Industry & Urban Growth
1865 - 1915
Terms and People

- **patent** – document giving one the sole right to make and sell an invention
- **Thomas Edison** – inventor of the light bulb, phonograph, motion picture camera, and other devices
- **Alexander Graham Bell** – inventor of the telephone
- **Henry Ford** – manufacturer who perfected a way to mass-produce automobiles
- **assembly line** – manufacturing method in which a product is put together as it moves along a belt
- **Wilbur and Orville Wright** – brothers who tested a gas-powered airplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina
The Business Cycle

The pattern of good times (booms) and bad times (busts) experienced by industry.
Natural resources are key to industrial growth and, as Americans moved west, they found plenty of them.
In 1859, workers in Titusville, Pennsylvania, discovered another source of energy—oil.

**Oil** quickly became valuable to industry.

- Lubricants for machines
- Gasoline to power engines and cars
The national government also encouraged growth.

Why Industry Boomed

- government policies
- land grants
- subsidies for businesses
- high tariffs on imports
Government policies benefited many companies, including the railroads.

Some railroad lines consolidated, forming giant companies that controlled rail traffic.

New tracks carried settlers west and raw materials east.
Federal Land Grants to Railroads as of 1871

The government gave railroad companies 20 square miles of public land for every mile of track laid. Railroad companies then sold the land to raise money.
Railroad Time

Railroads changed America in a surprising way: they altered time. Before railroads each community based its time on the sun – solar time. This caused problems for people scheduling trains.

To solve this problem, railroad companies set up standard time - a system that divided the United States into four time zones. Standard time went into effect on November 18, 1883 but Congress did not officially adopt it until 1918.

Railroads made economic and social changes that helped create modern America:

1. Linked the economies of the East and West.
2. Helped people settle the West.
3. Weakened the Native American hold on the West.
4. Gave people more control of the environment.
New technology also spurred industrial growth.

The development of the Bessemer process resulted in a way to make stronger steel at a lower price.

Steel soon replaced iron as a basic building material.
The **Bessemer Steel Process** cut costs and increased international steel production. The nation’s steel output increased 500 times between 1867 and 1900. Industry began to make more products out of steel including: plows, barbed wire, nails, beams for buildings, and rails for the nation’s expanding railroads.
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, became the nation’s steel-making capital.
New inventions also changed American life and industry. **Thomas Edison, the Wizard of Menlo Park,** invented the **electric light,** the **phonograph,** and a **moving picture viewer. Alexander Graham Bell** invented the **telephone** in 1876. By 1880, more than 50,000 telephones has been sold. Other important inventions were the **typewriter** and the **sewing machine.**
Thomas Edison’s light bulb would have been worthless without a **reliable source of energy**.

**In 1882, Edison opened the nation’s first electrical power plant.** Other plants quickly sprang up.

Electricity was soon lighting up homes, running streetcars, and powering factories.
Menlo Park Lab

Thomas Alva Edison’s greatest invention may have been the modern industrial research laboratory. In Menlo Park, New Jersey, Edison brought together inventors who shared ideas and helped design hundreds of inventions. Following the Menlo Park model, young companies like Bell Telephone and Eastman Kodak quickly set up their own research labs. Such facilities are now common in most industries.

In 1879 the lab became the first building ever to be equipped for electric lighting.

Another great Menlo Park invention was the phonograph, developed in 1877. On this phonograph, sound was recorded by a stylus inscribing a piece of tinfoil wrapped around a cylinder which was turned by cranking the large wheel shown here.

Thomas Edison built Menlo Park when he was 29.

Gathering groups of inventors together to work under one roof was unheard of before Edison’s time.

Reading Like a Historian

1. Interpreting Visuals  How does this image reflect the type of work carried on at Menlo Park?

2. Making Inferences  What would be the advantage of bringing together many inventors under one roof?

Alexander Graham Bell’s telephone revolutionized communications. Instead of going to a telegraph office, people could communicate simply by picking up a telephone.

Bell eventually organized more than 100 local phone companies into American Telephone and Telegraph.
Henry Ford’s assembly line method of mass-producing cars made them more affordable.

By 1917, more than 4 million Americans owned cars.

