

Progressivism and the Age of Reform

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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Progressivism and the Age of Reform



This political cartoon shows President Theodore Roosevelt as a hunter who's captured two bears: the "good trusts" bear he's put on a leash labeled "restraint," and the "bad trusts" bear he's apparently killed.

The Progressive Era was a period in the late 19th and early 20th centuries during which social, economic, and political reforms aimed to end the dominance of large businesses and wealthy business owners and increase equity and opportunity for the less affluent members of American society, including recent immigrants. Although the era had no firm beginning or ending dates, historians generally consider it to have lasted from around 1890 to sometime in the 1920s.

The Progressive reform movement began in response to the rapid industrialization that had been sweeping much of the country since the Civil War. This had enriched the country as a whole but had created increasingly impoverished classes of workers, who often lived in urban slums and worked in unsafe factories. The rapid pace of economic growth had provided opportunities for new immigrants but at the same time had created dangerous working conditions for many people who took advantage of these job opportunities. Political corruption had also increased, particularly in the cities.

Progressive leaders came primarily from the white middle- and upper-classes and aimed to make changes at the local, state, and national levels. Journalists, social workers, politicians, and other Progressive reformers became involved in a multitude of reform initiatives, including legislation, urban sanitation and beautification efforts, social services, and labor organizations.

This presentation examines Progressive Era events and reforms from the late 1880s until the Federal Reserve Act of 1913.

Essential Questions

- Why did the Progressive Era begin? What social, economic, and political factors contributed to the movement toward Progressive reform?
- How did the issues prominent during the Progressive Era, and the changes that occurred then, affect the lives of immigrants, African Americans, and women?
- How did the social and moral values of white middle- and upper-class citizens influence Progressive Era reform agendas?
- In what ways did Progressive reforms depend on the work of individual activists? In what ways did they depend on the participation of larger groups of people?
- What impact did political leadership have on shaping Progressive reforms?

The Gilded Age

- 1870s and 1880s
- U.S. as world's main industrial power
- Industrialists and financiers formed trusts
- “Robber barons”
- Criticism of unfair practices and poor worker treatment



A cartoon criticizing “robber barons” such as Gould and Vanderbilt for their treatment of workers

The Gilded Age of the 1870s and 1880s brought about dynamic economic growth. During this time, the United States became the world's foremost industrial power. Increasing industrial activity, particularly in the Northeast, attracted immigrants to work in factories and enriched the industrialists and financiers who owned and funded the manufacturing companies. These wealthy individuals included Cornelius Vanderbilt, J.P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and others, many of whose names remain prominent today in the names of corporations, universities, foundations, and other institutions.

During this era, many corporations consolidated into trusts, or mega-corporations that controlled nearly all of the manufacturing and distribution in a particular industry. For example, financier J.P. Morgan consolidated the steel industry into U.S. Steel. Financial markets also consolidated, with their center at New York City's Wall Street.

Critics complained that trusts held too much power in the country's economy. These critics called the trusts' owners “robber barons” (a reference to medieval lords who illegally collected tolls from ships on the Rhine River), reflecting disapproval of the anti-competitive business practices the trusts had used to amass their immense wealth and power. Some critics also began to publicize the unfair treatment of workers, including extremely low wages, long hours, and unsafe working conditions in many factories.

Standard Oil and Trusts



John D. Rockefeller

- Founded by John D. Rockefeller in 1867
- Controlled 90% of U.S. oil-refining and soon almost the entire petroleum industry
- Other industries followed his model
- Sherman Antitrust Act (1890) had little impact for a decade after its passage

One of the largest and most powerful trusts of the late 19th century was John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil, founded in 1867. Rockefeller used his influence to purchase oil companies around the nation, consolidating the industry until, by 1880, he controlled 90% of the nation's oil-refining capabilities. Rockefeller then purchased companies that produced and sold petroleum products, thus allowing Standard Oil to control virtually the entire petroleum industry. The company could set the price of oil and determine details of its supply and distribution. This near-monopoly made it extremely difficult for any other companies to compete.

Rockefeller inspired other entrepreneurs to develop their own corporations along a similar business model. The meat-processing and -distribution industry and the sugar industry, for example, both modeled themselves after Standard Oil.

During the late 19th century, the dominant cultural view of *laissez-faire* dictated that the government should have a very limited role in the private sector's affairs. Despite this attitude, opponents of Standard Oil and other industrial monopolies managed to press the government for some regulations even before 1900. In 1890, for example, Congress passed the Sherman Antitrust Act, which prohibited "unlawful restraint and monopolies." Despite its intentions, this law was poorly enforced and had little impact on trusts until Theodore Roosevelt's presidency in the first years of the 20th century.

The Panic of 1893

- Overspeculation during the 1880s
- Banks, railroads, and other companies failed
- Unemployment, homelessness, and financial ruin
- Reform-minded Americans began to organize



The New York Stock Exchange during the Panic of 1893

During the 1880s, many companies overextended themselves by speculating on business opportunities that did not yet exist. This was particularly true for the railroad companies, which built more railroads than the country needed. The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad filed for bankruptcy in February 1893, ushering in a severe economic downturn.

News of the souring economy led many people to withdraw their money from banks, meaning that the banks could no longer offer credit. It became increasingly popular to take money out of banks and use it to buy gold, which was safer than keeping it in a bank. As the federal government's gold reserves declined, the nation neared bankruptcy, and President Grover Cleveland had to borrow gold from financier J.P. Morgan. Many banks failed, and other railroads and manufacturing companies collapsed as well. Unemployment skyrocketed. Many people lost their homes and life savings.

Within the context of this economic depression the Progressive Era began. As the economy stagnated, middle-class reform-minded Americans increasingly organized in opposition to such problems as corruption in politics, overcrowding, and poor working conditions. They called for increased governmental regulation of businesses, and tax reforms that would benefit poor people, including recent immigrants.

Progressivism: An Overview

- “Making progress”
- A variety of organizations and interests
- Not a cohesive movement
- Three broad categories: social, economic, and political reform

The word “progressive” generally refers to an attitude or spirit of moving forward with new ideas, actions, or opportunities (i.e., “making progress”). During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a variety of organizations and interests arose to combat the perceived injustices of the Gilded Age. This movement collectively became known as the “Progressive movement.” Rather than being a single, cohesive movement, Progressivism was an amalgamation of various interests and goals, mainly falling into the three broad categories of social, economic, and political reform.

Progressivism: State and Local

- Many changes could be more easily attained
- Local: high schools, playgrounds, less corruption, better sewage, beautification, settlement houses
- State: reduced overcrowding, safety measures in factories, workers' compensation, restricted child labor, minimum wage
- Wisconsin and La Follette



Robert La Follette

Progressives desired many changes that they found they could more easily attain locally or statewide than nationally; thus, new Progressive state and local laws and programs vastly outnumbered national ones.

Local initiatives commonly included the expansion of high schools to promote education beyond the elementary level, playground construction, and reorganization of city governments to increase efficiency and reduce corruption. Many cities elected Progressive mayors to help curb corruption in city politics. Progressive reformers succeeded in improving the condition of streets and sewer lines, adding parks, and otherwise making cities more attractive. Settlement houses (described in an upcoming slide) also helped champion Progressive causes in the cities.

Many states passed laws regulating the numbers of people who could live in a given space, reducing overcrowding. Other laws mandated that factories take certain safety precautions, instituted workers' compensation, and restricted child labor. Minimum-wage laws also took effect in several states.

Wisconsin governor Robert La Follette put his state at the forefront of Progressive reforms. During his tenure (1900–1905), the state legislature enacted laws to dissolve monopolies, increase taxes on railroads, preserve forests, and establish direct primary elections (i.e., voters could directly choose candidates). La Follette continued working toward Progressive reforms as senator. Successive governors further regulated the railroad and insurance industries, established the country's first workers' compensation program, mandated factory safety, and limited women's and children's work hours.

Women and Progressive Reforms



A YWCA poster

- Women became much more involved in social and political causes
- Mainly middle- and upper-class women
- Aimed to increase “moral behavior” of lower classes
- Organizations such as YWCA and National Consumers League

During the Progressive Era, women began working for social and political causes in much greater numbers. Many women, primarily from the middle and upper classes, joined Progressive organizations and became leaders in reforms regarding child labor, urban sanitation, education, and other social issues.

Many women felt a moral obligation to become involved in these causes. For example, some felt outraged upon learning about the indignities of child labor and unsanitary conditions in tenements (discussed in future slides). Female (as well as male) Progressive reformers also frequently viewed reform as a way of increasing the “moral behavior” of immigrants and the working class, whom they often viewed as coarse and indecent. In this regard, women’s Progressive reform work was closely linked to the temperance (anti-alcohol) movement and other moral causes.

Many women joined organizations such as the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) and the National Consumers League to promote Progressive reforms. Women also became leaders of the settlement-house movement and the social-work profession.

Muckrakers

- Journalists who exposed corruption and social injustices
- Term coined by Theodore Roosevelt
- Works published in popular magazines
- Riis, Steffens, Tarbell, Baker et al.



Magazines like this one often published muckraking articles

Jacob Riis was one of the first major writers in what came to be known as “muckraking.” President Theodore Roosevelt coined the term “muckraker” in 1906 to describe the work of journalists who exposed the problems of business and government corruption, child labor, prostitution, racial discrimination, and other issues. While Roosevelt used this term negatively, feeling that these writers only focused on the negative rather than on the positive, the term became associated with the work the writers did to increase public awareness of urban problems.

Popular magazines, including *McClure's* and *Cosmopolitan*, published many of the muckrakers' articles, giving them a wide audience and exposing the general public to the problems that the muckrakers addressed.

Other famous muckrakers included Lincoln Steffens, Ida M. Tarbell, and Ray Stannard Baker. These three journalists worked for *McClure's* until 1906, when they left to help create *The American Magazine*.

Jacob Riis



- Photographed and wrote about conditions in tenements and factories, and on the streets
- *How the Other Half Lives* (1890)
- Set the stage for Progressive urban reforms

The reform movements of the Progressive Era gained momentum as conditions for the poor and working class became increasingly publicized. One of the earliest and most influential individuals to inform the middle and upper classes as to the lives of the country's urban poor was journalist Jacob Riis. As a police reporter for New York newspapers, Riis visited many impoverished neighborhoods, mainly those housing recent immigrants. He photographed and wrote about the conditions he witnessed in tenement homes (large, crowded apartment buildings), on the streets of urban slums, and in factories.

Riis used a camera with flashlight powder, enabling him to take photographs in dark tenement rooms. He also wrote essays documenting the conditions he saw. When newspapers and magazines published his photographs and writings, the public gained a better understanding of the impoverished conditions in which many New Yorkers (and residents of other cities) lived, in stark contrast to the opulent lives of industrialists and financiers.

In 1890, Riis published his major work *How the Other Half Lives*, which included many of his photographs and essays. By enabling members of the middle and upper classes to witness the lives of "the other half" (the urban poor) of American society, Riis's work helped set the stage for many Progressive urban-reform initiatives.

Riis: From *How the Other Half Lives*

Long ago it was said that “one half of the world does not know how the other half lives.” That was true then. It did not know because it did not care. The half that was on top cared little for the struggles, and less for the fate of those who were underneath, so long as it was able to hold them there and keep its own seat. There came a time when the discomfort and crowding below were so great, and the consequent upheavals so violent, that it was no longer an easy thing to do, and then the upper half fell to inquiring what was the matter. Information on the subject has been accumulating rapidly since, and the whole world has had its hands full answering for his old ignorance.

Discussion questions: Give students time to read the excerpt, which comes from Riis’s introduction to his book.

- What are the two “halves” Riis referred to? Who was on top? Who was on the bottom? (The middle and upper socioeconomic classes of society compose the top half; the lower classes and poor immigrants make up the bottom half.)
- Why did the upper half “[fall] to inquiring what was the matter”? (The upper half became uncomfortable with the large numbers of people in the bottom half, whom they perceived as violent and whom they felt were crowding the cities.)
- Which half did Riis most empathize with? (He most empathized with the bottom half.)
- At the time Riis wrote this paragraph, the problems he described continued to exist in New York. Why do you think he wrote this introduction from the perspective of the future? What message might he have been trying to convey to his audience? (He was hoping his writings and photographs, along with other progressive initiatives, might lead to this scenario in the future. He might have hoped his audience would awaken to a clearer understanding of the class differences in society and a desire to do something to improve this situation.)

Riis: Photographs



“Dens of Death”



“Five Cents Lodging,
Bayard Street”

Discussion questions: Give students time to view the photographs, then ask the following:

- What does each photograph show? (“Dens of Death,” left: dilapidated tenement buildings crowded together in an urban slum; “Five Cents Lodging, Bayard Street,” left: several men in what appears to be the sleeping quarters of a very small and crowded room—actually an illegal boarding room in a tenement—with walls that look old, dirty, and crumbling, and clothing trunks tightly packed onto a shelf.)
- What do these photographs reveal about living conditions in the tenements? What do they tell you about what it might have been like to be a tenement resident? (The tenements were not in good condition, and life there might have been difficult. Some of the buildings’ sides and roofs appear ready to collapse. The men are living in extremely close quarters, with little room to move and high risk of spreading infection.)
- Why do you think Riis chose to take each of these photos? Why did he publish them? (To demonstrate to middle- and upper-class Americans the squalor in which New York City’s poor lived. By raising awareness, he hoped to foster initiatives to change conditions there by passing new laws, enforcing existing ones, increasing social outreach to poor immigrants, and expanding their economic opportunities.)
- Imagine that you were a middle-class American seeing these images for the first time. What might your reactions have been? (Middle-class Americans would likely have been shocked by the conditions these photographs revealed, not having visited these neighborhoods or known anyone living there.)

Immigrants

- Job opportunities and religious freedom
- Southern and eastern European and Jewish immigrants
- Ethnic enclaves in large cities
- Poor conditions
- Faced prejudice and discrimination



An immigrant neighborhood, circa 1900

Throughout the Progressive Era, immigrants poured into the country, attracted by growing job opportunities as well as by the promise of religious freedom. American steamship and railroad companies in Europe actively promoted emigration. Most immigrants during this period settled in cities to take advantage of the economic opportunities of the Industrial Revolution.

