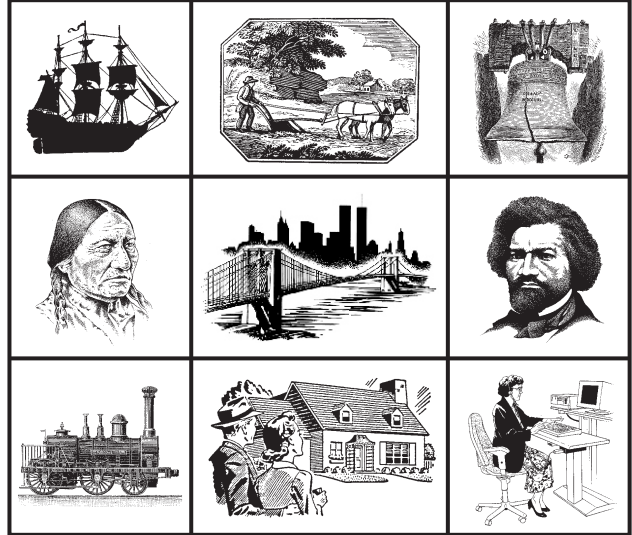


---

---

# *Fasttrack to America's Past*

Age of Discovery to Present 7th Edition



An interactive learning guide for students of U.S. History

by David Burns

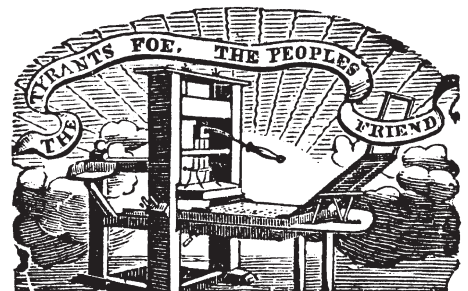


The Teacher Key and additional resources to use with these pages are at:

[www.fasttrackteaching.com/ftap7](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ftap7)

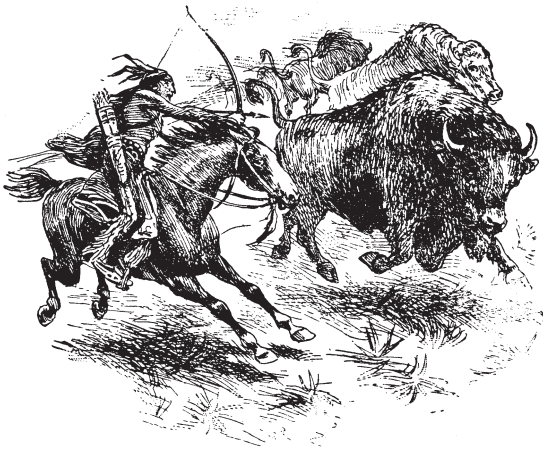
Copyright 2015, 2024 by David A. Burns. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the copyright holder. Teachers who have downloaded this section of pages from the *Fasttrack to America's Past* Internet support site are hereby granted permission to make photocopies of these pages for use by their own students.

Additional copyright information and tips for teachers using these pages can be found on our web site at: [www.fasttrackteaching.com/ftap7](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ftap7).



# 6

## The Gilded Age: 1865 - 1900



*“From where the sun now stands,  
I will fight no more forever.”*

*“In God we trusted. In Kansas we busted.”*

*“Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to  
breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your  
teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless,  
tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”*



*“So long as all the increased wealth which  
modern progress brings goes but to build up  
great fortunes, to increase luxury and make  
sharper the contrast between the House of  
Have and the House of Want, progress is not  
real and cannot be permanent.”*

# Study Checklist

When you have completed this section, you should be able to:



Identify and explain the context of the **Famous Quotes** shown on the Section Title Page.



Identify and explain the importance of the **Famous Names and Terms** listed on the topic summary pages in this section.



Identify on a map and explain the importance of the **Famous Places** shown on the maps in this section.



Explain the general sequence of events in this period and tell from memory the **Famous Years**:

- The first transcontinental railroad was completed (1869).
- The telephone was invented (1876).
- The Spanish-American War began (1898).

## Take a Practice Test!



*A multiple-choice practice test for this section can be found on the Internet support site.*

**Textbook Page References:**



**Discuss or write briefly on such questions and topics as these:**

1. *Why might it be said that the railroad created the cowboy era, and barbed wire ended it?*
2. *What were the consequences of westward growth for Native Americans in this era? What was the goal of the Dawes Act, and why did most Indians object to it?*
3. *How does the growth of business in this era show both the positive and negative consequences of “raw” or unregulated capitalism? How did labor unions try to deal with the growth of big business?*
4. *In what ways did immigrants to America in these years get what they hoped for, and in what ways were they likely disappointed? How did the sources of immigration change in this period?*
5. *What signs were visible by the late 1800s that showed many Americans were trying to solve the problems that grew up in the Gilded Age?*
6. *Describe the changes of this era that would have impressed a city resident in 1900 who was old enough to remember what life in America was like in 1865.*

# Timeline 1865 - 1900

---

*As you study the timeline, fill in the blanks using the word bank at the bottom of the page.*

**Civil War ends** - The economy of the \_\_\_\_\_ was left in ruins.

**Typewriter invented** - It soon opened a whole new career to \_\_\_\_\_.

**Transcontinental R.R. opens** - Irish and \_\_\_\_\_ immigrants did much of the back-breaking work on this famous railroad.

**Boss Tweed exposed** - His crooked ways in New York politics finally sent him to \_\_\_\_\_.

**Susan B. Anthony's illegal vote** - She fought for woman \_\_\_\_\_.

**Carnegie's steel company begins** - He made millions, then \_\_\_\_\_ much of it away.

**Telephone invented** - It was invented by Alexander Graham \_\_\_\_\_.

**Light bulb invented** - It was just one of Thomas \_\_\_\_\_'s many inventions.

**Standard Oil trust started** - It aimed to get \_\_\_\_\_ control of the oil industry.

**A. F. of L. forms** - The American Federation of Labor became the leading organization of workers in the U.S., and was led by Samuel \_\_\_\_\_.