Cars changed the nation. Americans began to travel more. New businesses were opened by highways.
Henry Ford's Assembly Line

The industrial boom of the 1920s owed much to the assembly line Henry Ford first used in 1913-1914. Parts moved on a conveyor belt. Workers attached the parts to cars moving past them at a steady speed of six feet per minute.

1. Tires are put on the wheels and dropped down rollways.

2. Tanks filled with one gallon of gas slide from the "Tank Bridge."

3. Engines built on the third floor are lowered onto the chassis.

4. Radiators arrive from the far end of the 60-acre factory.

5. Auto bodies are assembled on the second floor, then lowered through the ceiling onto the moving chassis.

How large was Ford's plant?
The first flight of the Wright brothers drew little attention.

By the 1920s, however, the airplane had changed transportation forever.
## Inventors & Inventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inventor</th>
<th>Invention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Edison</td>
<td>Electric light bulb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Graham Bell</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Matzeliger</td>
<td>Shoe-making machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granville Woods</td>
<td>Train telegraph delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Eastman</td>
<td>Lightweight camera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Sholes</td>
<td>Typewriter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac Singer</td>
<td>Sewing machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilbur and Orville Wright</td>
<td>Airplane</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Patents Issued by Decade 1850 - 1899

- 1850–1859: 19,591
- 1860–1869: 64,302
- 1870–1879: 124,672
- 1880–1889: 195,104
- 1890–1899: 221,277
What is the meaning of the following Thomas Edison quote: “Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration”? Was he correct? Explain.
Terms and People

- **entrepreneur** – one who sets up new businesses to make a profit
- **corporation** – business owned by many investors
- **monopoly** – company that controls most or all businesses in an industry
- **Andrew Carnegie** – leader of the steel industry
- **John D. Rockefeller** – leader of the oil industry
- **trust** – group of corporations run by a single board of directors
- **free enterprise** – system in which privately owned businesses compete freely
- **Samuel Gompers** – founder of the American Federation of Labor
- **collective bargaining** – process in which unions negotiate with management for workers as a group
The business boom of the late 1800s was led by bold **entrepreneurs** who found new ways of building businesses.

To succeed, new businesses need capital.

Many entrepreneurs raised the capital they needed by forming **corporations**.
New Ways of Doing Business

Corporations sell stock to stockholders for cash.

In return for their investments, stockholders receive part of the corporation’s profits and choose its directors.
New Ways of Doing Business

In addition to selling stock, corporations raise capital by borrowing money from banks.

Bankers such as J. P. Morgan lent businesses so much money that they gained control of major industries.
The Growth of Big Business

In the late 1800s, there were few laws that regulated corporations. This led to the growth of giant corporations that dominated American industry. The oil and steel companies were dominated by two men. John D. Rockefeller led the oil industry, and Andrew Carnegie controlled the steel industry.

A robber baron was a business leader who became wealthy through dishonest methods.
By age 16, Cornelius Vanderbilt was transporting people and cargo around New York harbor. In 1818, he sold his business and went to work for a steamship line run by Thomas Gibbons. The Gibbons line was highly successful by effectively undercutting the competition. Vanderbilt stayed with Gibbons until 1829 when, having learned all he could, and left to establish his own line. During the 1830s, Vanderbilt's line became the dominant steamship presence in New York, due largely to low pricing and comfortable accommodations. Vanderbilt eventually gained control of the New York and Harlem Railroad. Vanderbilt managed to expand his empire through purchase and consolidation. He gained control of the New York Central in 1869. By 1873, he successfully linked New York to Chicago.

Vanderbilt adopted the title “Commodore” and frequently dressed in a full naval uniform.
Problem
Competition has been fierce in the railroad business in your area (Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York). Companies have been cutting prices all over the place. Many have gone bankrupt because they can’t make a profit. You, a railroad company owner, could make a secret agreement with other railroad companies in the area to keep prices from falling too low. You could agree to divide the area up so that on each route (say, Philadelphia to Pittsburgh) only one or two railroads operate, meaning that prices could be set a little higher.