Immigrants during this period increasingly came from southern and eastern Europe rather than from western Europe. Southern Europeans (particularly from Italy) and eastern Europeans generally left their home countries due to poor economic conditions and political instability. Steamship companies encouraged them to journey to the U.S., promising better economic opportunities across the Atlantic. Jewish immigrants also sought to escape religious persecution in eastern European countries.

Immigrants during the late 19th and early 20th centuries typically inhabited urban ethnic enclaves, neighborhoods where most people came from the same country. Here they set up stores, religious gathering places, and social networks. These tended to be the least affluent parts of town and often lacked efficient sanitation systems. These neighborhoods became very crowded due to increasing immigration, and urban infrastructures could not accommodate the number of people. Immigrants also faced prejudice and discrimination by native-born residents.

Many immigrants found jobs in the growing numbers of factories, often doing work that American-born people would not. Working conditions tended to be poor, with wages generally very low.

Jane Addams and Hull House



Jane Addams

- Settlement houses
- In 1889, Addams and Starr founded Hull House in Chicago
- A community center for the poor
- Offered classes, concerts, lectures, clubs

Immigrants living in cities' ethnic enclaves benefited from the establishment of settlement houses. Settlement houses had developed in London in the mid-19th century to serve as social-service centers for the urban poor. Supported by wealthy donors, the settlement houses provided meals, shelter, education, and other activities.

In 1889, Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr founded Hull House on Chicago's West Side. Inspired by the London settlement house Toynbee, Hull House served as a community center for many of Chicago's poorest residents, including many immigrants. It also attracted reformers who wanted to help improve conditions and opportunities for the urban poor. Addams became one of the most prominent figures in the Progressive movement.

Hull House offered classes in a variety of subjects, concerts and lectures, and clubs for both children and adults. Its leaders established the first playground and bathhouse in Chicago and helped improve sanitation and housing in the neighborhood.

Jane Addams and Hull House (cont.)

- Hull House workers lived in the community
- Economic desperation seen as the root of urban problems
- Addams's political work



Children outside Hull House, 1908

Addams and the other Hull House leaders believed that the people who worked there should live in the community, allowing them to become an integral part of the neighborhood, connect closely with those they provided service to, and gain a better understanding of the reality of conditions there. She also held the Progressive view that economic desperation, rather than moral character flaws, engendered the crime, poor sanitation, and other problems common to poor neighborhoods. She therefore felt that the key to helping impoverished people was to provide access to opportunities for education, jobs, and full participation in the democratic process.

Addams became deeply involved not only in Hull House but also in the political process. She advocated legislation to protect the working class, including the eight-hour work day for women, Illinois child-labor law, the first juvenile courts, and housing reform. To this end, she helped organize community groups to lobby public officials. Writing and lecturing widely, she publicized the difficulties that the urban poor faced.

Relief Programs and Charities

- Private relief programs
- Charity organizations
- Paid caseworkers replaced volunteers
- Tensions between charities and settlement houses
- Began to work toward common goals around 1900

In addition to the settlement houses, Progressives formed private relief programs within churches, charities, and other organizations. These groups provided direct assistance to poor people in need of basic accommodations and services, including food, shelter, health care, education, and job placement.

Charity organizations had sprung up in urban areas since the Civil War. Volunteers, almost always affluent women, would visit poor communities and assess their needs. They would then report to the charity's headquarters, which would organize and dispense assistance. During the Progressive Era, paid caseworkers (generally also women) replaced volunteers, forming the foundation for the modern profession of social work.

Until about 1900, early social workers and the charities they worked for tended to look down upon settlement houses. Settlement houses, in turn, tended to feel that the charities looked down upon the poor and blamed poor people's "moral failings" and defects for their predicaments, rather than blaming social conditions in the cities. After 1900, however, charities and settlement houses began to work together toward their common goals.

New York's Tenement House Act

- Poor sanitation, lack of basic comforts, fire hazards, and “moral indecencies” in tenements
- Tenement House Committee exhibition
- Tenement House Commission
- Tenement House Act (1901)
- Improved lighting, ventilation, toilets, courtyards



New York City tenements,
early 1900s

Beginning in the 1840s, urban developers constructed apartment buildings for working-class immigrant families. These buildings, known as “tenements,” became notorious for overcrowding, fire hazards, and lack of light and adequate ventilation. Early tenements rarely had plumbing, running water, or gas for heating and cooking. Most tenement residents worked low-paying factory jobs.

Progressive reformers objected not only to poor living quarters in terms of sanitation, comfort, and fire hazard, but also to potential moral indecencies they perceived to arise from such conditions, including the lack of privacy in bedrooms and bathrooms. Reformers feared that a vile tenement building posed a threat to the entire community as well as to tenement residents. Some went so far as to claim that tenements caused most urban problems.

In 1899, a Tenement House Committee formed in New York City to work toward legislation that would improve conditions. The committee held a two-week exhibition of photographs, maps, and other documents providing details about the tenements. Many upper- and middle-class people attended the exhibition, which was held in a wealthy part of town. It resulted in a significant public response in favor of tenement improvement, as well as increased interest in city parks and other urban beautification efforts. As a result of this publicity, New York City established a Tenement House Commission, which submitted a report in 1901 recommending legislation that would improve conditions. Passed in April 1901, the Tenement House Act mandated improved lighting, ventilation, and toilet facilities, and required that new tenements be built on larger lots than before and include windows and courtyards. Although landlords vigorously opposed the law at first, they eventually came to recognize it as a suitable and moderate reform.

Discussion Questions

1. What arguments did Progressive reformers make against trusts?
2. Why did Jacob Riis's work have so great an impact on the cause of improving conditions in tenements?
3. What did reformers such as Jane Addams see as the root of most urban problems? What solution did she suggest?

1. Reformers felt that the trusts concentrated too much power over the economy into the hands of the few, since trusts by definition sought to stifle competition. A monopoly (or near-monopoly) usually results in higher prices for necessary services. In addition, critics decried the poor treatment of workers in these industries, which the near-monopoly status of trusts gave management little incentive to improve, without competition.
2. Riis's work made an impact by reaching people on two levels. First, his use of flash photography allowed him to document even the darkest and most squalid of tenements, putting accurate information on the plight of the urban poor in the most comprehensible way—into images. Second, Riis had his photographs and accompanying commentary published in major magazines (and later books) that had middle- and upper-class readerships, which gave him access to a greater number of individuals with time and money to devote to such causes.
3. Addams believed that economic desperation, rather than character flaws, engendered the crime, poor sanitation, and other problems typical of cities—especially in poorer neighborhoods. Her solution, as embodied by settlement houses such as Hull House, was to help the impoverished by providing access to opportunities for education, jobs, and ultimately full participation in the democratic process.

Factory Conditions: Taylorism

- Increased automation
- Management consultant
Frederick W. Taylor
- Helped companies maximize worker efficiency
- Workers and managers complained of reduced autonomy
- Did not offer workers long-term economic security



Frederick W. Taylor

Many recent immigrants and others of the urban working class worked in factories. In the late 19th century, factory owners experimented with new methods of mechanization and automation, breaking down complex tasks into their simplest components so that each worker along an assembly line could perform one task repeatedly.

Much of this increased efficiency reflected the management style of Frederick W. Taylor, who served as a consultant to large manufacturing corporations, including Bethlehem Steel. Taylor studied workers and factory systems to determine the most efficient methods of organizing factory operations. He used this knowledge to help companies implement systems to maximize worker efficiency and, in the process, reduce company expenses and increase profits.

Although Taylor claimed that his systems enhanced workers' quality of life, most workers felt differently. Stripped of their autonomy and ability to make decisions for themselves, workers felt powerless and frequently bored. Workers also realized that while Taylor's policies increased wages initially, they jeopardized long-term wages and job security because companies would come to expect workers to do more for less and could more easily replace workers who "underperformed." Many managers did not like the new systems either, as they too saw a reduction in their autonomy and control.

Factory Conditions: Workers



- Growing employment insecurity
- Fear of injury or death at work
- Assembly line workers generally paid by the task
- Women and children paid less
- Very few African Americans
- Workers began to organize

As factory automation and efficiency grew, workers needed less training and skill to do their jobs. Some industrial workers were skilled craftsmen, but many more were “industrial operatives” who needed little skill to work on the assembly lines. These workers experienced growing levels of employment insecurity, living in constant fear of being fired and replaced. They also feared being injured or killed in a factory accident—not uncommon, considering factories’ low safety standards and the increasing speed at which workers had to do their jobs.

As factories increased their efficiency, management expected workers to increase their pace. They typically received payment based on how many times they completed their repetitive task in a day and were penalized for slow or inadequate work or for being late.

Factories employed women and children, both of whom they paid less than men. Women and children often performed specific tasks that differed from the men’s jobs. African Americans rarely worked in factories, as discrimination forced them into even lower-status jobs as unskilled laborers or domestic servants.

The rapidly expanding industrial sector around the turn of the 20th century meant that workers dissatisfied with working conditions could frequently quit their jobs and easily find new ones. Nevertheless, workers did seek job security and increasingly began to organize to negotiate with companies for better wages and conditions.

Sweatshops

- Factories with terrible working conditions, low wages, long hours
- Also referred to home-based piecework
- Garment and cigar industries
- Recent immigrants
- Mostly women and some children



Cigar factory, 1909

Factories with particularly difficult working conditions became known as “sweatshops.” Sweatshops typically paid extremely low wages, required long hours with few or no breaks, and provided very little job security (workers could be fired at any time, for any reason). Owners often illegally housed sweatshop factories in the backs or on the top floors of buildings and tended to move the factories to new locations on a regular basis. Conditions were typically terrible, with fire hazards and other safety issues routinely ignored.

The term “sweatshop” can also refer to the system of labor by which people work in manufacturing industries at extremely low wages. During the Progressive Era, many workers within this system actually worked at home. While working conditions may have been more acceptable than in the factories, these laborers had to rapidly produce large volumes of work (typically garments or pieces of garments, thus leading to the term “piecework”), for which they received very little pay.

The garment and cigar industries became especially known for using sweatshop labor. Sweatshop workers were generally recent immigrants, who would take any job offered and complained little. Although men worked in sweatshops also, women made up the greatest number of sweatshop employees. Many children also worked in the sweatshop system.

Child Labor



Child coal miners

- 1.75 million under 16 had jobs in 1900 (not including farms)
- Progressives campaigned against child labor and for higher adult wages
- “Mother” Jones and the Children’s Crusade

In 1900, approximately 1.75 million children under the age of 16 had jobs, not including those working on farms. Often, a poor family could only survive financially by sending its children into the factories. Many children, even those under the age of eight, worked 12-hour days—a completely legal practice, prior to reforms.

Progressives campaigned against child labor while simultaneously agitating for higher wages so that adults could earn enough money to make it unnecessary for their children to work. Reformers also worked to increase the numbers of schools available to children and the access these children had to public education.

In 1903, Mary Harris “Mother” Jones organized the Children’s Crusade, a group of child workers from factories and mines in Pennsylvania. The children marched to President Theodore Roosevelt’s summer home on Long Island to demand that they be allowed to go to school rather than work. This march brought the issue of child labor to the forefront of public discussion.

Child Labor (continued)

- National Child Labor Committee (1904)
- Hine's photographs
- Child labor laws in Northern states
- U.S. Children's Bureau
- Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938



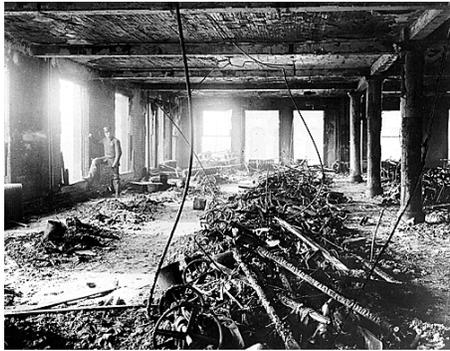
Famous photograph by Lewis Hine of a girl working in a textile factory

Beginning in 1904, the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) sought the support of prominent individuals in working toward children's welfare and child labor regulations. The NCLC hired photographer and sociologist Lewis Hine to document child labor. Hine's photographs of boys and girls working in mills and factories increased public demand for regulations against child labor laws.

The NCLC successfully lobbied for child labor laws in many Northern states, but had much less success in the South. The organization then turned toward national lobbying efforts. In 1912, it convinced the Departments of Labor and Commerce to establish the United States Children's Bureau, which would work with the organization over the next few decades to promote child labor laws on both the state and national levels.

The fight for child labor regulations continued past the Progressive Era. The NCLC's greatest success occurred with the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which remains the primary legislation protecting children from "oppressive child labor" (defined in great detail in the act, and including prohibiting children under 16 from working for employers).

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire



The interior of the factory after the fire

- Locked doors, highly flammable materials, no extinguishers, few exits
- March 25, 1911
- 146 people died, mainly young immigrant woman
- Led to public outcry, increased legislation for safety measures

Approximately 600 workers helped produce women's blouses ("shirtwaists") at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City. Mostly young immigrant women, they commonly worked 12- to 14-hour days for very low wages. The factory's owners fiercely opposed unions, and although some workers had joined the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, most did not belong to a union.

Factory conditions were abysmal (although typical for the time), with a good deal of flammable fabric littering the floor, paper patterns hanging on walls, gas lighting, and male workers being allowed to smoke inside the factory. The factory did not have modern fire extinguishers and only had a few buckets usable for a fire. Located on the top three floors of a ten-story building, the factory had only a few possible exits. Management had locked some of the outside doors, and the fire escape was not sturdy enough to hold large numbers of people.

A fire broke out on March 25, 1911. Many workers on the ninth floor could not evacuate the building in time; many others jumped to their deaths. 146 people, mainly young women, perished in the fire.

This tragedy contributed to a growing outcry for stronger worker safety and workers' compensation laws. It also led to the establishment of the American Society of Safety Engineers and an increased interest in the expansion of labor unions. The American Red Cross and a special Joint Relief Committee established by garment workers' unions assisted survivors. At the unions' urging, the governor appointed a commission to investigate factory conditions, leading to factory safety legislation. Various other laws were also enacted to help improve factory conditions.

The National Consumers League

- Florence Kelley (1899)
- Run primarily by women
- Pushed for fair and humane manufacturing of consumer products
- “White Label” program
- Advocated for state and national minimum wage and maximum work hour laws
- *Muller v. Oregon* (1908)



Florence Kelley

In 1899, Hull House leader Florence Kelley founded the National Consumers League (NCL). Run primarily by women, its primary goals included establishing minimum wage laws and laws limiting women’s and children’s work hours. The NCL appealed to women as household consumers, advocating the idea that consumer products should be manufactured in fair and humane ways.

