**America’s Gilded Age, 1870-1890**

**Essential Questions:**

1. What factors combined to make the United States a mature industrial society after the Civil War?
2. How was the West transformed economically and socially in this period?
3. Was the Gilded Age political system effective in meeting its goals?
4. How did the economic development of the Gilded Age affect American freedom?
5. How did reformers of the period approach the problems of an industrial society?

**At the end of this unit, I will be able to explain the following:**

1. Describe the importance of the nation’s railroads in the rise of America’s Second Industrial Revolution.
2. Explain how the development of an urban, industrial society exacerbate inequalities in U.S. society and promote class violence.
3. Describe the involvement of American family farmers in the global economy after 1970 and its effects their independence.
4. Explain how social thinkers misapplied Charles Darwin’s ideas to justify massive disparities in wealth and power and to deny government a role in equalizing opportunity

**Vocabulary**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| “great upheaval” of 1886 | Standard gauge | Railroad time zones |
| Vertical integration | Standard Oil Company | “captains of industry” v. “robber barons” |
| Bonanza farming | Dawes Act | “The Significance of the Frontier in American History |
| Ghost Dance | Greenbacks | Civil Service Act of 1883 |
| Interstate Commerce Commission | Patrons of Husbandry | Iron law of supply and demand |
| Social Darwinism | Liberty of conduct | *Lochner v. New York* |
| Great Railroad Strike of 1877 | Knights of Labor | Social Gospel |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Textbook Readings | Primary Source Readings |
| Give Me Liberty! Chapter 16: The Gilded Age | * “The Rich are Good Natured” by William Sumner * Story of a Monopoly * How the Other Half Lives by Jacob Riis |

**Chapter 16, Section 1**

***What factors combined to make the United States a successful industrial society after the Civil War?***

***Directions:*** Define each concept and identify its impact on the Second Industrial Revolution.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Availability of Investment Capital** |  |
| **Technological Innovations** |  |
| **Expansion of Railroads** |  |
| **New waves of Immigration** |  |
| **Changes in Government** |  |

**Foreshadowing:** Of the components listed above, which do you think will cause the most divisions or issues amongst the American people? Why?

**Chapter 16, Section 1 (continued)**

***“Self-Made” Men of the Gilded Age***

***Directions:*** Provide a background on these men of these “captains of industry” and what distinguished them in the Gilded Age.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| John D. Rockefeller | Andrew Carnegie |
| J.P. Morgan | Cornelius Vanderbilt |
| How did these “self-made” men represent the WORK ideology of the Gilded Age? | How did this ideology feed into the ever-growing gap between social classes? |
| Why are these captains of industry also referred to as *robber barons?* | |

**Chapter 16, Section 2**

***How was the West transformed both economically and socially during the Gilded Age?***

***Quick Review:*** What were some of the characteristics of the Market Revolution during the early 1800s?

***Directions:*** Explain how each of the following elements of Western life were transformed by the boom of industrialism after the Civil War and during the Reconstruction Era.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Railroads** |  |
| **Immigration** |  |
| **Women** |  |
| **Bonanza Farms** |  |
| **Large Scale Agriculture** |  |
| **Cowboys** |  |

**How was the West transformed both economically and socially during the Gilded Age?**

**Chapter 16, Section 2 (continued)**

***How did the transformation of the West put the freedom of Native Americans in jeopardy?***

***Directions:*** Explain how each aspect listed affected the lives of Native Americans.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Warfare** |  |
| **Destruction of Indian Economy** |  |
| **New States** |  |
| **“Civilizing”** |  |
| **Wounded Knee Massacre** |  |

**What were the chief complaints made by Natives about their treatment?**

**How did the transformation of the West put the freedom of Native Americans in jeopardy?**

**Chapter 16, Section 3**

***How did the prosperity of the Gilded Age alter the state of politics in the United States?***

***Do Now:***

Define capital:

Define labor:

What conflicts have we seen between capital and labor in modern day?

