

## Society in the 1920s

## READING FOCUS

- How were women's roles changing during the 1920s?
- How were the nation's cities and suburbs affected by Americans on the move from rural areas?
- Who were some American heroes of the 1920s? What made them popular with the American public?

## MAIN IDEA

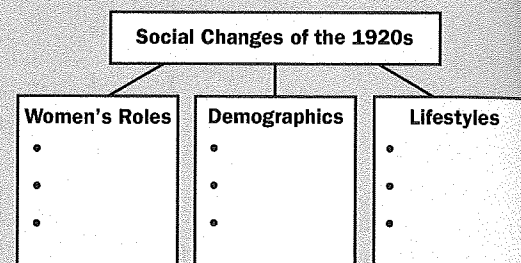
The 1920s were a time of rapid social change, in which many young people, particularly young women, adopted new lifestyles and attitudes. As its rural population decreased, the United States became an urban nation, and traditional values were increasingly challenged.

## KEY TERMS

flapper  
demographics  
barrio

## TAKING NOTES

Copy the chart below. As you read, fill in details relating to various social changes of the 1920s.



**VIEWING HISTORY** Flappers defined a new style of dress.

**Drawing Inferences** How does this young woman's attitude reflect the mood of the 1920s?

**Setting the Scene** The decade of the 1920s stands out as a time of rapid change in American society. Much of the change had its roots in the previous century. In the late 1800s, industrialization and immigration began transforming the United States into an urban nation. Farm families streamed into the cities. Along with masses of immigrants, the new arrivals helped form a more complex urban culture.

The Great War accelerated those changes. Millions of young people had marched off to war full of enthusiasm. Many returned bearing the scars of that war: shell shock, permanent injury, and the effects of poison gas. Many also came back disillusioned, a condition they shared with others who had stayed home during the war. Together, they questioned the ideas and attitudes that had led to the war. Their challenge of traditional values helped ignite a revolution in manners and morals.

The **flapper** symbolized this revolution. The term described a new type of young woman: rebellious, energetic, fun-loving, and bold. One author depicted the flapper this way:

*“Breezy, slangy, and informal in manner; slim and boyish in form; covered in silk and fur that clung to her as close as onion skin; with carmined [vivid red] cheeks and lips, plucked eyebrows and close-fitting helmet of hair; gay, plucky and confident.”*

—Preston Slosson, *The Great Crusade and After*, 1930

Many older Americans held more traditional views of how young women were supposed to behave in public. They disapproved not only of the flappers' display of free manners but also of the behavior of the young men who flocked around them.

Of course, not all young women became flappers, and not everyone questioned traditional values. Still, those who did had a lasting effect on society. They helped create what we think of today as modern America.

## Women's Changing Roles

Women stood at the center of much of the social change in the 1920s. Both single and married women had been in the work force for a long time. During the war, their numbers rose and they moved into better, higher-paying jobs. After the Nineteenth Amendment was adopted in 1920, all American women could vote. These experiences made them eager for still greater equality with men. Without intending to, the rebellious flapper brought all women closer to that goal.

**The Flapper Image** The flapper represented only a small number of American women, yet her image had a wide impact on fashion and on behavior. Stylish young women began wearing dresses shorter than their mothers did, to the dismay of some guardians of decency. The fashion page of the *New York Times* declared in July 1920 that “the American woman . . . has lifted her skirts far beyond any modest limitation.” At that time, hemlines had risen to just nine inches above the ground. By 1927, they would rise to knee-length or even higher. Between 1913 and 1928, the average amount of fabric used to make a woman's outfit shrank from 19.5 yards to just 7 yards.

Women also broke with the past in other ways. While most of their mothers had grown their hair long and then pinned it up, young women bobbed, or cut short, their hair. Instead of wide-brimmed hats, they wore the close-fitting “cloche,” whose bell shape accentuated the new hairstyles. They also began wearing heavy makeup, a practice formerly associated only with actresses or prostitutes.

Women's manners changed as well. Before the 1920s, “proper” women rarely drank anything much stronger than wine, much less smoked, in public. By the end of the decade, many women were doing both, in part to defy Prohibition, but also to express their new freedom. Between 1918 and 1928, the number of cigarettes produced in the United States more than doubled. Though men were smoking more (many switching from cigars and pipes to cigarettes), the new woman smoker accounted for a large part of the increase. All these changes shocked American society and enraged many parents.

**Women Working and Voting** Although many women bobbed their hair and wore shorter skirts, most did not embrace a flapper lifestyle. Some women adopted the new fashions simply because they were more convenient.

Convenience was an issue for young working women, as they had less time to spend maintaining elaborate wardrobes or hairstyles. During the 1920s, about 15 percent of wage-earning women became professionals and about 20 percent held clerical positions. Generally, these were single white women, although the percentage of married women working increased from 23 percent of the total female work force in 1920 to 29 percent in 1930.

Businesses remained prejudiced against women seeking professional posts. Many hospitals refused to hire female doctors, and many legal firms rejected female lawyers or offered them secretarial jobs. Employers seldom trained women for jobs beyond the entry level or paid them on as high a scale as men. Few women advanced to leadership positions. Employers expected women to quit if they married and became pregnant.

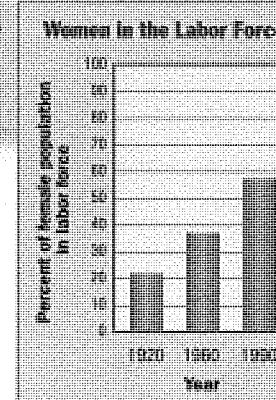
## Fast Forward to Today

## Women in the Workplace

Over time, the nature of women's work has changed to accommodate the needs of the labor market and changes in attitudes about women working outside the home. In a rural setting, women looking for outside work have typically found their choices more limited than in a city. As more and more people moved from rural areas in the 1920s, growing urban economies made room for women to enter the paid work force. The 1920s saw many women securing clerical jobs, work once reserved for men. From the 1920s to today, work available to women in the United States has expanded from jobs women have traditionally held, such as teaching and nursing, to include a range of options never before available.

As shown by the chart below, the percentage of women in the labor force has risen from the 1920s to the 1990s.

? What types of jobs are limited to rural areas or to cities today?





**VIEWING HISTORY** In 1920, women in New York City vote after the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment. **Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think more women did not turn out to vote in the early 1920s?

Like the situation of women at work, women's status in politics changed little. As of 1920, women could vote in all elections. At first, some politicians feared that women might vote as a bloc, or special-interest group. That did not happen. Most women voted along the same lines as men. Moreover, relatively few women voted at all, especially in the early years after gaining national suffrage. Only about 35 percent of women voters went to the polls in 1920. In 1923, a survey asked women in Chicago why they did not vote in the mayoral election. Most notably, about a third said that they lacked interest. Another eleven percent said that they did not think women should vote at all.

Early on, women did not exercise their right to vote for a number of reasons. Women who lived in rural areas or had children to look after had to make special arrangements to get to the polls. Sometimes women's families discouraged them from voting. Other women were not comfortable with the idea of voting. In short, women had yet to make voting a habit, and it would take time for the habit to develop.

As the decade wore on, more women voted, but their choices did not change politics greatly. In national elections, women voted in patterns similar to men's. In local elections, however, women's votes often differed from men's, perhaps because women were more familiar with the candidates and issues.

After the Nineteenth Amendment was adopted, the alliance that worked for suffrage split, weakening its ability to push bills through Congress. Progressive reformers did lobby successfully for the Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921, the first major federal welfare measure concerned with women's and children's health. A constitutional amendment calling for an end to child labor failed, however. So did the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), introduced in Congress for the first time in 1923. The original wording of the ERA stated that "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." Some reformers opposed the ERA because it would make the laws requiring special working conditions for women unconstitutional.