The NCL adopted a “White Label” program, giving its stamp of approval to stores that met minimum wage and maximum work hour requirements and provided decent working conditions for its employees. The organization encouraged its supporters to shop only at White Label stores and to boycott stores without the White Label.

The NCL also advocated for state and national minimum wage and maximum work hour laws. Many Progressive organizations, including the NCL, felt that women should have special consideration under labor law. In 1908, it assisted the proponents of a 10-hour-maximum women’s workday, successfully arguing their case to the Supreme Court. The *Muller v. Oregon* decision agreed that women deserved special protection from lengthy work days; the court had struck down similar legislation for men.

The Rise of the Labor Movement and Unions

- Groups of workers organized to negotiate with employers
- Early unions vs. newer unions
- Industrial unions at the turn of the 20th century tended to be more radical (IWW)
- Emerged in response to mid-1890s economic downturn



Labor unions are groups of workers who organize to collectively negotiate with their employers for the wages, benefits, and working conditions they believe are fair. Unions sometimes stage strikes, boycotts, and other activities to bring attention to their demands and put pressure on employers. Local labor unions existed from the end of the 18th century, but not until the late 19th century did the American labor movement become a significant factor in organizing workers from a variety of trades and manufacturing businesses. Early unions focused on specific crafts and trades. As the 20th century approached and increasing numbers of low-wage immigrants worked in factories, new types of unions developed to represent workers from a variety of manufacturing industries.

These new unions competed with the older ones, leading to tension within the labor movement overall. The industrial unions established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, for example, tended to take more radical stances toward economic and social reforms than did earlier craft and trade unions. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, or “Wobblies”) was perhaps the most prominent of these unions, accepting all workers regardless of national origin, religion, gender, or race and advocating political action, strikes, and boycotts. The IWW formed as a reaction to disagreement with the American Federation of Labor (the AF of L), a union federation which IWW members saw as too conservative and business friendly.

The economic downturn of the mid-1890s led many companies to reduce wages. Unions became stronger in response, with increasing numbers of workers joining, local unions consolidating into national federations, and workers increasingly striking to make their demands clear.

The Pullman Strike (1894)

- Pullman company cut wages, did not lower rents
- Workers joined American Railway Union
- Strike shut down the passenger railway system
- Federal intervention led to violence; 34 dead
- Government broke the strike



A scene from
the strike

The Pullman Palace Car Company, a manufacturer of railroad sleeping cars, cut wages during the economic downturn of the 1890s. Most of the company's workers lived in the company town of Pullman, south of Chicago. The company refused to reduce rents to help compensate for the lower wages.

Pullman workers joined the American Railway Union, led by the labor leader Eugene V. Debs. The workers went on strike, refusing to work on any trains with Pullman cars. This strike had the effect of stopping passenger trains throughout the country. The union promised that it did not intend to interfere with delivery of the U.S. mail. President Cleveland nevertheless ordered federal troops to operate the railway, claiming it necessary for ensuring delivery of the mail. Cleveland's decision led to rioting and the deaths of 34 people.

Federal intervention successfully broke the strike, and Eugene V. Debs, convicted of ignoring a court injunction against union leaders supporting the strike, spent six months in prison. The Pullman strike, while not leading to the gains workers had hoped for, set a precedent for the labor movement to support striking and for the federal government to intervene in strikes.

Samuel Gompers

- President of American Federation of Labor (AF of L)
- Established collective bargaining procedures
- Stressed worker benefits in exchange for union dues
- AF of L less radical than other unions



Samuel Gompers, a New Yorker who had emigrated from England at age 13, worked in a cigar factory and became president of his local chapter of the Cigarmakers' International Union. As president, he organized craft unions (unions whose members all do the same type of work) to form the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions in 1881. This organization became the American Federation of Labor (AF of L) in 1886, with Gompers as its president.

Gompers believed that fair treatment of workers and economic opportunity led to a stable society. He especially had concerns about workers' wages, which factory owners often reduced. He therefore established procedures for collective bargaining, the process by which union members can negotiate with their employers for wages, limited working hours, and other worker benefits. He also implemented benefits for unemployment, illness, and death, providing union members with increased job security in return for their union dues.

Gompers tried to stay out of politics and spoke out against more radical labor organizations such as the IWW. These organizations, in turn, saw Gompers as too conservative and did not like the idea of negotiating with business owners.

Discussion Questions

1. What impact did Taylorism have on workers?
2. What was the National Consumers League's consumer-based approach toward ending sweatshops and child labor? Do you see this as effective? Why?
3. What differences between older and newer unions tended to cause tension within the labor movement?

1. Under Taylor's system, workers experienced reduced autonomy, greater powerlessness, and increased boredom. While workers saw short-term gains in wages, they knew that long-term benefits to workers would decrease, since Taylor's system made workers do more for less and made individual tasks take less skill, jeopardizing job security.
2. In addition to standard means such as lobbying and backing test cases (e.g., *Muller v. Oregon*), the NCL appealed directly to women consumers by labeling products made by companies with fair minimum-wage and maximum work-hour requirements with its White Label. Conversely, the NCL urged women to boycott products and the stores that sold them that didn't meet its approval. Students may see this as perhaps more effective than agitating for legislation because it gave the choice to participate in the program to the business owner, and to support the program to the consumers; others may disagree for the very same reason.
3. Earlier unions usually focused on a specific craft or trade, while many newer unions represented workers in a variety of occupations; this led to competition for membership as newer unions became more inclusive. In addition, the newer industrial unions established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries tended to take more radical stances on economic and social reforms than did earlier craft and trade unions. Unions such as the IWW formed in response to the more conservative, business-friendly unions such as the AF of L.

The Good-Government Movement

- Political machines
- Patronage and the spoils system
- Progressives aimed to increase transparency and honesty in city government
- National Municipal League (1894)
- Reduced influence of immigrants and working class in city politics



"A Looming Tragedy of the Political Deep," a 1906 cartoon which depicts Republican and Democratic machines as sinking submarines

Many Progressive Era reformers looked to end governmental corruption, particularly at the city level. Powerful "political machines" (hierarchical political organizations or parties run by authoritarian bosses) controlled the governments of many major cities. These machines often employed patronage systems, in which political leaders awarded gifts and political positions to their supporters. In particular, machines operated by way of the spoils system, granting government jobs to supporters who worked hard on the campaign, rather than basing employment decisions on other qualifications.

To undermine these political machines, progressive advocates of "good government" attempted to diminish the parties' influence within city governments. In the process, they aimed to increase transparency, making municipal government more accountable to the people and more honest in their practices. Progressive politicians (including future President Theodore Roosevelt), educators, business leaders, and journalists founded the National Municipal League in 1894 with these goals in mind. This organization established local reform groups in cities throughout the country. These groups helped educate each other about good-government practices as their cities and states implemented new procedures, including direct primaries and reforms to the election of city council members.

Despite their intentions, these good-government activities had the effect of reducing the influence of immigrants and the working class on city politics, since political machines generally targeted these groups. Progressives did not necessarily find this result undesirable, however, as many Progressive political reformers distrusted immigrants and members of the working class.

Direct Primaries



- Allow voters—not party leaders or bosses—to directly choose candidates
- Robert La Follette of Wisconsin
- WI adopted first direct primary law in 1903

The good-government movement also worked to establish direct primaries in the states. The direct primary (also called a “primary election”) allows voters to select candidates for office, rather than candidates being chosen at party conventions or caucuses. The direct primary process therefore permitted an increased level of public participation in a democratic system, rather than allowing party leaders and bosses to choose candidates on their own.

Robert La Follette, as governor of Wisconsin (1901–1906) and Wisconsin senator (1906–1925), played an instrumental role in establishing direct primaries in his state and set an example for other states to follow. Wisconsin adopted the first direct primary law in the country in 1903.

Note to teacher: The cartoon in this slide, “A Seat That Holds Them All,” refers to the debate over direct primaries that dominated William Sulzer’s term as governor of New York. Sulzer’s support for the direct primary infuriated Tammany officials who opposed the measure. The cartoonist shows Sulzer with Hearst and Roosevelt, prominent figures whom Sulzer recruited to show public support for his direct primary bill. (Information on the cartoon from the Library of Congress.)

Lincoln Steffens

- Muckraker who exposed government corruption
- Articles in *McClure's*
- *The Shame of the Cities* (1904)
- Uncovered direct evidence of graft
- Increased public outrage



In an attempt to expose government corruption, muckraker Lincoln Steffens wrote a series of articles in *McClure's* magazine that he subsequently compiled into a 1904 book titled *The Shame of the Cities*. Steffens focused on St. Louis, Minneapolis, Cleveland, New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia. During his investigations, he uncovered evidence of graft payments (gifts to politicians in return for political favors); in Minneapolis, he photographed a ledger clearly showing such payments.

Steffens aimed to invoke public outrage against government corruption, thus leading to increased calls for change. His efforts, combined with other muckraking activities, effectively increased outrage among the general public.

Steffens: From *The Shame of the Cities*

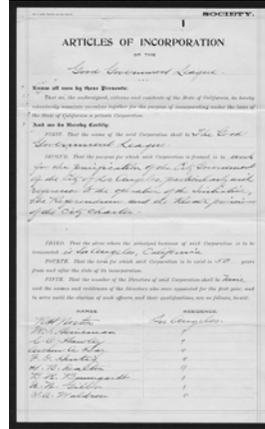
When I set out to describe the corrupt systems of certain typical cities, I meant to show simply how the people were deceived and betrayed. But in the very first study—St. Louis—the startling truth lay bare that corruption was not merely political; it was financial, commercial, social; the ramifications of boodle were so complex, various, and far-reaching, that one mind could hardly grasp them, and not even Joseph W. Folk, the tireless prosecutor, could follow them all.

Discussion questions: This excerpt is from Steffens’s introduction to *The Shame of the Cities*. Have students read it, and then ask following:

- Whose “side” was Steffens on? Who was he trying to support in this investigation? How can you tell? (Steffens supported the people, rather than the politicians—evident when he says “the people were deceived and betrayed.”)
- What does Steffens mean when he says, “corruption was not merely political; it was financial, commercial, social...?” (He means that the corruption was more complex than relating simply to a few corrupt politicians. Rather, it was closely intertwined with the cities’ financial and social structures.)
- In what ways might urban corruption have been complex, rather than simply a matter of a few corrupt politicians? (For example, prominent business leaders might have been involved in financial dealings with the city, paying off politicians to protect or enhance their businesses. Similarly, tenement landlords might have bribed city officials to look the other way regarding their buildings’ conditions. Since these prominent individuals had social connections and influence on many levels of city life, it would have been very difficult to stand up against them. They therefore would have held sway over newspaper reporters and editors and others who might have otherwise come forward to denounce the corruption.)

Initiative and Referendum

- Initiative: citizens vote on a proposed state law
- Referendum: citizens vote on an existing law
- Progressives saw state legislatures as corrupt and beholden to wealthy business interests
- South Dakota became the first to enact both, in 1898



Articles of incorporation for the California Good Government League, which promised in the document to “work for the purification” of the L.A. city government through initiative, referendum, and recall

Progressive “good government” reformers also established initiative and referendum procedures in state electoral systems. These new procedures allowed citizens to vote directly on state laws, increasing the level of public participation. The initiative permitted citizens to vote for or against a proposed state law, while the referendum asked citizens to vote for or against an existing state law.

Progressives favored the initiative and referendum procedures because they felt that state legislatures tended to be corrupt and beholden to wealthy business interests rather than to the general public. In 1898, South Dakota became the first state to enact the initiative and referendum.

The 17th Amendment

- Constitution originally had state legislatures elect senators
- Bribery, corruption, deadlocks in state legislatures
- Direct primaries aimed to change this method
- “Oregon System”

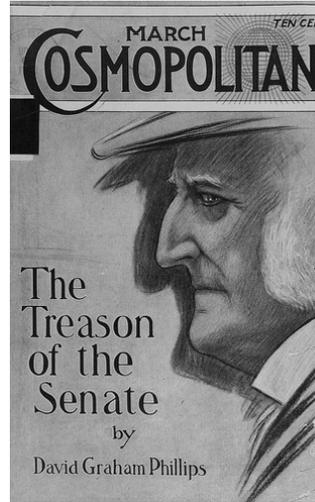
The U.S. Constitution originally mandated that state legislatures, rather than the public, should elect U.S. senators. As the 19th century progressed, this arrangement became increasingly controversial. During the Civil War, for example, conflict between the Democratic and Republican parties within some states prevented their legislatures from choosing any senators for long periods of time. After the war, problems with bribery and corruption often led to contested senatorial votes in state legislatures, and many legislatures remained deadlocked, not sending any senators to Washington.

During the 1890s and into the early part of the 20th century, efforts to reform the system of electing senators gained momentum. Beginning with South Carolina in 1888, states reformed their electoral systems to include the direct primary, by which members of the voting public could directly vote for senatorial candidates. Since the Constitution still mandated that state legislatures elect senators, the direct primary system called for state legislatures to elect the senatorial candidates who had received the greatest number of popular votes.

Other states adopted the “Oregon System,” which called for a runoff election between the two senatorial candidates who had received the most votes from each party. Candidates for state legislature were asked to make public statements either promising to vote for the senatorial candidate who received the most votes or admitting that they would vote for whomever they wanted to. This made it easier for voters to choose candidates who would honor the results of a direct primary.

The 17th Amendment (cont.)

- Little support in Senate, except La Follette
- Phillips's *The Treason of the Senate*
- Amendment ratified in 1913



In the early 20th century, many states began to favor amending the Constitution to allow for direct election of senators. Progressive leaders, including Robert La Follette of Wisconsin, championed this change, but members of the U.S. Senate resisted. Public support for an amendment increased largely as a result of muckraking articles published in *Cosmopolitan* magazine, a well-respected general interest magazine owned by publishing magnate William Randolph Hearst. In *Cosmopolitan*, muckraker David Graham Phillips wrote a series entitled *The Treason of the Senate*, describing senators as extremely corrupt.

Senators who had been elected via direct primaries began to support a constitutional amendment. The Senate passed this amendment in 1911, while the House did the next year. After ratification by the states, the 17th Amendment went into effect in 1913. Senators would now be elected “by the people thereof,” rather than by state legislatures. Most people regarded this amendment as a victory for Progressives and a blow to corruption in the Senate.

