

Chapter 10 Notes: The Jazz Age

Section 1: Time of Turmoil

Fear of Radicalism

Events after World War I made some Americans intolerant of immigrants and foreign ideas.

- As the 1920s began, Americans wanted to return to a **normal** way of life.
- Many Americans felt threatened by the Russian Bolsheviks, who urged workers around the world to overthrow **capitalism**.
- **Anarchists**—people who believe there should be no government—also frightened Americans with bombings in several cities.
- These fears led to the **Red Scare**, a period when government officers arrested Communists and others with radical views.
- The government **deported** a few hundred of the aliens it arrested but quickly released many others for lack of evidence.

Labor and Racial Strife

The 1920s brought increased labor unrest and racial tensions, often marked by violence.

- Steelworkers demanding better wages and eight-hour workdays were accused of being “red agitators,” forcing an end to their strike.
- Massachusetts governor **Calvin Coolidge** called out the National Guard when Boston police officers went on strike for the right to form a union.
- Distrust of unions led to a sharp drop in union membership in the 1920s.
- Despite the decline of unions, **dynamic** African American A. Philip Randolph started the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters Union.
- African American leader **Marcus Garvey** opposed integration and supported a “back-to-Africa” movement.

Section 2: Desire for Normalcy

Harding and Coolidge

The Harding and Coolidge administrations favored business and wanted a smaller government.

- **Warren G. Harding** won the 1920 presidential election with his promise of a return to “normalcy.”

- Harding gave government jobs to many of his political supporters, many of whom were unqualified or corrupt.
 - ✓ Albert Fall, the secretary of the interior, secretly **leased** government oil reserves in Teapot Dome, Wyoming, to oil company owners.
 - ✓ **Teapot Dome** became a symbol of the corruption in the Harding administration.
- In the summer of 1923, President Harding died and Vice President Calvin Coolidge was sworn in as President.
- Coolidge took a hands-off approach to government.
- He once said, “If the federal government should go out of existence, the common run of the people would not **detect** the difference for a considerable length of time.”
- Under Coolidge, the government cut spending, lowered income tax rates on wealthy Americans and corporations, and overturned laws regulating child labor and women’s wages.
- Coolidge swept the 1924 presidential race with 54 percent of the popular vote.

Foreign Policy

Harding and Coolidge aimed to limit the role of the United States in foreign affairs.

- Many Americans supported the policy of **isolationism** that Harding and Coolidge favored for the nation in world affairs.
- The Harding and Coolidge administrations actively promoted peace.
 - ✓ In 1922, the United States, Japan, Britain, France, and Italy agreed to limit the size of their navies.
 - ✓ In 1928, the United States joined 14 other nations in signing a pact that called for outlawing war.
- Instead of **intervening** with troops in Mexico, Coolidge negotiated a peaceful settlement.

Section 3: A booming Economy

Growth in the 1920s

The United States experienced amazing economic growth during the 1920s.

- After World War I, the American economy initially was in a **recession** but then began a steady growth that lasted most of the decade.
 - ✓ In 1922 the **gross national product** of the United States was \$70 billion.

- ✓ By 1929, the gross national product rose to \$100 billion.
- Employers hired **experts** to make work more efficient and increase **productivity**.
- Mass-production **techniques** also increased productivity and cut production costs.
- Employers took steps—known as welfare capitalism—to build better relationships with workers.
- More than 60% of American households had electricity, and many consumers purchased electric appliances through **installment buying**.

The Automobile Age

The automobile industry stimulated the economy and transformed the ways Americans traveled and lived.

- During the 1920s, the car became an important part of American life.
- **Henry Ford** was a pioneer in making affordable, dependable automobiles.
- The automobile had an effect on other industries.
 - ✓ Roads and highways needed to be built.
 - ✓ Gas stations, eateries, and shops were built along roads and highways.
 - ✓ The steel, rubber, and glass industries grew.
- Some industries did not benefit from the economic boom.
 - ✓ After the war, farmers had to compete with European agriculture again.
 - ✓ Railroad workers suffered as trucks took business from railroads.
 - ✓ Coal miners had a difficult time as electricity replaced coal as a power source.
 - ✓ As more clothes were made out of synthetic fabrics, cotton producers suffered.