Despite their disagreements, women worked together to win political office. Jeannette Rankin of Montana won election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1916, becoming the first woman to serve in either house of Congress. Miriam A. Ferguson from Texas and Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming, both wives of former governors, were elected governors themselves in 1924. By 1928, there were 145 women in 38 state legislatures. Thus, although women did not increase their political power as quickly as suffragists had hoped, they did lay a foundation for future participation in government on a larger scale.

### Americans on the Move

In addition to social changes, many changes in **demographics** occurred in the 1920s. Demographics are the statistics that describe a population, such as data on race or income. The major demographic change of the 1920s was a movement away from the countryside. The 1920 census showed that for the first time in the nation's history, more Americans lived in urban areas than in rural areas.

**Rural-Urban Split** The 1920s magnified the gap between rural and urban society. One aspect of that gap was economic. Farmers had done well for the first two decades of the century. After the war, however, market prices dropped while the costs of operation rose. By the early 1920s, many farmers were economically stressed.

Meanwhile, the industrial and commercial economy began to boom. This prosperity bypassed much of rural America. Many farmers reluctantly left the land and headed to cities. During the decade, some 6 million people moved from rural to urban areas.

This migration, combined with urban prosperity, had important effects on society. Attendance at public high schools rose from 2.2 million in 1920 to 4.4 million by 1930. Some of this rise came from an increase in urban population and greater prosperity, but an important part of it resulted from a change in the labor pool. On farms, most older children played vital roles as laborers, so they often had to drop out of school to help their parents. In cities, children needed more education to compete in urban-based industry.

Rural and urban America also split over cultural issues. You read earlier about the change in manners and morals. This general shift away from traditional values took place mainly in the cities. Most rural populations wanted to preserve traditional values, not defy them. They frowned on the flappers and other aspects of society that they deemed immoral or dangerous.

**African Americans in the North** As you have read, the passage of Jim Crow laws, as well as new job opportunities in the North, produced the Great Migration of blacks from the South to northern cities. This migration continued from the late 1800s through World War I. The boom in northern industries further encouraged this demographic shift.

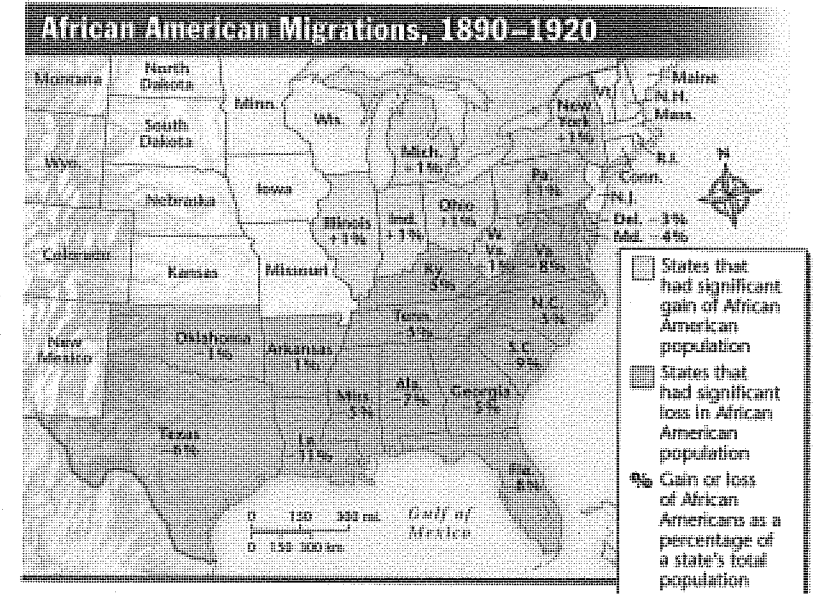
Throughout the early 1900s, jobs for African Americans in the South had been scarce and low-paying. Many factories refused to hire blacks for anything other than menial jobs. As industries expanded during the 1920s, many jobs opened up for African Americans in the North. In 1860, 93 percent of all African Americans lived in the South. By 1910, this figure had dropped to 89 percent. By 1930, it had fallen far more, to 80 percent.

Yet the North was no promised land. African American factory workers often faced anger and hatred from whites, who believed that migrants would work for lower wages and take their jobs. African American women generally worked for very low wages as household help for whites.

**Other Migration** After World War I, masses of refugees applied for entry into the United States. During the 1920s, Congress acted to limit immigration, especially from southern and eastern Europe and also from China and Japan. Since the limits did not apply to nations in the Americas, employers turned to immigrants from Mexico and Canada to fill low-paying jobs.

In the West, Mexicans supplied most of this labor, migrating to work on the farms of California and the ranches of Texas. In the Northeast, Canadians from the French-speaking province of Quebec traveled south to work in the paper mills, potato fields, and forests of New England and New York.

Migrants also took jobs in the cities. Los Angeles, for example, became a magnet for Mexicans and developed a distinct **barrio**, or Spanish-speaking neighborhood. New York also attracted a Spanish-speaking population—Puerto Ricans migrating in the hope of a better life in the United States.



**READING CHECK**  
How did women influence politics in the 1920s?

**MAP SKILLS** The migration of African Americans from the South to the North helped alter the populations of both regions. **Movement** Which states lost the largest percentages of their black populations?

**Growth of the Suburbs** As a result of the migrations of the 1920s, American suburbs grew. Suburban growth had begun to accelerate in the late nineteenth century. Cities built transportation systems that used electric trolleys—cars that ran on rails laid in the streets, and were powered by overhead wires. Trolleys allowed people to get from their suburban homes to jobs and stores in the city cheaply.

During the 1920s, buses replaced trolleys in many areas. Buses did not need rails and overhead wires, and thus were less expensive and easier to route. By the mid-1920s, about 70,000 buses were operating throughout the United States. At the same time, the automobile became more affordable to middle-class families and offered even greater flexibility in travel.

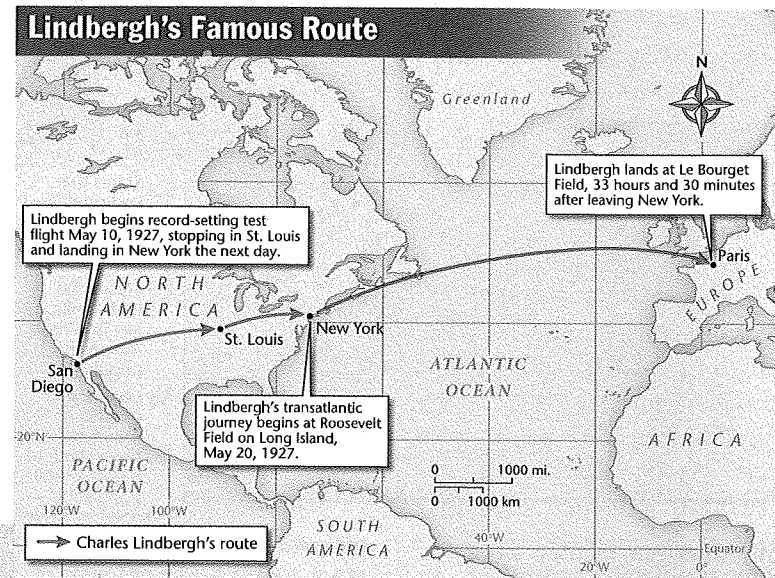
New York City provides a good example of the demographic changes that occurred during the 1920s. The number of residents decreased in Manhattan, the heart of the city, while the suburb of Queens saw its population double.