**Dawes Act** - It tried to " \_\_\_\_\_ " the Indians, but failed.

**Kodak camera invented** - It made photography easy for \_\_\_\_\_.

**Sherman Antitrust Act** - This law passed by Congress was an attempt to control the growing power of big business, but it proved to be \_\_\_\_\_ very effective.

**Populist Party begins** - Many \_\_\_\_\_ and workers liked this reform-minded party.

**Ellis Island opens** - It was the gateway for millions of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Plessy v. Ferguson** - This famous Supreme Court case allowed \_\_\_\_\_ to continue, by accepting the concept of "separate but equal" facilities for whites and blacks.

**Spanish-American War** - It won \_\_\_\_\_ and the Philippines for the U.S.

---

*Word bank to fill in the blanks: Americanize, Bell, Chinese, Edison, everyone, farmers, gave, Gompers, immigrants, jail, not, Puerto Rico, segregation, South, suffrage, total, women*

---

1865	<b>Civil War ends</b>
	<b>Typewriter invented</b>
1870	<b>Transcontinental R.R. opens</b>
	<b>Boss Tweed exposed</b>
	<b>S.B. Anthony's illegal vote</b>
	<b>Carnegie's steel company begins</b>
1875	<b>Telephone invented</b>
1880	<b>Light bulb invented</b>
	<b>Standard Oil trust started</b>
1885	
	<b>A.F. of L. forms</b>
	<b>Dawes Act</b>
	<b>Kodak camera invented</b>
1890	<b>Sherman Antitrust Act</b>
	<b>Populist Party begins</b>
	<b>Ellis Island opens</b>
1895	
	<i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i>
1900	<b>Spanish-American War</b>

A. Lincoln
Andrew Johnson
Ulysses S. Grant
Rutherford B. Hayes
James Garfield / Chester Arthur
Grover Cleveland
Benjamin Harrison
Grover Cleveland
William McKinley

**TIMELINE: THE GILDED AGE**

# THE GILDED AGE

---

Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, trusts, Thomas Edison, tenement, political machine, graft, Boss Tweed, Sherman Antitrust Act, American Federation of Labor, Homestead Act, reservations, Indian Wars, Ellis Island, Spanish-American War, Susan B. Anthony

---

The Civil War left the South devastated, but it gave a big boost to business growth in the North and the West. In the Gilded Age some businesses grew to a size and power that rivaled the government itself. Men like Andrew Carnegie (in the steel business) and John D. Rockefeller (in the oil business) were at the head of this trend. The companies they created, and others like them, made great advances in technology and efficiency. Some, like Rockefeller's Standard Oil trust, organized whole industries in ways designed to eliminate competition.



Cities continued growing rapidly in this era. By 1900 many had electric trolley systems and large downtown department stores. The first steel framed skyscrapers were being built in Chicago. New inventions like the telephone and Thomas Edison's electric light bulb were developed. Books, magazines, and newspapers spread much more widely. Sports like baseball, boxing, and bicycling captured the interest of millions.



Gilded Age cities held sharp contrasts. Rich business owners built extravagant mansions, but the lower classes lived in crowded tenement buildings. Big-city "political machines" gave some small help to the poor in return for their votes at election time. Those who ran the political machines often grew wealthy through various forms of graft and even outright theft. New York City's Boss Tweed is often ranked as the best example of such crooks.

A few new laws tried to deal with problems that appeared in the Gilded Age. The Sherman Antitrust Act was passed by Congress to try to control big businesses. The "get ahead, go ahead" attitude, however, made such laws hard to enforce. There was a related attitude of "rugged individualism": determination and hard work would get you ahead, so if you stayed poor, it was your own fault. Labor unions objected to that view of poverty. They blamed poverty on business owners' greed, and organized strikes by workers to try to win better pay and working conditions. The American Federation of Labor, a nation-wide union led by Samuel Gompers, was formed in these years.

This era is also remembered for the Wild West. Railroads were spreading after the Civil

War, and the First Transcontinental Railroad was completed in 1869. A different set of tracks reaching into Kansas solved a big problem for cattle ranchers in Texas. Now, cowboys could move the Texas Longhorn cattle up the overland trails to the rail line at cities like Abilene, Kansas. From there, railroads carried the cattle for sale in cities like St. Louis and Chicago. Many more rail lines were built all over the West during the next few decades.

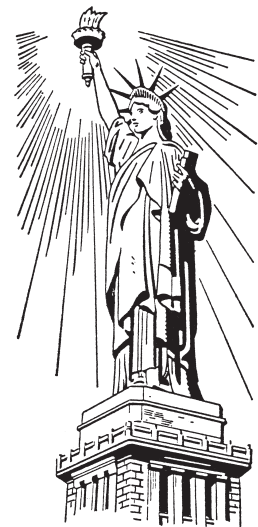
Mining and lumbering drew many people to the West, but farmland was the biggest draw of all. The Homestead Act passed by Congress gave 160 acres in the West to anyone who would settle there. Many tried farming or ranching and gave up. Others, however, stayed and slowly changed the look of the countryside with the help of the new barbed wire fences.



As more people poured into the West, Indians already living there were forced by federal laws to stay on reservations. Settlers feared deadly attacks by the Indians. Indians resented the loss of their lands and cheating by dishonest government agents.

Many Indians fought the plan to restrict them to reservations. The vast numbers of settlers, and the destruction of the wild buffalo herds, slowly overwhelmed them. One of the most famous incidents in the Indian Wars was the Battle of the Little Bighorn (1876). That Indian victory in what is now Montana, however, was the exception to the pattern.

Immigrants were another big part of the Gilded Age story. After 1880 many more were arriving, especially from Eastern and Southern European countries. They found opportunity, but often faced resentment from the native-born, who feared the cultural changes the newcomers might bring. Still, Ellis Island in the harbor of New York City became famous as the place where millions of immigrants were checked in on the way to becoming new Americans.