Section 4: The Roaring Twenties

Social and Cultural Change

During the 1920s, social changes affected the role of women and led to new forms of entertainment and culture.

- The 1920s brought many changes for women.
 - ✓ The Nineteenth Amendment guaranteed women in all states the right to vote.
 - ✓ Women also ran for election to political offices.

- ✓ More women took jobs outside the home.
- The symbol of a liberated woman was the **flapper**—a carefree young woman with short “bobbed” hair, heavy makeup, and a short skirt.
- **Mass media** such as newspapers and radio spread cultural changes quickly to millions.
- Americans had more leisure time as a result of laborsaving **devices** or equipment.
- The motion picture industry offered great entertainment from silent movies to “talkies.”
- The radio brought news, concerts, sporting events, and comedies into homes and offered businesses an **enormous** audience for advertising their products.
- Jazz music captured the spirit of the era so well that the 1920s are often referred to as the Jazz Age.
- The rhythm and themes of jazz inspired the **Harlem Renaissance** in New York City.
 - ✓ The African American experience was presented in novels, poems, and short stories.
- Other writers questioned American ideals and became **expatriates**.

A Clash of Cultures

During the 1920s, American society was divided by a clash between traditional and modern values.

- The temperance movement was rooted in religious objections to drinking alcohol and the belief that society would benefit if alcohol were unavailable.
 - ✓ The movement reached its goal in 1919 with the ratification of the **Eighteenth Amendment** to the Constitution, which established **Prohibition**.
 - ✓ A continuing demand for alcohol led to widespread lawbreaking, and prohibition was repealed in 1933 with the **Twenty-First Amendment**.
- The concerns of native-born Americans led to the upsurge of **nativism**—the belief that native-born Americans are superior to foreigners.
 - ✓ Congress passed laws responding to Nativist fears that foreigners would take their jobs by establishing a **quota system**.
- Another cultural clash in the 1920s involved the role of religion in society.
 - ✓ In 1925, Tennessee passed a law making it illegal to teach **evolution**—the scientific theory that humans evolved over vast periods of time.

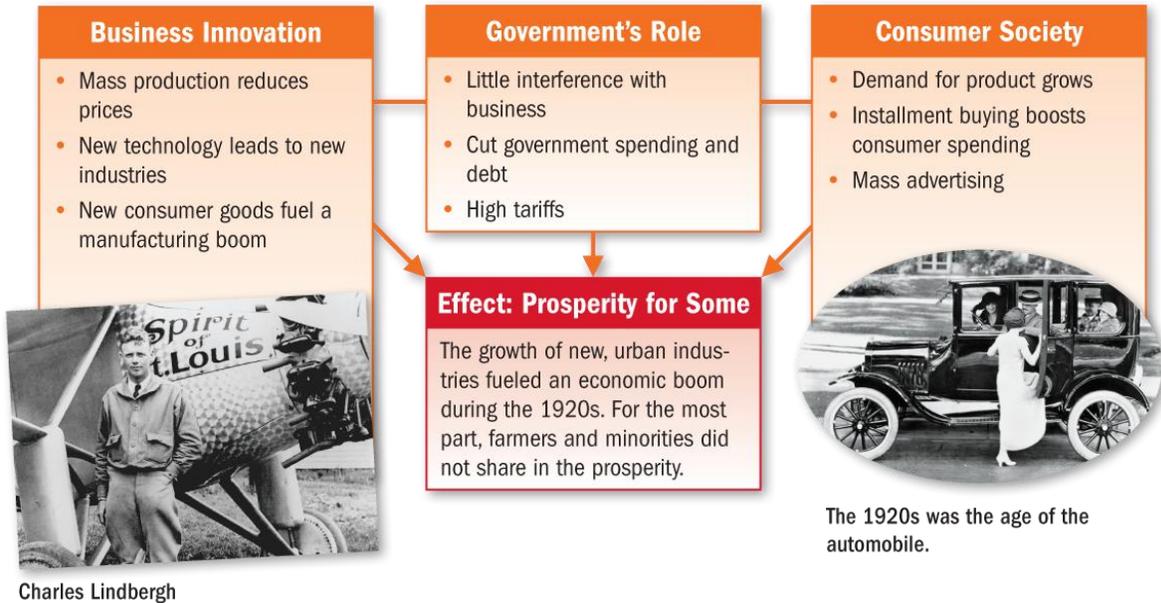
- ✓ A young high school teacher named John Scopes was convicted of breaking the law, but the Tennessee Supreme Court overturned Scopes's conviction.