### American Heroes

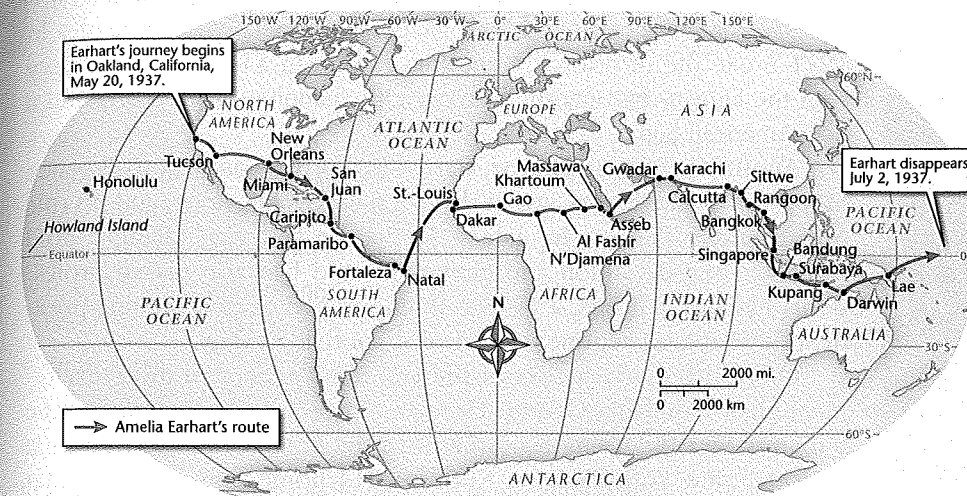
The changing morals of the 1920s made many Americans hungry for the values of an earlier time. Many in the nation became fascinated with heroes. Some were admired for their bravery and modesty, others for the way they showed Americans how to meet new challenges, with spirit and vitality. Among the decade's heroes, none became more famous than Charles Lindbergh.

**“Lucky Lindy”** The sky was drizzling rain at Roosevelt Field on Long Island, New York, on the morning of May 20, 1927. A 25-year-old Minnesotan, Charles Lindbergh, climbed into the cockpit of his plane, the *Spirit of St. Louis*, and revved the engine. He had not slept much, but he did not dare wait any longer. Two other teams were waiting on the airfield, hoping to be the first to fly nonstop from

**MAP SKILLS** Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight helped foster the development of commercial aviation. Lindbergh is shown below with his *Spirit of St. Louis*. **Location** What body of water did Lindbergh cross from New York to Paris?



### The Last Flight of Amelia Earhart



**MAP SKILLS** The map shows the route aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan took in their attempt to fly around the world. **Regions** What continents did Earhart and Noonan fly over on their journey?

New York to Paris. The prize was \$25,000, and Lindbergh was determined to capture it.

In those days, flying was an infant science. Orville and Wilbur Wright had achieved the first powered, sustained, and controlled airplane flight only two decades earlier, in 1903. Radio and navigation equipment were primitive at best, and Lindbergh had no autopilot to switch on if he grew tired. Flying solo, he would have to stay awake and alert for the entire flight.

The minute Lindbergh's plane was aloft, the news flashed by telegraph and telephone to news desks around the nation. Americans everywhere took notice and began to wait eagerly for the latest word. The newspapers fed this hunger, printing some 27,000 columns of information about Lindbergh in the first few days after his departure.

After a brutal flight over the Atlantic Ocean, battling icy weather and fighting off sleep, “Lucky Lindy” landed safely in an airfield outside Paris, 33½ hours after he had left New York. America went wild with jubilation. Lindbergh was brought home on a navy cruiser, given the Congressional Medal of Honor, and celebrated with parades throughout the nation.

Yet despite this frenzy of hero-worship, Lindbergh remained modest and calm. He refused offers of millions of dollars in publicity fees. To millions of Americans, Lindbergh was proof that the solid moral values of the old days lived on in the heartland of America. The public's fascination with Lindbergh may have played a role in a great tragedy for him, however, when one night his firstborn son was kidnapped from his crib. The child was later found murdered. Ironically, the murder case brought Lindbergh and his family more media attention than ever before.

**Amelia Earhart** Lindbergh's feat inspired later flyers, including Amelia Earhart. In 1928, Earhart became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic, although she was only a passenger. In 1932, she made the trip on her own, becoming the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. Later Earhart set another record, as the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California, a challenge that had resulted in the deaths of many aviators before her. In 1937, Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, tried to fly around the world. After completing two thirds of the trip, they disappeared mysteriously while crossing the Pacific Ocean.



Amelia Earhart helped open the field of aviation to more women.



**VIEWING HISTORY** At Cape Gris Nez, France, Gertrude Ederle is greased up in preparation for her swim across the English Channel. **Analyzing Visual Information** What does the photograph show about the difficulties of a Channel swim and what the feat might mean to the public?

**Sports Heroes** Though spectator sports had long been popular with the American public, they became big business in the 1920s. The new, heavy commercialization of sports led to larger audiences and more revenues. A highly publicized fight between boxers Jack Dempsey and Georges Carpentier in 1921 broke the record for ticket sales, taking in \$1 million. Dempsey won the fight to become the heavyweight champion of the world and a new American hero.

Another hero, Jim Thorpe, starred as a professional football player in the 1920s. By then he was in the late stages of his career, and his role was to attract fans to the games. Earlier, he had won Olympic gold medals in the decathlon and pentathlon and had also played professional baseball. Thorpe, a Native American, was elected the first president of what later became the National Football League.

Of all the sports heroes of the era, none generated more excitement than baseball's George Herman "Babe" Ruth, known as "the Sultan of Swat." During his career with the Boston Red Sox and then with the New York Yankees, Ruth hit 714 home runs, a record that was unbroken for nearly 40 years. In 1927, the champion enthralled Americans by setting the legendary record of 60 home runs in a 154-game season.

Women who excelled in sports included Hazel Wightman and Helen Wills, Olympic and Wimbledon tennis stars, and Gertrude Ederle, who smashed record after record in women's freestyle swimming. Ederle won one gold and two bronze medals in the 1924 Olympic Games. Newspapers hailed her as the "bob-haired, nineteen-year-old daughter of the Jazz Age." Her coach explained that her feat was a product of modern times. Thirty years previously, he said, "corsets and other ridiculously unnecessary clothing" would have hampered her physical conditioning. In 1926, Ederle became the first woman to swim the English Channel, having made an unsuccessful attempt the year before. She covered some 35 miles, taking into account crosscurrents and rough water. Her time beat the men's record by nearly two hours.

Besides being eager spectators, more Americans participated in amateur sports during the 1920s. With wide-ranging transportation, such as buses and automobiles, plus more leisure time, people took up golf, tennis, swimming, and many other types of recreation.

Section

2

Mass Media and the Jazz Age

READING FOCUS

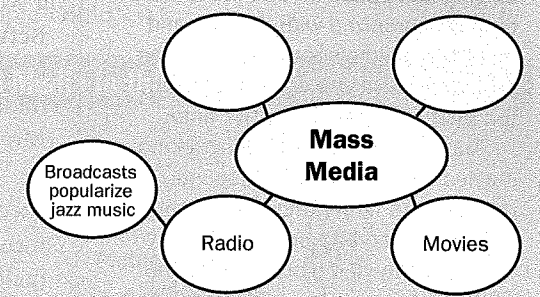
- How did the mass media help create common cultural experiences?
- Why are the 1920s called the Jazz Age, and how did the jazz spirit affect the arts?
- How did the writers of the Lost Generation respond to the popular culture?
- What subjects did the Harlem Renaissance writers explore?

KEY TERMS

- mass media
- Jazz Age
- Lost Generation
- Harlem Renaissance

TAKING NOTES

Copy the web diagram below. As you read, fill in the blank circles with details on how the mass media affected American life.



MAIN IDEA

In the 1920s, the mass media provided information and entertainment as never before. The decade was an especially creative period for music, art, and literature.

Setting the Scene

Before 1900, few people outside Los Angeles had even heard of a dusty little subdivision northwest of the city. Its founder, a religious man, hoped that it would remain a quiet town, where citizens valued proper behavior. In the early 1900s, however, filmmakers began moving there. They were attracted by the large work force in nearby Los Angeles; by the variety of landscapes, from desert to snowy mountains; and by the warm climate and the sun they needed to light their films.