In this period, America grew beyond its shores with the addition of Alaska and Hawaii. The U.S. helped Cuba free itself from Spain in the Spanish-American War (1898). With victory in that conflict, America gained Puerto Rico and the Philippines from Spain.

As the start of a new century drew near, inventors were already tinkering with early automobiles. Many women, led by Susan B. Anthony, were pushing hard for the right to vote. Women were also working to improve city life, and focused some of their best efforts on helping poor immigrant neighborhoods. Journalists – both men and women – were exposing the problems of the era in newspapers and magazines. More people began demanding that something be done about unsafe conditions for workers in factories and mines. There was a widespread and hopeful expectation that America's growing pains, while very real, would be cured.

# MAP - WESTERN RAILROADS AND CATTLE TRAILS

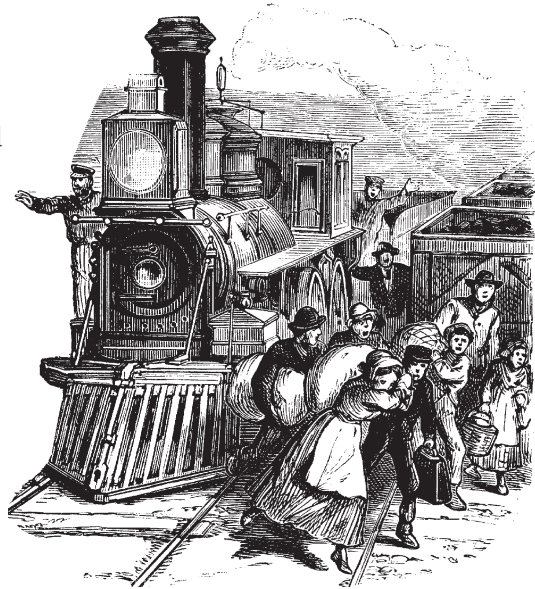
Finish labeling and coloring the map, and fill in the blanks using the word bank below.

## THE FIRST TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD

Use red for all railroad lines. The dotted lines will guide you.

The **Transcontinental Railroad** is the rail line shown on the map reaching from Omaha, Nebraska, to Sacramento, California. It connected the far West with the already existing railroad network that reached back to \_\_\_\_\_ and the rest of the country east of the Mississippi River.

The line was built by two railroad companies, the **Central Pacific** and the **Union Pacific**. The federal government, however, helped \_\_\_\_\_ the project. Among other things, the government gave the railroad companies land along the route that they could sell to farmers and ranchers. Land near the track route would be much \_\_\_\_\_ valuable, of course, as the rail line was completed.



Some work actually began during the Civil War, but most of the construction was done in the years just \_\_\_\_\_ the war ended. The Central Pacific started laying track in California, and built toward the east. The Union Pacific started in Nebraska, and laid track going west. The two sections of the line met and were joined together in Utah, at a spot near the Great \_\_\_\_\_ Lake, in 1869.

## OTHER WESTERN RAILROADS AND THE CATTLE TRAILS

Use red to show the rail lines. The dotted lines will guide you.

Draw the cattle trails in green.

- The route connecting Chicago, St. Louis, and Kansas City.
- The route connecting Kansas City, Abilene, and Denver.
- The route connecting Atchison, Dodge City, and Pueblo.



**Chisholm Trail    Western Trail    Goodnight-Loving Trail**

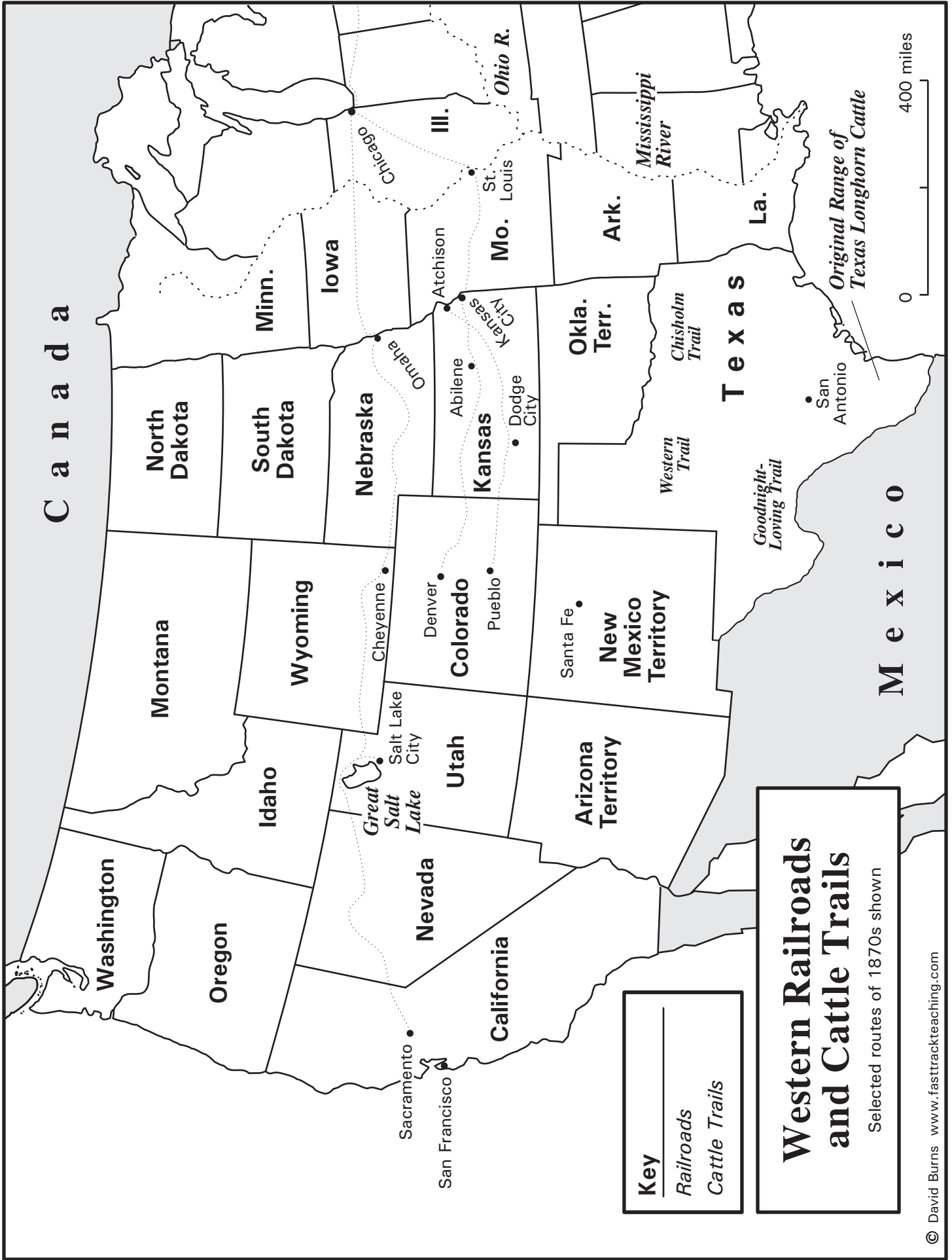
**Original range of Texas Longhorn cattle** (Shade this area in southern Texas light green.)

