist groups had divergent goals

Changing Family Life

- Birthrate declines due to birth control
- Marriages based more on love
- Technology made household labor easier; most household necessities “ready-made”
- Public agencies began to care for elderly
- New labor laws allowed children to stay in school



Margaret Sanger

The “Great Migration” and the “New Negro”



Alain Locke

- Many blacks moved to Northern cities for better opportunities
- Tended to live in ghettos
- Many saw just as much discrimination in the North
- Alain Locke
- Described changes in attitudes and beliefs of African Americans

The “Back to Africa” Movement



Marcus Garvey

- Marcus Garvey
- Founded Universal Negro Improvement Association
- Black separatism
- Many “mainstream” blacks saw Garvey as too flamboyant
- Black Star Line

Discussion Questions

1. What elements of the flapper lifestyle did older Americans and Fundamentalists object to most? Is the flapper a fitting symbol of the 1920s as a whole? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think national women's suffrage became a reality during the 1920s? Why did women still hold little political power? Explain.

Discussion Questions (cont.)

3. What significant changes occurred to the family structure in the 1920s?
4. Do you think Marcus Garvey and his "Back to Africa" movement benefited African Americans in the 1920s? Why or why not?

The Advent of Radio

- Pittsburgh's KDKA began broadcasting in 1920
- More than 500 stations operating nationwide by 1922
- National Broadcasting Company formed in 1926
- News, music, sports, and live comedies and dramas

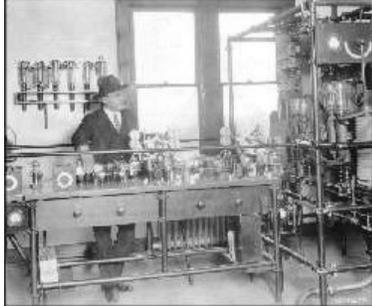


Broadcasting from the KDKA studios, 1920

The First Commercial Radio Broadcast



Westinghouse engineer Frank Conrad founded KDKA, the first radio station. Its first broadcast gave results of the 1920 presidential election.



Radio Programming

- Early broadcasts featured live music
- By 1924, news events and election coverage
- Later, comedies, dramas, and sports
- Major corporations sponsored programming
- Federal regulation



Charles Lindbergh



Charles A. Lindbergh

- Wanted to win Orteig Prize for first nonstop transatlantic flight
- *Spirit of St. Louis*
- Flew solo from New York to Paris in 33½ hours
- International celebrity

Sports' "Golden Age"



Babe Ruth shakes hands with President Harding on Opening Day, 1921

- Baseball, football, and golf extremely popular
- Radio made professional sports accessible
- Pro athletes became heroes
- Endorsement deals

Movies



Foreground, from left: D.W. Griffith, Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, and Douglas Fairbanks

- Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*
- Enormous popularity
- Big budgets
- *The Jazz Singer*: the first sound film
- Concern about impact of movies on society

Jazz

- Originated in New Orleans
- Roots in ragtime and blues
- Considered the only truly "American" music
- Frequently played in speakeasies; many saw it as corrupting youth



Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, considered one of the finest jazz musicians of the era

Literature



F. Scott Fitzgerald

- Many 1920s authors disillusioned by WWI
- The “Lost Generation”
- Ernest Hemingway
- F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Other authors included Wharton, Mencken, and Lewis

The Harlem Renaissance

- Flourishing of African American musical, literary, and artistic talent
- Centered in black district of New York City
- Changed many Americans’ perception of blacks
- Major figures included Hughes, Johnson, Hurston, Cullen, and McKay



Langston Hughes

Discussion Questions

1. Why did radio become the dominant medium of the 1920s?
2. Why do you think Charles Lindbergh became such a major celebrity? Why might many have seen him as more of a hero than the great athletes of the era?

Discussion Questions (cont)

3. What drove movies' popularity in the 1920s?
4. What influenced the trend of white American writers relocating to Europe? How did the tone of their work differ from the writers of the Harlem Renaissance?