These pioneer filmmakers faced many difficulties. Director Cecil B. DeMille set up his first studio in a rented barn, which he shared with horses and a carriage. DeMille later wrote, "I expected to be working like a horse: what did it matter being housed like one?"

In the early 1920s, DeMille became known for his stylish comedies that dealt with the changing romance customs of the time, and for his epics, which were designed to appeal to mass audiences. The barn he rented grew into a huge movie complex and the small suburb it was located in—Hollywood—soon became the center of the entertainment film industry. The town's main avenue displayed a strip of expensive shops and bars. Stars drove the streets in luxurious cars, trailed by reporters. In turn, what grew out of Hollywood in the 1920s—its culture of movies, movie stars, and entertainment reporters—helped create the beginnings of a common national culture.



**VIEWING HISTORY** Hollywood's Mulholland Drive is shown in this 1924 photo. The now-famous sign in the hills was erected to promote a real-estate development. **Analyzing Visual Information** What details in the photograph show Hollywood's past and future?

The Mass Media

Hollywood's new fame reflected a major trend of the 1920s. Before that time, the United States had been largely a collection of regional cultures. Interests, tastes, and attitudes varied widely from one region to another. Most Americans simply did not know much about the rest of the country, talk with people in other regions, or even read the same news as other Americans.

Section

Assessment

READING COMPREHENSION

1. How did the **flapper** symbolize change for women in the 1920s?
2. What conditions brought about the **demographic** shifts of the 1920s?
3. How did a **barrio** develop in Los Angeles during the 1920s?

CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

4. **Making Comparisons** How is today's youth culture similar to the youth culture of the 1920s?
5. **Writing a News Brief** Write a short news article and headline reporting on women voting in 1920 after the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Take It to the NET

**Activity: Writing a Biography** Research the lives of Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.  
[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)

## Focus on TECHNOLOGY

**Adding Sound to Movies** The system used to record and play sound in *The Jazz Singer* (below) was known as Vitaphone, which used a 16-inch rotating wax disk to record the movie's singing and speech. The sound was then synchronized with the film and amplified by loudspeakers in the theater. The Vitaphone system offered the best sound quality of its time.

Another method of making sound movies involved recording sound directly onto film. Although the early use of this method produced poor sound quality and distortion, by the 1930s it became the preferred technology for making "talkies."



The 1920s changed all that. Films, nationwide news gathering, and the new industry of radio broadcasting produced the beginnings of a national culture. As you have read, early in the decade few American women dressed in the flapper style or smoked and drank in public. Such customs became common cultural experiences because of the growth of the mass media. The **mass media** are print, film, and broadcast methods of communicating information to large numbers of people.

**Movies** From their beginnings in the 1890s, motion pictures had been a wildly popular mass medium, and through the 1920s, audiences grew. Between 1910 and 1930, the number of theaters rose from about 5,000 to about 22,500. By 1929, when the total population was less than 125 million, the nation's theaters sold roughly 80 million tickets each week. Moviemaking had become the fourth largest business in the country.

This growth occurred throughout the silent film era. In 1927, the success of the first sound film, *The Jazz Singer*, changed the course of the movie industry. Starring vaudeville performer Al Jolson, the movie included speech, singing, music, and sound effects. Audiences loved it. As more theaters played "talkies," the industry's boom continued.

Some actors never made the shift from silent films to sound films. Foreign actors, for example, often faced the choice of learning English or giving up their movie careers. Other actors moved more smoothly to talkies. Greta Garbo, a glamorous star of the silent screen, retained her popularity in speaking roles despite a heavy Swedish accent. Silent screen actress Lillian Gish won renown for playing the part of the delicate heroine. She readily transferred her expressive gestures and heart-rending glances to speaking roles. Charlie Chaplin extended the silent era. Dressed in his famous tattered suit, derby hat, and cane, Chaplin had delighted American audiences since 1914 with his silent comedy. In the era of sound, Chaplin added music to his films and successfully continued his soundless portrayal of the "little tramp."

**Newspapers and Magazines** Americans followed the off-screen lives of their favorite stars in two other mass media—newspapers and magazines. During the 1920s, newspapers increased both in size and in circulation, or readership. In 1900, a hefty edition of the *New York Times* totaled only 14 pages. By the mid-1920s, however, newspapers even in mid-sized American cities often totaled more than 50 pages a day, and Sunday editions were enormous. In fact, the use of newsprint roughly doubled in the United States between 1914 and 1927.

Even as newspapers grew and gained more readers, the number of independently owned newspapers fell. Many disappeared as a result of mergers. A newspaper chain, owned by a single individual or company, often bought up two of a city's established papers and merged them. Thus they created one newspaper with potentially twice the circulation. The larger the circulation, the more money that advertisers would pay to market their products in the paper and the greater the profits for the publisher. Between 1923 and 1927, the number of chains doubled, and the total number of newspapers they owned rose by 50 percent.

Profits, not quality, drove most of these newspaper chains. To attract readers, especially in the cities, many chains published tabloids. A tabloid is a compact newspaper that relies on large headlines, few words, and many pictures to tell a

story. Tabloids of the 1920s replaced serious news with entertainment that focused on fashion, sports, and sensational stories about crimes and scandals. This content sold papers, as publisher William Randolph Hearst knew well. Hearst once said that he wanted his New York tabloid the *Daily Mirror* to be "90 percent entertainment, 10 percent information—and the information without boring you."

During the 1920s, sales of magazines rose, too. By 1929, Americans were buying more than 200 million copies of such popular magazines as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Reader's Digest*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Time*. These magazines provided a variety of information in a form that most people could easily digest. Advertisers, eager to reach so many potential customers, often ran full-page ads promoting their products.

With the rise of newspapers and magazines as mass media, Americans began to share the same information, read about the same events, and encounter the same ideas and fashions. Thus newspapers and magazines helped create a common popular culture.

**Radio** As a mass medium, radio barely existed until the 1920s. Before that time, relatively few Americans had radio sets, and those they had were all homemade. They used their radios to communicate with each other one-on-one. In 1920, Frank Conrad, an engineer with the Westinghouse Electric Company, set up a radio transmitter in his garage in Pittsburgh. As an experiment, he began sending recorded music and baseball scores over the radio. The response was so great that Westinghouse began broadcasting programs on a regular basis. Soon the nation had its first commercial radio station, Pittsburgh's KDKA.

At first, the only advertising on KDKA was the occasional mention of its sponsor, Westinghouse. Yet even that was enough to increase the sales of Westinghouse products, mainly home appliances. In the coming years, radio would become a profitable medium for advertisers.

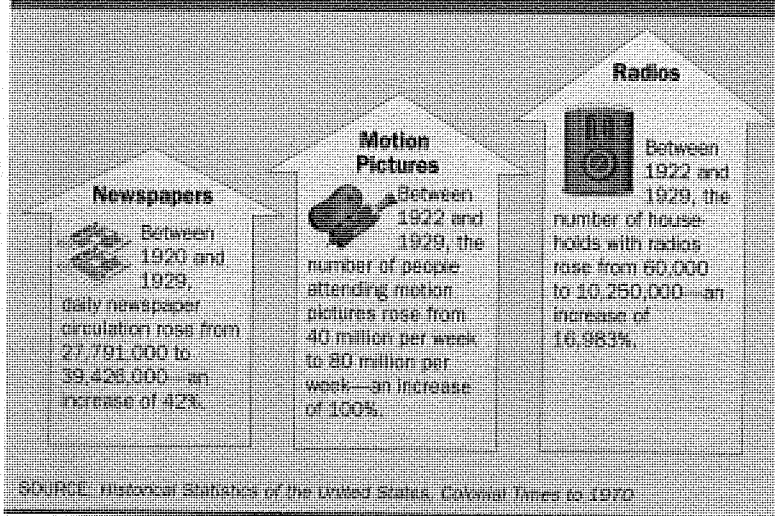
Radio enjoyed tremendous growth. By 1922, more than 500 stations were on the air, and Americans eagerly bought radios to listen to them. To reach more people, networks such as the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) linked many individual stations together. Each station in the network played the same programming. Soon much of the country was listening to the same jokes, commercials, music, sports events, religious services, and news. Other companies imitated NBC, building networks of their own.