---

Word bank to fill in the blanks: *finance, Chicago, Salt, after, more*

---





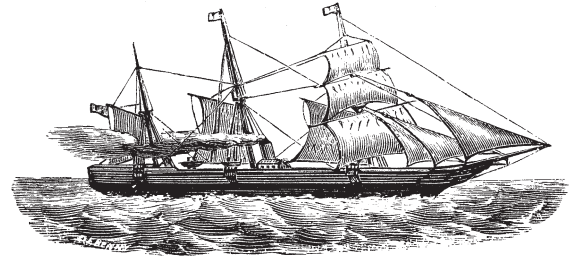
# MAP - AMERICA GROWS OVERSEAS

---

Finish labeling and coloring the map to show the items listed in bold. Use red to show the areas acquired by the U.S. in this era. Fill in the blanks using the word bank below.

## GAINED BY PURCHASE

**Alaska**, purchased from \_\_\_\_\_ in 1867. The deal was much criticized at the time as a waste of money, but Alaska has proven to be a very valuable addition to the U.S.



## GAINED BY ANNEXATION

**Hawaii**, which joined the U.S. five years after American settlers and businessmen living there worked up a scheme to overthrow the Hawaiian \_\_\_\_\_ and her government in 1893. (Annexation is the term used when a government absorbs or adds new territory.)

## GAINED AS A RESULT OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR (1898)

**Cuba**, which was controlled after the war by the U.S. for several years until a new government was formed. America still has control of some Cuban land for a naval base at \_\_\_\_\_ Bay.

**The Philippines**, where the Filipinos wanted independence, and fought the U.S. (unsuccessfully) to get it. Independence came only after World War \_\_\_\_\_.

**Puerto Rico**, an island that is still part of the U.S., but \_\_\_\_\_ a state.

**Guam**, which is still part of the U.S., and important as an American \_\_\_\_\_ base in the Pacific.

## ISLANDS OBTAINED FOR USE AS SHIPPING OR TRADING STOPS

**Midway** (1867)

**Wake** (1899)

**Samoa** (1900)

## LAND OBTAINED BY THE UNITED STATES TO BUILD THE PANAMA CANAL

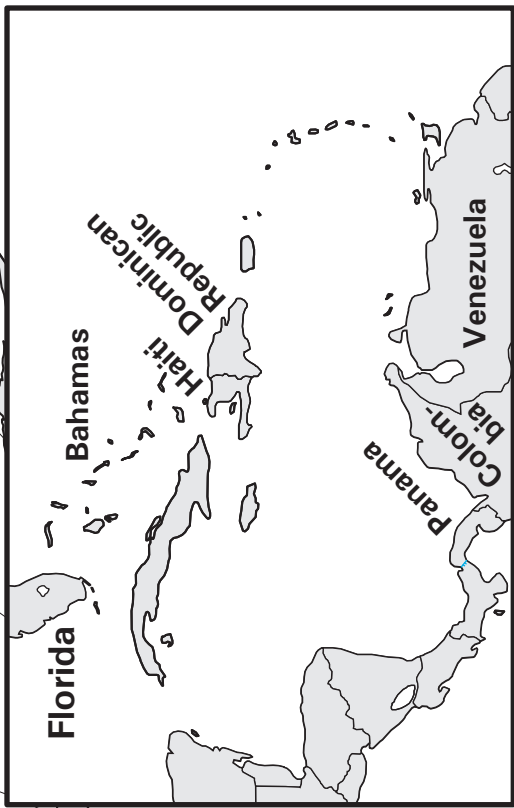
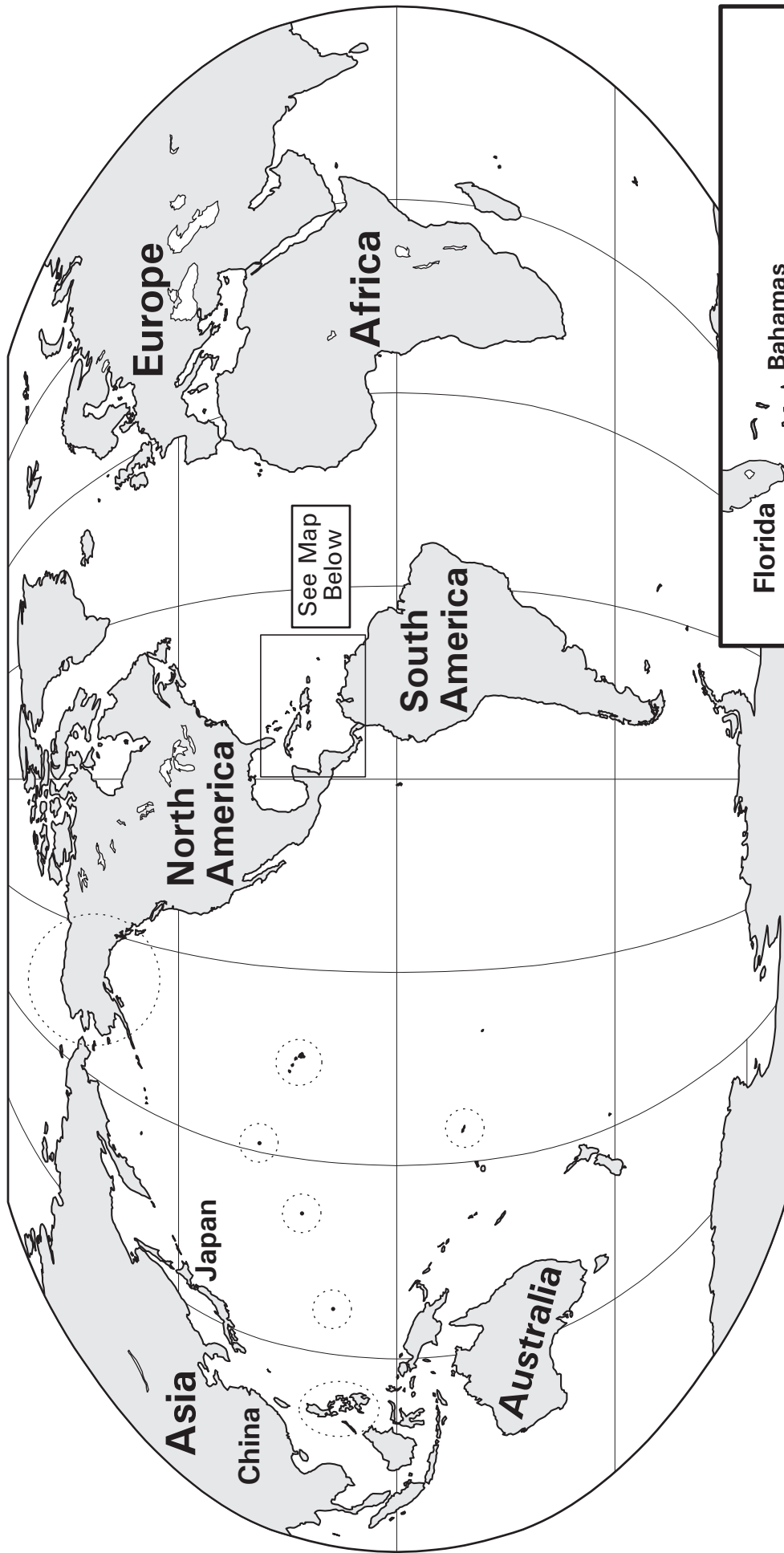
**Panama Canal Zone**, on the Isthmus of Panama. When Colombia stalled the sale of the small strip of land America needed for the canal, Theodore Roosevelt sent a