Discussion Questions

1. What were the main goals of the good-government movement?
2. How are an initiative and a referendum similar? How are they different?
3. What did the 17th Amendment provide for? What were some problems it was designed to prevent?

1. Reformers tried to increase the transparency of government (particularly city government), making it more accountable and honest. They also hoped to diminish the influence of political parties—especially political machines—within city governments and to end patronage and the often counterproductive spoils system.
2. Both an initiative and a referendum give voters direct say on a piece of state legislation, either for or against. They differ in that an initiative involves a law not yet passed, while a referendum concerns a law already in effect.
3. The 17th Amendment provided for the election of U.S. senators by popular vote, rather than selection by state legislatures. The Constitution's original system often caused a deadlock between parties in state legislatures, resulting in a vacancy in the U.S. Senate. In addition, many saw this process as facilitating bribery and corruption.

Women's Suffrage

- Included in movement toward more democratic government
- NAWSA formed in 1890
- More women served as progressive leaders
- Anthony, Catt, and Paul
- 19th Amendment passed in 1919



Suffragists celebrate the ratification of the 19th Amendment

During the Progressive Era, women did not have the right to vote. The women's suffrage movement had been gaining momentum since the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, at which advocates drafted a Declaration of Sentiments calling for women to be given the vote. At the dawn of the 20th century, the movement toward more democratic government increasingly involved the issue of women's suffrage.

In 1890, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) formed by combining the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), with suffragist leader Susan B. Anthony as the new organization's first president. Around the same time, women became leaders of progressive reform institutions and initiatives, including Jane Addams's Hull House. As women's voices became more prominent, progressive leaders called for a more fair and democratic system of electing representatives to all levels of government.

In the early 20th century, millions of women and men mobilized to support women's suffrage. This mobilization increased with new activist leaders, including NAWSA president Carrie Chapman Catt, who replaced Anthony in 1904. Catt gave numerous lectures on the topic of women's suffrage and recruited thousands of volunteers and new members to the organization. Alice Paul joined NAWSA in 1912 and became a prominent activist in the organization, particularly in fundraising and congressional lobbying. She strongly supported a constitutional amendment permitting women's suffrage, rather than a continued state-by-state push as NAWSA had been doing. The suffragists' dream did not become reality until 1919, when the 19th Amendment to the Constitution passed the Senate and House and was ratified by three-fourths of the states.

The Temperance Movement

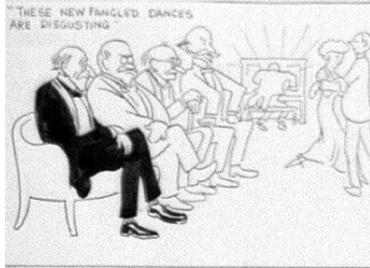
- Some felt that alcohol undermined society's "moral fabric"
- Supported curtailing or banning alcohol
- WCTU and Anti-Saloon League
- Targeted immigrants and corrupt politicians
- State and local successes
- 19th Amendment (1919)



Many Progressive Era reformers—particularly women—joined the temperance movement. This movement had begun in the 1830s, advocating the curtailment and sometimes the prohibition of alcohol. Progressive temperance advocates argued that drinking alcohol undermined the moral fabric of society and linked alcohol to corrupt politicians, particularly in the cities. Temperance activism targeted immigrants, particularly the Irish, who developed a reputation for heavy drinking. The push for temperance gained strength during the last decades of the 19th century, particularly with the establishment of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in 1874. Its membership peaked in the late 19th century, with approximately 200,000 members. The Anti-Saloon League formed in 1893 and worked closely with Protestant churches to spread its message in favor of the complete prohibition of alcohol.

Supporters of temperance saw success at the state and local levels in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly in the South, West, and rural states. They met national success in 1919, with the passage of the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. (The amendment was repealed in 1933 by the 21st Amendment.)

Morality “Policing”



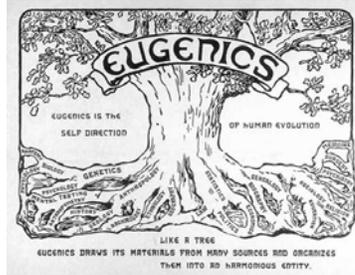
- Moral “improvement” for immigrants, working class, and the young
- Targeted leisure activities (e.g., movies, music)
- Ragtime and jazz
- Rules against “immoral” dancing
- Whites thought new music tied too closely to African American culture

A common Progressive argument called for reforms to involve some level of moral “improvement,” particularly amongst immigrant and working-class populations and young people. Reformers who felt this way, primarily middle-class women, often sought to regulate others’ personal behavior. They particularly targeted leisure activities of populations they felt needed some moral “fine-tuning,” for example, by establishing a National Board of Censorship to regulate the content of movies.

The Progressive Era coincided with the exploding popularity of ragtime and jazz music, particularly for young people of all ethnic backgrounds and races. Some white middle-class reformers opposed this trend and established lists of dancing rules (e.g. preventing women and men from dancing too close together) to curb what they viewed as immoral dancing. They felt the new musical trends were too closely tied to African American culture and feared it threatened the morality of young white women.

The Eugenics Movement

- Believed that those with “inferior” genes threatened the nation’s future
- Sought to curb reproduction by the “inferior” and increase reproduction by the “superior”
- Supported by many Progressives
- 18 states enacted eugenics laws
- Waned after WWII



Some Progressive reformers also embraced eugenics, a movement within the scientific community that claimed that people with “inferior” genes posed a threat to a nation’s morality and future development. Proponents believed that the country would improve if it could curb reproduction by those of “inferior” genetic stock and increase reproduction by people of “superior” genetic constitution. These designations of good and bad often related to race, class, and ethnicity, with the white middle and upper classes considered superior to new immigrants, lower classes, and African Americans. Eugenicists also targeted the mentally disabled, proposing sterilization programs for the developmentally disabled, residents of insane asylums, and perpetrators of certain crimes. Eighteen states—beginning with Indiana, in 1907—enacted laws permitting sterilization for people considered insane or mentally retarded. In these states, doctors could legally sterilize people without their consent.

Many prominent progressives, including presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, supported the eugenics movement. Major universities taught eugenics as part of their science curricula, thus perpetuating this pseudoscience through affluent young students who would later gain positions of power in American society. The eugenics movement therefore blended into middle- and upper-class belief systems, including those of the Progressive movement.

The eugenics movement waned in the U.S. after World War II, as Americans learned about Nazi Germany’s own eugenics programs and became increasingly appalled at similar practices within the United States.

African Americans in the Progressive Era



A black sharecropper

- Reforms focused on poor whites and European immigrants
- Menial jobs
- Jim Crow laws in the South
- Ineligible for most Northern factory jobs
- Worked mostly as domestics or day laborers

While a multitude of Progressive reforms and activism occurred at the local, state, and national levels, they mainly benefited native-born Caucasians and European immigrants. African Americans fared much worse during this period.

Typically relegated to the most menial jobs in the North and the South, including sharecropping on farms owned by Southern whites, African Americans continued to face intense discrimination throughout the country. During this era, Jim Crow laws came into full force in the South, entrenching discrimination for decades to come by preventing blacks from voting and imposing second-class citizenship upon African Americans in most areas of life. Violence against African Americans increased in the South, with lynch mobs enforcing the racial code.

African Americans generally could not secure even the most undesirable factory jobs in the North. Instead, they tended to work as domestics or day laborers. Although they did not face the same level of institutionalized discrimination as in the South, African Americans in the North struggled daily with acts of prejudice and economic discrimination.

African Americans in the Progressive Era (continued)

- Most reformers middle-class whites; many highly racist
- African Americans forced to organize their own reforms and groups
- Ida B. Wells



Ida B. Wells

Most Progressive reformers were middle-class whites. While promoting the ideals of fairness and justice for American workers, the reformers often expressed highly racist sentiments and did not include African Americans among those for whom they were fighting. Many had accepted the idea, commonly taught in universities at the time, that African Americans were innately inferior to whites.

This growth in discrimination did not prevent African Americans from organizing their own reform activities, which were generally separate from white progressive programs. For example, teacher and civil- and women's-rights activist Ida B. Wells traveled the country helping to establish black women's clubs, which focused on finding solutions not only to racism but also to problems with education, health, sanitation, and other Progressive concerns. African American women also founded settlement houses and mutual-benefit societies to help other black women in the North and the South. Many African Americans also established community support networks, purchased land, and formed agricultural cooperatives, particularly in the South. African Americans in industry participated in strikes, although segregated into their own unions.

African Americans: Booker T. Washington

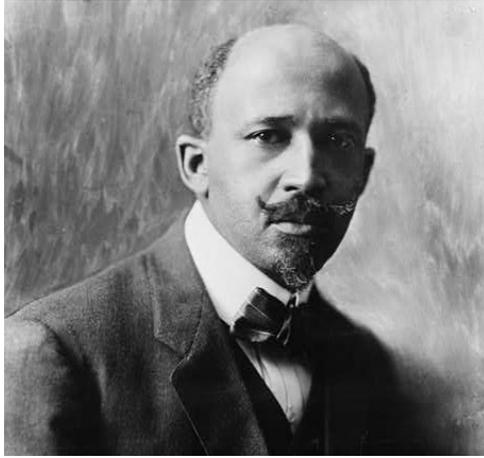
- Founded Tuskegee Institute
- Promoted educational opportunities
- Allied with prominent whites
- Believed white support was needed to get ahead



The two most prominent African American leaders during the Progressive Era were Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois.

Washington founded the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, an African American teachers' college that later became Tuskegee University. An educator and author, Washington advocated for African Americans while promising white America that he would not demand the black vote or insist upon integration. He received endorsements from middle- and upper-class whites, including many Progressive government and industrial leaders, who approved of his conciliatory attitude and did not see him as a threat. Most middle-class blacks also strongly supported his ideas. Washington formed many alliances with political, philanthropic, and education leaders and promoted a strong agenda for African American education. He believed that establishing alliances with and gaining the support of whites made for the best path toward increased opportunities for African Americans, particularly as they gained educational opportunities.

African Americans: W.E.B. Du Bois



- Strongly against segregation and discrimination
- Wrote articles and books; published other blacks' work
- Challenged blacks to stand up against the dominant culture

Some African Americans, including members of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), criticized Washington in his later years for not taking a strong public stand against segregation and discrimination. Civil rights activist and author W.E.B. Du Bois participated in this criticism and spoke out forcefully in favor of changing the political climate and laws that led to discrimination. Du Bois wrote and published numerous articles and published the works of other African American authors, including the poet Langston Hughes. Like Washington, Du Bois strongly supported education for African Americans, but he did not believe that they should try to “fit in” to white culture. Rather, he challenged African Americans to question and stand up against the dominant views and policies that most whites—including Progressive activists—supported.

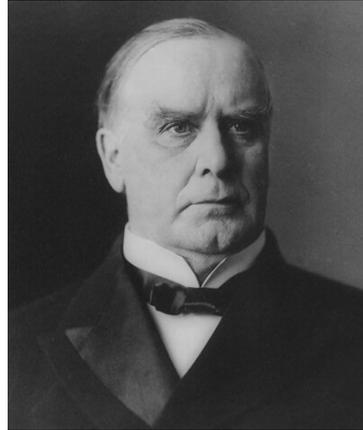
Discussion Questions

1. What were some ways in which Progressives attempted to improve the “morality” of the lower-class? Do you see these actions as effective? Why?
2. How did Washington and Du Bois differ in philosophy as to how blacks could better their lives and get ahead? Whose approach would most Progressives have likely preferred? Why?

1. Progressives tried to make immigrants, the poor, and the young (who were likely considered more susceptible) more “moral” by fighting to curtail the use of or ban alcohol, to regulate the content of movies, discouraging dancing “too closely,” and by condemning new genres of music such as ragtime and jazz, both of which moral reformers disliked because of their association with African Americans. Students will likely see these measures as ineffective, probably because of unintended consequences such as organized crime’s rise during Prohibition; moreover, the complaints raised by Progressives are the same leveled against the poor and the young in every decade since.
2. While both men strongly stressed the importance of education as a means of improving blacks’ position in society, Washington believed that blacks needed the support of whites to succeed as a whole, while Du Bois advocated that African Americans question and stand up against the dominant white culture. Most Progressives—who tended to harbor racist beliefs in spite of their drive to help the poor and disadvantaged—likely preferred Washington’s approach, since he didn’t agitate for integration or black voting rights and seemed less of a threat to the social order; Du Bois’s ideas about changing the political climate and passing legislation, let alone his lack of interest in conforming to white culture, probably seemed radical to white Progressives.

President William McKinley

- Elected in 1896
- Foreign affairs in first term
- Handily won election of 1900 on “prosperity” platform
- Supported rapid industrialization and trusts
- Began to change his views on trusts
- Assassinated in 1901



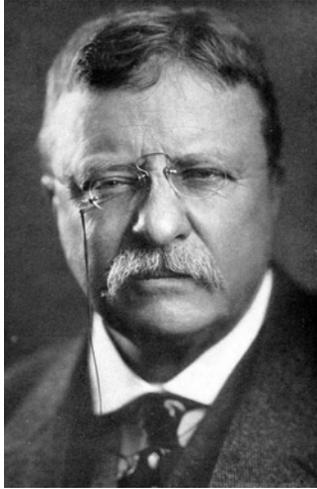
William McKinley won the presidential election of 1896, defeating the populist Democrat William Jennings Bryan. A Republican, McKinley campaigned on a platform that emphasized a protective tariff on imports and keeping the U.S. on the gold standard (meaning the dollar would be worth a predetermined amount of gold).

McKinley spent most of his first term consumed by foreign affairs, including fighting the Spanish-American War. He ran for reelection against Bryan in 1900, along with his vice presidential running mate, New York governor and war hero Theodore Roosevelt. McKinley ran on a platform of “prosperity,” emphasizing the country’s increasing domestic wealth and power abroad. He won handily.

At first McKinley supported the rapid industrialization sweeping the country, including the growth of large businesses and trusts. He began to change his views during his second term, when he called for attention to the increasing problem of industrial consolidation into trusts and stopped supporting protective tariffs.

McKinley did not live long enough to enact policies in accordance with his changing views. While attending the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, on September 6, 1901, McKinley was shot in the abdomen by the anarchist son of Polish immigrants. He died eight days later, and Theodore Roosevelt became president.