Would you make such an agreement? Explain.
What Actually Happened
Many railroads formed pool agreements to keep profits up. Unfortunately, since these agreements were not legal contracts and were unenforceable, they were regularly broken. Here’s what often happened: Companies would sign pool agreements to each charge a certain price. As soon as they left the meeting, one of them would drop their price below the one specified in the agreement in order to steal customers from the other businesses.
A company that wipes out its competitors and controls an industry is a monopoly.
John D. Rockefeller built his first oil refinery in 1863. He decided that the best way to make money was to put his competitors out of business. Rockefeller bought other refineries, made secret deals with railroads, and built his own pipelines to carry oil.

Rockefeller’s most famous move to end competition was to develop the **Standard Oil Trust**. By 1880, the trust controlled 95% of all oil refining in the United States.
**Vertical Integration**

Purchase of companies producing the supplies and the services upon which the main business depends.

- Railroad tanker cars
- Pipelines
- Refineries
- Barrel factories
- Oil-storage facilities
- Oil fields

**Horizontal Integration**

Purchase of competing companies in the same industry.

- Refineries

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**Skills Focus**

Rockefeller integrated, or combined, businesses both vertically and horizontally to increase profits. *How do vertical and horizontal integration differ?*

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H15
Rockefeller was the first to combine several corporations into an even bigger business—a trust. Trusts soon dominated key industries, crushing competitors by slashing prices.
Many Americans criticized the trusts.

Business leaders are “robber barons.”

- Threaten free enterprise
- Unfairly eliminate competition
- Use wealth to influence politics
Others, however, thought trusts were good for the country.

Business leaders are “captains of industry.”

- Build up the economy
- Create jobs
- Lower prices for consumers
- Are “fittest” and deserve to survive
Business & Ethics?

Problem
You own a small oil refining company in Cleveland. John D. Rockefeller has offered to buy your company for $25,000. He says that if you don’t sell, he’ll undercut your prices and drive you out of business. You estimate your company is worth $40,000. But no one else will buy your company because of Rockefeller’s cutthroat reputation. Will you sell? Explain.

What Actually Happened
All the companies eventually sold out to Rockefeller or went out of business. The ones that sold out earlier got a better deal. Some people didn’t sell out because they felt what Rockefeller was doing was wrong. They preferred to lose money rather than to give in to such a cutthroat businessman.
Political Cartoon

This 1901 drawing portrays John D. Rockefeller as ruling the oil industry.

Standard Oil owned interests in all parts of the industry, including drilling, refining, and storage of oil.

Rockefeller got special rates from railroad companies, lowering his transport costs.

Rockefeller’s fortune rested on Standard Oil.

**Skills Focus**

**Reading Like a Historian**

1. **Interpreting Political Cartoons** What images suggest Rockefeller’s wealth and power?
2. **Contrasting** How does this depiction of Rockefeller contrast with his position as a generous philanthropist?

The theory of Social Darwinism was often used to support big business.

According to Charles Darwin, plants and animals **survive by adapting to change and competing with others.**

Business leaders claimed that they also had to ruthlessly compete in order to survive.

Business leaders used Social Darwinism to **justify horrible working conditions.**
Andrew Carnegie tried to beat his competition in the steel industry by making the best and cheapest product. To do so, he tried to control all the processes related to the manufacture of steel. He bought the mines that supplied the iron ore, and the ships and railroads that carried the ore to the mills. Carnegie’s company dominated the U.S. steel industry from 1889 to 1901, when he sold it to J. P. Morgan, the nation’s most prominent banker.

Rockefeller and Carnegie were also both philanthropists, people who give large sums of money to charities. Rockefeller gave away more than $500 million and Carnegie gave more than $350 million.
Problem
There’s a new machine for cutting and forming steel. Buying it costs $100,000 (when a worker makes about $500 per year). Would you buy it for your steel business? Explain.

What Actually Happened
Andrew Carnegie brought in new machinery because he was producing so much steel that almost any machine tended to save him much more in production costs than it cost him to buy it. However, if you only produced a small amount, the new machinery would bankrupt you.
The defining image of 19th-century financial titan J. P. Morgan makes him look like a hard-hearted robber-baron. Part of the reason is that after photographer Edward Steichen shot a photo of Morgan, he asked him to shift position for another. Morgan complied, but became clearly aggravated.