naval force to support a \_\_\_\_\_ by the Panamanians, who wanted the canal. The year was 1903. (Before the rebellion, Panama was part of Colombia.)

---

Word bank to fill in the blanks: *Guantanamo, military, not, queen, rebellion, Russia, Two*

---



© David Burns [www.fasttrackteaching.com](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com)

**America Grows Overseas**  
**Main Areas Acquired 1865 - 1903 [ I ]**  
Robinson Projection

# BIG INDUSTRY AND LABOR UNIONS

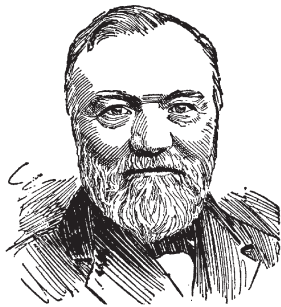
---

*These selections highlight some of the issues in the debates about big industry and labor unions in the Gilded Age.*

## **Carnegie Defends the Millionaires**

*These excerpts are condensed from a famous article by Andrew Carnegie titled "Wealth." Its message later became known as "The Gospel of Wealth."*

The conditions of human life have not only been changed, but revolutionized, within the past few hundred years. The contrast between the palace of the millionaire and the cottage of the laborer with us today measures the change which has come with civilization. This change, however, is not to be deplored, but welcomed as highly beneficial.



The "good old times" were not good old times.

Formerly articles were manufactured at the domestic hearth [in the home] or in small shops which formed part of the household. But the

inevitable result of such a mode of manufacture was crude articles at high prices.

Today the world obtains commodities of excellent quality at prices which even the generation preceding this would have deemed incredibly low. The poor enjoy what the rich could not before afford. What were luxuries have become the necessities of life.

The price we pay for this change is great. We assemble thousands of operatives [workers] in the factory and in the mine. Under the law of competition, the employer is forced into the strictest economies, among which are the rates paid to laborers, and often there is

friction between employer and the employed, between capital and labor, between rich and poor.

The price which society pays for the law of competition is great. But the advantages of this law are greater still, for it is to this law that we owe our wonderful material development, which brings improved conditions.

While the law of competition may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it insures the survival of the fittest. We accept and welcome, therefore, great inequality of living conditions and the concentration of business in the hands of a few. The law of competition between these is not only beneficial, but essential for the future progress of the race.

## **Ida Tarbell Criticizes Business Practices**

*Journalist Ida Tarbell exposed the way John D. Rockefeller organized the Standard Oil Company to control the oil refining industry. She showed that often, business in the Gilded Age involved practices that were far from fair competition. These condensed excerpts are from her famous book on the Standard Oil Company.*

Every great campaign against rival interests which the Standard Oil Company has carried on has been inaugurated [started], not to save its life, but to build up and sustain a monopoly in the oil industry.

Very often people who admit the facts, who are willing to see that Mr. Rockefeller has employed force and fraud to secure his ends, justify him by declaring, "It's business." That is, "it's business" has come to be a legitimate excuse for hard dealing, sly tricks, special privileges. It is a common enough thing to hear men arguing that the

ordinary laws of morality do not apply in business.

Now, if the Standard Oil Company were the only concern [business] in the country guilty of the practices which have given it monopolistic power, this story would never have been written. Were it alone in these methods, public scorn would long ago have made short work of the Standard Oil Company. But it is simply the most conspicuous type of what can be done by these practices.