President Theodore Roosevelt



- Considered a liability by Republican Party leaders
- Disliked both excessive corporate power and potential violence by the working class
- Believed the wealthy had a moral obligation to help the poor

Although Roosevelt was a hero of the Spanish-American War and very popular with the public, many Republican leaders regarded him as an unpredictable liability to their party. These Republicans had been pleased that Roosevelt, clearly a highly ambitious politician, was relegated to the role of McKinley's vice president. McKinley's assassination forced the nation—and the Republican Party—to accept Roosevelt's leadership.

Roosevelt had deep concerns about the economic and social divisions that had become increasingly clear in American society. He disliked excessive corporate power and the consolidation of extreme wealth in the hands of a few corporate magnates, and he also spoke out against the power of the underclass to foment violence against the upper classes. Although raised in an extremely wealthy New York family, Roosevelt branched out from this circle of affluence to promote laws and regulations helping the poor and working class. His father had taught him that the wealthy had a moral obligation to help the poor.

President Theodore Roosevelt (continued)

- Increased federal government's role in regulation
- Only opposed monopolies he believed worked against the public interest
- Became very popular



Roosevelt greatly expanded the role of the federal government as opposed to individual states, particularly with regard to regulation. Although he gained a reputation as a “trustbuster” and a champion of the working class, he was more conservative than is often believed. He did not oppose all monopolies, but rather only those that he believed worked against the public interest. He began his presidency on a cautious note, becoming bolder during his second term.

Roosevelt became very popular with the general public, in large part because of his assertive personality, well-publicized personal exploits (including driving a car, flying an airplane, and going in a submarine), and willingness to assert government authority against corporate power. He easily won election to his own term in 1904.

Roosevelt: The Square Deal

- A package of laws and regulations that he felt to be fair to all, particularly workers:
 - Increased regulation of business
 - Workers' right to organize
 - Eight-hour work days
 - Pure food and drug laws
 - Income and inheritance taxes on the wealthy

Roosevelt used the term “Square Deal” to describe his overall domestic program, which demonstrated his desire to promote laws and regulations that were fair to all people. Roosevelt argued that farmers and wage earners should feel that they received fair treatment, because fair treatment for the lower classes would engender democracy and prosperity for all members of society.

To this end, Roosevelt used the Sherman Antitrust Act to challenge business monopolies. He supported increased regulations on business, workers' right to organize into unions, eight-hour workdays for federal employees, pure food and drug laws, and income and inheritance taxes on the wealthiest Americans.

Roosevelt: Trustbusting

- Established Department of Commerce and its Bureau of Corporations
- Invoked Sherman Antitrust Act in over 40 lawsuits
- Northern Securities Company case set precedent
- Hepburn Act set maximum railroad rates and strengthened the ICC



Early in his presidency, Roosevelt took action against the trusts, particularly the railroads. In 1903, Congress followed Roosevelt's wishes by establishing the Department of Commerce, which contained a Bureau of Corporations. This bureau had the power to investigate corporations and publish the results, although it could not directly regulate them.

Roosevelt invoked the Sherman Antitrust Act to serve lawsuits against more than 40 trusts, including J.P. Morgan's Northern Securities Company, a conglomerate of western railroads. After much litigation, the Supreme Court ordered that the company be dissolved in 1904. This case set the precedent for Roosevelt's other antitrust lawsuits.

Roosevelt further acted against railroad monopolies by supporting the Hepburn Act of 1906. This law allowed the Interstate Commerce Commission to establish maximum railroad rates and review railroad companies' records. It ended the practice of railroads charging inflated rates and had the intention of facilitating trade and travel via the railroads. It also greatly increased the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Roosevelt: Conservation Ethic and Actions



Roosevelt and naturalist John Muir
at Yosemite in California

- Saw America's landscape as central to its democratic spirit; natural resources vital to economic, political strength
- Resources belong to the public
- Set aside numerous public lands
- U.S. Forest Service (1905)
- Antiquities Act (1906)

An avid outdoorsman and hunter, Roosevelt became the first president to make environmental conservation a central goal. He viewed the American landscape as central to the nation's democratic character and spirit, with its unique wilderness areas (such as the Grand Canyon) symbolic of American pride, uniqueness, and greatness. He also understood that the country's natural resources play a vital role in its economic health and global political strength.

Roosevelt's presidency came at a time when many Americans were beginning to realize that the natural resources on which the country had built its wealth were finite. Roosevelt feared that if the country's natural resources continued to decline or became controlled by a small number of wealthy individuals or corporations, the economic potential of future generations would be jeopardized, posing a threat to democracy. He particularly believed that the nation's natural wealth belonged to the public, rather than to private interests. He also felt that hunting and other outdoor pursuits contributed vitally to a man's character, and he lamented that modern urban men were losing the sense of "manliness" that only the outdoors could develop.

With the goal of conserving these resources—not only for economic security but also for the enjoyment of all Americans—Roosevelt established the United States Forest Service, five national parks, and numerous other wildlife refuges and reservations. These amounted to more public land designations than all previous presidents combined. In establishing and managing these lands, Roosevelt worked closely with National Forest Service head Gifford Pinchot, an advocate of efficient federal (as opposed to private) forest management. Roosevelt also established the Antiquities Act of 1906, allowing the president to directly order the preservation of areas of national significance, particularly archaeological sites.

Ida M. Tarbell

- Teacher and muckraker
- *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904)
- Exposed monopolistic business practices
- Contributed to public outrage and support for antitrust legislation
- Inspired other muckrakers



While Roosevelt used his presidential powers against the trusts, activists helped in exposing the trusts' unscrupulous business practices. Teacher and muckraking journalist Ida M. Tarbell became best known for her investigative exposé of the Standard Oil Company. This report, entitled *The History of the Standard Oil Company*, appeared as a series in *McClure's* magazine and was then published as a book in 1904. In the report, Tarbell exposed the monopolistic business practices of Standard Oil's founder and owner, John D. Rockefeller.

The History of the Standard Oil Company contributed to public outrage against Standard Oil and public support for antitrust legislation. The report also inspired other journalists to conduct similar investigations into the trusts.

The Coal Strike of 1902



Striking miners

- May: PA mine workers struck over wages and safety
- Threatened coal availability
- June: Roosevelt ordered investigation
- October: Roosevelt's meeting; no progress
- Public support for strikers grew

On May 12, 1902, the United Mine Workers of America went on strike in the anthracite (“hard”) coal fields of eastern Pennsylvania. The union sought formal recognition from the coal industry, more control over workers’ wages, and improvement of safety concerns. This strike threatened the availability of coal for heating the homes of millions of city residents, particularly if the strike were to continue into the colder months of the year.

Tensions mounted between strikers and law enforcement, including the Pennsylvania National Guard. President Roosevelt became involved on June 8th, ordering an investigation of the strike. On October 3rd, he organized a meeting with representatives of government, labor, and management, at which he expressed his deep concern about a possible shortfall of coal for the coming winter. He called for an immediate end to the strike, appealing to the need to sacrifice for the common good.

Despite Roosevelt’s pleas, this meeting did not produce immediate results. The company’s owners refused to negotiate with labor. Roosevelt asked the union to end the strike in exchange for his support of a commission to investigate and propose a resolution to the issues that had led to the strike. Union leaders and members overwhelmingly rejected this proposal.

Public support for the striking coal workers grew rapidly, and many business and government leaders (including Roosevelt) feared escalating violence and a populist call for socialist governmental policies. Some strikers acted violently against people related to the mine owners, including family members and security guards.

The Coal Strike of 1902 (continued)

- Morgan's commission
- Strike ended late October
- Increased union confidence and membership
- Set precedent for federal involvement in strikes



The government recruited the help of J.P. Morgan, a major stakeholder in the coal business. Morgan had helped negotiate a previous coal strike and had the government's trust in helping resolve in this emergency. Morgan helped set up a commission that included engineers, a judge, a coal industry expert, and a union leader. Industry representatives could thus avoid the appearance of negotiating with the union directly by communicating with the commission.

The strike ended on October 23rd. The commission investigated conditions in the coal fields and business practices in the coal industry. It concluded that the horrendous working conditions many strikers had reported were the exception to the rule. It directed the two sides to "split the difference" in terms of what they wanted, with coal workers receiving 10% wage increases, as opposed to the 20% they had asked for, and a nine-hour workday instead of the requested eight hours. The commission also required the establishment of a six-member arbitration board, to be staffed by equal number of coal company and union leaders.

Despite these compromises, most saw the Coal Strike of 1902 as a victory for the union. The strike had the effect of increasing confidence in unions and therefore raising union membership.

The strike also represented the first time the federal government had direct participation in negotiations between business owners and workers. Roosevelt's involvement set a precedent for government intervention in future strikes, citing the interests of the general public as a legitimate government responsibility.

Upton Sinclair and *The Jungle*



Upton Sinclair

- Published 1906
- Harsh criticisms of working conditions in Chicago's meatpacking industry
- Instant bestseller
- Public more concerned about meat safety than working conditions
- Meat sales abroad cut in half

In 1906, author Upton Sinclair published his most famous novel, *The Jungle*. This book offered a scathing criticism of conditions in Chicago's meatpacking industry, describing the characters' impoverished living conditions, harsh working conditions, lack of social programs or support, and stark contrast between the working-class main characters and people of wealthier classes. In one famous scene, Sinclair described workers falling into rendering tanks and being processed along with the meat.

In *The Jungle* and other writings, Sinclair continued the muckraking tradition. Sinclair distrusted both of the major political parties, feeling that neither party had an interest in working toward real solutions to the problems that he wrote about.

The Jungle first appeared as a series of articles in the socialist newspaper *The Appeal to Reason*. It became an instant bestseller when released in book form in 1906. The public reacted strongly to the conditions they read about, but people seemed most concerned with the issue of food safety and contaminated meat, rather than the issue of working conditions as Sinclair had intended. As the book circulated internationally, American meat sales abroad decreased by half. This led the meatpacking industry to call for government inspection and certification of American meat.

Food and Drug Legislation

- In response to growing public outrage over unsafe and unsanitary food
- Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*
- Meat Inspection Act (1906)
- Pure Food and Drug Act (1906)



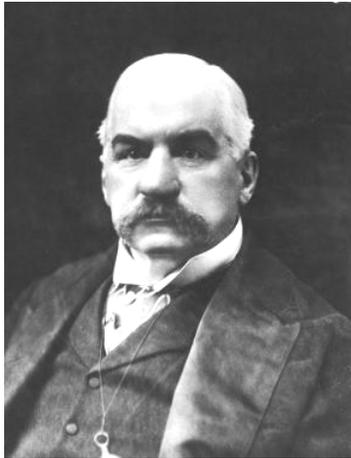
A German meatpacking plant

Once he'd won a presidential election, Roosevelt became less cautious and more liberal in exerting his opinions and authority in favor of governmental regulation. Two of the most significant regulatory actions Roosevelt supported were the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act, both of 1906. With Roosevelt's support, Congress passed these laws in response to increasing public outrage against reported incidents of food poisoning and unsanitary conditions in meatpacking factories. Newspaper articles had blamed meatpackers for sickening U.S. troops in Cuba during the Spanish-American War by sending them unhealthy meat. The publication of *The Jungle* greatly expanded the level of public concern about this issue.

Roosevelt had sent inspectors into meatpacking plants to verify Upton Sinclair's reports. Their conclusions led him to support a law regulating the meatpacking industry. The Meat Inspection Act authorized the Department of Agriculture to inspect meat and deem it unfit for human consumption when necessary. The law also required the inspection of meatpacking plants that intended to ship meat across state lines.

Consumers had concerns about the adulteration of food and medicines with unnecessary or unsavory chemicals and ingredients. The Pure Food and Drug Act required that food and medicine shipped between states or abroad be unadulterated and properly labeled. Many farmers and some food and drug producers supported the law, hoping to differentiate their products from "adulterated" ones and therefore maintain consumer confidence.

The Panic of 1907



J.P. Morgan

- A severe economic crisis
- Recession began in 1906
- NYSE plunged by 50%
- Runs on banks
- Knickerbocker Trust Company collapsed
- Unemployment, bankruptcies rose; production, imports fell
- J.P. Morgan, others personally contributed money

During much of Roosevelt's administration, the U.S. economy stayed unstable. An economic recession beginning in 1906 culminated in the Panic of 1907, one of the most severe economic crises of the era. The New York Stock Exchange plunged 50%, and people made runs on banks. The collapse of one of New York's largest trusts (a type of commercial bank, not a business trust), the Knickerbocker Trust Company, caused other trusts to panic as banks began to withhold money. This panic spread to the general public. During the economic recession, unemployment and bankruptcies rose while production, imports, and immigration fell.

Financier J.P. Morgan pledged a large sum of his own money to help stabilize the banks and convinced other wealthy financiers to do the same. These actions helped slow down the crisis. However, later in 1907, the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company (TCI) collapsed, threatening the financial solvency of New York's major brokerage firm. This situation could have been disastrous to the economy, but Roosevelt allowed Morgan's U.S. Steel to intervene with an emergency takeover of TCI.

The Federal Reserve Act

- Response to Panic of 1907
- National Monetary Commission
- Federal Reserve Act (1913)
- Federal Reserve System
- Gave government control over monetary and banking systems, in accordance with Progressive Era trends



A painting depicting President Wilson signing the Federal Reserve Act

As a result of the Panic of 1907 and the overall recession and economic instability of this time, the government took measures toward reforming the country's financial system. In 1908, Congress established the National Monetary Commission to study and propose solutions to problems in the banking system that had led to the panic. The commission sent Senate Republican leader Nelson Aldrich to Europe to study the European banking system, in which countries had central banks that could put money into the economy during downturns.

Although many members of the federal government appeared ready for Progressive reform of the country's financial system, any concrete changes took several years. At the recommendation of the National Monetary Commission, Congress passed the Federal Reserve Act in 1913. This created the Federal Reserve System, a central banking system for the country that remains in place today. The act reflected some of the ideals of the Progressive Era in that it established government control over the monetary and banking systems, rather than placing these systems solely into private hands. It proved politically polarizing, with most Republicans voting against it and most Democrats voting for it.

At the time, people hoped this new system would prevent national financial disasters similar to the Panic of 1907. The stock market crash of 1929 that ushered in the Great Depression dashed these hopes.