“His expression had sharpened and his body posture became tense,” recalled Steichen in his autobiography. He quickly took the photo, and Morgan hated the result - he tore up the proof then tried unsuccessfully to buy the print. Steichen always denied touching up the image to accentuate the negative. His backers say it's simply an example of what every good photographer strives to do: reveal character.
There is unrest in the forest,  
There is trouble with the trees,  
For the maples want more sunlight  
And the oaks ignore their pleas.

The trouble with the maples,  
(And they're quite convinced they're right)  
They say the oaks are just too lofty  
And they grab up all the light.

But the oaks can't help their feelings  
If they like the way they're made.  
And they wonder why the maples  
Can't be happy in their shade.

There is trouble in the forest,  
And the creatures all have fled,  
As the maples scream "Oppression!"  
And the oaks just shake their heads.

So the maples formed a union  
And demanded equal rights.  
"The oaks are just too greedy;  
We will make them give us light."

Now there's no more oak oppression,  
For they passed a noble law,  
And the trees are all kept equal  
By hatchet, axe, and saw.
Changes in the Workplace

Men, women, and children worked in dangerous conditions in mills, factories, coal mines, and sweatshops.

Hours were long and pay was low.
Sweatshops were places where workers labored long hours under poor conditions for low wages. Often both children and adults worked there.

*Shuckers in the Varn and Platt Canning Company* (1913), Lewis W. Hine
Child Labor
Child Labor

Investigators
Sentimentalists
Charity Organizations
And All Meddling Old-Women
KEEP OUT
On March 25, 1911, a terrible fire in a New York sweatshop shocked the nation and drew attention to the unsafe conditions many workers faced.

Doors were locked at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory to keep workers at their jobs.

Trapped inside, nearly 150 people, mostly young women, died.
The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in New York City on March 25, 1911, was one of the worst industrial disasters in the history of the city of New York, causing the death of 146 garment workers who either died from the fire or jumped to their deaths.

The fire led to legislation requiring improved factory safety standards and helped spur the growth of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, which fought for better and safer working conditions for sweatshop workers in that industry.
Many workers believed they could improve working conditions by organizing unions.

Working together, members of a union could protest unsafe conditions and demand improvements.

Early attempts to form unions, however, met with fierce resistance.

Laws made it illegal to strike.

Companies hired guards to attack union workers.
The **Great Railroad Strike of 1877** started in Virginia on July 14 in response to the cutting of wages for the second time in a year by the B&O Railroad. Striking workers would not allow any of the stock to roll until this second wage cut was revoked.

The governor sent in state militia units to restore train service, but the soldiers refused to use force against the strikers. The strike soon spread to Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Illinois.

President Hayes sent federal troops from city to city. These troops suppressed strike after strike, until at last, approximately 45 days after it had started, the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 was over. More than one hundred workers had been killed or wounded.
Workers Organize

A union called the **Knights of Labor** began as a small group, meeting in secret.

Its ranks grew after a series of rallies inviting all workers—skilled and unskilled—to join.

**A violent clash between striking workers and police,** however, cost the Knights much of their support.
The Growth of Unions, 1880–1910

- Total nationwide union membership
- American Federation of Labor membership
- Knights of Labor membership

Year: 1880, 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1910

Members

Sources: Growth of American Trade Unions, 1880 - 1923; Ebb and Flow of Trade Unionism

Skills Focus

Interpreting Graphs

What happened to union membership following the Haymarket Riot? What union was created following the riot?

Workers Organize

In 1886, **Samuel Gompers** formed a new union called the **American Federation of Labor**.

The AFL quickly became the leading union in the country.

- Included only skilled workers, who were of more value to businesses
- Worked for improvements through collective bargaining
In 1893, a depression hit the nation. Despite union efforts, many businesses fired workers and cut wages.

A series of violent strikes swept the country.

A strike at a plant owned by George Pullman shut down the railroads and ended when troops fired on protestors.
Many Americans blamed the unions for such violent unrest.

In time, however, unions would win public support.

As membership climbed, unions became an important force in American business.
What is the meaning of the following quote by AFL President Samuel Gompers: “Show me a country in which there are no strikes and I’ll show you a country in which there is no liberty”? Is his observation accurate or is it an exaggeration? Explain.
Terms and People

- **urbanization** – the rapid growth of city populations

- **tenement** – building divided into many tiny apartments

- **Jane Addams** – reformer who worked to help poor city dwellers

- **settlement house** – center offering help to the urban poor
The new Industrial Revolution was a time of frenzied growth—for businesses, factories, and cities.