The Election of 1928

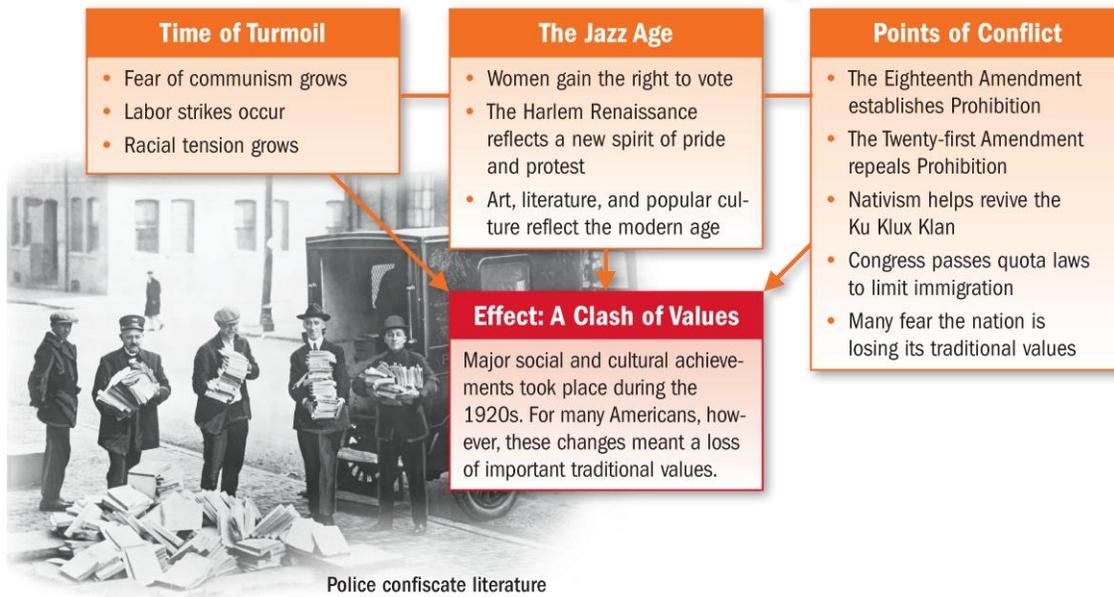
Prosperity, prohibition, and religion were the major themes of the 1928 election.

- Republican Herbert Hoover faced Democratic candidate Alfred E. Smith—the first Roman Catholic nominee for president—in the 1928 election.
- Hoover won the election due to the prosperity of the 1920s, for which the Republicans took credit, and the religious prejudice against Smith.

Economic Change



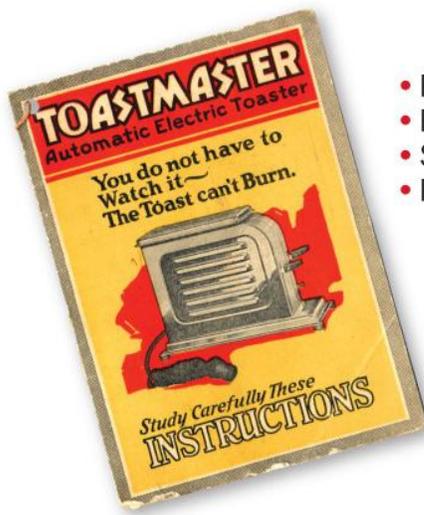
Cultural and Social Change



By the Numbers The 1920s Economy

Industry (Percentage Increase, 1922-28)		Workers (Percentage Increase, 1922-28)	
Industrial production	70%	Workers' incomes	11%
Gross national product	40%	Average workweek	-4%
Corporate profits	62%		