The Election of 1928



Herbert Hoover

- Coolidge chose not to run
- Republicans nominated Herbert Hoover
- Democrats ran Al Smith
- Many suspicious of Smith for being “big city” and Catholic
- Hoover landslide, but Smith proved Democrats still strong



Al Smith

Economic Problems

- Decline in agriculture, textiles, coal
- High tariffs and poor European economic policies
- Uneven distribution of wealth
- Overproduction
- Overuse of credit
- Overspeculation in real estate and stocks



An ad for real estate during the Florida land boom of the 1920s

The Stock Market Crash



A crowd gathers outside the New York Stock Exchange following the crash

- Panic started on October 24
- Biggest decline on October 29
- \$14 billion lost that day; \$30 billion that week
- A mostly steady decline until 1932
- Businesses began to lay off workers
- Many banks failed

The Depression Begins

- Hoover believed in limited government involvement
- Opposed direct aid in favor of charitable organizations
- “Trickle-down” economic theory
- Unemployment skyrocketed
- Economy continued to decline



Children in front of signs blaming Hoover for the country's economic woes

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Hoover win the election of 1928 so easily? What inroads against Republican dominance did the Democrats make?
2. What underlying economic problems did the nation face in the last years of the 1920s? Why do you think so many allowed these problems to worsen?
3. What caused the stock market to crash in 1929? What immediate impact did it have on the nation's economy?

The 1920s: Backwards Planning Activities

Enduring understandings:

- The 1920s saw a great deal of social and political change
- In the 1920s, America turned away from the internationalism of the World War I period and toward domestic threats and other issues
- Women gained certain political and social rights in the 1920s, especially the right to vote; however, a double standard for behavior still applied for men and women
- The 1920s was an era of conflict between science and religious fundamentalism
- The 1920s was a period of innovation in the arts and music
- In the 1920s, African Americans developed a unique culture of artistic expression centered in New York City
- Reckless economic policies and practices during the 1920s led to the Great Depression of the 1930s

Essential questions:

- Why did the U.S. experience so much political and social change during the 1920s?
- Why did the 1920s see the emergence of the “consumer society”?
- What issues led to Prohibition in the 1920s, and what problems contributed to its failure?
- Why did many see the 1920s as a period of rebellion by American youth?
- What changes occurred to marriage and the American family structure in the 1920s?
- How did economic policies during the 1920s lead to the Great Depression?

Learning Experiences and Instruction

Students will need to know...	Students will need to be able to...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Various social movements of the 1920s 2. Various politicians of the 1920s and their influence on government policy during the era 3. How WWI and subsequent treaty negotiations affected the development of 1920s foreign policy 4. The role of Fundamentalism in 1920s society 5. The role of mass production and advertising on society during the 1920s 6. How economic policies and the consumer society of the 1920s affected labor-management relations 7. How the social climate affected the arts in the 1920s 8. How economic policies and practices of the 1920s led to the Great Depression 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Read and interpret primary source documents from the period of the 1920s 10. Make conclusions about various events and movements of the 1920s 11. Identify key women, political leaders, and social leaders from the 1920s 12. Recognize how trends in American society evolved during the 1920s 13. Understand changes in Americans' lifestyles during the decade 14. Determine the effect of the 1920s on public policy development 15. Understand the enduring impact of the 1920s on society and government throughout the 20th century

These lessons incorporate the following learning activities to help students reach the enduring understandings:

- Overview of essential questions and basic understandings
- Class discussion of subject matter questions in the 1920s presentation
- Teacher introduction of common terms and ideas in the essential questions and related projects
- Provide students with primary source materials from which they will complete the related projects in the unit
- Students conduct research in groups to be used later in individual and group projects
- Informal observation and coaching of students as they work in groups
- Evaluation and delivered feedback on projects and research reports
- Students create and present their unit projects
- Posttest made of multiple-choice questions covering the presentation, with one or more essential questions as essay questions

Project #1: A News Panel Show on the Impact of Prohibition

Overview:

In this lesson, students role-play principal figures on both sides of the Prohibition issue in a news panel-show format similar to *Meet the Press*, *Face the Nation*, or other interactive, news-based shows.

Objectives:

As a result of completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify and reflect the views of major players on both sides of the Prohibition issue
- Express these views in a meaningful and coherent manner
- Respectfully address and refute opposing viewpoints

Time required:

Five to seven class periods (with at least one period for the actual talk show)

Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, a printer, the “Talk Show Character Chart” (provided), optional technology as described in the lesson methodology

Methodology:

Prior to beginning the lesson, consider possible roles to assign. While you may wish to add or subtract roles based on class size, you should include some or all of the roles listed below. Students may select the roles they wish to play, or you may elect to assign roles based on student abilities and personalities.

