Gilded Age
1870-1900

Level 2
Presidents of the Gilded Age

U.S. Grant 1869-1877
Rutherford B. Hayes 1877-1881
James Garfield 1881
Chester A. Arthur 1881-1885
Grover Cleveland 1885-1889 and 1893-1897
Benjamin Harrison 1889-1893
William McKinley 1897-1901
Gilded Age-origin

- **Gilded Age** - Period when corruption existed in society but was overshadowed by the wealth of the period ("gilded" is when something is golden/beautiful on the surface but is really cheap/worthless underneath)

- Abuses in business and government caused problems for immigrants, laborers, and farmers

- Term comes from a book written about the time period by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner in 1873 *The Gilded Age*
Inventors/Inventions

► **Thomas Edison**
  - Perfected the light bulb in 1880, and motion picture
  - Organized power plants
  - Established first research lab

► **Alexander Graham Bell**
  - Telephone (1876)

► **Henry Ford**
  - Assembly Line

► **George Eastman**
  - Camera (1885)

► **Samuel Morse**
  - Telegraph (1837)

► **Wright Brothers**
  - Airplane (1903)

► **Christopher Sholes**
  - Typewriter (1867)

► **Guglielmo Marconi**
  - Radio (1900)
The Steel Industry’s Impact on America

► **Bessemer Process** - developed around 1850 injected air into molten iron to remove impurities and make steel—a lighter, more flexible, rust resistant metal

► Steel is used in railroads, farm equipment, canned goods

► Engineers use steel to create skyscrapers and longer bridges (Brooklyn Bridge)
The Rise of Big Business

► Andrew Carnegie
  • Industrialist who made a fortune in steel in the late 1800’s, as a philanthropists, he gave away some $350 million. ($4.8 billion in today’s $)

► John D. Rockefeller
  • Industrialist who made a fortune in the oil refining industry
  • U.S. Standard Oil (99%)
  • ($30 billion in today’s $)
The Rise of Big Business

J.P. Morgan

- Industrialists who started U.S. Steel from Carnegie Steel and other companies. Became 1st Billion dollar Corporation.
- Bailed out the U.S. economy on more than one occasion.
The Rise of Big Business

★ Vertical Integration
  • A process in which a company buys out all of the suppliers. (Ex. coal and iron mines, ore freighters, railroad lines)

★ Horizontal Consolidation
  - A process in which a company buys out or merges with all competing companies (JP Morgan bought out Carnegie steel and other companies)
The Rise of Big Business

► **Trusts** - A group of separate companies placed under the control of a single managing board

- Critics called these practices unfair and the business leaders of trusts were known as “**Robber Barons**”
The Rise of Big Business

► **Social Darwinism**
  - Used Darwin’s theory to explain business
  - Natural Selection, Survival of the Fittest
  - Govt. should not interfere
  - *Laissez-faire* - policy that US had followed since inception to not allow govt. to interfere with business

► **Gospel of Wealth** - belief that the wealthy are “chosen by God” to be successful and were therefore responsible to look out for the well being of those less fortunate. Many Industrialist shared wealth although rarely through direct welfare. Started museums, etc.
Poor Working Conditions in the Late 1800’s

- Most factory workers worked 12 hour days, 6 days a week.
- Steel mills often demanded 7 days a week.
- No vacations, sick leave, unemployment compensation, or workers compensation for injuries on the job.
- Children as young as 5 often worked as much as 12 or sometimes 14 hours a day, for as little as $27 a day.
The New Immigrants

► **Old Immigration** - between 1776 and 1870 mostly from western and northern Europe

► **New Immigration** - Between 1870 and 1920 - 20 million Europeans - mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe came to America - (Jews/Catholics)
  - Hundreds of thousands more came from Mexico, Caribbean, and China
  - Looked and sounded different than natives

► **Nativism** - Movement to ensure that native-born Americans received better treatment than immigrants
The New Immigrants

- **Ellis Island** - In New York harbor where most European immigrants came to get processed

- **Angel Island** - In San Francisco where most Asians entered US
  - Culture Shock
  - Melting Pot
The New Immigrants

► **1882-Chinese Exclusion Act**—prohibited Chinese laborers from entering the country. Was not lifted until 1943.

► **Gentlemen’s Agreement 1907**—was reached between U.S. and Japan in which Japan agreed to restrict immigration to the U.S.
Problems of Rapid Urbanization

► Urbanization - growth of cities

► 3 reasons cities grew in late 1800’s and early 1900’s
  • New immigrants arrived in cities for work
  • As farm machines replaced the number farmers needed to produce crops they moved to cities
  • African Americans left South after Civil War and came to Northern cities. This was known as the Great Migration
Problems in Cities

1. Housing shortages - People lived in Tenements – crowded apartment building with poor standards of sanitation, safety, and comfort

2. Transportation – struggled to keep up with growth

3. Clean water – was difficult to produce and transport

4. Waste and garbage removal was a challenge and often neglected

5. Fires were very common
   - Great Chicago Fire - 1871
   - San Francisco Earthquake 1906

6. Crime rose with urbanization
The Rise of Political Machines

► **Political Machines** – an organized group of people that controlled the activities of a political party
  • By giving voters services they needed, the machine won their vote and controlled city government

► **City Boss** was head of Political Machines
  • Controlled
    ► Jobs in police, fire, and sanitation departments
    ► Agencies that granted licenses to businesses
    ► Money to fund large construction projects

“All Politics center around the Boss”
Political Machines

► Political machines loved immigrants, WHY?
  • Never voted, tried to sway votes by bribery, intimidation, and other means

► Political machines used power to
  • Rig elections
  • Become wealthy from kickbacks—illegal payments
  • Control police force to stay out of trouble
“Boss Tweed” and Thomas Nast

► William “Boss” Tweed
City Boss of Tammany Hall - Democratic Political Machine in New York City

► Thomas Nast – political cartoonist who was critical of machines and Tweed
Corruption in Government

► **Patronage or Spoils System** - giving government jobs to loyal party workers or friends
  • Were not qualified
  • Used position to get money from government (graft)

► President James Garfield is assassinated by disappointed office seeker (Charles Guiteau) favoring Spoils System

► President Chester Arthur signs **Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883**
Pendleton Civil Service Act 1883

► Attempted to end Patronage/Spoils System

► 1. Creating the Civil Service Commission which required appointed govt. officials to pass the Civil Service Exam to base jobs on merit instead of friendship

► 2. Federal employees did not have to contribute to campaign funds

► 3. Federal employees could not be fired for political reasons

Chester A. Arthur signed Pendleton Act into effect