***Directions:*** Explain the response of the US government in the discovery of the following corruption cases

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Case** | **Government Response/ Role in the Scandal** |
| **Credit Mobilier** |  |
| **New York Tweed Ring** |  |
| **Whiskey Ring** |  |

**Define:** Laissez Faire Economics

How did the policy of Laissez Faire aid the development of big businesses?

**Chapter 16, Section 4**

***How did Gilded Age economic development affect American freedom?***

**Define** Social Darwinism:

“The Rich are Good-Natured” William Graham Sumner Defends the Wealthy

In the late 19th century, William Graham Sumner, an Episcopal minister turned academic sociologist, brought a distinctly conservative perspective to the science of sociology. Some of his ideas about the economic survival of the fittest and opposition to government intervention in the economy were applications of Darwin’s scientific ideas of evolution to the social sphere. He also drew upon the doctrines of laissez-faire British economists like Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo to argue that government intervention would disturb the “natural” and self-regulating market. Sumner’s writings justified government inaction in the face of vast social dislocations caused by rapid industrialization and the periodic economic depressions that accompanied it. Not surprisingly, his work had a broad influence beyond the academy. In this excerpt from his 1883 essay, “What the Social Classes Owe To Each Other,” Sumner portrayed the wealthy elite as a put-upon class whose misunderstood ambitions and intentions would benefit everyone.

THAT IT IS NOT WICKED TO BE RICH; NAY, EVEN, THAT IT IS NOT WICKED TO BE RICHER THAN ONE’S NEIGHBOR.

I have before me a newspaper slip on which a writer expresses the opinion that no one should be allowed to possess more than one million dollars’ worth of property. Alongside of it is another slip, on which another writer expresses the opinion that the limit should be five million. I do not know what the comparative wealth of the two writers is, but it is interesting to notice that there is a wide margin between their ideas of how rich they would allow their follow-citizens to become, and of the point at which (“the State,” of course) would step in to rob a man of his earnings. These two writers only represent a great deal of crude thinking and declaiming which is in fashion. I never have known a man of ordinary common-sense who did not urge upon his sons, from earliest childhood, doctrines of economy and the practice of accumulation. A good father believes that he does wisely to encourage enterprise, productive skill, prudent self-denial, and judicious expenditure on the part of his son. The object is to teach the boy to accumulate capital. If, however, the boy should read many of the diatribes against “the rich” which are afloat in our literature; if he should read or hear some of the current discussion about “capital;” and if, with the ingenuousness of youth, he should take these productions at their literal sense, instead of discounting them, as his father does, he would be forced to believe that he was on the path of infamy when he was earning and saving capital. It is worth-while to consider which we man or what we mean. Is it wicked to be rich? Is it mean to be a capitalist? If the question is one of degree only, and it is right to be rich up to a certain point and wrong to be richer, how shall we find the point? Certainly, for practical purposes, we out to define the point nearer than between one and five million of dollars.

How does Sumner relate Darwin’s scientific ideas to the new economic growth of the Gilded Age?   
  
  
  
  
What does the author think about “the State” regulating a man’s earnings?

How does Sumner believe society should raise boys? How does he believe government interference in the economy could limit a boy’s success?

**Story of a Monopoly (1881)**

*During the last half of the nineteenth century, American capitalism was transformed by the emergence of massive new industrial trusts. The federal government had little interest and even less power to regulate their behavior, but journalists and social critics including Henry Demarest Lloyd labored to awaken popular outrage against this new threat to liberty. In this excerpt, Lloyd described his plan for curbing the railroad trusts and restoring American liberty.* ***As you read this document, consider whether the laissez-faire liberalism and passive federal government was sufficient to control the new monopolies.***

Our experiences in the riots of 1877, in the countless cases of excessive and unfair railroad taxation fairly represented by the case of the Standard Oil Company, and in pools which have culminated in the Great Trunk Line Executive Committee, makes it clear than an adequate power must be called in to secure these things: --

(1) Railroad charges must be public. Publicity is the great moral disinfectant.

(2) They must be stable. In transportation, as in currency, taxation and the law, it is indispensable that the citizen knows what to count on.