Cities attracted industry, and industry attracted people. **City populations soared** as many people left farm life behind.

**Rapid Growth of Cities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rural Population</th>
<th>Urban Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau*
Many fast-growing cities were located near waterways because they provided an easy way to transport goods.
New technology supported rapid urbanization.

Changing technology led to dramatic improvements in public transportation.

- Elevated trains
- Electric streetcars
- Subways
- Steel bridges
Public transportation **encouraged cities to expand outward** and allowed people to **commute** from the suburbs.
Streetcars and elevated trains made traveling to and around cities easier.
New technology helped cities expand upward as well.

Skyscrapers soon towered over city skylines.
Steel frames, elevators, and windows made skyscrapers possible.
Fast urban growth created many problems.

**Tenements** are run down buildings divided into many tiny and overcrowded apartments.

Life in city **tenements** was dismal. Often, people crowded together in a single room with no windows, heat, or plumbing.
Life in some cities could be dangerous - even deadly.

- Overcrowding
- Garbage
- Fire
- Disease

A fire broke out in Chicago in 1871 and left 18,000 homeless.

Babies were especially at risk and often died before they reached their first birthday.
In the 1880s, cities began to make changes to improve urban life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crowding</td>
<td>Skyscrapers, city planning, parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor housing</td>
<td>Building codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danger</td>
<td>Streetlights and police forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for fire</td>
<td>Electric lights and fire departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor sanitation</td>
<td>Public-health departments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reformers like Jane Addams also worked to help the urban poor.

- Helped the homeless
- Worked to outlaw child labor
- Opened settlement houses
- Set up hospitals and clinics
Settlement houses like Hull House in Chicago offered services such as daycare, education, and health care to needy people in slum neighborhoods.

Jane Addams
Despite their problems, cities offered many benefits. One of the biggest attractions was shopping. Elegant new department stores offered many different goods under one roof.
As the division between work and play became stricter, cities began to provide a wide variety of entertainment and leisure activities.

Museums
Theaters
Orchestras
Zoos
Parks

These places of leisure allowed city dwellers to enjoy art, performances, green grass, and cleaner air.
The Excitement of City Life

Also, **professional sports teams** began to form in cities.

**Baseball** was the most popular sport, with games attracting thousands of fans.

**Basketball** was invented in 1891 and it quickly became a popular winter sport.

**Football** was also popular, although it was very dangerous.
Vaudeville attracted large audiences to performances that featured a mixture of song, dance, and comedy.

A new type of music called Ragtime became popular. **Ragtime** was a blend African-American songs and European musical forms.
Terms and People

• **steerage** – large ship compartment that usually held cattle

• **assimilation** – process of becoming part of another culture

• **anarchist** – person who opposes all forms of government
Twenty-five million immigrants entered the United States between 1865 and 1915.

Source: Historical Statistics of the United States
Some factors **pushed immigrants** from their homelands.

- Shrinking farmland
- Religious persecution
- Political revolution
Other factors **pulled immigrants** toward the United States.

- New jobs
- Cheap land
- Democracy and liberty
For many different reasons, immigrants from around the world poured into the country.

Most came from Europe, especially southern and eastern Europe.

Few spoke English and many had never known democracy.

Source: Historical Statistics of the United States
### Old and New Immigrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Immigrants</th>
<th>New Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Arrived before 1880</td>
<td>• Arrived 1880–1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Came from Northern and Western Europe</td>
<td>• Came from Southern and Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Were mainly Protestant Christians</td>
<td>• Were mainly Catholics, Jews, or Orthodox Christians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Were culturally similar to the original American settlers</td>
<td>• Were often culturally different from the original American settlers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Settled both in cities and in rural areas</td>
<td>• Generally settled in cities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For most immigrants, the long ocean crossing was difficult and dangerous.

Ships were overcrowded, and people were jammed into cramped steerage compartments below deck.

Disease and rough seas made many sick.
Europeans entered through Ellis Island, near New York City.

Immigrants arriving from Asia entered through Angel Island near San Francisco.
Once admitted to the United States, most immigrants settled in cities. Ethnic neighborhoods flourished, helping immigrants assimilate.