- Al Capone—Chicago mob boss who made a fortune supplying illegal liquor during Prohibition
- Richard “Two-Gun” Hart (James Vincenzo Capone)—Al Capone’s older brother, a noted prohibition-enforcement agent
- Elliot Ness—Federal Prohibition agent who helped convict Capone of income tax evasion; also headed the Prohibition enforcement unit known as “the Untouchables”

- John D. Rockefeller—Industrialist who originally gave large sums of money to the Anti-Saloon League, but later supported repeal of the 18th Amendment
- Franklin D. Roosevelt—Democratic presidential candidate in 1932 who supported the repeal of Prohibition. The 21st Amendment was ratified during the first months of his administration.
- Howard Hyde Russell—President of the Anti-Saloon League during WWI
- Pauline Sabin—Head of the Women’s Organization for National Prohibition Reform; having originally supported Prohibition, she later opposed it due to the spread of political corruption and growth of organized crime
- John Morris Sheppard—Congressman and later Senator from Texas who introduced the resolution for the 18th Amendment in the Senate and helped to draft the Volstead Act
- Billy Sunday—Fundamentalist preacher of the 1920s who supported prohibition and spoke out against alcohol use in his radio sermons
- Al Smith—Democratic presidential candidate in 1928 who supported repeal of Prohibition
- Andrew Volstead—Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, who oversaw the passage of the National Prohibition Act (a.k.a. the Volstead Act)
- Wayne Wheeler—Lead attorney and head lobbyist for the Anti-Saloon League, considered the architect of the Volstead Act
- George W. Wickersham—Head of the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, also known as the “Wickersham Commission”
- Woodrow Wilson—President during the ratification of the 18th Amendment and passage of the Volstead Act. Wilson vetoed the Volstead Act but Congress overrode his veto the same day

In addition, select a student to act as the moderator of the talk show. The moderator should keep the flow of the show going and ask questions of the guests, as well possibly solicit questions from audience members. (You may wish to record an episode of *Meet the Press*, *Face the Nation*, or another panel show to give the class an idea of how their show should be conducted.)

Depending on resources available as well as the time allotted to complete the project, you may choose to have students dress in character (in period clothes, make-up, etc.) in order to make them more believable to the audience. Also, if your school has suitable facilities, you may stage the talk show under similar conditions to a television studio, with lighting, sound, and possibly videotaping. This would provide additional roles for students to act as camerapersons, lighting and sound technicians, and other related roles.

Once roles have been assigned, allot sufficient time for students to complete research on their roles via the Internet, as well as through more-traditional means such as books, magazines, and microfiche. As students find pertinent information, have them complete the “Prohibition Panel Show Character Chart.”

Depending on desired depth of the activity, you may wish to arrange the classroom (or other room where the talk show will be held) with furniture for the show. This might include individual chairs for each participant as well as the moderator, and large conference-type tables for the participants.

In some instances—particularly if the class size is large—you may wish to provide subordinate roles for students not directly participating in the show. For example, these students might act as “research assistants” aiding participants in gathering information about their roles or developing possible scripts.

Once students have completed research, have them conduct the panel show. Inform them that in order to be successful, they’ll need to be convincing. In other words, they should be able to give reasonable answers to questions or refute charges made by other participants without looking extensively at their notes or other printed resources.

Allot a reasonable time for the show (likely a class period). If desired, the teacher may also wish to allow for a debriefing period for critiquing student performance as well as for student questions.

Evaluation:

After the show, you should evaluate students based on their knowledge of their character, how convincingly they portrayed their role, and their research skills in completing the character chart. While you may wish to develop your own rubric for this project, a sample rubric is included as a guideline.

Suggested Web Resources:

The following is a sampling of possible resources for the panel show. You should supplement this list by assisting students in finding related information via a reputable search engine.

Al Capone:

<http://www.chicagohs.org/history/capone.html>

<http://www.fbi.gov/libref/historic/famcases/capone/capone.htm>

Richard “Two-Gun” Hart:

http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/gangsters_outlaws/mob_bosses/capone/hart_10.html

http://crimemagazine.com/brothers_capone.htm

Elliot Ness:

<http://www.fbi.gov/page2/jan07/ness010307.htm>

<http://www.ifip.com/ness.html>

John D. Rockefeller:

<http://archive.rockefeller.edu/publications/resrep/pdf/dighe.pdf>

<http://www.drugtext.org/library/articles/craig101.htm>

Franklin D. Roosevelt:

<http://newdeal.feri.org/speeches/1932b.htm> (Sections 31 and 32 of the speech)

<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history.do?action=Article&id=286>

Howard Hyde Russell:

http://www.wpl.lib.oh.us/AntiSaloon/Leaders/howard_hyde_russell.html

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,736735,00.html?iid=chix-sphere>

Pauline Sabin:

<http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/controversies/1131637220.html>

John Morris Sheppard:

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/SS/fsh24.html>

<http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/John-Morris-Sheppard>

Al Smith:

