




Flappers reflected the modern spirit of the Jazz Age.

Movie poster, 1926



1,800 tons of paper streamers—and newspapers reported on his every move. The national embrace of Lindbergh showed what one historian called a “delighted concern over things that were exciting but didn’t matter profoundly.”

Changes for Women

The 1920s did bring profound changes for women. One important change took place with the ratification of the **Nineteenth Amendment** in 1920. The amendment guaranteed women in all states the right to vote. Women also ran for election to political offices.  (See page 249 for the text of the Nineteenth Amendment.)

Throughout the 1920s the number of women holding jobs outside the home continued to grow. Most women had to take jobs considered “women’s” work, such as teaching and working in offices as clerks and typists. At the same time, increasing numbers of college-educated women

started professional careers, and more women worked after marriage. But the vast majority of married women remained within the home, working as homemakers and mothers.

The flapper symbolized the new “liberated” woman of the 1920s. Pictures of **flappers**—care-free young women with short, “bobbed” hair, heavy makeup, and short skirts—appeared in magazines. Many people saw the bold, boyish look and shocking behavior of flappers as a sign of changing morals. Though hardly typical of American women, the flapper image reinforced the idea that women now had more freedom. Pre-war values had shifted, and many people were beginning to challenge traditional ways.

 **Reading Check** **Describing** What did the Nineteenth Amendment guarantee?

Entertainment

Changes in attitudes spread quickly because of the growth of **mass media**—forms of communication, such as newspapers and radio, that reach millions of people. Laborsaving devices and fewer working hours gave Americans more leisure time. In those nonworking hours, they enjoyed tabloid-style newspapers, large-circulation magazines, phonograph records, the radio, and the movies.

The Movies and Radio

In the 1920s the motion picture industry in **Hollywood**, California, became one of the country’s leading businesses. For millions of Americans, the movies offered entertainment and escape.

The first movies were black and white and silent, with the actors’ dialog printed on the screen and a pianist playing music to accompany the action. In 1927 Hollywood introduced movies with sound. The first “talkie,” *The Jazz Singer*, created a sensation.

The radio brought entertainment into people’s homes in the 1920s. In 1920 the first commercial radio broadcast, which carried the presidential election returns, was transmitted by station KDKA in Pittsburgh. In the next three years nearly 600 stations joined the airwaves.

The networks broadcast popular programs across the nation. The evening lineup of programs included something for everyone—news, concerts, sporting events, and comedies. Radio offered listeners a wide range of music—opera, classical, country and western, blues, and jazz. *Amos 'n' Andy* and the *Grand Ole Opry* were among the hit shows of the 1920s. Families sat down to listen to the radio together.

Businesses soon realized that the radio offered an enormous audience for messages about their products, so they began to help finance radio programs. Radio stations sold spot advertisements, or commercials, to companies.

Sports and Fads

Among the favorite radio broadcasts of the 1920s were athletic events. Baseball, football, and boxing soared in popularity. Americans flocked to sporting events, and more people participated in sports activities as well.

Sports stars became larger-than-life heroes. Baseball fans idolized **Babe Ruth**, the great outfielder, who hit 60 home runs in 1927—a record that would stand for 34 years. Football star Red Grange, who once scored four touchdowns in 12 minutes, became a national hero. Golfer Bobby Jones and Gertrude Ederle, the first woman to swim the English Channel, became household names.

In the 1920s Americans took up new activities with enthusiasm, turning them into fads. The Chinese board game *mah-jongg* (mah•ZHAHNG) and crossword puzzles were all the rage. Contests such as flagpole sitting and dance marathons—often lasting three or four days—made headlines. Americans also loved the Miss America Pageant, which was first held in 1921.

Reading Check **Comparing** What fads were popular in the 1920s? What are two comparable fads today?

The Jazz Age

During the 1920s people danced to the beat of a new kind of music called jazz. Jazz captured the spirit of the era so well that the 1920s is often referred to as the **Jazz Age**.

Jazz had its roots in the South in African American work songs and in African music. A blend of ragtime and blues, it uses dynamic rhythms and **improvisation**—new rhythms and melodies created during a performance. Among the best-known African American jazz musicians were trumpeter **Louis Armstrong**, pianist and composer **Duke Ellington**, and singer **Bessie Smith**. White musicians such as Paul Whiteman and Bix Biederbecke also played jazz and helped bring it to a wider audience.

Interest in jazz spread through radio and phonograph records. Jazz helped create a unique African American recording industry. Equally important, jazz gave America one of its most distinctive art forms.