The Progressive Party and the Election of 1912

- Taft won in 1908
- Rift in Republican Party between Progressives and conservatives
- Progressive (“Bull Moose”) Party split from Republican Party; nominated Roosevelt
- Democrat Wilson won in 1912, with Roosevelt second



Progressive Party convention, 1912

Roosevelt decided not to run for reelection in 1908. His hand-picked successor, Republican William Howard Taft, easily won the election against William Jennings Bryan to become the next president. Taft proved much less popular than Roosevelt, antagonizing Progressives, conservatives, and Roosevelt himself. This led to a deep split between Progressives and conservatives within the Republican Party. Taft led the conservative wing, while Roosevelt (although no longer president) led the party's Progressive wing.

When the Republicans decided to nominate Taft for reelection in 1912, a number of Progressive Republicans split from the party and formed the Progressive Party, also known as the “Bull Moose Party.” The Bull Moose Party nominated Roosevelt as its presidential candidate. Three major parties therefore participated in the election: the Republicans supporting Taft, the Bull Moose Party supporting Roosevelt, and the Democratic Party supporting Woodrow Wilson. The resulting split in the Republican vote made Wilson the winner; Roosevelt came in second.

The Progressive Party nominated Roosevelt again in the election of 1916, but he refused to run. Most Progressive leaders returned to the Republican Party around that time.

The Progressive Era: Legacy

- Wilson established FTC, progressive income tax; also passed Clayton Antitrust Act
- Many reforms remain in place today
- Did not radically change the structure of society
- Set precedent for governmental protections against unchecked capitalism

The Progressive Era continued through the Wilson Administration and World War I. Wilson and the Democratic Congress supported a variety of Progressive initiatives, including establishing the Federal Trade Commission (to protect consumers against business monopolies), passing the Clayton Antitrust Act (further strengthening antitrust provisions), and enacting the first progressive federal income tax (requiring higher earners to pay higher tax rates), as well as passing the Federal Reserve Act.

Many Progressive Era reforms remain in place today, including child labor laws, antitrust legislation, food and drug safety laws, and worker protections. While many Progressive laws remain on the books, the level of enforcement has varied depending on the political climate throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries.

The Progressive Era didn't radically alter the distribution of wealth or the overall economic system, as radical reformers had hoped. It did, however, set a precedent for the government to become actively involved in protecting individuals against the negative effects of unchecked capitalism. The reforms of this period set the stage for the country to balance economic growth with social protections in the new industrial economy and society that had been created.

Discussion Questions

1. What was Roosevelt's Square Deal?
2. How did Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle* help create the Meat Inspection Act of 1906?
3. Why did Roosevelt support the conservation of public lands?
4. In what way was the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 a response to the Panic of 1907?

1. The Square Deal was Roosevelt's name for his package of laws and regulations he felt to be fair (and "square") to all people—in effect, the "deal" he made with the American people to make changes improving equity and fairness. These changes included reducing the influence of trusts, increased regulation of business, preserving workers' right to organize, and instituting eight-hour workdays for federal employees, pure food and drug laws, and income and inheritance taxes on the wealthiest Americans.
2. Although a novel, *The Jungle* publicized a range of unsanitary conditions in meatpacking plants, leading Americans to demand governmental inspection and certification of meat. When other countries stopped importing American meat due to contamination concerns, meatpacking companies began to support this legislation as well.
3. He believed the unique American landscape to be central and vital to the American character and that the country's finite natural resources were important to its economic health and global political strength. He also felt that the land belonged to the public, not to private corporations, and lamented the decline of what he considered the "manly" pursuits of hunting and other outdoor activities.
4. The economic instability of the Panic of 1907 spurred the government to reform the country's financial system. Following the National Monetary Commission's study of European central banks, which could inject money into the economy during downturns, the Federal Reserve Act created the Federal Reserve System (the "Fed") to perform the same function (and others) to prevent financial collapses.

Progressivism and the Age of Reform



This political cartoon shows President Theodore Roosevelt as a hunter who's captured two bears: the "good trusts" bear he's put on a leash labeled "restraint," and the "bad trusts" bear he's apparently killed.

Essential Questions

- Why did the Progressive Era begin? What social, economic, and political factors contributed to the movement toward Progressive reform?
- How did the issues prominent during the Progressive Era, and the changes that occurred then, affect the lives of immigrants, African Americans, and women?
- How did the social and moral values of white middle- and upper-class citizens influence Progressive Era reform agendas?
- In what ways did Progressive reforms depend on the work of individual activists? In what ways did they depend on the participation of larger groups of people?
- What impact did political leadership have on shaping Progressive reforms?

The Gilded Age

- 1870s and 1880s
- U.S. as world's main industrial power
- Industrialists and financiers formed trusts
- "Robber barons"
- Criticism of unfair practices and poor worker treatment



A cartoon criticizing "robber barons" such as Gould and Vanderbilt for their treatment of workers

Standard Oil and Trusts



John D. Rockefeller

- Founded by John D. Rockefeller in 1867
- Controlled 90% of U.S. oil-refining and soon almost the entire petroleum industry
- Other industries followed his model
- Sherman Antitrust Act (1890) had little impact for a decade after its passage

The Panic of 1893

- Overspeculation during the 1880s
- Banks, railroads, and other companies failed
- Unemployment, homelessness, and financial ruin
- Reform-minded Americans began to organize



The New York Stock Exchange during the Panic of 1893

Progressivism: An Overview

- “Making progress”
- A variety of organizations and interests
- Not a cohesive movement
- Three broad categories: social, economic, and political reform

Progressivism: State and Local

- Many changes could be more easily attained
- Local: high schools, playgrounds, less corruption, better sewage, beautification, settlement houses
- State: reduced overcrowding, safety measures in factories, workers' compensation, restricted child labor, minimum wage
- Wisconsin and La Follette



Robert La Follette

Women and Progressive Reforms

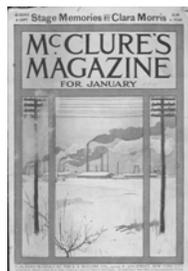


A YWCA poster

- Women became much more involved in social and political causes
- Mainly middle- and upper-class women
- Aimed to increase "moral behavior" of lower classes
- Organizations such as YWCA and National Consumers League

Muckrakers

- Journalists who exposed corruption and social injustices
- Term coined by Theodore Roosevelt
- Works published in popular magazines
- Riis, Steffens, Tarbell, Baker et al.



Magazines like this one often published muckraking articles

Jacob Riis



- Photographed and wrote about conditions in tenements and factories, and on the streets
- *How the Other Half Lives* (1890)
- Set the stage for Progressive urban reforms

Riis: From *How the Other Half Lives*

Long ago it was said that "one half of the world does not know how the other half lives." That was true then. It did not know because it did not care. The half that was on top cared little for the struggles, and less for the fate of those who were underneath, so long as it was able to hold them there and keep its own seat. There came a time when the discomfort and crowding below were so great, and the consequent upheavals so violent, that it was no longer an easy thing to do, and then the upper half fell to inquiring what was the matter. Information on the subject has been accumulating rapidly since, and the whole world has had its hands full answering for his old ignorance.

Riis: Photographs



"Dens of Death"



"Five Cents Lodging,
Bayard Street"

Immigrants

- Job opportunities and religious freedom
- Southern and eastern European and Jewish immigrants
- Ethnic enclaves in large cities
- Poor conditions
- Faced prejudice and discrimination



An immigrant neighborhood, circa 1900

Jane Addams and Hull House



Jane Addams

- Settlement houses
- In 1889, Addams and Starr founded Hull House in Chicago
- A community center for the poor
- Offered classes, concerts, lectures, clubs

Jane Addams and Hull House (cont.)

- Hull House workers lived in the community
- Economic desperation seen as the root of urban problems
- Addams's political work



Children outside Hull House, 1908

Relief Programs and Charities

- Private relief programs
- Charity organizations
- Paid caseworkers replaced volunteers
- Tensions between charities and settlement houses
- Began to work toward common goals around 1900

New York's Tenement House Act

- Poor sanitation, lack of basic comforts, fire hazards, and “moral indecencies” in tenements
- Tenement House Committee exhibition
- Tenement House Commission
- Tenement House Act (1901)
- Improved lighting, ventilation, toilets, courtyards



New York City tenements, early 1900s

Discussion Questions

1. What arguments did Progressive reformers make against trusts?
2. Why did Jacob Riis's work have so great an impact on the cause of improving conditions in tenements?
3. What did reformers such as Jane Addams see as the root of most urban problems? What solution did she suggest?

Factory Conditions: Taylorism

- Increased automation
- Management consultant Frederick W. Taylor
- Helped companies maximize worker efficiency
- Workers and managers complained of reduced autonomy
- Did not offer workers long-term economic security



Frederick W. Taylor

Factory Conditions: Workers



- Growing employment insecurity
- Fear of injury or death at work
- Assembly line workers generally paid by the task
- Women and children paid less
- Very few African Americans
- Workers began to organize

Sweatshops

- Factories with terrible working conditions, low wages, long hours
- Also referred to home-based piecework
- Garment and cigar industries
- Recent immigrants
- Mostly women and some children



Cigar factory, 1909

Child Labor



Child coal miners

- 1.75 million under 16 had jobs in 1900 (not including farms)
- Progressives campaigned against child labor and for higher adult wages
- “Mother” Jones and the Children’s Crusade

Child Labor (continued)

- National Child Labor Committee (1904)
- Hine’s photographs
- Child labor laws in Northern states
- U.S. Children’s Bureau
- Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938



Famous photograph by Lewis Hine of a girl working in a textile factory

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire



The interior of the factory after the fire

- Locked doors, highly flammable materials, no extinguishers, few exits
- March 25, 1911
- 146 people died, mainly young immigrant woman
- Led to public outcry, increased legislation for safety measures

The National Consumers League

- Florence Kelley (1899)
- Run primarily by women
- Pushed for fair and humane manufacturing of consumer products
- “White Label” program
- Advocated for state and national minimum wage and maximum work hour laws
- *Muller v. Oregon* (1908)



Florence Kelley

The Rise of the Labor Movement and Unions

- Groups of workers organized to negotiate with employers
- Early unions vs. newer unions
- Industrial unions at the turn of the 20th century tended to be more radical (IWW)
- Emerged in response to mid-1890s economic downturn



The Pullman Strike (1894)

- Pullman company cut wages, did not lower rents
- Workers joined American Railway Union
- Strike shut down the passenger railway system
- Federal intervention led to violence; 34 dead
- Government broke the strike



A scene from the strike

Samuel Gompers

- President of American Federation of Labor (AF of L)
- Established collective bargaining procedures
- Stressed worker benefits in exchange for union dues
- AF of L less radical than other unions

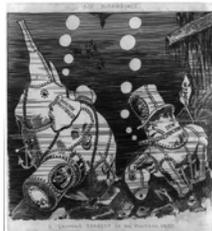


Discussion Questions

1. What impact did Taylorism have on workers?
2. What was the National Consumers League's consumer-based approach toward ending sweatshops and child labor? Do you see this as effective? Why?
3. What differences between older and newer unions tended to cause tension within the labor movement?

The Good-Government Movement

- Political machines
- Patronage and the spoils system
- Progressives aimed to increase transparency and honesty in city government
- National Municipal League (1894)
- Reduced influence of immigrants and working class in city politics



"A Looming Tragedy of the Political Deep," a 1906 cartoon which depicts Republican and Democratic machines as sinking submarines

Direct Primaries



- Allow voters—not party leaders or bosses—to directly choose candidates
- Robert La Follette of Wisconsin
- WI adopted first direct primary law in 1903

Lincoln Steffens

- Muckraker who exposed government corruption
- Articles in *McClure's*
- *The Shame of the Cities* (1904)
- Uncovered direct evidence of graft
- Increased public outrage



Steffens: From *The Shame of the Cities*

When I set out to describe the corrupt systems of certain typical cities, I meant to show simply how the people were deceived and betrayed. But in the very first study—St. Louis—the startling truth lay bare that corruption was not merely political; it was financial, commercial, social; the ramifications of boodle were so complex, various, and far-reaching, that one mind could hardly grasp them, and not even Joseph W. Folk, the tireless prosecutor, could follow them all.

Initiative and Referendum

- Initiative: citizens vote on a proposed state law
- Referendum: citizens vote on an existing law
- Progressives saw state legislatures as corrupt and beholden to wealthy business interests
- South Dakota became the first to enact both, in 1898



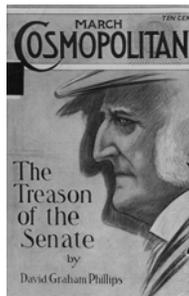
Articles of incorporation for the California Good Government League, which promised in the document to “work for the purification” of the L.A. city government through initiative, referendum, and recall

The 17th Amendment

- Constitution originally had state legislatures elect senators
- Bribery, corruption, deadlocks in state legislatures
- Direct primaries aimed to change this method
- “Oregon System”

The 17th Amendment (cont.)

- Little support in Senate, except La Follette
- Phillips’s *The Treason of the Senate*
- Amendment ratified in 1913



Discussion Questions

1. What were the main goals of the good-government movement?
2. How are an initiative and a referendum similar? How are they different?
3. What did the 17th Amendment provide for? What were some problems it was designed to prevent?

Women's Suffrage

- Included in movement toward more democratic government
- NAWSA formed in 1890
- More women served as progressive leaders
- Anthony, Catt, and Paul
- 19th Amendment passed in 1919



Suffragists celebrate the ratification of the 19th Amendment

The Temperance Movement

- Some felt that alcohol undermined society's "moral fabric"
- Supported curtailing or banning alcohol
- WCTU and Anti-Saloon League
- Targeted immigrants and corrupt politicians
- State and local successes
- 19th Amendment (1919)



Morality “Policing”



- Moral “improvement” for immigrants, working class, and the young
- Targeted leisure activities (e.g., movies, music)
- Ragtime and jazz
- Rules against “immoral” dancing
- Whites thought new music tied too closely to African American culture

The Eugenics Movement

- Believed that those with “inferior” genes threatened the nation’s future
- Sought to curb reproduction by the “inferior” and increase reproduction by the “superior”
- Supported by many Progressives
- 18 states enacted eugenics laws
- Waned after WWII



African Americans in the Progressive Era



A black sharecropper

- Reforms focused on poor whites and European immigrants
- Menial jobs
- Jim Crow laws in the South
- Ineligible for most Northern factory jobs
- Worked mostly as domestics or day laborers

African Americans in the Progressive Era (continued)

- Most reformers middle-class whites; many highly racist
- African Americans forced to organize their own reforms and groups
- Ida B. Wells



Ida B. Wells

African Americans: Booker T. Washington

- Founded Tuskegee Institute
- Promoted educational opportunities
- Allied with prominent whites
- Believed white support was needed to get ahead



African Americans: W.E.B. Du Bois



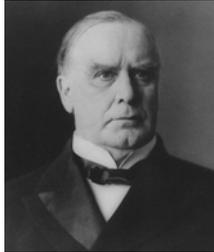
- Strongly against segregation and discrimination
- Wrote articles and books; published other blacks' work
- Challenged blacks to stand up against the dominant culture

Discussion Questions

1. What were some ways in which Progressives attempted to improve the “morality” of the lower-class? Do you see these actions as effective? Why?
2. How did Washington and Du Bois differ in philosophy as to how blacks could better their lives and get ahead? Whose approach would most Progressives have likely preferred? Why?