<http://millercenter.org/academic/americanpresident/hover/essays/biography/3>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=8958672>

Billy Sunday:

<http://www.billysunday.org/>

<http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/entry.php?rec=363>

Andrew Volstead:

<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=V000114>

<http://www.lawzone.com/half-nor/volstead.htm>

Woodrow Wilson:

<http://www.woodrowwilsonhouse.org/index.asp?section=exhibit&file=exhibit&ID=15>

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=9904E7DB1630E233A25751C1A96E9C946396D6CF>

Wayne Wheeler:

http://www.wpl.lib.oh.us/AntiSaloon/Leaders/wayne_wheeler.html

<http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/entry.php?rec=406>

George W. Wickersham:

<http://law.jrank.org/pages/12342/Wickersham-George-W-Excerpt-from-Problem-Law-Enforcement.html>

<http://www.drugtext.org/library/reports/wick/Default.htm>

Prohibition Panel Show Character Chart

Name of person researched:

Biographical information:

Physical characteristics as seen in pictures or descriptions:

Pertinent quotations from the subject:

Political or philosophical views to include:

Any other relevant information to add:

Civil Rights Rubric

Criteria:	Excellent (15–10):	Good (9–5):	Fair (4–2):	Poor (1):	Student score:
Research	Character chart completely filled out; student shows mastery of material	Most of chart filled out; student portrays character generally well	Approximately half of chart completed; student shows some understanding of assigned character	Less than half of chart completed; student shows lack of understanding of assigned character	
Mastery of character	Student remains in character; is convincing throughout the show	Student usually remains in character; somewhat convincing	Student frequently lapses out of character; rarely demonstrates knowledge of subject	Student has little knowledge of subject; not convincing to audience	
Speaking ability	Student projects voice effectively; uses proper grammar throughout	Student generally projects voice effectively; generally uses proper grammar	Student does a below-average job of projecting voice; uses proper grammar infrequently	Student does not project voice; uses poor grammar throughout	
Considers other positions	Views of other show participants considered and effectively incorporated or countered	Other positions acknowledged and considered	Other positions acknowledged but not considered or refuted	Limited sensitivity to other views	
Other criteria as set by the teacher					

Project #2: Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s

Overview:

In this lesson, student groups each research a famous athlete of the 1920s and make a case as to why he/she should be considered the decade's best. Students construct persuasive multimedia presentations to make their case.

Objectives:

By completing the lesson, students will:

- Understand the importance of sports in American culture during the 1920s
- Collect information dealing with major athletes of the decade
- Make conclusions as to why their choice deserves to be "Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s"

Time required:

Five to seven class periods

Materials:

Computers with Internet access; printer (if needed); multimedia presentation software (such as Microsoft PowerPoint); adequate data-storage space (jump drive, network drive, or hard drive) for saving projects; large monitor or television for displaying completed student work

Methodology:

Introduce the lesson by a class discussion about why sports heroes are important in American culture. You might wish to mention specific athletes of today and the recent past, including Tiger Woods, Tom Brady, Michael Jordan, and others. Ask students why these athletes are not only considered exceptional in their respective fields, but have also crossed over into popular culture, such as movies, television, product endorsement, etc.

Next, ask students to brainstorm about specific sports heroes of the 1920s, using the PowerPoint presentation as well as their textbook and other related resources. Write the athletes' names on the chalkboard or overhead projector as students come up with them. Students will probably mention the obvious legends such as Babe Ruth, Red Grange, Lou Gehrig, but may omit less obvious choices, such as Bobby Jones, Gertrude Ederle, Bill Tilden, or others.

After concluding the brainstorming session, read the assignment statement to the class, or project it using an overhead or LCD projector. Alternately, you can also duplicate and distribute it to the students.

Examples of athletes that may be selected include:

- George Herman “Babe” Ruth
- Lou Gehrig
- Gene Tunney
- Jack Dempsey
- Bobby Jones
- Red Grange
- Gertrude Ederle
- Helen Wills Moody
- Bill Tilden
- Ty Cobb
- Knute Rockne

If desired, you or the students may select lesser-known athletes from the era that students may know from class discussion, film, etc. For example, American Olympic runners Jackson Scholz and Charlie Paddock, who both competed in the 1924 Paris games, are featured in the 1981 film *Chariots of Fire*. Heavyweight boxer James J. Braddock, whose career spanned the 1920s and 1930s, is the subject of the 2005 film *Cinderella Man*.

Prior to assigning groups, determine the size of each group based on class size and ability. You may also wish to divide tasks among individual students in the groups; for example, one student can concentrate on finding related media files, while another can concentrate on layout for the multimedia presentation, and so on.