Harlem Renaissance

The rhythm and themes of jazz inspired the poetry of **Langston Hughes**, an African American writer. In the 1920s, Hughes joined the growing number of African American writers and artists who gathered in **Harlem**, an African American section of New York City. Hughes described his arrival in Harlem:

“I can never put on
paper the thrill of the
underground ride to
Harlem. I went up the
steps and out into the
bright September sunlight.
Harlem! I stood there,
dropped my bags, took a deep
breath and felt happy again.”

Langston Hughes



Harlem witnessed a burst of creativity in the 1920s—a flowering of African American culture called the **Harlem Renaissance**. This movement instilled an interest in African culture and pride in being African American.

During the Harlem Renaissance, many writers wrote about the African American experience in novels, poems, and short stories. Along with Hughes were writers like James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, Countee Cullen, and Zora Neale Hurston.



Bessie Smith

Jazz record label

Based in New Orleans, King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band was one of the best and most important bands in early jazz.

A Lost Generation of Writers

At the same time that the Harlem Renaissance blossomed, other writers were questioning American ideals. Disappointed with American values and in search of inspiration, they settled in Paris. These writers were called expatriates—people who choose to live in another country. Writer **Gertrude Stein** called these rootless Americans “the lost generation.”

Novelist **F. Scott Fitzgerald** and his wife, Zelda, joined the expatriates in Europe. In *Tender Is the Night*, Fitzgerald wrote of people who had been damaged emotionally by World War I. They were dedicated, he said,

“to the fear of poverty and the worship of success.”

Another famous American expatriate was novelist **Ernest Hemingway**, whose books *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* reflected the mood of Americans in postwar Europe.

While some artists fled the United States, others stayed home and wrote about life in America. Novelist **Sinclair Lewis** presented a critical view

of American culture in such books as *Main Street* and *Babbitt*. Another influential American writer was **Sherwood Anderson**. In his most famous book, *Winesburg, Ohio*, Anderson explored small-town life in the Midwest.

✓ Reading Check Describing What type of music did Louis Armstrong play?

Prohibition

During the 1920s the number of people living in cities swelled, and a modern industrial society came of age. Outside of the cities, many Americans identified this new, urban society with crime, corruption, and immoral behavior. They believed that the America they knew and valued—a nation based on family, church, and tradition—was under attack. Disagreement grew between those who defended traditional beliefs and those who welcomed the new.

The clash of cultures during the 1920s affected many aspects of American life, particularly the use of alcoholic beverages. The temperance movement, the campaign against alcohol use, had begun in the 1800s. The movement was

rooted both in religious objections to drinking alcohol and in the belief that society would benefit if alcohol were unavailable.

The movement finally achieved its goal in 1919 with the ratification of the **Eighteenth Amendment** to the Constitution. This amendment established **Prohibition**—a total ban on the manufacture, sale, and transportation of liquor throughout the United States. Congress passed the **Volstead Act** to provide the means of enforcing the ban. In rural areas in the South and the Midwest, where the temperance movement was strong, Prohibition generally succeeded. In the cities, however, Prohibition had little support. The nation divided into two camps: the “drys”—those who supported Prohibition—and the “wets”—those who opposed it.

Consequences of the Ban

A continuing demand for alcohol led to widespread lawbreaking. Some people began making wine or “bathtub gin” in their homes. Illegal bars and clubs, known as speakeasies, sprang up in cities. Hidden from view, these clubs could be entered only by saying a secret password.

With only about 1,500 agents, the federal government could do little to enforce the Prohibition laws. By the early 1920s, many states in the East stopped trying to enforce the laws.

Prohibition contributed to the rise of organized crime. Recognizing that millions of dollars could be made from **bootlegging**—making and selling illegal alcohol—members of organized crime moved in quickly and took control. They used their profits to gain influence in businesses, labor unions, and governments.


Crime boss Al “Scarface” Capone controlled organized crime and local politics in Chicago. Defending his involvement in illegal alcohol, Capone said,

“I make my money by supplying a popular demand. If I break the law, my customers are as guilty as I am.”

Eventually, Capone was arrested and sent to prison.



Al Capone

Over time many Americans realized that the “noble experiment,” as Prohibition was called, had failed. Prohibition was repealed in 1933 with the **Twenty-first Amendment**.  (See pages 249 and 250 for the text of the Eighteenth and Twenty-first Amendments.)

Reading Check **Analyzing** Why was Prohibition difficult to enforce?

Nativism

The anxieties many native-born Americans felt about the rapid changes in society contributed to an upsurge of **nativism**—the belief that native-born Americans are superior to foreigners. With this renewed nativism came a revival of the **Ku Klux Klan**.