(3) They must be reasonable. They must be based on the cost of the service, not on what people will stand. The community will not be taxed to pay dividends and interest on the $54,507,000 of water in the New York Central, the $63,963,881 in the Erie, the $13,000,000 in the New York Elevated roads, and so on through the list, or to fatten corrupt railroad officials, like the secret stockholders in the Acme Oil Company.

(4) They must be equal; for similar services, similar rates. If the absolute equality of the post-office, which sells stamps the same price by one or one million, is not practicable, and there must be wholesale and retail rates, let the additional charge – as in the case of a single harvester of the small farmer along the Northern Pacific – in no case exceed the actual additional cost of handling and hauling.

(5) Railroads and railroad men must exercise their public functions. No road shall voluntarily stop running, as several roads did in July, 1877, and no railroad man or multiple of him shall desert his post or interfere with the operation of any road.

(6) There must be a national board to hear the complaints of citizens and railroads, with power to take testimony, to investigate abuses, to publish the results, and to call upon the legal officers of the government to prosecute where prosecution is needed.

(7) Under the constitutional right of Congress to pass laws and levy taxes, “to establish justice,” there must be such amendment of the law and its processes that all violations of the duties of common carriers, “in commerce among the States,” can be prosecuted by civil or criminal proceedings promptly and cheaply.

The costliness, the delays, and the technicalities of our law amount to a denial of justice that is eating deep into the hearts of the people. Only the rich can get justice; only the poor cannot escape it.

In less than the ordinary span of a lifetime, our railroads have brought upon us the worst labor disturbance, the greatest of monopolies, and the most formidable combination of money and brains that ever overshadowed a state. The time has come to face the fact that the forces of capital and industry have outgrown the forces of our government. The corporation and the trades-union have forgotten that they are the creatures of the state. Our strong men are engaged in a headlong fight for fortune, power, precedence, success. Americans as they are, they ride over the people like Juggernauts to gain their ends. The moralists have preached to them since the world began, and have failed. The common people, the nation, must take them in hand. The people can be successful only when they are right. When monopolies succeed, the people fail; when a rich criminal escapes justice, the people are punished; when a legislature is bribed, the people are cheated. There is nobody richer than Vanderbilt except the body of citizens; no corporation more powerful than the Transcontinental Railroad except the corporate sovereign at Washington. The nation is the engine of the people. They must use it for their industrial life, as they used it in 1861 for their political life. The States have failed. The United States must succeed, or the people will perish.

**Define *MONOPOLY:***

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| --- | --- |
| 1. What are some of the complaints made in this reading? | 2. What are the critics of this particular monopoly asking for? |
| 3. How does this piece fit into the overall story of the Gilded Age? | 4. What freedom does the author see being jeopardized? What freedoms does he or she see to be at risk? |

**5. How does this political cartoon portray big business? Who would this cartoon appeal to? Why?**

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**Chapter 16, Section 4 (Continued) *Gilded Age Political Cartoon Analysis***

