

## ***Gilded Age***

The Transcontinental Railroad established a permanent link between the East and West coasts as well as creating new markets for the goods being produced as a result of industrialization. The economic growth created by these new markets led to the Gilded Age. While some gained extreme wealth during this time period, not everyone enjoyed the privileges that this wealth provided. It is often asserted that the real movers and shakers of the period were not the men in the White House or Congress but “the captains of industry” or, as some have called them, “the robber barons.” As industrialization exploded, harsh and unsafe labor conditions resulted for workers. Children were often forced to work in factories as families struggled to eke out a living. Finally, immigration was at a height due to the unrest in Eastern and Southern Europe. This influx of new immigrants resulted in a multitude of social and economic problems.

Directions: Use the content from the Texas Citizen Bee website to help answer the following questions:

### **PEOPLE**

William Jennings Bryan

- 1) During William Jennings Bryan’s three unsuccessful runs for president, what viewpoints did he endorse?
- 2) Why did William Jennings Bryan resign as Woodrow Wilson’s Secretary of State?

Andrew Carnegie

- 1) Describe Andrew Carnegie’s “rags to riches” story.
- 2) Explain the meaning of Andrew Carnegie’s Gospel of Wealth, and what did he do that exemplified the Gospel of Wealth?

Thomas Edison

- 1) How did failed inventions influence Thomas Edison?
- 2) Describe how two Thomas Edison inventions still influence life today?
- 3) What measures did Thomas Edison take to protect his inventions and why did he do this?

Henry Ford

- 1) While Henry Ford did not invent the automobile, how did his Model-T revolutionize the auto industry?
- 2) Explain several methods Henry Ford used to meet the demands on his Model-T production.

Frances Willard

- 1) Why did Frances Willard found the Women’s Christian Temperance Union?
- 2) How did the members of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union go about advocating temperance?

## The Wright Brothers

- 1) Why was Kitty Hawk, North Carolina selected as the site for the Wright Brothers to test their flying machine?
- 2) How did the Wright Brothers spend much of their time after their successful flight and why?

## DOCUMENTS

### Chinese Exclusion Act

- 1) What push factors caused Chinese immigration to the U.S.? What pull factors caused Chinese immigration to the U.S.?
- 2) Why were Chinese immigrants resented?
- 3) Why was the law significant in terms of immigration policy?

### Pendleton Act

- 1) Why was President Garfield assassinated and how did this motivate the passage of the Pendleton Act?
- 2) How did the Pendleton Act end the spoils system?

### Interstate Commerce Act

- 1) Why was the Interstate Commerce Act passed, and how was this a shift in government policy?

### Sherman Anti-Trust Act

- 1) Why was the Sherman Anti-Trust Act initially ineffective?

### Omaha Platform

- 1) The Populist Party had many ideas in their Omaha Platform. Which idea do you think was the most important in addressing their concerns and why?

### William Jennings Bryan Cross of Gold

- 1) What was William Jennings Bryan advocating in his Cross of Gold speech?
- 2) Why did William Jennings Bryan and his fellow Democrats argue for free coinage of silver or bimetallism?

## SUPREME COURT CASES

### *U.S v. E.C. Knight Company and Northern Securities Company v. U.S.*

- 1) Explain how *U.S. v. E.C. Knight Company* was a failure of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and explain how *Northern Securities Company v. U.S.* was a success of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

### *Plessy v. Ferguson*

- 1) Who was Homer Plessy and what did he do that resulted in this court case?
- 2) Why did Justice John Marshall Harlan dissent with the majority ruling in this case?

## Insular Cases

- 1) Why did the *Insular Cases* develop?
- 2) Do you believe it is appropriate that the U.S. still has territories where the full rights and privileges of the U.S. Constitution do not apply? Why or why not?

### **CONNECTION QUESTIONS:**

- 1) Which person from the Gilded Age era most reflects the time period? Defend your answer.
- 2) Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford, and the Wright Brothers were all innovators. Which innovator had the most impact on society then and who has had the most impact on society today? Defend your answers.
- 3) Which law passed during the Gilded Age has had the most impact on American history. Defend your answer.
- 4) Despite not electing a candidate to the presidency, would you consider the Populist Party a success? Defend your answer.