One of the most depressing features of the ethical side of the matter is that instead of such methods arousing contempt they are more or less openly admired.

### Samuel Gompers Defends Labor Unions

*Samuel Gompers rose to fame as the president of the American Federation of Labor. These lines are condensed from an 1894 letter to a judge who was critical of the strategy of collective action (such as strikes) by workers.*

You know, or ought to know, that the introduction of machinery is turning into idleness [unemployment] thousands faster than new industries are founded. The laborer is a man, he is made warm by the same sun and made cold – yes, colder – by the same winter as you. He has a heart and brain, and feels and knows the human and paternal instinct for those depending on him as keenly as you.

What shall the workers do? Sit idly by and see the vast resources of nature and the human mind be utilized and monopolized for the benefit of the comparative few?

No. The laborers must learn to think and act, and soon, too, that only by the power of organization and common action can their manhood be maintained, their rights to work be recognized, and liberty and rights secured.

I am not one of those who regards the entire past as a failure. I recognize the progress made and the improved conditions of which nearly the entire civilized world are the beneficiaries.

I ask you to explain, however, how it is that thousands of able-bodied, willing, earnest men and women are suffering the pangs of hunger? We may boast of our wealth and civilization, but to the hungry man and woman and child our progress is a hollow mockery, our civilization a sham, and our “national wealth” a chimera [fantasy].

You recognize that the industrial forces set in motion by steam and electricity have materially changed the structure of our civilization. You evidently have observed the growth of corporate wealth and influence.



You recognize that wealth, in order to become more highly productive, is concentrated into fewer hands, and yet you sing the old siren song that the workingman should depend entirely upon his own “individual effort.”

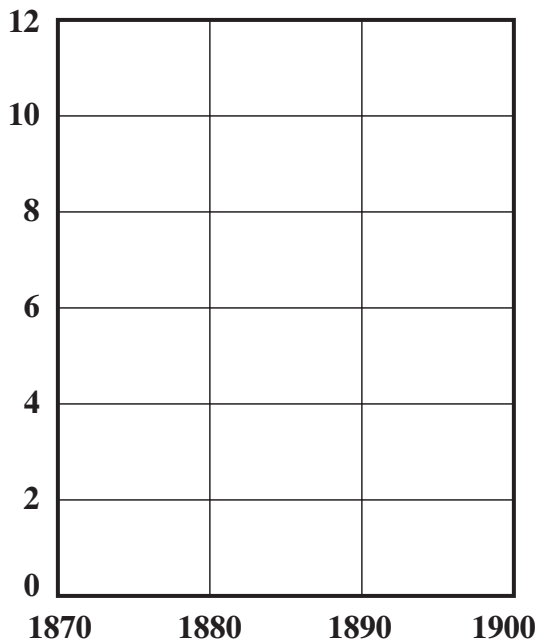
If, as you say, the success of commercial society depends on the full play of competition, why do not you turn your attention and your attacks against the trusts and corporations?

In conclusion, let me assure you that labor will organize, and despite relentless antagonism, achieve for humanity a nobler manhood, a more beautiful womanhood, and a happier childhood.

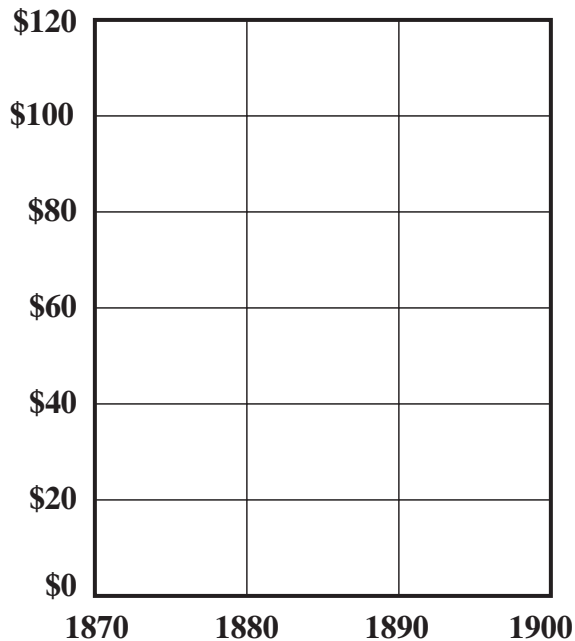
**Group Discussion:** *Summarize briefly each writer’s main points. On what point do Andrew Carnegie and Samuel Gompers agree? In what ways do their views differ?*

# CHARTING ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Gilded Age is often remembered for its extremes of wealth and poverty, as well as the some-times violent conflicts between labor unions and business owners. Complete the line graphs on these pages to see a more complete picture of the era, which included many positive trends. What conclusions about the Gilded Age can you draw from these four graphs?



**Production of Raw Steel  
(Millions of Tons)  
1870 to 1900**



**Price of Steel Rails  
(Dollars per Gross Ton)  
1870 to 1900**

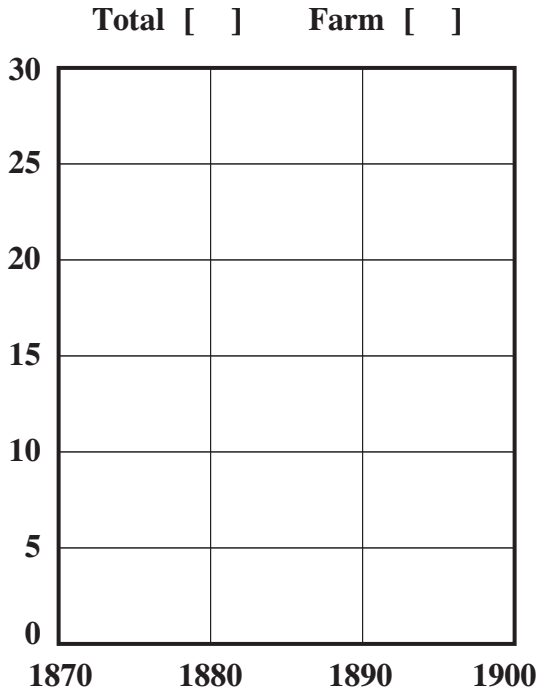
Use the table below to make the line graphs above. For the graph on the left, be sure to convert the figures for raw steel production from tons to “millions of tons.”