Also, you should determine ahead of time what requirements students should fulfill regarding the length of the presentation, number of pictures, and other relevant requirements. While you should take into account your class’s ability, the assignment should be challenging and engaging. You can find a sample (and adaptable) criteria sheet at <http://www.vcsc.k12.in.us/staff/mhutchison/thewar/project.htm>.

Once students have been introduced to the project, formed groups, and selected their athletes, give students adequate time to research and collect information. While information can be collected via Internet sites, it is highly suggested that you encourage students to use more conventional forms of research, such as encyclopedias and textbooks. You should also consider asking students to use primary source materials as well, such as eyewitness accounts, news articles, and archived video and audio files.

Students should collect information with the help of a graphic organizer, such as the provided “Sports Legends of the 1920s Information Chart.”

Once students have had sufficient opportunity to research their athletes, they can begin to work on the presentation. Allow students sufficient time to create their presentations.

Note: Depending on what requirements you have specified for each presentation, some may grow to be quite large. In those instances, you may wish to consider a project storage solution, such as a jump drive, portable hard drive, or network storage space.

Evaluation:

After the project has concluded, evaluate student work with a suitable rubric based on the requirements you've established. A sample rubric is included, which you may adapt or use as is.

Suggested Web Resources:

Due to the large number of possible subjects for the presentation, this list includes only a sampling of resources. You may also wish to guide students in online research using a suitable search engine. Check <http://www.vcsc.k12.in.us/tcr/searching.htm> for information regarding effective strategies for searching, as well as links to various search engines.

Ty Cobb:

<http://www.tycobbmuseum.org/>

<http://espn.go.com/sportscentury/features/00014142.html>

Jack Dempsey:

<http://cyberboxingzone.com/boxing/dempsey.htm>

<http://www.cmgww.com/sports/dempsey/>

Gertrude Ederle:

http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/siforwomen/top_100/42/

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9c06efd7103af932a35751c1a9659c8b63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=1>

Lou Gehrig:

<http://www.lougehrig.com/>

<http://espn.go.com/sportscentury/features/00014204.html>

Red Grange:

<http://espn.go.com/sportscentury/features/00014213.html>

<http://www.chicagobears.com/tradition/hof-grange.asp>

Bobby Jones:

<http://www.bobbyjones.com/>

<http://www.newgeorgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-468&pid=s-58>

Helen Wills Moody:

http://www.tennisfame.com/famer.aspx?pgID=867&hof_id=95

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/1006.html>

Knut Rockne:

http://espn.go.com/classic/biography/s/Rockne_Knut.html

<http://www.gonorway.com/norway/articles/rockne/40/index.html>

Babe Ruth:

<http://www.baberuth.com/>

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~UG02/yeung/Baberuth/home.html>

Bill Tilden:

<http://espn.go.com/sportscentury/features/00016509.html>

<http://sports.jrank.org/pages/4854/Tilden-Bill-Born-Into-Privilege.html>

Gene Tunney:

<http://bally.fortunecity.com/mayo/239/>

<http://cyberboxingzone.com/boxing/tunney-g.htm>

While students should focus on learning about 1920s sports legends and their effect on American culture, they should also devote some attention to PowerPoint mechanics. Many students have some background knowledge of the software, and some may be quite proficient. We suggest the

following resources, either for students to use, or if you wish to review basic skills with the class as a whole.

PowerPoint in the Classroom: <http://www.actden.com/pp/>)

PowerPoint Tips (<http://www.geocities.com/~webwinds/classes/powerpt.htm>)

Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s: Assignment Sheet

The National Archives has decided to create an exhibit on famous athletes of the early 20th century and wishes to select one athlete as the “Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s.” Your class has been chosen to create persuasive multimedia presentations to help select the candidates for this honor. You will choose one notable athlete, work in groups to create the presentation, and present it to the class. Remember, you will want to do your best to persuade your audience that the athlete you select deserves the title of “Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s.”

Be sure to include the following in your presentation:

- Biographical information about the athlete
- Statistical information about the athlete’s career
- Pictures and video and sound files (if available) of your athlete
- A persuasive statement explaining why your athlete deserves the title
- A bibliography of sources you used to assemble your presentation
- Any other information you feel will make your presentation more persuasive and informative

Your teacher will give you further information regarding group and athlete assignments and other requirements for the presentation.

“Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s” Information Form

Name of athlete: _____

Sport in which he/she participated: _____

Years of career: _____

Awards or championships won (e.g., world championships, MVP awards, gold medals):

Significant achievements (e.g., Hall of Fame, world records, other recognitions):

Retirement date: _____

Significant contributions made outside of their sport:

Interesting details about the athlete’s life:

Date of death: _____

Evidence that supports our claim that this athlete deserves the title “Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s”:

“Greatest Sports Hero of the 1920s”

Presentation Rubric

Criteria:	Level 1 (1–10 points):	Level 2 (11–20 points):	Level 3 (21–30 points):	Level 4 (31–40 points):	Group score:
Clear expression of ideas	Communicates information as random, isolated pieces	Communicates important information, but not a clear theme or overall structure	Clearly communicates main idea, theme, and point of view	Clearly and effectively communicates main idea, theme, or point of view	
Presentation of a point of view	Limited evidence of a point of view	Point of view apparent but unclear at times	Demonstrates a clear point of view	Provides a strong point of view using rich and persuasive details	
Evidence of research	Elements demonstrate little evidence of research	Elements show some evidence of research	Elements show clear evidence of research	Elements show evidence of considerable research	
Effective use of colors and graphics	Color and/or graphics unclear	Colors and/or graphics not clearly supportive of theme	Colors and/or graphics support theme	Colors and/or graphics make purpose of presentation obvious	
Effective use of text	Minimally displayed; purpose unclear	Clearly displayed but does not support the theme or message	Supports the theme or message	Delivers theme or message impact	
Overall impact and creativity	Shows little effort; visuals and text of unequal quality; limited innovation and appeal	Clear visuals and text, though their connection may not be obvious; may show a hint of the unusual or innovative	Effort and thoughtful preparation clearly shown; elements of innovation in text or visuals	Visuals and text make for an eye-catching and powerful design	

Project #3: The Scopes Trial Front Page

Overview:

In this lesson, students working in groups act as reporters and editors in 1925 covering the Scopes trial. Having collected information about the trial, they write articles and lay out newspaper “front pages” highlighting their stories as well as other information regarding Fundamentalism and the 1920s.

Objectives:

In completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- Critically analyze the trial proceedings and testimony
- Write news stories and editorial content regarding the trial
- Create “front pages” highlighting their Scopes trial stories

Time required:

Three to five class periods

Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, printer, word-processing and publishing software such as Microsoft Word and Microsoft Publisher (should you elect to have students complete the project electronically), poster board, glue (if you want students to assemble pages manually), copies of newspapers of the era (on microfilm or online, if available)

Methodology:

Before beginning the lesson, students should have some background on the Scopes trial: the Butler Act, the circumstances leading to Scopes’s arrest, and general information about the trial. Ask students to speculate as to how their local newspaper might have covered the trial. (You may wish to show students articles from local publications if examples are available.)

Next, explain to the students that they’ll be working in groups to create newspaper “front pages” covering the trial as well as other related events from the same period. In addition to basic news coverage, groups may want to include elements such as editorials, editorial cartoons, photographs, and period advertisements, as well as coverage of other related events from the summer of 1925.

You may wish to approach this lesson in one of two ways: either by asking student groups to research the entire Scopes trial (July 15–21, 1925), or by choosing individual dates of the trial and asking students to focus on that one day. You can find a good day-by-day summary of the trial at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4723956>.

Once you've introduced the lesson to the class, have students begin research using the related Web sites and by filling out the "Scopes Trial Information Form" to assist them in completing the project. Have students look for specific events from the trial that they might wish to write about.

Allow sufficient time for students to complete their research. Once finished, students should take their information and shape it into news stories to include on the front page.

Evaluation:

Once student groups have completed their front pages, evaluate the finished product using a suitable rubric. You may wish to use a school- or district-developed rubric, or the sample rubric included with this lesson. (Note: The rubric provided is geared toward evaluating projects created with word-processing and publishing software.)

Related Web Resources:

Many online resources deal with the Scopes trial. Some reflect an obvious bias due to the controversial nature of the trial. The sites provided here tend to reflect a neutral point of view. Should you encourage students to do further investigation and research, take care that the sites they visit present information as objectively as possible. Have students also look for more general information on the 1920s if you want them to include other articles or elements indicative of the time period.