### The Jazz Age

Both the growing radio audience and the great African American migration to the cities helped make a music called jazz widely popular in the 1920s. This music features improvisation, a process by which musicians make up music as they are playing it rather than relying completely on printed scores. It also has a type of off-beat rhythm called syncopation.

**Jazz Arrives** Jazz grew out of the African American music of the South, especially ragtime and blues. By the early 1900s, bands in New Orleans were

### Growth of the Mass Media in the 1920s



#### INTERPRETING DIAGRAMS

The decade of the 1920s saw an explosion in forms of mass communication. **Making Comparisons** Why do you think radio grew the most during this decade?

#### READING CHECK

What social changes were brought about by the mass media?

# American BIOGRAPHIES

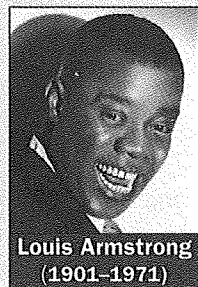


Duke Ellington  
(1899–1974)

**Edward Kennedy Ellington** was born in Washington, D.C. At 17, “Duke,” as Ellington was called, played in Washington’s clubs at night and painted signs during the day. In 1923, Ellington and several other musicians moved to New York City and formed a band. This band, under various names and in one form or another, continued to play with Ellington until his death at age 75.

Although Ellington was an excellent pianist, his greatest talents were as a band leader, an arranger, and a composer. He wrote at least a thousand pieces in his long career, including music for concerts, Broadway shows, films, and operas. Among his most memorable tunes are “Mood Indigo,” “Solitude,” “In a Sentimental Mood,” “Blue Harlem,” and “Bojangles.”

**Louis Armstrong**, nicknamed “Satchmo,” was born and grew up in New Orleans, where he learned to sing and play the trumpet. In 1922, Armstrong was invited to play the trumpet in Chicago, and in 1923, he made his first recordings with King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band. Armstrong’s showmanship and virtuosity soon became evident, especially when he performed his improvised extended solos. Because of Armstrong, long solos became key elements of jazz ensemble performances.



Louis Armstrong  
(1901–1971)

Armstrong also improvised with his voice, replacing words with nonsense syllables in a style known as “scat” singing. His first scat recording, “Heebie Jeebies,” encouraged many jazz vocalists to sing scat. His Hot Five and Hot Seven ensemble recordings are among his most notable early recordings.

are played widely to this day.

When flappers danced to jazz on the radio or to a live jazz band, most likely they did the Charleston. This dance took over the dance halls and ballrooms in the 1920s and became a national fad. The Charleston embodied the Jazz Age. It was wild and reckless, full of kicks and twists and pivots. Unlike traditional ballroom dancing, the Charleston could be danced with a partner, in a group, or all alone.

**The Jazz Spirit** The jazz spirit ran through all the arts of the 1920s. People spoke of “jazz poetry” and “jazz painting.” However, jazz most strongly influenced other forms of music. Composers in the Jazz Age, such as George Gershwin, mixed jazz elements into more familiar-sounding music. Gershwin, the son of

playing the new mix of styles. Although jazz recordings were available in the 1910s, many radio listeners began hearing the new sound for the first time in the 1920s. Soon jazz became a nationwide craze. Younger people in particular loved to dance to the new music. By 1929, a survey of stations showed that two thirds of all radio air time was devoted to jazz.

Some Americans were horrified by jazz. Its syncopated rhythms and improvisations were too suggestive of the free manners and morals of the age. Eventually, however, Americans from many walks of life embraced the music. The great symphony conductor Leopold Stokowski declared that jazz was “an expression of the times, of the breathless, energetic, superactive times in which we are living.” The 1920s came to be called the **Jazz Age**.

**Jazz Clubs and Dance Halls** One of the most popular places to listen to jazz was Harlem, a district on the northern end of the island of Manhattan. By one count, Harlem had some 500 jazz clubs. A dozen of them, including the Cotton Club, Connie’s Inn, and the Saratoga Club, catered to the rich and famous. At clubs such as these, musicians, most of whom were black, performed for audiences that were primarily white.

Nearly all the great jazz musicians played in the Harlem clubs at one time or another. Jelly Roll Morton, a jazz pianist from New Orleans, arranged his band’s music in a way that encouraged group improvisation. This gave his band a smooth, modern sound. Benny Goodman, known as the “King of Swing,” began playing jazz professionally as a teenager in the early 1920s. His “big band” helped make jazz popular with white audiences. Goodman’s 1936 quartet, which included African American musicians Lionel Hampton and Teddy Wilson, was the first popular racially mixed jazz group. Two musicians, in particular, made important contributions to jazz beginning in the 1920s: Louis Armstrong, who wowed audiences with his brilliantly improvised trumpet solos, and Duke Ellington, an arranger, composer, and bandleader, whose works

Russian immigrants, won overnight success in 1924 with his *Rhapsody in Blue*. First played by bandleader Paul Whiteman’s orchestra, this piece throbbed with jazz rhythms. Not quite jazz and not quite symphony, it was, instead, a magical blend of the two. The basic form of this rhapsody came to Gershwin in a sudden rush of insight while riding a train. He said that he heard the music in the rhythmic noise of the train:

“I heard it as a sort of musical kaleidoscope of America—of our vast melting pot, of our unduplicated national pep, of our blues, our metropolitan madness.”

—George Gershwin, 1924

**Painting** Like jazz musicians, American painters of the 1920s did not shy away from taking the pulse of American life. Painters such as Edward Hopper and Rockwell Kent showed the nation’s rougher side, from cities to coal mines, from the streets to the barrooms.

By contrast, a young artist named Georgia O’Keeffe painted natural objects such as flowers, animal bones, and landscapes. However simple her images, they always suggest something greater than themselves. A range of hills, for example, seems almost to shudder with life. O’Keeffe continued to paint until her death in 1986 at the age of nearly 100.

**Literature** Several modern writers began fruitful careers during the 1920s. Novelist Sinclair Lewis attacked American society with savage irony. His targets included the prosperous conformist (*Babbitt*, 1922), the medical business (*Arrowsmith*, 1925), and dishonest ministers (*Elmer Gantry*, 1927). In *Main Street* Lewis, showing no mercy, depicts small-town Americans as a

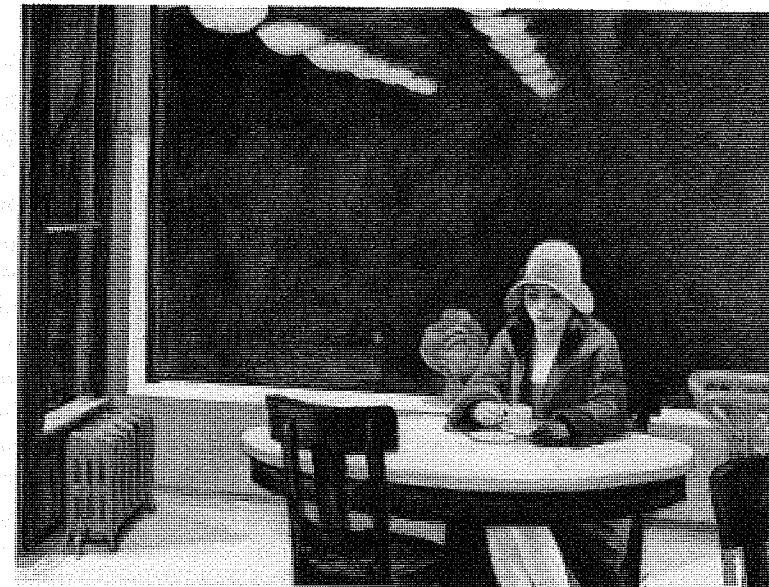
“savorless people, gulping tasteless food, and sitting afterward, coatless and thoughtless, in rocking-chairs prickly with inane decorations, listening to mechanical music, saying mechanical things about the excellence of Ford automobiles, and viewing themselves as the greatest race in the world.”

—Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street* (1920)

Lewis refused a Pulitzer Prize in 1926, but in 1930 he became the first American to receive the Nobel prize for literature.

Another writer destined for the Nobel prize was playwright Eugene O’Neill. In a career stretching from the 1920s into the 1950s, he wove dark, poetic tragedies out of the material of everyday American life. Until his time, most American theaters had shown only European plays or light comedies. The power of O’Neill’s work proved to the public that the American stage could achieve a greatness rivaling that of Europe.

**The Lost Generation** American society in the 1920s troubled one group of important writers. This group rejected the quest for material possessions that



**VIEWING HISTORY** Edward Hopper painted this scene, titled *Automat*, in 1927. The *Automat* was a popular restaurant chain in which one could purchase a snack or meal from a vending machine and then eat at a table. **Drawing Inferences** What does the painting suggest about Hopper’s view of the culture of the times?



## Sounds of an Era

Listen to a 1927 recording of “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” by Duke Ellington.

Artists of the Jazz Age (left to right): Writer F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald, a writer and painter; poet Edna St. Vincent Millay; and writer and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston.



seemed to occupy so many Americans. Its members also scorned American popular culture as artless and uninspired. Postwar society so repelled them that they left the United States for Europe. These expatriates, or people who live outside their homeland, found Europe more intellectually stimulating.

The most prominent of these writers settled in Paris. They included Sherwood Anderson, Archibald MacLeish, Hart Crane, E. E. Cummings, John Dos Passos, Ernest Hemingway, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Another notable American writer, Gertrude Stein, had been living in Paris for some time and had come into contact with many of the expatriates. Stein remarked to Hemingway that he and the other expatriate writers were all a **Lost Generation**, a group of people disconnected from their country and its values. Hemingway introduced Stein's term to the reading public when he used it in his 1926 novel *The Sun Also Rises*.

F. Scott Fitzgerald was both part of the Lost Generation and part of the Jazz Age. Some people believe Fitzgerald helped create the flapper culture with his novel *This Side of Paradise*, published in 1920. His 1925 masterpiece *The Great Gatsby* focused on the wealthy, sophisticated Americans of the Jazz Age whom he found to be self-centered and shallow.

After Hemingway made the term *Lost Generation* famous, it was taken up by the flappers. They liked to imagine themselves as rebels against the culture of their time, living a fast and dangerous life. The words of a popular poet of the day, Edna St. Vincent Millay, captured the flapper's attitude toward life:

“My candle burns at both ends;  
It will not last the night;  
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends—  
It gives a lovely light!”

—Edna St. Vincent Millay, “First Fig,” 1920

## The Harlem Renaissance

For African Americans, New York City's Harlem was becoming the cultural center of the United States. The number of African Americans living in Harlem grew from 50,000 in 1914 to about 200,000 in 1930. Not just a national center for jazz, Harlem also became the home of an African American literary awakening of the 1920s known as the **Harlem Renaissance**.

James Weldon Johnson emerged as a leading writer of the Harlem group. Johnson lived in two worlds, the political and the literary. As executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of

Colored People (NAACP), he led the group during an active period in its history. At the same time, he pursued a writing career that inspired younger members of the Harlem group. His most famous work, *God's Trombones* (1927), is a collection of sermons in rhythmic verse modeled after the style of traditional black preaching.

Other writers followed Johnson's lead. Alain Locke's 1925 book *The New Negro* celebrated the blossoming of African American culture. Locke noted that both African and American heritages could be enriching, not conflicting. Zora Neale Hurston came to New York in 1925, became an anthropologist, and gained fame as a writer with her poignant novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). Dorothy West, another accomplished writer, tackled the dual themes of being black and being a woman.

The leading poets of the Harlem Renaissance were Claude McKay and Countee Cullen. McKay produced a large body of work, including *Harlem Shadows* (1922), and was a voice of protest against the sufferings of African Americans in white society. The gifted Cullen is best known for his 1925 collection of poems called *Color*. He also brought to light the talents of fellow writers in *Caroling Dusk: An Anthology of Verse by Negro Poets* (1927).

The Harlem writer perhaps most studied today is Langston Hughes, a poet, short story writer, journalist, and playwright whose career stretched into the 1960s. Hughes spoke with a clear, strong voice about the joys and difficulties of being human, being American, and being black:

“I, too, sing America. I am the darker brother. They send me to eat in the kitchen When company comes, But I laugh, And eat well, And grow strong. . . .	Tomorrow, I'll be at the table When company comes. Nobody'll dare Say to me, 'Eat in the kitchen,' Then.	Besides, They'll see how beautiful I am And be ashamed— I, too, am America.”
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—Langston Hughes,  
“I, Too,” 1926



Harlem Renaissance poet and writer Langston Hughes

## Focus on CULTURE

**Twenties Slang** Every generation coins its own terms and phrases. The youth culture of the 1920s was no different. In addition to “flappers” and “speakeasies,” the decade spoke its share of slang, some of which is still in use today.

**baloney** Nonsense; untrue  
**bee's knees** The best; cutest  
**copacetic** Excellent, used as an exclamation  
**gold digger** A woman in search of a wealthy man  
**goofy** Silly, clumsy, stupid  
**hard-boiled** Unfeeling or tough  
**jazz baby** Another word for flapper  
**peppy** Energetic  
**ritzy** High class  
**swell** Terrific

## Section

2

## Assessment

### READING COMPREHENSION

1. What social changes were brought about by the **mass media**?
2. Who were some of the major figures of the **Jazz Age**?
3. Why is the term **Lost Generation** used to describe some writers of the 1920s?
4. How might the jazz spirit have influenced the poetry that came out of the **Harlem Renaissance**?

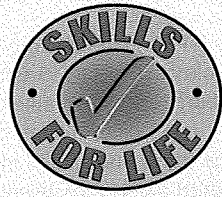
### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

5. **Making Comparisons** What do the novels of Sinclair Lewis and F. Scott Fitzgerald say about Americans in the 1920s?
6. **Writing an Opinion** What influence do film and radio have on current popular culture? Give examples.



### Take It to the NET

**Activity: Drawing a Cartoon**  
 Learn more about popular entertainment in the 1920s, and then draw a cartoon about the music, movies, sports, or arts of the Jazz Age. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.  
[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)



# Supporting a Position

When you take a position on an issue, you have a better chance of winning others to your side if you can back up your argument with solid reasons and evidence.

The movie industry introduced the first "talkie"—a movie with sound—in 1927. At that time, many people predicted that these films would replace traditional stage productions. (In recent years, some people have made a similar prediction with regard to computers replacing books, newspapers, and magazines.) In 1929, Irving Norton Fisher discussed this issue in a letter to his father. Fisher would later become a drama critic and author. In his letter, he takes a position on talkies.

### LEARN THE SKILL

Use the following steps to support a position:

- 1. State your position clearly in a sentence.** To take a position on any issue, you must be clear as to what that position is. Writing it out in a sentence forces you to organize your thoughts.
- 2. Identify at least three reasons for your position.** To be convincing, you must do more than say what you believe; you must say why you believe it. Think of reasons for your side—or against the opposing position. Pointing out the weakness of an opposing idea can be very effective. Also consider your audience. Think of what reasons will be most effective with those you are trying to persuade.
- 3. Support each reason with evidence.** To build a solid case for your position, use facts to support each reason.
- 4. Add a conclusion.** This is your chance to sum up and drive your point home.