Year	Raw Steel Production (Tons)	Steel Rail Prices (Dollars per Gross Ton)
1870	100,000	107
1880	1,400,000	68
1890	4,800,000	32
1900	11,200,000	32

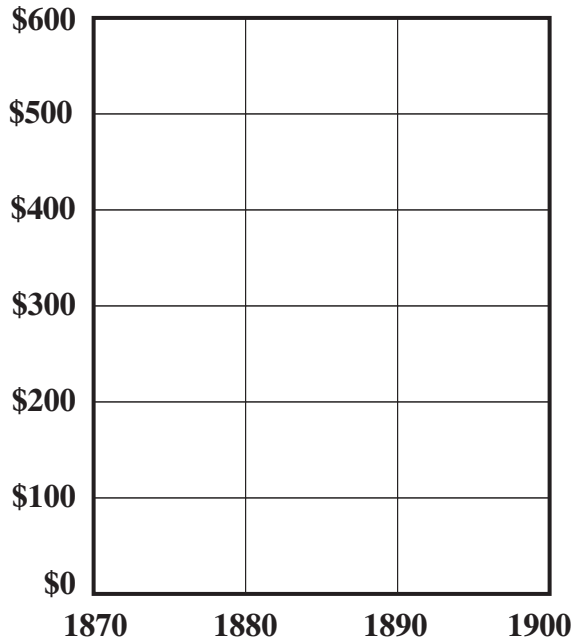
*Note: A gross ton is 2,240 pounds, slightly heavier than today's U.S. standard ton of 2,000 pounds.*

source: Historical Statistics of the United States

The two graphs below show trends in job creation and wages received by workers. The wage figures are adjusted for changes in the purchasing power of the dollar. Historians call these adjusted figures "real wages," since they reflect what a paycheck actually could buy when compared to paychecks many years earlier or later.



**Employment of Workers  
(Millions)  
1870 to 1900**



**Real Wages (Dollars per Year)  
of Non-Farm Workers  
1870 to 1900**

Use the table below to make the line graphs above. Use two different colors to show total employment and farm employment on the same graph.

Year	Total Workers (Millions)	Farm Workers (Millions)	Real Wages (Dollars per Year) of Non-Farm Workers
1870	12.9	6.8	375
1880	17.4	8.6	395
1890	23.3	9.9	519
1900	29.0	10.9	573

*source: Historical Statistics of the United States*

## JANE ADDAMS WORKS FOR BETTER CITIES

---

*Jane Addams opened Hull House as a kind of community center in one of Chicago's working class neighborhoods in 1889. This "settlement house" was staffed by Addams and other volunteers who acted as neighborhood organizers and social workers. These are condensed selections from her famous books and articles.*

The social organism has broken down through large districts of our great cities. Many of the people living there are very poor, the majority of them without leisure or energy for anything but the gain of subsistence [the bare necessities]. They move from one wretched lodging to another. They live for the moment side by side, many of them without knowledge of each other, without fellowship, without local tradition or public spirit, without social organization of any kind.

Practically nothing is done to remedy this. The people who might do it, who have the social tact and training, the large houses, and the traditions and custom of hospitality, live in other parts of the city. The club-houses, libraries, and galleries are also blocks away.

We find the working men organized into armies of producers [in factories]. But these working men are not organized socially. Their ideas and resources are cramped. They have no share in the traditions and social energy which make for progress. Too often their only place of meeting is a saloon, their only host a bartender. Men of ability and refinement, of social power and university cultivation, stay away from them.

Personally, I believe the men who lose most are those who stay away.

It is constantly said that because the masses have never had social advantages they do not want them, that they are heavy and dull. This divides the city into rich and poor;

into the favored, who express their sense of social obligation by gifts of money, and into the unfavored, who express it by clamoring for a "share" – both of them actuated [motivated] by a vague sense of justice.

It is inevitable that those who feel most keenly this insincerity should be our young people. I think it is hard for us to realize how seriously many of them are taking to the notion of human brotherhood, how eagerly they long to give expression to the democratic ideal.



They hear constantly of the great social maladjustment, but no way is provided for them to change it. Our young people feel the need of putting theory into action, and

respond quickly to the Settlement house form of activity [as volunteer staffers].

*Jane Addams criticized the system of "boss" politics found in many big cities. In some city neighborhoods, she noted, votes were bought at election time for "drinks or dollars." After the election, however, the real needs of poor neighborhoods were mostly ignored by the political system.*

The policy of the public authorities of never taking an initiative, and always waiting to be urged to do their duty, is fatal in a neighborhood where there is no initiative among the citizens. The idea underlying our self-government breaks down in such a neighborhood.

The streets are inexpressibly dirty, the



number of schools inadequate, factory legislation unenforced, the street-lighting bad, the paving miserable and altogether lacking in the alleys and smaller streets, and the horse stables defy all laws of sanitation.

Hundreds of houses are unconnected with the street sewer. The older and richer inhabitants seem anxious to move away as rapidly as they can afford it. They make room for the newly arrived immigrants who are densely ignorant of civic duties.

*Addams and the volunteers at Hull House put pressure on city officials to improve garbage collection and other services vital to life in any neighborhood. She also took time to observe the lives around her.*

To one who has lived for years in a crowded quarter where men, women and children constantly jostle each other and press upon every inch of space in shop, tenement and street, nothing is more impressive than the strength, the continuity, the varied and powerful manifestations of family affection.

Every tenement house contains women who for years spend their hurried days in preparing food and clothing and pass their sleepless nights in tending and nursing their needy children. Every shop is crowded with workingmen who year after year spend all of their wages upon the nurture and education of their children, reserving for themselves but the shabbiest clothing and a crowded place at the family table.

The wonderful devotion to the child seems at times, in the midst of our stupid social and industrial arrangements, all that keeps society human. This devotion to the child is the inevitable conclusion of the devotion of man to woman.