NPR's "Timeline: Remembering the Scopes Monkey Trial":
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4723956>

University of Missouri–Kansas City Scopes trial links:
http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/SCO_BIBL.HTM

On the Media's "Evolving Coverage" transcript:
<http://www.onthemedias.org/transcripts/2005/07/08/07>

Digital History page on the Scopes trial:
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=448

University of Virginia's Scopes Monkey Trial page:
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ug97/inherit/1925home.html>

American Heritage's "Twenty Questions About the Scopes Trial":

<http://www.americanheritage.com/events/articles/web/20060710-john-scopes-creationism-evolution-darwin-intelligent-design-william-jennings-bryan-monkey-trial.shtml>

CNN page on the trial: <http://archives.cnn.com/2000/LAW/07/13/scopes.monkey.trial/>

American Experience's "Monkey Trial" page: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/monkeytrial/>

CourtTV's "Scopes Monkey Trial" page: <http://www.courttv.com/archive/greatesttrials/scopes/>

History.net's "Scopes Trial" site: <http://www.historynet.com/scopes-trial.htm>

Bryan College's "World's Most Famous Trial" page: <http://www.bryan.edu/historical.html>

Scopes Trial Front Page Information Form

Event	Date of event	Significance of event (Why it should be included on the front page)	URL or source of information

Scopes Trial Front Page Rubric

Category:	Excellent (20–16):	Good (15–11):	Fair (10–6):	Poor (5–1):	Student score:
Research	Information form completely filled out; evident that resources were thoughtfully selected	Information form filled out; sketchy information included for some resources	Information form incomplete; inclusion of several irrelevant resources	Information form incomplete; little or no rationale for including resources	
Historical accuracy	Resources germane to the subject; accurate portrayal of events	Resources generally germane; portrayal of events generally accurate	Resources somewhat germane; portrayal of events rarely accurate	Resources not germane; inaccurate portrayal of events	
Creativity	Layout of front page shows exemplary level of creativity and thought	Layout of front page shows generally high level of creativity and thought	Layout of front page somewhat difficult to read; flow of page generally acceptable	Layout of front page very difficult to read; flow of page unacceptable	
Use of technology (optional)	Highly effective; adds greatly to overall project	Generally highly effective	Somewhat effective	Ineffective, poor use of software	
Additional criteria as set by the teacher					
Overall group score					

The 1920s: Multiple-Choice Quiz

1. Which of the following terms or ideas did NOT describe America at the beginning of the 1920s?
 - a. Victorious in World War I
 - b. Failed to ratify the Treaty of Versailles
 - c. Eager to join the League of Nations
 - d. Isolationist

2. In the presidential election of 1920, Harding promised:
 - a. “A chicken in every pot”
 - b. A return to “normalcy”
 - c. A guaranteed annual income for all Americans
 - d. Retribution against Germany for starting World War I

3. Which was a major cause of the “Red Scare”?
 - a. Various labor strikes in the U.S.
 - b. The Sedition Act of 1918
 - c. Concern that a revolution similar to Russia’s would occur in the U.S.
 - d. The Palmer Raids

4. The verdict in the Sacco and Vanzetti case led to:
 - a. Public demonstrations in support of the two men
 - b. Public demonstrations against Italian immigrants
 - c. Many Italian immigrants being deported because they were considered to be a danger
 - d. The two men being released by the governor of Massachusetts on humanitarian grounds

5. The Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s opposed all the following groups outright, except:
 - a. Catholics
 - b. Jews
 - c. Immigrants
 - d. Protestants

6. What caused the Ku Klux Klan to lose a great deal of influence?
 - a. The 1928 election of Al Smith as president
 - b. The conviction of Sacco and Vanzetti
 - c. The conviction of the Indiana Grand Dragon on charges of rape and murder
 - d. The conviction of Al Capone on tax-evasion charges

7. What was the Kellogg-Briand Treaty designed to do?
 - a. Reduce the number of warships that a country could build
 - b. Raise tariff rates
 - c. Force Germany to pay war reparations
 - d. Outlaw war

8. What was the “Ohio Gang” most famous for?
 - a. Various political scandals during the Harding Administration
 - b. Prohibition violations
 - c. Contributing a number of players to professional baseball
 - d. Teaching evolution

9. The Teapot Dome scandal centered around which activity?
 - a. Bribery of prohibition enforcement agents
 - b. Sale of government oil reserves
 - c. Mismanagement of the Bureau of Veterans Affairs
 - d. Breaking into the offices of the Democratic National Committee

10. Which economic philosophy best fits Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon?
 - a. Lowering taxes on the wealthy frees up money that eventually benefits middle- and lower-income taxpayers
 - b. Government should spend large amounts of money to help right the economy after a stock market crash
 - c. Government should provide millions of dollars in direct relief for the unemployed
 - d. All of the above

11. Who introduced mass production to the automobile industry?
 - a. Henry Ford
 - b. Walter Chrysler
 - c. John L. Lewis
 - d. Walter Reuther