Source: Jules Tygiel, "The 1920s Economy: A Statistical Portrait"

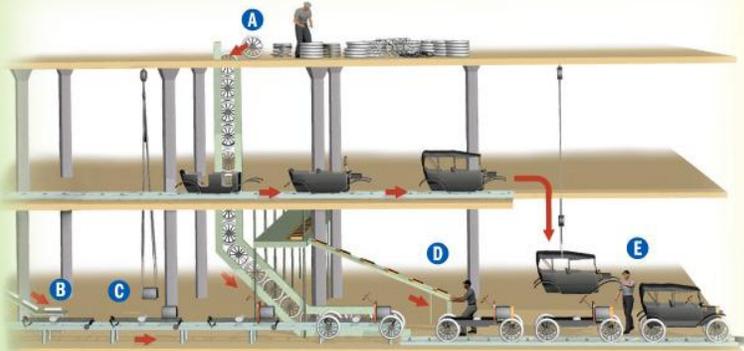


Invented in the 1920s

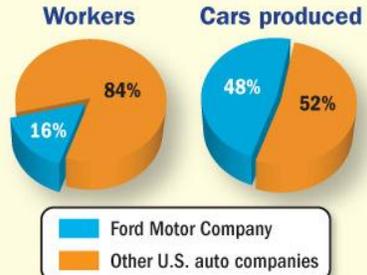
- Push-button elevators
- Electric razors
- Spiral-bound notebooks
- Pop-up toasters
- Car radios
- Adhesive tape
- Self-winding wristwatch
- Band-Aid™

Economics & History

The Ford assembly line sped production and led to lower prices. Tires **A** are put on the wheels; gas tanks **B** slide onto the conveyor belt; and the engine **C**, the radiator **D**, and the auto body **E** are lowered onto the moving chassis.



U.S. Auto Industry in 1914

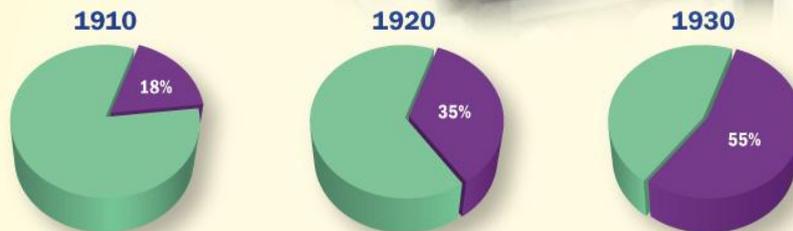
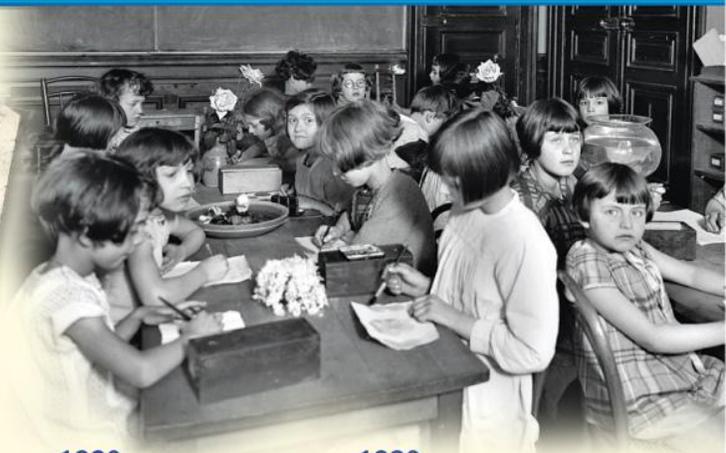
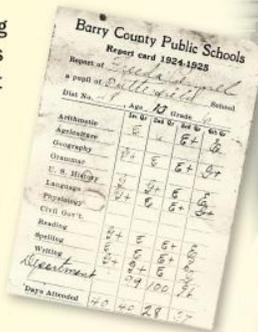


Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Education in the 1920s

Going to School

Society was changing rapidly. Nowhere was change more evident than in education. Larger numbers of young people were in school than ever before. By 1930 a majority of children of high school age were in school.



Enrollment in grades 9-12 as a percentage of 14-17 year olds.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States