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

Answer the following questions:

- (a)** What position does Irving Norton Fisher take on the issue of talkies replacing live theater? **(b)** What part of his letter states this position? **(c)** Restate Fisher's position in your own words, as if you were using it to begin an essay or a speech.
- (a)** What reasons does Fisher give for his position? **(b)** How does Fisher treat the opposing position? **(c)** Does this strengthen or weaken his argument? Explain your reasoning.
- (a)** What evidence does Fisher give for each of his reasons? **(b)** Is the evidence factual, or just opinion masquerading as fact?
- (a)** Fisher's argument is part of an informal letter and does not have a conclusion. Write a conclusion for his argument. **(b)** Write a short paragraph that takes one of these positions: the position of Fisher's father (that talkies would become popular

Nov. 14, 1929.

Dear Father:—

*Yours of the 10th just here. For which many thanks, as I know how pressed for time you must be. It's incredible that the stock market can go any lower, and yet each new day seems to be worse than the day before. . . .*

*I'm free to confess I don't entirely agree with all you say about "talkies" replacing the theatre. Any more than I believe that artificial flowers can ever replace those produced by nature. There is no mechanical way of thrilling the human mind as the actual presence of an actor or singer thrills it. And from what Sidney Howard said after directing three "talkies" in Hollywood himself, the whole thing is still in the balance. No talkie has yet paid for itself.—They are so much more expensive than other films, and the whole foreign market (formerly so lucrative) is automatically cut out, except for English-speaking countries. Formerly, movies didn't begin to make money until the returns began accumulating from the small towns in U.S. (which are still unequipped for "talkies") and from foreign countries. Of course Hollywood is optimistic, who wouldn't be if his livelihood [sic] depended on it, but it is by no means an assured thing! . . .*

—Your very loving son,  
Irving N. Fisher

and replace live theater); or the position that, in the future, computers will (or will not) replace books, newspapers, and magazines.

### APPLY THE SKILL

See the Chapter Review and Assessment for another opportunity to apply this skill.

# Cultural Conflicts

### READING FOCUS

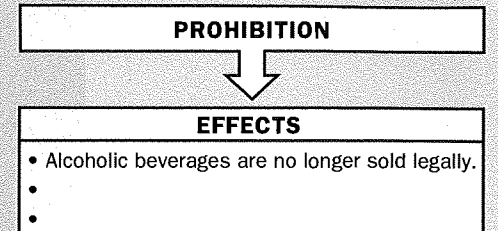
- What were the effects of Prohibition on society?
- What issues of religion were at the core of the Scopes trial?
- How did racial tensions change after World War I?

### KEY TERMS

- bootleggers
- speakeasies
- fundamentalism
- Scopes trial

### TAKING NOTES

Create a chart like the one below. As you read, fill the chart with some of the effects of Prohibition.



### MAIN IDEA

Rapid social change after World War I caused conflicts among people with differing beliefs and values.

**Setting the Scene** Prohibition of all alcoholic beverages became the law of the land when the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution took effect on January 16, 1920. Yet for many people, life went on as before. Even President Harding did not heed the law, as the daughter of former President Theodore Roosevelt witnessed:

*“ Though violation of the Eighteenth Amendment was a matter of course in Washington, it was rather shocking to see the way Harding disregarded the Constitution he was sworn to uphold. . . . there were always, at least before the unofficial dinners, cocktails in the upstairs hall outside the President's room. . . . One evening . . . a friend of the Hardings asked me if I would like to go up to the study. . . . No rumor could have exceeded the reality; . . . trays with bottles containing every imaginable brand of whiskey stood about. . . .”*

—Alice Roosevelt Longworth, *Crowded Hours*, 1933

### Prohibition

The main goals of Prohibition seemed worthy: (1) Eliminate drunkenness and the resulting abuse of family members and others. (2) Get rid of saloons, where prostitution, gambling, and other forms of vice thrived. (3) Prevent absenteeism and on-the-job accidents stemming from drunkenness. Congress passed the Volstead Act in 1919 to provide a system for enforcing the Eighteenth Amendment, but it was widely ignored—especially in the large cities along the coasts and in the upper Midwest. A 1924 report showed Kansans obeying the law at a rate of about 95 percent and New Yorkers at a rate of only about 5 percent. Thus Prohibition sharpened the contrast between urban and rural moral values during the 1920s.

**Bootlegging** Liquor, beer, and wine could no longer be manufactured, sold, or transported in the United States. Americans who chose to defy the Volstead Act needed to find a private source of alcoholic beverages. For this they turned to a new type of criminal: the bootlegger.



Prohibition forced many beer companies to find new beverages to brew, as these labels show.





In the old days, **bootleggers** merely had been drinkers who hid flasks of liquor in the leg of their boots. Now the term was used to describe suppliers of illegal alcohol. Some bootleggers operated stills—devices used to produce alcohol from corn, grain, potatoes, or other fruit and vegetable sources. Others smuggled liquor overland from Canada or by ship from the Caribbean. A smuggler's ship might anchor far off the coast, where its illegal cargo would be loaded onto speedboats fast enough to outrace Coast Guard cutters. The boats would then head to secluded harbors where trucks were waiting to carry the liquor to warehouses. From there, it would be transported to retail outlets. Those outlets included restaurants, nightclubs, and speakeasies.

**Speakeasies** were bars that operated illegally. These bars flourished in the cities. One observer estimated that there were 700 speakeasies and 4,000 bootleggers in Washington, D.C., a city with only 300 licensed saloons before Prohibition. The whole state of Massachusetts had 1,000 saloons before Prohibition, while during it Boston alone had 4,000 speakeasies and 15,000 bootleggers. A customer could not just stroll into a speakeasy. A heavy gate usually blocked the entrance, and the customer had to show a membership card or be recognized by a guard. A

number of speakeasies rejected the standard gate for a more creative entrance, as a French diplomat observed in New York City:

*“Some speakeasies are disguised behind florists’ shops, or behind undertakers’ coffins. I know one, right in Broadway, which is entered through an imitation telephone-box; it has excellent beer. . . .”*

—Paul Morand, 1929

**Organized Crime** Supplying illegal liquor was a complex operation, involving manufacture, transportation, storage, and sales. This complexity, and bootlegging’s huge potential for profit, helped lead to the development of organized crime.

At first, local gangsters operated independently, competing to supply liquor. Then some of them found that by joining forces they could create an organization large and efficient enough to handle the entire bootlegging operation. When these organizations tried to expand their territory, they clashed with other gangs. As rival groups fought for control with machine guns and sawed-off shotguns, gang wars and murder became commonplace. The streets of American cities became a battleground.

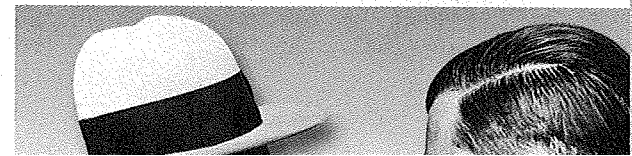
Successful bootlegging organizations often moved into other illegal activities, including gambling, prostitution, and a highly profitable business called racketeering. In one kind of “racket,” gangsters bribed police or other government officials to ignore their illegal operations. In another, gangsters forced local businesses to pay a fee for “protection.” Those who refused to pay might be gunned down or have their businesses blown to bits. In one period of a little more than a year, racketeers set off 157 bombs in Chicago. Terrified citizens went along with the gangsters’ demands. The supporters of Prohibition had never dreamed that their ideals would bear such evil fruit.

**Al Capone** The most notorious of the gangster organizations operated in Chicago. There, bootlegging had added immense wealth to an already successful gambling, prostitution, and racketeering business that reached into nearly every neighborhood, police station, and government office.

In 1925, a young gangster murdered his way to the top of Chicago’s organized crime network. He was Al Capone, nicknamed “Scarface.” Capone was a ruthless criminal with a talent for avoiding jail. With so much money at his disposal (\$60 million a year from bootlegging alone), Capone easily bought the cooperation of police and city officials. Politicians, even judges, took orders from him.

