

The Gilded Age

*The Development of the Industrial
United States (1870–1900)*



Immigration and urbanization

Social change

The Western frontier

Politics

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will learn about the social change during the Gilded Age in a number of different areas:

- Standard of living and consumption
- Leisure and mass culture
- Education
- Segregation and discrimination.



During the Gilded Age, people's standard of living started to increase in a few different ways.

Greater numbers of people went to school and university.

People had more leisure time and a mass culture began to develop.



New forms of communication helped people to stay in touch and spread information.

More people had access to convenience items and consumer goods.

Did the standard of living improve for everyone?



The Gilded Age saw the increased production of consumer goods. The way in which they were bought and sold also changed.

Drag each statement to the correct place, depending on whether it refers to the purchase of goods before or after industrialization.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Shopping

New innovations and developments in shopping kept pace with the growth of consumerism. An increase in scale and a drop in prices were key features.
Can you match each development to the correct photograph and description?

Press **start** to begin.

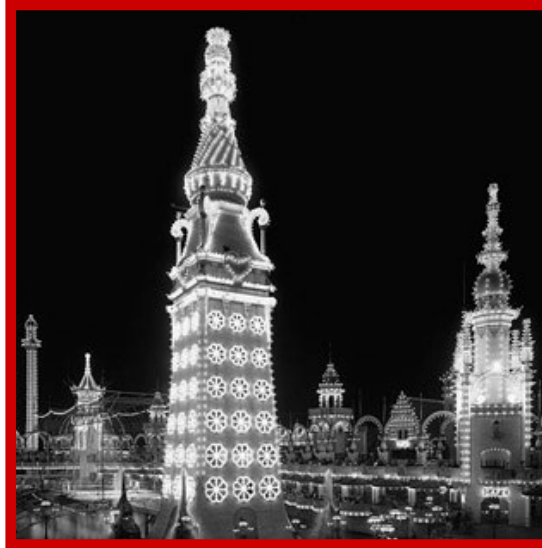
start





As the middle classes had more leisure time and money, new pastimes surged in popularity, including:

- amusement parks
- bicycling
- tennis
- theater
- spectator sports.



As people shared the same experiences, a mass culture developed for the first time. Innovations in printing led to large circulation newspapers. Book and magazine prices fell and public libraries also gave more people the opportunity to read.

How did changes help a national culture to develop?



Education expanded massively during the Gilded Age. The number of students increased, but opportunities were not available to all.

Press the buttons to find out about the expansion of education during this era, including high schools and higher education.

Press **start** to begin.

start





During the Civil War, white women **suffragists** had fought for the cause of **abolition** and supported the Republican Party. When the **15th Amendment** extended the vote to black males but not females, the suffragists were upset.

The movement, the **American Equal Rights Association (AERA)**, split into two groups:

- **American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA)**
- **National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA)**



Women became enfranchised in a couple of states, but the movement made little real progress during the Gilded Age.



Despite the abolition of slavery, opportunities for most black Americans improved little, if at all. For many Southern blacks, their experience and lack of schooling made them suitable only for field work. Therefore many stuck to this type of work.



As industrialization created new jobs in the North, Southern blacks slowly began to migrate to the Northeast and Midwest.

However, the amendment guaranteeing freedom under the law did not easily wipe away discrimination and prejudice. What followed was a century-long battle to end **segregation** and restrictions placed on blacks, such as the ability to vote.

How were blacks denied the right to vote?



Plessy v. Ferguson

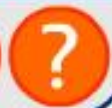


Plessy v. Ferguson was a landmark civil rights case in 1896. It effectively upheld racial segregation as constitutionally legal for almost 60 years.

Press on each tab to find out more information about the case and its legacy.

Press **start** to begin.

start



In which areas of public life did segregation occur?



Jim Crow was a black character created by a white man in the early part of the 19th century. He was used to popularize **minstrel** shows, where white men darkened their skin (**blackface**) and sang, danced and told jokes.

The shows portrayed blacks as lazy, bumbling fools and helped to create and reinforce many racial stereotypes.

From this character, Jim Crow became a nickname for blacks by mid-century. The later segregation laws and systems of oppression were therefore commonly known as the Jim Crow laws.