As you read in Chapter 17, the first Klan had been founded in the 1860s in the South to control newly freed African Americans through the use of threats and violence. The second Klan, organized in 1915, still preyed on African Americans, but it had other targets as well—Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and other groups believed to represent “un-American” values.

In the 1920s the new Klan spread from the South to other areas of the country, gaining considerable power in such states as Indiana and Oregon and in many large cities. For the most part, the Klan used pressure and scare tactics to get its way, but sometimes Klan members whipped or lynched people or burned property.

The Klan began to decline in the late 1920s, however, largely as a result of scandals and power struggles involving Klan leaders. Membership shrank, and politicians who had been supported by the Klan were voted out of office.

The concerns of the Red Scare days had not completely disappeared. Some Americans feared foreign radicals would overthrow the government. Others believed foreigners would take away their jobs. This anti-immigrant prejudice was directed mainly at southern and eastern Europeans and Asians.

People In History

Will Rogers 1879–1935



Part Native American, Will Rogers grew up in the West roping cattle and riding on the range. He landed jobs with Wild West shows and soon perfected his riding and trick-roping act, which, along with his personality and sense of humor, made him a star.

By 1920 Will Rogers was starring on both

stage and screen.

A daily newspaper column he started in 1926 spread his humorous views on life and politics. Claiming “I don’t make jokes—I just watch the government and report the facts,” he poked fun in a light-hearted way and was never hostile. One of his favorite sayings was

“I never met a man I didn’t like.”

By the late 1920s, audiences were listening to his commentary on the radio. To Americans, Rogers had become a national treasure. They mourned when Rogers died in a plane crash near Point Barrow, Alaska, in August 1935.

In 1921 Congress responded to nativist fears by passing the **Emergency Quota Act**. This law established a **quota system**, an arrangement placing a limit on the number of immigrants from each country. According to the act, only 3 percent of the total number of people in any national group already living in the United States would be admitted during a single year. Because there had been fewer immigrants from southern and eastern Europe than from northern and western Europe at that time, the law favored northern and western European immigrants.

Congress revised the immigration law in 1924. The **National Origins Act** reduced the annual country quota from 3 to 2 percent and based it on the census of 1890—when even fewer people from southern or eastern Europe lived in America. The law excluded Japanese immigrants completely. An earlier law, passed in 1890, had already excluded the Chinese.

These quota laws did not apply to countries in the Western Hemisphere. As a result, immigration of Canadians and Mexicans increased. By 1930 more than one million Mexicans had come to live in the United States.

Reading Check **Describing** What is a quota system?

The Scopes Trial

Another cultural clash in the 1920s involved the role of religion in society. This conflict gained national attention in 1925 in one of the most famous trials of the era.

In 1925 the state of Tennessee passed a law making it illegal to teach **evolution**—the scientific theory that humans evolved over vast periods of time. The law was supported by Christian fundamentalists, who accepted the biblical story of creation. The fundamentalists saw evolution as a challenge to their values and their religious beliefs.

A young high school teacher named John Scopes deliberately broke the law against teaching evolution so that a trial could test its legality. Scopes acted with the support of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). During the sweltering summer of 1925, the nation followed day-to-day developments in the **Scopes trial** with great interest. More than a hundred journalists from around the country descended on Dayton, Tennessee, to report on the trial.

Two famous lawyers took opposing sides in the trial. **William Jennings Bryan**, Democratic candidate for president in 1896, 1900, and 1908

and a strong opponent of evolution, led the prosecution. **Clarence Darrow**, who had defended many radicals and labor union members, spoke for Scopes.

Although Scopes was convicted of breaking the law and fined \$100, the fundamentalists lost the larger battle. Darrow's defense made it appear that Bryan wanted to impose his religious beliefs on the entire nation. The Tennessee Supreme Court overturned Scopes's conviction, and other states decided not to prosecute similar cases.

The Scopes case may have dealt a blow to fundamentalism, but the movement continued to thrive. Rural people, especially in the South and Midwest, remained faithful to their religious beliefs. When large numbers of farmers migrated to cities during the 1920s, they brought fundamentalism with them.

Reading Check Explaining What law did Scopes challenge?

The Election of 1928

In 1927 President Coolidge shocked everyone by announcing that he would not run for a second full term. **Herbert Hoover** declared his candidacy for the Republican nomination.

During World War I, Hoover had won respect as the head of a committee providing food relief for Europe. He showed such a gift in the role that "to Hooverize" came to mean "to economize, to save and share." Later, Hoover served Presidents Harding and Coolidge as secretary of commerce.