**Directions:** Analyze the following political cartoons about the Gilded Age

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **EMPLOYER WEAPONS** | **UNION WEAPONS** |
| **AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT:** Employer can terminate employee for any reason, so long as it is not an illegal reason (such as firing someone based on race or sex) | **BOYCOTT**: Workers and sympathizers refuse to buy the products of a company which is in a dispute with its workers |
| **BLACKLIST**: A list of the names of employees who are union activists, used to deny them work | **CHECK-OFF:** Deductions are regularly taken from a worker’s paycheck to cover union dues. |
| **COMPANY UNIONS:** Company controlled organization for handling workers’ grievances that mimics an employee union | **CLOSED SHOP:** A company may hire only union members |
| **INDIVIDUAL BARGAINING:** Negotiations and agreements made separately with individual workers | **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING:** Negotiations and agreements made by elected representatives of all union members. |
| **INJUNCTION:** Court order which stops workers from picketing or striking | **DIRECT POLITICAL ACTION:** Official union endorsement of political candidate |
| **LAWS LIMITING UNION ACTIVITIES:** Rules or laws which curtail union activities such as rules against recruiting union company property and/or during working hours | **FAVORABLE LABOR LEGISLATION:** Rules or laws which meet union demands such as laws limiting the hours of work and requiring safe working conditions |
| **LOCKOUT:** The closing of a factory and denial of work designed to force employees to agree to employer demands. | **FEATHER-BEDDING:** The creation or maintenance of work where profit-wise there is none; can involve the slowing down of work or the continuation of jobs which are subject to technological unemployment (example: train engineers and conductors who kept their jobs although their jobs were no longer needed) |
| **OPEN SHOP**: Employer may hire both union and non-union labor | **Lobbying:** Union efforts to influence lawmakers |
| **Outsourcing**: Removing portions of the factory’s production to other firms (typically non-unionized) in order to reduce the amount of work being done by unionized employees | **PICKETING:** Union members and their supporters walk around the perimeter of a factory or business to discourage strikebreakers from entering the structure as well as to urge the public to support a boycott of the company |
| **relocation:** Company moves the factory a location that has weaker or nonexistent unions. | **SABOTAGE:** Malicious destruction or willful waste of company property. |
| **RIGHT-TO-Work laws:** Laws that allow workers to get and keep a job regardless of union membership | **STRIKES:** Organized work stoppages |
| **Welfare Capitalism:** Provision of benefits to employees to dissuade workers from joining a union | **UNION LABEL:** Seal placed on manufactured goods to indicate that the goods were manufactured using union labor |
| **yellow-dog Contract:** Agreement between employee and the employer that the employee will not join a union. | **UNION SHOP:** All employees of the shop must join the union within 30 days of starting work there. |

**Excerpt:** How the Other Half Lives by Jacob Riis (1890)

Be a little careful, please! The hall is dark and you might stumble over the children pitching pennies back there. Not that it would hurt them; kicks and cuffs are their daily diet. They have little else. Here where the hall turns and dives into utter darkness is a step, and another, another. A flight of stairs. You can feel your way, if you cannot see it. Close? Yes! What would you have? All the fresh air that ever enters these stairs comes from the hall-door that is forever slamming, and from the windows of dark bedrooms that in turn receive from the stairs their sole supply of the elements God meant to be free, but man deals out with such niggardly hand. That was a woman filling her pail by the hydrant you just bumped against. The sinks are in the hallway, that all the tenants may have access – and all be poisoned alike by their summer stenches. Hear the pump squeak! It is the lullaby of tenement-house babes. In summer, when a thousand thirsty throats pant for a cooling drink in this block, it is worked in vain. But the saloon, whose open door you passed in the hall, is always there. The smell of it has followed you up. Here is a door. Listen! That short hacking cough, that tiny, helpless wail – what do they mean? They mean that the soiled bow of white you saw on the door downstairs will have another story to tell – Oh! A sadly familiar story – before the day is at an end. The child is dying with measles. With half a chance, it might have lived; but it had none. That dark bedroom killed it.

**How did the social and economic changes during the Gilded Age separate social classes?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Life for the Poor** | **Life for the Rich** |
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Directions: Answer in SRF format. ***How did the economic development of the Gilded Asge affect American freedom?***

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**Chapter 16, Section 5 How did Gilded Age reformers approach the issues of an industrial society?**

**The Beginning of Reform: Major Court Cases and Conflict**

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| --- | --- |
| ***Wabash v. Illinois***  **Definition:   Context:    Impact:** | ***Lochner v. New York***  **Definition:**  **Context:**  **Impact:** |
| **United States v. E.C. Knight Co.**  **Definition:**  **Context:**  **Impact:** | **Great Railroad Strike**  **Definition:**  **Context:**  **Impact:** |
| **Haymarket Riot, 1886**  **Definition:**  **Context:**  **Impact:** | **Homestead Strike, 1892**  **Definition:**  **Context:**  **Impact:** |
| How did changes in the economic landscape lead to wide-scale corruption and large disparity in wealth between the rich and the poor? | Was the Gilded Age political system effective in protecting American citizens’ rights to pursue freedom? |