The government fought back with improved law enforcement. The Bureau of Investigation (later named the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI), headed by J. Edgar Hoover, became a dedi-

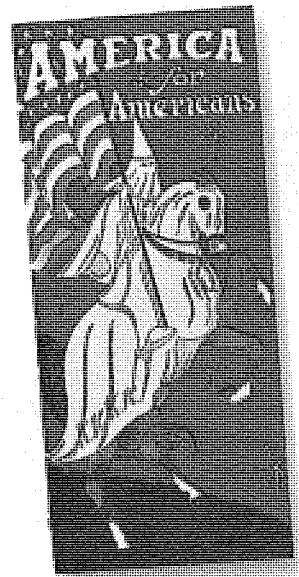
**VIEWING HISTORY** Chicago gangster Al Capone (left) confers with his lawyer in this 1929 photo. **Synthesizing Information** Why was it so difficult for the government to bring Capone to justice?



## COMPARING PRIMARY SOURCES

### The Eighteenth Amendment

and Congress to hear testimony on whether the Eighteenth Amendment should



This 1920s poster illustrates the Ku Klux Klan's views on immigration.

Some whites also directed racial violence against specific individuals. During the 1920s, the lynchings of the Jim Crow era continued. Many of these new crimes were the work of an old enemy of racial harmony, the Ku Klux Klan.

**Revival of the Klan** During Reconstruction, President Grant's campaign against the Ku Klux Klan had largely eliminated it. However, in 1915 a former Methodist circuit preacher from Atlanta, Colonel William J. Simmons, revived the organization. The Klan used modern fundraising and publicity methods to increase its influence and size. By 1922, Klan membership had grown to about 100,000. Two years later, it had ballooned to 4 million. The new Klan was no longer just a southern organization. In fact, the state with the greatest number of Klansmen was Indiana. The Klan's focus shifted, too. The organization vowed to defend their own white-Protestant culture against any group, not just blacks, that seemed to them un-American:

*“Klansmen are to be examples of pure patriotism. They are to organize the patriotic sentiment of native-born white, Protestant Americans for the defense of distinctively American institutions. Klansmen are dedicated to the principle that America shall be made American through the promulgation [circulation] of American doctrines, the dissemination [spread] of American ideals, the creation of wholesome American sentiment, the preservation of American institutions.”*

—Klansman's Manual, 1925

During the early 1920s, Klan members carried out many crimes against African Americans, Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and others. They rode by night, beating, whipping, even killing their victims, terrorizing blacks and whites alike. Then, in 1925, the head of the Klan in Indiana was sentenced to life imprisonment for assaulting a girl who later poisoned herself. The nation was finally shocked into action, and police began to step up enforcement. By 1927, Klan activity had diminished once again.

**Fighting Discrimination** Increasing violence against African Americans rallied the efforts of the NAACP. During the 1920s, the NAACP worked in vain to pass federal anti-lynching laws. A proposed law passed the House of Representatives in 1922 but died in the Senate. Law enforcement improved at the state level, and the number of lynchings gradually decreased. Ten lynchings were reported in 1929.

During the 1920s, the NAACP also worked to protect the voting rights of African Americans, but again it had only limited success. For example, the Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional a Texas law prohibiting blacks from voting in the Democratic primary. Yet the Texas legislature got around the law by giving political parties the right to decide who could vote in primary elections. African Americans in the South still could not exercise their full political rights.

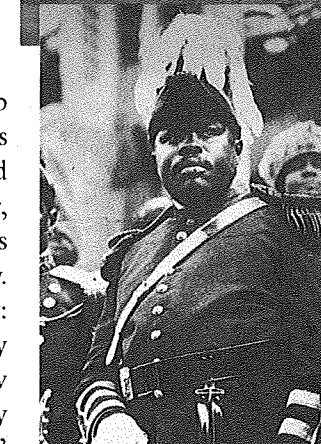
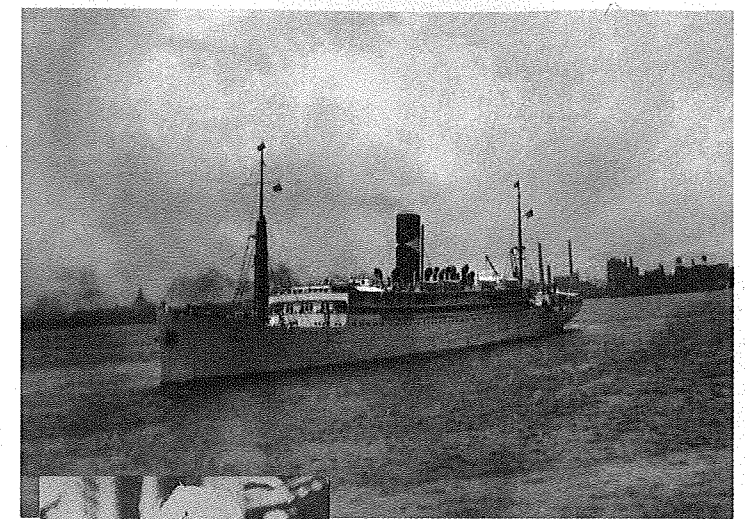
**The Garvey Movement** Some African Americans, frustrated by continued violence and discrimination, dreamed of a new homeland where they could live in peace. An African American named Marcus Garvey worked to make that dream a reality. Garvey had come to New York City from his native Jamaica in 1916 to establish a new headquarters for his Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA).

Through the UNIA, Garvey sought to build up African Americans' self-respect and economic power. African Americans were encouraged to buy shares

in Garvey's Negro Factories Corporation, a set of small black-owned businesses. He also urged African Americans to return to “Motherland Africa” to create a self-governing nation. Garvey's message of racial pride and independence attracted a large number of followers to his black nationalist movement. Garvey held regular UNIA meetings in Harlem, and his followers could be seen in military-style uniforms reflecting their status, whether as members of the marching band, the Black Cross Nurses, or the African Legion. Several respected African American leaders, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, criticized the movement, however. They objected to Garvey's call for separation of the races, as well as his careless business practices.

Garvey gathered \$10 million for a steamship company, the Black Star Line, that would carry his followers back to the motherland. Corruption and mismanagement plagued the shipping line, however, and in 1925, Garvey was jailed on mail fraud charges relating to the sale of stock in the steamship company. From prison the same year, he wrote in an essay: “Why should we be discouraged because somebody laughs at us today? Who [is] to tell what tomorrow will bring forth? . . . We see and have changes every day, so pray, work, be steadfast and be not dismayed.”

Garvey's sentence was later commuted, and he was deported to Jamaica in 1927. Without his leadership, the UNIA in America collapsed. Still, Garvey's ideas remained an inspiration to later “black pride” movements.



**VIEWING HISTORY** This ship belonged to Marcus Garvey's Black Star Line steamship company, founded in 1919. It was one of many enterprises Garvey (left) hoped would strengthen the African American community. **Drawing Conclusions** Was Marcus Garvey a successful leader?

## Section

## 3

## Assessment

### READING COMPREHENSION

1. What were the goals of Prohibition?
2. How did organized crime profit from **bootleggers** and **speakeasies** during Prohibition?
3. How were religious issues and **fundamentalism** at odds with the teaching of evolution?
4. Which positions did William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow each represent in the **Scopes trial**?
5. Why were many African Americans drawn to Marcus Garvey's message and movement?

### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

6. **Predicting Consequences** How might life in the 1920s have been different without Prohibition?
7. **Synthesizing Information** Consider the racial tensions that existed in the 1920s and those that exist today. Why are racial issues difficult to resolve?
8. **Writing a Conclusion** Write a short essay that supports the following conclusion: Differences between traditional and modern beliefs were responsible for the cultural conflicts of the 1920s.



### Take It to the NET

**Activity: Creating a Poster** Research arguments for and against Prohibition, and then create a poster that either promotes Prohibition or calls for its repeal. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.  
[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)