President William McKinley

- Elected in 1896
- Foreign affairs in first term
- Handily won election of 1900 on “prosperity” platform
- Supported rapid industrialization and trusts
- Began to change his views on trusts
- Assassinated in 1901



President Theodore Roosevelt



- Considered a liability by Republican Party leaders
- Disliked both excessive corporate power and potential violence by the working class
- Believed the wealthy had a moral obligation to help the poor

President Theodore Roosevelt (continued)

- Increased federal government's role in regulation
- Only opposed monopolies he believed worked against the public interest
- Became very popular



Roosevelt: The Square Deal

- A package of laws and regulations that he felt to be fair to all, particularly workers:
 - Increased regulation of business
 - Workers' right to organize
 - Eight-hour work days
 - Pure food and drug laws
 - Income and inheritance taxes on the wealthy

Roosevelt: Trustbusting

- Established Department of Commerce and its Bureau of Corporations
- Invoked Sherman Antitrust Act in over 40 lawsuits
- Northern Securities Company case set precedent
- Hepburn Act set maximum railroad rates and strengthened the ICC



Roosevelt: Conservation Ethic and Actions



Roosevelt and naturalist John Muir at Yosemite in California

- Saw America's landscape as central to its democratic spirit; natural resources vital to economic, political strength
- Resources belong to the public
- Set aside numerous public lands
- U.S. Forest Service (1905)
- Antiquities Act (1906)

Ida M. Tarbell

- Teacher and muckraker
- *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904)
- Exposed monopolistic business practices
- Contributed to public outrage and support for antitrust legislation
- Inspired other muckrakers



The Coal Strike of 1902



Striking miners

- May: PA mine workers struck over wages and safety
- Threatened coal availability
- June: Roosevelt ordered investigation
- October: Roosevelt's meeting; no progress
- Public support for strikers grew

The Coal Strike of 1902 (continued)

- Morgan's commission
- Strike ended late October
- Increased union confidence and membership
- Set precedent for federal involvement in strikes



Upton Sinclair and *The Jungle*



Upton Sinclair

- Published 1906
- Harsh criticisms of working conditions in Chicago's meatpacking industry
- Instant bestseller
- Public more concerned about meat safety than working conditions
- Meat sales abroad cut in half

Food and Drug Legislation

- In response to growing public outrage over unsafe and unsanitary food
- Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*
- Meat Inspection Act (1906)
- Pure Food and Drug Act (1906)



A German meatpacking plant

The Panic of 1907



J.P. Morgan

- A severe economic crisis
- Recession began in 1906
- NYSE plunged by 50%
- Runs on banks
- Knickerbocker Trust Company collapsed
- Unemployment, bankruptcies rose; production, imports fell
- J.P. Morgan, others personally contributed money

The Federal Reserve Act

- Response to Panic of 1907
- National Monetary Commission
- Federal Reserve Act (1913)
- Federal Reserve System
- Gave government control over monetary and banking systems, in accordance with Progressive Era trends



A painting depicting President Wilson signing the Federal Reserve Act

The Progressive Party and the Election of 1912

- Taft won in 1908
- Rift in Republican Party between Progressives and conservatives
- Progressive (“Bull Moose”) Party split from Republican Party; nominated Roosevelt
- Democrat Wilson won in 1912, with Roosevelt second



Progressive Party convention, 1912

The Progressive Era: Legacy

- Wilson established FTC, progressive income tax; also passed Clayton Antitrust Act
- Many reforms remain in place today
- Did not radically change the structure of society
- Set precedent for governmental protections against unchecked capitalism

Discussion Questions

1. What was Roosevelt's Square Deal?
2. How did Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle* help create the Meat Inspection Act of 1906?
3. Why did Roosevelt support the conservation of public lands?
4. In what way was the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 a response to the Panic of 1907?

Progressivism and the Age of Reform: Backwards Planning Activities

Enduring understandings:

- The Progressive Era was an age of reform that encompassed a variety of social, economic, and political movements at the local, state, and national levels, combining the interests of many different groups and individuals
- Progressive reform movements began as reactions to the dominance of large corporations and wealthy individuals during the Gilded Age
- Popular support for Progressive reforms resulted in large part from journalists and activists publicizing problems related to such issues as poverty, working conditions, and corruption
- Being “Progressive” during this era did not necessarily mean being open to equality for all Americans or being tolerant of different lifestyles; many Progressive reformers looked down upon immigrants and did not support equality for African Americans
- Progressivism did not change the fundamental economic system in the United States, but it did set a precedent for government to become more involved in protecting individuals

Essential questions:

- Why did the Progressive Era begin? What social, economic, and political factors contributed to the movement toward Progressive reform?
- How did the issues prominent during the Progressive Era and the changes that occurred during this period affect the lives of immigrants, African Americans, and women?
- How did the social and moral values of white middle- and upper-class citizens influence Progressive Era reform agendas?
- In what ways did Progressive reforms depend on the work of individual activists? In what ways did they depend on the participation of larger groups of people?
- What impact did political leadership have on shaping Progressive reforms?

Learning Experiences and Instruction

Students will need to know...	Students will need to be able to...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The origins of the Progressive Era and the reasons behind the increasing calls for reform during this time 2. The variety of reform movements that occurred during this time and the specific conditions that led to these initiatives 3. The impact of progressive reforms on the urban poor, immigrants, and factory workers 4. The status of African Americans during this time 5. The role of women in Progressive movements 6. The relationship between middle- and upper-class “moral values” and Progressive reforms 7. Specific significant reform organizations and initiatives 8. The role of the muckrakers in shaping public opinion 9. The role of the labor movement in overall workplace reform 10. Progressive changes to the political and electoral systems 11. President Theodore Roosevelt’s role in Progressive reforms 12. Specific legislation enacted during the Progressive Era 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the role of the muckrakers and the impact they had on influencing public opinion 2. Identify major issues discussed and debated during the Progressive Era 3. Trace the chronology of developments related to specific Progressive Era issues 4. Describe differing opinions regarding trusts during the Progressive Era

Teaching and learning activities that will equip students to demonstrate targeted understandings:

- Overview of essential questions and basic understandings
- Class discussion of subject matter questions in the PowerPoint 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: The Role of the Muckrakers

Overview:

This lesson has students review their understanding of the muckrakers' role during the Progressive Era and asks them to analyze muckraking photographs and writings. They will then consider the perspectives and reactions of people who viewed and read these materials. They'll finish by creating magazine editorial pages expressing some of these reactions.

Objectives:

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

- Describe the role and impact of several muckrakers
- Have a better perspective as to how members of the middle and upper classes might have reacted to the muckrakers' photos and writings
- Articulate these reactions clearly in writing

Time required:

Four to five class periods

Methodology:

Ask students to describe the role of the muckrakers during the Progressive Era. They should base their answers on what they learned from the PowerPoint as well as from other sources, if applicable. You may use these questions as guidelines for this discussion:

- Who were the muckrakers? What occupations did they typically have?
- Who was their audience?
- What impact did the muckrakers' work have?
- Why were the muckrakers so influential?

Have students use Internet or library resources to find some of the Progressive Era photographs taken by Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine. Have them work in groups or pairs to answer the questions in Section 1 of the Student Handout about two photographs from each photographer.

Have students use Internet or library resources to locate articles or excerpts from articles or books written by three muckrakers. For each work, ask them to find a section (one to five paragraphs) that encapsulates some of the author's main points. Have them read these sections and answer the questions in Section 2 of the Student Handout. Some examples they might search for and read online include:

- Jacob Riis: *How the Other Half Lives* (read the excerpt in the PowerPoint, or find others)

- Ida M. Tarbell: *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (read the final three paragraphs of the conclusion)
- Lincoln Steffens: “Tweed Days in St. Louis” (read at least the first five paragraphs)
- Upton Sinclair: *The Jungle* (ideally, they’ll read the entire book, but good excerpts for this lesson include the beginnings of chapters 11 and 14)

Ask students to imagine that they are middle-class magazine readers at the beginning of the 20th century. They have just read these articles and looked at these photographs. Discuss these questions as a class:

- How might you react to what you have read and seen?
- What particular sections and arguments do you find particularly compelling, and why?

Ask groups to pretend they are the editors for a magazine that has published the works of muckraking writers and photographers. They will create an editorial page for their magazine, including the following components:

- An editorial stating their opinion of the muckrakers’ work and describing the ways in which they see the muckrakers impacting society
- Three letters to the editor from readers responding to the writings and photographs (at least one should express the viewpoint of someone who disagrees with the muckrakers)
- A political cartoon expressing the magazine’s opinion about issues the muckrakers have exposed

When working on their editorial pages, students should refer to the notes they have taken in the charts on the Student Handout. They may also need to conduct additional research on the muckrakers’ works and impacts. They can search online for political cartoons of this era to give them some ideas for their own cartoons.

Have them create their editorial pages on folded pieces of construction or poster paper or stapled 8½" x 11" pages. Inform them that neatness and presentation will count toward their grade.

Evaluation:

Use a rubric to evaluate groups’ editorial pages. A sample rubric follows this lesson.

The Role of the Muckrakers

Student Handout

Section 1:

Look at photographs by Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine, and answer these questions for two photographs by each of these men.

	What is the name of this photograph, and where did you find it?	What does this photograph show?	What do you think might have been the impact of this photograph?
Jacob Riis: photograph 1			
Jacob Riis: photograph 2			
Lewis Hine: photograph 1			
Lewis Hine: photograph 2			

Section 2:

Read excerpts from the writings of three different muckrakers. Answer questions about them in this chart.

What is the author's name?	What is the name of the written work, and where did you find it?	What are the author's main points in the section you've read?	What do you think might have been the impact of this piece of writing?
Muckraker 1:			
Muckraker 2:			
Muckraker 3:			

The Role of the Muckrakers Rubric

Criterion:	Level 1 (1–10 points):	Level 2 (11–20 points):	Level 3 (21–30 points):	Level 4 (31–40 points):	Group score:
Student Handout, Section 1	Chart reflects little attention to the photos, a poor effort in considering their content and impact, or is incomplete	Chart reflects some attention to the photos but reflects inadequate effort applied to their analysis	Chart reflects good attention to the photos, with adequate effort applied to their analysis	Chart reflects careful attention to the photos and excellent effort and insight applied to their analysis	
Student Handout, Section 2	Chart reflects little attention to the writings, a poor effort in considering their content and impact, or is incomplete	Chart reflects some attention to the writings but reflects inadequate effort applied to analysis	Chart reflects good attention to the writings; adequate effort applied to analysis	Chart reflects careful attention to the writings; excellent effort and insight applied to analysis	
Editorial pages—content	Editorial pages incomplete and/or contain very sketchy or unclear information	Editorial pages have all required components but lack clarity and/or depth	Editorial pages have all required components and exhibit adequate clarity and depth	Editorial pages have all required components and exhibit superb clarity and depth, reflecting outstanding effort	
Editorial pages—overall neatness and presentation	Editorial pages very messy	Editorial pages somewhat messy	Editorial pages relatively neat but may have some sloppy aspects	Editorial pages very neat; created with care and with close attention to aesthetics	

Project #2: Progressive Era “Timeline” Performances

Overview:

Students have already learned about many of the important issues that were discussed and debated during the Progressive Era. This lesson asks them to review these issues and delve further into them, finding out about events and developments that occurred with regard to specific issues. They'll form groups to conduct this research, and culminate the lesson with creative skits that describe details of the issues they have studied and the chronology in which they occurred.

Objectives:

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

- Identify major issues discussed and debated during the Progressive Era
- Describe in detail six events or developments related to a specific Progressive Era issue
- Cooperate with group members to clearly express details of these events in creative skits

Time required:

Three to four class periods

Methodology:

Ask students to make a class list that includes major issues discussed and debated during the Progressive Era. You may want to skim the PowerPoint with students if they haven't viewed it in a while. Write their list on the board.

Divide the class into groups of four or five. Ask each group to choose one issue from the class list. Ideally, groups will choose different issues; you may want to assign issues to ensure that this happens.

Have groups research their issues in more detail, asking them to find at least six events or developments that happened with regard to this issue during the Progressive Era. These may include specific problems that arose, writings or photographs, activism, strikes, speeches, legislation, or anything else related to the issue. If they can't find six events or developments, have them choose a more significant issue.

Have students list and describe their six events or developments in Section 1 of the Student Handout. They should list them in the order in which they occurred.

Ask groups to prepare skits in which they act out some of the main events that happened concerning the issue they've researched. Allow them to be creative and have fun with this project, but ask them to make sure their performances accomplish the following:

- Provide a clear overview of the issue (this might be presented as an introduction to the skit)
- Clearly address six things that happened with regard to this issue during the Progressive Era
- Explain the chronology of these events and developments: In what order did they occur? In what ways did they logically follow each other?
- Ensure that all students have lines and participate equally

Have groups perform their skits for the class. After each performance, allow audience members to ask the performers questions related to the issues and the scenes they acted out.

OPTIONAL: As an alternative to the skits, have students continue their research to find additional events or developments related to this issue. Have them create PowerPoint presentations showing the main events and developments they have researched. Allow students to be creative with this activity, as long as they convey the main points. One slide should show an actual timeline with all of the events and developments.