Immigrants also shared their culture. Foods like bagels and spaghetti became mainstream.
Many immigrants valued education, hoping that the next generation would be better off.
Immigrants came to America looking for jobs - and they found them.

- Construction workers
- Garment workers
- Miners
- Steelworkers
- Meatpackers
- Railroad workers
New immigrants were often victims of prejudice. “Native-born Americans” feared different religious groups and thought immigrants would be controlled by political machines. People also worried that new immigrants would take their jobs by working for lower wages and in worse conditions. People even thought the immigrants carried diseases.
Political Cartoon

This cartoon appeared in 1893. Its caption reads: “They would close to the new-comer the bridge that carried them and their fathers over.” The shadow figures in the cartoon represent previous immigrants.

These characters represent wealthy “old immigrants” opposed to new immigrants.

The clothing and items carried by this immigrant are typical of a poor person from Eastern Europe.

Skills Focus

1. Interpreting Political Cartoons  What do the shadow figures look like?
2. Making Inferences  Was the artist a nativist?

Despite such success stories, however, increased immigration led to a wave of nativism.

**Nativist Arguments**

- Immigrants can’t assimilate.
- Immigrants take away jobs.
- Immigrants promote violence and **anarchy**.
Such feelings led to new laws limiting immigration.

1882

**Chinese Exclusion Act**

This Act *excluded Chinese people* solely based on their race.

This act *kept most of the world’s poor* from immigrating.

1917

**Immigration Act**

excluded those who could not read their own language.
Is America like a **melting pot**, a place where cultures blend, or a **salad bowl**, a place where cultures maintain their integrity and contribute positively to the whole?
Terms and People

• **compulsory education** – requirement that children attend school up to a certain age

• **realist** – writer who tries to show life as it is

• **Mark Twain** – popular author of the late 1800s; Samuel Clemens

• **Joseph Pulitzer** – creator of the first modern, mass-circulation newspaper

• **yellow journalism** – sensational reporting style of certain newspapers
Before 1870
- Fewer than half of American children went to school.
- Most attended one-room schoolhouses.

After 1870
- Businesses boomed.
- Immigrants poured into the country.
- The expanding economy needed an educated workforce.
In the mid-1800s, many states began to pass **compulsory education** laws.

The South was slower to pass compulsory education laws, so the Freedmen’s Bureau helped to build schools.

By 1918, **every state required children to attend school**.
In elementary schools, students learned the “three R’s.”

Lessons also emphasized moral values, such as “waste not, want not.”
High school enrollment increased dramatically from 1880 to 1910.

Most states required students to attend school through the tenth grade.

As enrollments jumped, many towns and cities built new high schools.

Educating Americans

New colleges and universities also opened.

Source: Historical Statistics of the United States
Adults also benefited from new educational opportunities.

New **public libraries** were built, often with funds from wealthy business leaders like Andrew Carnegie.

Traveling Chautauqua Society companies offered lectures on important topics of the day.
As education expanded, more and more Americans learned to read.

U.S. Literacy Rates, 1870–1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage of Population That Is Literate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Historical Statistics of the United States
Books and magazines also became more popular.

Many bestselling authors wrote **dime novels**.

Some were thrilling adventures that took place in the “Wild West.”

Others were heartwarming “rags to riches” stories.
Other authors were **realists** who wrote about everyday life—both the good and the bad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stephen Crane</strong></td>
<td>The hardships of slum life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jack London</strong></td>
<td>The backbreaking jobs of miners and sailors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kate Chopin</strong></td>
<td>Unhappily married women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paul Laurence Dunbar</strong></td>
<td>The joys and sorrows of black life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mark Twain was the most popular author of the time.

Twain used regional speech patterns in his novels. His characters spoke like people who lived and worked in the South.

*Huckleberry Finn*, a story about a young boy who helps a fugitive slave, has become an American classic.
As Americans became more educated, newspaper sales surged. Newspapers were especially popular in big cities. Unlike villagers, city dwellers could not get their news through personal interactions.

Joseph Pulitzer created the first modern newspaper, *The New York World*. The paper sold well because:

- It was inexpensive.
- Pulitzer’s papers not only informed people but also entertained them with comics and other features.
Newspapers like Pulitzer’s became known for **yellow journalism** because they used sensational headlines to sell papers.