- 12.** Why did many industrialists follow a policy of “welfare capitalism”?
- They wanted to “give back” to their employees for having them work under harsh conditions
 - They thought it might stave off a stock market crash
 - They could claim benefits for their employees as a tax write-off
 - They saw providing certain benefits as a way to keep workers from joining unions
- 13.** Which of the following is most associated with Fundamentalism?
- Harry Daugherty
 - Robert Lynd
 - Aimee Semple McPherson
 - Babe Ruth
- 14.** Which of the following resulted from the widespread use of mass-production techniques?
- Corporate profits declined because goods were sold more cheaply
 - Unemployment went up because fewer workers were needed
 - The standard of living rose, and consumers could buy more luxury items
 - The stock market crashed
- 15.** Which constitutional amendment allowed for national prohibition of alcohol?
- Seventeenth
 - Eighteenth
 - Nineteenth
 - Twenty-first
- 16.** Which legislation was also known as the “National Prohibition Act”?
- The Butler Act
 - The Volstead Act
 - The Palmer Act
 - The Wickersham Act.
- 17.** Which of the following statements best describes enforcement of Prohibition?
- The government tried to enforce prohibition, but too many people were willing to break the law in order to drink
 - The government tried to enforce prohibition but couldn’t because too much liquor was still available
 - The government expected local and state governments to enforce the law
 - The government provided funding for enforcement, but hopelessly underestimated the expense and manpower needed

- 18.** What conclusion did the Wickersham Commission make?
- a. Prohibition should be repealed
 - b. Prohibition should continue, but more effective and aggressive enforcement
 - c. Prohibition should continue, but only as a local option
 - d. The Wickersham Commission didn't make any conclusions about Prohibition
- 19.** Who was John T. Scopes's defense attorney?
- a. William Jennings Bryan
 - b. H.L. Mencken
 - c. Clarence Darrow
 - d. Louis Armstrong.
- 20.** Which of the following statements best describes the verdict in the Scopes trial?
- a. Scopes was found not guilty of teaching evolution
 - b. Scopes was found guilty of teaching evolution and spent a year in jail
 - c. Scopes was found guilty of teaching evolution and fined \$100
 - d. The case ended in a hung jury
- 21.** Which of the following was typical of a flapper?
- a. She was the symbolic "new woman" of the 1920s
 - b. She wore short skirts and bobbed hair
 - c. She smoked and drank in public
 - d. All of the above
- 22.** Which was one reason that women could not expand their political power in the 1920s, even after gaining suffrage?
- a. A split in the feminist movement diluted their political influence
 - b. Women didn't see voting as important
 - c. They tended to vote along with their husbands, so their votes didn't make much difference
 - d. They tended to vote for third-party candidates
- 23.** Which of the following was a general change in 1920s family life?
- a. There was a large increase in the birthrate in the U.S.
 - b. Many elderly persons were forced to live with their children
 - c. Marriages were more often based on love, rather than financial concerns
 - d. It was necessary for children to work in factories to help support the family

24. Who championed the “Back to Africa” movement?
- Alain Locke
 - Marcus Garvey
 - Langston Hughes
 - James Weldon Johnson
25. What were the call letters for the first radio station in the U.S.?
- WKRP
 - WNYX
 - KDKA
 - KCRW
26. Who was the first person to fly non-stop across the Atlantic Ocean?
- Raymond Orteig
 - Richard Bird
 - Orville Wright
 - Charles Lindbergh
27. Which film ushered in the era of “talking” motion pictures?
- Birth of a Nation
 - The Jazz Singer
 - The Great Train Robbery
 - The Little Tramp
28. What was the Harlem Renaissance?
- A flourishing of African American musical, literary, and artistic talent
 - A period of African American migration to northern cities
 - A surge in the number of African American professional athletes
 - One of the first nightclubs to feature jazz musicians
29. Which of the following was not an underlying economic problem of the 1920s?
- High tariffs on European imports
 - Limited consumer credit
 - Overspeculation in real estate and stocks
 - Overproduction by industry

30. Hoover's philosophy in dealing with the Depression was that:

- a. Government should spend massive amounts of money to help right the economy
- b. Government had an obligation to help industry and workers
- c. Private organizations such as the Red Cross could best provide relief
- d. He should temporarily close the stock market while he and his advisers decided what to do

The 1920s: Multiple-Choice Quiz

Answer Key

1. C
2. B
3. C
4. A
5. D
6. C
7. D
8. A
9. B
10. A
11. A
12. D
13. C
14. C
15. B
16. B
17. D
18. B
19. C
20. C
21. D
22. A
23. C
24. B
25. C
26. D
27. B
28. A
29. B
30. C