OPTIONAL (extension activity): Remind students that these issues are not static and did not end with the close of the Progressive Era. Most of them still have relevance in the present time, and many are still actively debated today. Have students continue their research to find out what happened with regard to this issue through the rest of the 20th century up until the present. This time, the research can be more general; they should choose from three to five main points. Have them include this information in their skits, or ask them to write essays describing the evolution of this issue from the Progressive Era until the present.

Evaluation:

Use a rubric to evaluate students' work. A sample rubric is included at the end of this lesson, or you may use another one of your choice.

Progressive Era “Timeline” Performances

Student Handout

Section 1:

Research your assigned issue, and find six things that happened with regard to this issue during the Progressive Era. Fill in this chart with your findings, listing the events and developments in the order in which they occurred.

List the six items on your timeline here:	Describe this event or development: <u>When</u> did it happen? <u>Who</u> was involved? <u>What</u> happened? <u>Why</u> did it happen this way?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

Section 2:

Plan your skit, making sure that every member of your group will have some lines and will participate equally. Write each person's general role in this chart. Then, as an option, write down your lines on another piece of paper. Alternately, you can ad-lib the lines, as long as they accurately get your points across. Your skit will need to do the following:

- Provide a clear overview of the issue (you might present a statement about the issue as an introduction to the skit)
- Clearly address six things that happened with regard to this issue during the Progressive Era (act them out in a way that will show the audience what happened)
- Make sure these events appear in your skit in the order in which they occurred, so that your skit becomes a "performed timeline." If one event logically followed another, make that clear in your skit.

Student's name:	What this person will say or talk about:

Progressive Era “Timeline” Performances Rubric

Criterion:	Poor (0–5):	Fair (6–10):	Good (11–15):	Excellent (16–20):	Group score:
Student Handout, Section 1	Chart demonstrates little evidence of research or is incomplete, very sketchy, or makes little sense	Chart demonstrates some evidence of research; chart is more or less complete, but answers lack detail	Chart demonstrates solid research; chart is complete and reflects decent research, but lacks some detail	Chart demonstrates extremely solid research; chart is complete and reflects an investment of time and attention to detail	
Student Handout, Section 2	Group worked together poorly and did not adequately organize their skit	Group worked together somewhat poorly, with inadequate organization of their skit	Group worked together fairly well, with decent organization of their skit	Group worked together very well, with excellent organization of their skit	
Performances: understanding of the subject	Group’s performance reflected a highly inadequate understanding of the subject	Group’s performance reflected a somewhat inadequate understanding of the subject	Group’s performance reflected a decent understanding of the subject	Group’s performance reflected an excellent understanding of the subject	
Performances: cooperation	Group followed directions very poorly or was very uncooperative	Group demonstrated some difficulty in following directions or cooperating	Group followed directions and cooperated well, for the most part	Group clearly followed directions and cooperated superbly	

Project #3: What to Do About the Trusts?

A Class Forum

Overview:

Taking the perspective of people living in the Progressive Era, the class will stage a forum discussing and debating what should be done about trusts. Students will play a variety of roles, for which they will conduct research and prepare statements.

Objectives:

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

- Have a clear understanding of how different people and groups felt about the trusts
- Understand the reasons for these differing opinions and perspectives
- Clearly articulate a particular perspective regarding the trusts

Time required:

Four to five class periods

Methodology:

Hold a brief class discussion reviewing students' understanding of the trusts. Use the PowerPoint as a resource and these questions as a guideline:

- What is a trust?
- What were some of the most influential trusts during the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era? Who headed them?
- Why were some people critical of the trusts? What arguments did they make?
- What people tended to oppose to the trusts and support antitrust legislation? What people tended to be in favor of the trusts?
- How did President Theodore Roosevelt handle the trusts?

Write the following roles on the board, and either assign roles to the students or have them volunteer for the ones they want to play (you will likely have two or three students for each role):

- Wealthy financiers
- Upper-level managers of trusts
- The owners of small manufacturing companies and factories
- Moderate trade-union leaders
- Radical/socialist trade-union leaders
- Immigrant workers

- Middle-class women
- Social workers at settlement houses
- Members of Theodore Roosevelt’s staff (one person may play Roosevelt)
- Opponents of Theodore Roosevelt

Have students form groups based on their assigned roles. All the financiers will work together, and all the social workers will form another group, etc.

Ask groups to brainstorm some of the things they, in their roles, might have said and felt regarding what should be done about the trusts. Encourage them to think critically about the potentially conflicting views each individual might have held. The question of what to do about the trusts would not always have been a black-and-white issue for individuals. An immigrant worker, for example, might have been outraged at the way he or she was treated at a factory owned by a large corporation, but may have been grateful to have had a job in the first place. This person *might* have felt some loyalty to the company while still wanting to see significant changes made.

Have groups research their roles more thoroughly, using Internet and library resources. They should answer the questions in Section 1 of the Student Handout to record their findings.

Ask groups to discuss the results from their research and to decide how they will present their points of view during the forum. They should decide who will speak in which order, and who will say what. If group members have differing opinions about what their roles should say, they can express these differences; again, not every individual of a certain occupation or status would have felt the exact same way about the trusts. Have them write their statements in Section 2 of the Student Handout.

Ask students to imagine that the different interests they are representing in their roles have congregated in a community center to discuss and debate their views. (This would almost certainly never have happened, but it presents a learning opportunity for the class). Hold a forum in which students share their opinions on the trusts, from the perspective of the roles they have been assigned. You can structure the forum as you wish, but the following is an example (the following format will probably take more than one class period):

1. Have each group present its statements. Everyone should say something.
2. As one group presents its statement, the other groups should listen carefully. After each statement, have members of the listening groups spend a minute or two writing their reactions to the statement, from the perspective of their roles, in Section 3 of the Student Handout. Group members should collaborate in this process, but don’t let them spend more than three minutes on this task.
3. After all groups have presented their statements, call on each group to return to the front of the room and either present a rebuttal statement directed at another group or ask another group pointed questions about its stance. Group members may refer to their reaction notes and choose the group that they have the most issues with or questions for. Allow groups to which these rebuttal statements or questions are directed to provide a brief statement in response, from their seats.

4. Once each group has had a chance to make a reaction and rebuttal statement, end the forum with a class vote as to whether the trusts should be “busted” or left alone. Students should first vote from their roles’ perspectives, but they may take a second vote voicing their personal opinions.

Students may incorporate costumes and props to help make the forum more fun.

After the reenactment, hold a class discussion reviewing the main issues that came up for each of the groups involved.

Evaluation:

Use a rubric to evaluate students’ preparation for and participation in the forum. See the sample rubric provided after this lesson. It may either be used as is or adapted as needed.

What to Do About the Trusts? A Class Forum

Student Handout

Section 1:

Conduct research about your assigned role to find out the answers to the questions below. Write your answers in the space provided.

1. What is the name of your group?
2. How would members of your group have felt about the trusts?
3. Why would they have felt this way? How did the trusts affect them?
4. What would they have wanted to see happen to the trusts?

Section 2:

Your class will hold a forum in which you will make a statement regarding how your role would have felt about the trusts and what you would have wanted to see happen to them.

Discuss with your group what each member will say during this forum. Plan your statements so that you'll be prepared when asked to speak. Each group member should say something—ideally, you will each make a different point. If group members have different opinions about what to say, you may incorporate those differences into your statements.

Record each group member's planned statements in this chart:

Student's name:	What this person will say:

Section 3:

Listen carefully as other groups present their statements. Then write your reactions to the statements, from the perspective of your roles, in this chart.

Group:	Your reaction to the group's statement, from the perspective of your role:

What to Do About the Trusts?

A Class Forum Rubric

Criterion:	Poor (0–5):	Fair (6–10):	Good (11–15):	Excellent (16–20):	Group score:
Student Handout, Section 1	Group’s answers demonstrate little evidence of research, or answers are incomplete, very sketchy, or make little sense	Group’s answers demonstrate some evidence of research; answers are more or less complete, but lack detail	Group’s answers demonstrate solid research; answers are complete and reflect decent research, but lack some detail	Group’s answers demonstrate extremely solid research; answers are complete and reflect an investment of time and attention to detail	
Student Handout, Section 2	Group worked together poorly and did not adequately organize their statements	Group worked together somewhat poorly, with inadequate organization of their statements	Group worked together fairly well, with decent organization of their statements	Group worked together very well, with excellent organization of their statements	
Forum: clarity of initial statements	Group has made very unclear and unconvincing statements	Group has made somewhat unclear and unconvincing statements	Group has made somewhat clear and convincing statements	Group has made very clear and convincing statements	
Responses to other groups (Student Handout, Section 3)	Group has collaborated poorly, and responses are not thoughtful or clear	Group has collaborated well, but responses lack evidence of thought or clarity	Group has collaborated well and provided thoughtful and clear responses	Group has collaborated superbly and provided extremely thoughtful and clear responses	

Forum: cooperation	Group followed directions very poorly or has been very uncooperative	Group demonstrated some difficulty in following directions or cooperating	Group clearly followed directions and cooperated well	Group clearly followed directions and cooperated superbly	
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Progressivism and the Age of Reform: Multiple-Choice Quiz

1. Who did the term “robber barons” refer to, and who used this term?
 - a. This was what trust owners called themselves
 - b. This is the term Progressive Era reformers used to describe Gilded Age reformers
 - c. This is the term critics of the trusts used to describe trust owners
 - d. This is the term muckrakers used to describe corrupt urban politicians
2. Which of the following was *not* a common urban reform during the Progressive Era?
 - a. Tenement buildings that could accommodate more people in each apartment
 - b. New parks and playgrounds
 - c. Improvements to sewage systems
 - d. Increased educational opportunities for immigrants
3. Which of the following statements about Jacob Riis is *not* true?
 - a. His camera allowed him to photograph dark indoor scenes
 - b. His work greatly influenced middle- and upper-class opinions of how poor people lived
 - c. Most of the people he photographed were immigrants
 - d. He had little experience working in the inner city before the publication of *How the Other Half Lives*
4. Which of the following statements is true?
 - a. Women held only marginal roles in the Progressive movement
 - b. Women became much more politically involved during the Progressive Era than in previous time periods
 - c. Women Progressives were less concerned with morality than with their own economic interests
 - d. Women Progressives tended to steer clear of the temperance movement
5. Which of the following was *not* one of Jane Addams’s core beliefs?
 - a. That primarily economic desperation caused urban problems
 - b. That Hull House employees should live in the community they served
 - c. That it was essential to provide poor people with access to education, jobs, and democratic participation
 - d. That primarily individual character flaws caused urban problems

6. What was Taylorism?
- A system to maximize factory efficiency
 - A political philosophy adopted by many factory owners
 - A system of urban reform involving tenement improvement
 - A method of improving workers' collaboration in the factories
7. Which of the following is not a characteristic of a sweatshop?
- Low wages
 - No concern for safety issues
 - A permanent factory location
 - A requirement that workers produce many items in a short time
8. Which of the following was *not* a central goal of child-labor activism?
- To increase adults' wages so that children no longer had to help support their families
 - To make it illegal for children to work on farms
 - To end factory work for children under 16
 - To increase children's access to education
9. What was one effect of the National Consumers League's work?
- It encouraged progressive-minded people to shop at stores that received a White Label
 - It encouraged workers to strike for increased wages and better working conditions
 - It ended the practice of giving preferential treatment to female workers
 - It appealed mainly to middle-class men
10. Which of the following was a trend in the labor movement at the end of the 19th century?
- It became more conservative
 - It became less likely to encourage strikes.
 - It became less appealing to immigrant workers.
 - It became more radical
11. How did direct primaries change the electoral system?
- They allowed voters to directly elect the president
 - They ended the practice of electing candidates by direct vote
 - They allowed voters to directly select candidates for office rather than selection by party caucus or convention
 - They allowed non-citizen immigrants to vote for the first time

- 12.** Whose election was affected by the 17th Amendment?
- a. The president
 - b. Members of the U.S. House of Representatives
 - c. Members of the U.S. Senate
 - d. City mayors and state governors
- 13.** Which of the following statements is true?
- a. Many progressive reformers tied their reform efforts to their hopes for moral “improvements” in the lower classes
 - b. White progressive reformers were some of the main proponents of the new ragtime and jazz music
 - c. Progressives had little concern with moral issues
 - d. Progressives embraced African American musical forms as evidence of true progress for the country
- 14.** Which of the following statements is true?
- a. Progressive reforms helped reduce the level of discrimination against African Americans in the South
 - b. African Americans commonly worked in factories
 - c. African Americans had few community support networks during the Progressive Era
 - d. The Progressive Era coincided with the spread of Jim Crow laws in the South
- 15.** What was one main difference between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois?
- a. Washington was considered more radical
 - b. Du Bois was more critical of the political system
 - c. Washington shied away from allying himself with whites
 - d. Du Bois was more involved with the educational system
- 16.** Which of the following statements about President Theodore Roosevelt is the most accurate?
- a. He strongly opposed all trusts
 - b. He supported violent protest on behalf of the working class
 - c. He felt it was important for everyone to feel they were being treated fairly
 - d. He found it difficult to empathize with poor people because he had come from a wealthy family
- 17.** What was Upton Sinclair’s main intention in publishing *The Jungle*?
- a. To improve food standards
 - b. To increase the number of social programs available to immigrant workers
 - c. To see swift passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act
 - d. To improve working conditions in meatpacking factories

18. Which of the following statements is true?

- a. Roosevelt linked environmental conservation to democracy
- b. Roosevelt supported environmental conservation as a way to reduce the practice of hunting
- c. Roosevelt was opposed to the Antiquities Act of 1906
- d. Roosevelt was mainly interested in environmental conservation for economic reasons

19. What was the Bull Moose Party?

- a. A splinter of the Democratic Party that nominated Roosevelt as its presidential candidate
- b. A Progressive third party that split off from the Republican Party and nominated Roosevelt as its presidential candidate
- c. A Progressive third party that split off from the Democratic Party and nominated Taft as its presidential candidate
- d. The conservative wing of the Republican Party

20. Which of the following is *not* a legacy of the Progressive Era?

- a. Many Progressive Era laws are still on the books
- b. The federal progressive income tax began in this period
- c. The government established itself as an active participant in protecting individuals
- d. The distribution of wealth in the United States was radically altered

Progressivism and the Age of Reform: Multiple-Choice Quiz Answer Key

1. C
2. A
3. D
4. B
5. D
6. A
7. C
8. B
9. A
10. D
11. C
12. C
13. A
14. D
15. B
16. C
17. D
18. A
19. B
20. D