It is, or course, this tremendous force which makes possible the family, that bond which holds society together and blends the

experience of generations into a continuous story.

*Addams argued that city governments would have to take a larger, more active role to meet the social needs of the citizens. Cities, she said, should promote recreation, cultural life, and better schools. She hoped that the energy and idealism of young people would light the way to a brighter future for America's cities.*



Nothing is more certain than that each generation longs for a reassurance as to the value and charm of life, and is secretly afraid lest it lose its sense of the youth of the earth.

One generation after another has depended upon its young to equip it with gaiety and enthusiasm, to persuade it that living is a pleasure.

The spontaneous joy, the clamor for pleasure, the desire of the young people to appear finer and better and altogether more lovely than they really are, the idealization not only of each other but of the whole earth which they regard but as a theater for their noble exploits, the unworldly ambitions, the romantic hopes – What might they not do to make our sordid [ugly] cities more beautiful and more companionable?

**Group Discussion:** *What social problems did Jane Addams see in Chicago in the 1890s? What impressed her about the families she met around Hull House? Why did she think young people could be a key part of the effort to improve cities?*

## JACOB RIIS EXPOSES CHILD LABOR

---

*Jacob Riis was one of the first journalists to photograph and write about the condition of the poor living in New York City. In books like **How the Other Half Lives**, and in newspaper stories, he exposed the hard life of children working in factories, sweatshops, and mines. This is an excerpt from one of his articles.*

Of Susie's hundred little companions in the alley – playmates they could scarcely be called – some made artificial flowers, some paper boxes, while the boys earned money at “shinin’” [shining shoes] or selling newspapers. The smaller girls “minded the baby,” so leaving the mother free to work. Most of them did something toward earning the family living, young as they were.

The occupations that claim children's labor in and out of the shop are almost as numberless as the youngsters that swarm in tenement neighborhoods. The poorer the tenements the more of them always.

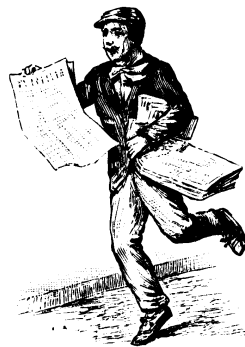
In an evening school class of nineteen boys and girls which I polled once, I found twelve boys who “shined,” five who sold papers, one of thirteen years who by day worked in a printing office, and one of twelve who worked in a wood-yard.

Of the girls, one was thirteen and worked in a paper box factory, two of twelve made paper lanterns, and one twelve-year-old girl sewed coats in a sweat-shop.

The four smallest girls were ten years old, and of them one worked for a sweater [sweatshop owner] and “finished twenty-five coats yesterday,” she said with pride. She looked quite able to do a woman's work. The three others minded the baby at home; one of them found time to help her mother sew coats when baby slept.

The trouble is not so much that the chil-

dren have to work early as with the sort of work they have to do. It is, all of it, of a kind that leaves them, grown to man and womanhood, just where it found them, knowing no more, and therefore less, than when they began. The years that should have prepared them for life's work are gone in hopeless and profitless drudgery.



The general result was well put by a tireless worker in the cause of improving the condition of the poor, who said to me, “They are down on the scrub level; there you find them and have to put them to such use as you can. They don't know anything else, and that is what makes it so hard to find work for them. Even when they go into a shop to sew, they come out mere machines, able to do only one thing, which is a small part of the whole they do not grasp. And thus, without the slightest training for the responsibilities of life, they marry and transmit their incapacity to another generation that is so much worse to start off with.”

She spoke of the girls, but what she said fitted the boys just as well.

**Group Discussion:** *What kind of work did children in the poor tenement neighborhoods do? What were the typical ages of those Riis talked to for this report? Factory owners at that time sometimes argued that children were getting an education by working. How would Riis probably respond to such an argument?*

# WHY WOMEN SHOULD VOTE

---

*Susan B. Anthony was among the most active organizers for women's voting rights. These arguments (condensed here) are from a speech she gave after being arrested in Rochester, New York. Her "crime" was voting in the presidential election of 1872.*

It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed this Union. And we formed it, not to give the blessings of liberty, but to secure them; not to the half of ourselves and the half of our posterity [descendants], but to the whole people – women as well as men.



It is a downright mockery to talk to women of their enjoyment of the blessings of liberty while they are denied the use of the only means of securing them provided by this government – the ballot.

For any state to make sex a qualification that must ever result in the disfranchisement [loss of voting rights] of one entire half of the people is therefore a violation of the supreme law of the land.

By it the blessings of liberty are forever withheld from women and their female posterity. To them this government is not a democracy. It is not a republic. It is an odious aristocracy; a hateful oligarchy of sex; the most hateful aristocracy ever established on the face of the globe. [Aristocracy and oligarchy are terms for rule by a select elite.]

*Another famous advocate for women's rights was Amelia Bloomer. She was the first woman in America to own and edit a newspaper for women. These lines are condensed from an 1895 essay.*

There is no positive rule by which to fix woman's sphere, except that of capacity. It is to be found, I should say, wherever duty or interest may call her, whether to the kitchen, the parlor, the nursery, the workshop, or the public assembly.

It is objected that it would be immodest and "unbecoming a lady" for women to go to the ballot-box to vote, or to the halls of the capitol [building] to legislate.

A few years ago it was thought very unladylike and improper for women to study medicine, and when Elizabeth Blackwell forced her way into the Geneva, New York, medical college people were amazed at the presumption. But she graduated with high honors, went to Europe to perfect her studies, and now stands high in her chosen profession.

Now there are several colleges for the medical education of women, and women physicians without number. And so of many other departments of trade, profession, and labor that within my recollection were not thought proper for woman, simply because she had not entered them.

Women are debarred [prevented] from voting and legislating, and therefore it is unfashionable for them to do either; but let their right to do so be once established, and all objections of that kind will vanish away.

**Group Discussion:** *What is the basic argument each woman makes about voting rights for women? Which woman do you think makes the best argument? Why?*