Hoover worked tirelessly to promote cooperation between government and business. A symbol of the forward-looking middle class, he easily won the Republican nomination.

The Democrats chose a far different kind of candidate—**Alfred E. Smith**, governor of New York. The son of immigrants and a man of the city, Smith opposed Prohibition and championed the poor and the working class. As the first Roman Catholic nominee for president, Smith was the target of anti-Catholic feeling. Hoover won the election by a landslide due to both the Republican prosperity of the 1920s and the prejudice against Smith. The contest reflected many of the tensions in American society—rural versus urban life, nativism versus foreign influences, "wets" versus "drys," Protestants versus Catholics, traditional values versus modern values.

Reading Check Identifying Who was elected president in 1928?

SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

HISTORY Online

Study Central™ To review this section, go to taj.glencoe.com and click on **Study Central™**.

Checking for Understanding

- Key Terms** Use each of these terms in a sentence that will help explain its meaning: **flapper**, **mass media**, **expatriate**, **Prohibition**, **nativism**, **quota system**, **evolution**.
- Reviewing Facts** What was the Harlem Renaissance? Name two writers associated with it.

Reviewing Themes

- Continuity and Change** How did the Scopes trial reflect the desire of many Americans to return to traditional values?

Critical Thinking

- Making Generalizations** Why do you think Gertrude Stein referred to many American writers as "the lost generation"?
- Drawing Conclusions** Re-create the diagram below and describe how each person contributed to his or her field.

	Contribution
Sherwood Anderson	
Countee Cullen	
Louis Armstrong	

Analyzing Visuals

- Picturing History** Study the photos on page 716. What does the mood of the country seem to be at this time? Write a short paragraph in which you explain your analysis.

Interdisciplinary Activity

Reading Find and read a poem by a writer who interests you. Find illustrations and photographs that help to communicate the meaning of the poem. Display the poem and illustrations on poster board.

Chapter Summary

The Jazz Age

Time of Turmoil

- Fear of communism grows.
- Labor strikes occur.
- Racial tensions grow.
- Voters elect leaders who promise isolation.
- Harding's administration is marred by scandal.
- Coolidge continues Harding's pro-business economic policies.



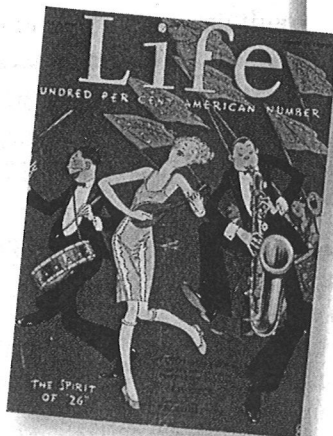
A Booming Economy

- Demand grows for products.
- Installment buying boosts consumer spending.
- The auto industry brings benefits and changes.



The Roaring Twenties

- Women gain the right to vote through the Nineteenth Amendment.
- Mass media grows.
- Entertainment industry grows.
- Harlem Renaissance instills interest in African culture.



Clashing Cultures

- The Eighteenth Amendment establishes Prohibition. The Twenty-first Amendment repeals Prohibition.
- Nativism helps revive the Ku Klux Klan.
- Congress passes quota laws to limit immigration.
- The Scopes trial symbolizes the tensions of the 1920s.

Reviewing Key Terms

On a sheet of paper, use the following vocabulary words to write two paragraphs about the decade of the 1920s.

1. isolationism
2. gross national product
3. installment buying
4. Prohibition
5. quota system

Reviewing Key Facts

6. What is capitalism?
7. How did Calvin Coolidge respond to the 1919 Boston police strike?
8. Who were the presidential candidates in 1920?
9. What did the Five-Power Treaty limit?
10. What is installment buying?
11. What did Charles Lindbergh accomplish?
12. Name three important jazz musicians.

Critical Thinking

13. **Determining Cause and Effect** How was the Red Scare used to turn the public against unions?
14. **Reviewing Themes: Global Connections** How did President Harding feel about the League of Nations?
15. **Analyzing Information** What new forms of entertainment were available to the American people in the 1920s as a result of new technology?
16. **Economic Factors** Re-create the diagram below and describe what you think are the advantages and disadvantages of scientific management.

Scientific management	
Advantages	Disadvantages

Citizenship Cooperative Activity

17. **The Political Process** With a partner, find out how political parties in your state nominate candidates for office. Then interview neighbors who are active in a political party. If any of them have participated in the nominating process, ask them about their experiences. Prepare a brochure on the nominating process to distribute in your neighborhood.