

Unit 7: 1890-1945

Questions 1-3 refer to the excerpt below.

. . . American development has exhibited not merely advance along a single line, but a return to primitive conditions on a continually advancing frontier line, and a new development for that area. American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character. The true point of view in the history of this nation is not the Atlantic coast, it is the Great West.

Source: Frederick Jackson Turner, historian, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," 1893

1. The ideas expressed in the excerpt best represent a continuation of which of the following 19th Century developments?
- Manifest Destiny
 - Social Darwinism
 - New Imperialism
 - Sectionalism

Explanations:

- Correct:** Turner's focus on the "frontier" indicates the continued push westward as the driving force behind "the forces dominating American character" and growth.
- Incorrect:** Social Darwinism is not directly addressed in the excerpt.
- Incorrect:** New Imperialism would serve as a continuation of Manifest Destiny to close out the 19th and begin the 20th Century through the Spanish-American War.
- Incorrect:** Sectionalism, largely referring to regional economic differences and the slave debate, is not directly addressed in the excerpt.

2. All the following were effects of the development described in the excerpt except
- war with Spain to gain new island territories in the Caribbean and Pacific
 - enduring support for foreign independence movements
 - increased competition for control of Asian and Latin American markets
 - domestic debates over America's changing role in the world

Explanations:

- Incorrect:** Expansion abroad was the logical succession to westward continental expansion.
- Correct:** The Cuban, Filipino, and Panamanian struggles for independence are primary examples of American intervention motivated by national interests rather than enduring support for self-determination.
- Incorrect:** Cracking into the spheres of influence dominating trade in China became a focus for American economic interests.
- Incorrect:** The debate between imperialist jingos and anti-imperialists raged on in the news media and Congress.

3. Turner's mention of "the forces dominating American character" most likely refers to which of the following?
- The self-sufficient and individualistic nature of the American pioneer
 - Principles of equality and freedom established in the United States' founding documents
 - The supposed superiority of whites over other groups in American history
 - The Union victory in the Civil War due to its industrial advantage

Explanations:

- Correct:** *The American psyche began to venerate the figurative image of the white American pioneer on the western edge of civilization.*
- Incorrect:** *The Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution are not mentioned or alluded to in the excerpt.*
- Incorrect:** *Though tacitly implied, race is not mentioned or alluded to in the excerpt.*
- Incorrect:** *The Civil War, debate over slavery, or northern dominance is not mentioned or alluded to in the excerpt.*

Questions 4-6 refer to the excerpt below.

. . . after all the hard work a man did, he was paid for only part of it. Jurgis had once been among those who scoffed at the idea of these [businesses] cheating; and so now he could appreciate the bitter irony of the fact that it was precisely their size which enabled them to do it with impunity. One of the rules on the killing beds* was that a man who was one minute late was docked an hour. . . . And on the other hand if he came ahead of time he got no pay for that—though often 2 of the bosses would start up the gang ten or fifteen minutes before the whistle. And this same custom they carried over to the end of the day; they did not pay for any fraction of an hour—for "broken time." A man might work a full fifty minutes, but if there was no work to fill out the hour, there was no pay for him . . .

**meatpacking plants where animals were butchered*

Source: Upton Sinclair, author, *The Jungle*, 1906

4. Which of the following developments most contributed to the conditions described in the excerpt?
- Reform movements called for restrictions on corporations and trusts
 - Increased leverage afforded to workers through unionization
 - An influx of largely poor and unskilled immigrants
 - Corporate interests lobbying for favorable legislation

Explanations:

- Incorrect:** *Progressive reforms such as the Food and Drug Act and the creation of the Food and Drug Administration resulted from the outrage elicited by Sinclair's book.*
- Incorrect:** *Labor unions sought to remedy the conditions described in the excerpt.*
- Correct:** *Despite union criticisms, a lack of concern for individual safety and working conditions on the part of factory owners emerged as sources of labor in the industrial workplace were seemingly never ending.*
- Incorrect:** *The conditions described in the excerpt resulted from industrialists prioritizing profit over the well-being of workers and the lack of regulations.*

5. Which of the following groups was not significantly affected by the conditions described in the excerpt?

- a. Immigrants from Europe
- b. Women in northern cities
- c. Children from working class families
- d. African Americans in the South

Explanations:

- a. Incorrect:** Lacking alternative economic opportunities, European immigrants (especially from Southern and Eastern Europe) became the dominant labor source in industrial meatpacking plants and factories during the early 20th Century.
- b. Incorrect:** Compared to previous eras, women contributed to the industrial labor force in a substantial way.
- c. Incorrect:** Child labor became a hot button issue during the Progressive Era as poor urban families enlisted their children's help to make ends meet.
- d. Correct:** While industrialization continued to take root in the South, the conditions described in the excerpt dominated the Midwestern and Northern industrial landscape whereas sharecropping dominated the South.

6. Which of the following best describes the goals of authors and journalists like Upton Sinclair?

- a. Make the public and lawmakers aware of corruption and inequality in the United States
- b. Inform workers and minorities of their rights and encourage activism
- c. Completely dismantle and abolish large corporations and trusts
- d. Exaggerate the problems in society to increase circulation of their publications

Explanations:

- a. **Correct:** Muckrakers aimed to bring awareness to the public of the rampant corruption and inequality that existed, primarily in urban centers. They were criticized by economic and political forces as subversive to their goals and as a negative force in society.
- b. **Incorrect:** Activism was encouraged by muckrakers but it was not the primary goal.
- c. **Incorrect:** Muckrakers knew that the power to bring about the end to trusts was not in their hands. Thus, mobilizing voters to bring about change was the larger focus.
- d. **Incorrect:** Muckrakers operated in the realm of investigative journalism and honest fiction. Sensationalism was reserved for the larger "yellow" journalistic publications.

Questions 7-8 refer to the image below.

<i>Number of Homes With Sets</i> (As of Jan. 1) <i>Including both factory-built and home-made after accounting for obsolescence</i>		<i>Radio Audience</i> (As of Jan. 1) <i>Number of people listening to sets in use</i>	
1922.....	60,000	1922.....	75,000
1923.....	1,500,000	1923.....	3,000,000
1924.....	3,000,000	1924.....	10,000,000
1925.....	4,000,000	1925.....	15,000,000
1926.....	5,000,000	1926.....	20,000,000
1927.....	6,500,000	1927.....	26,000,000
1928.....	7,500,000	1928.....	35,000,000

Source: *Radio Retailing*, magazine, March 1928

7. The trends depicted in the image resulted most directly from which of the following factors?

- a. The invention of mass production methods including the assembly line
- b. Cheaper raw materials from new territories and markets
- c. Outsourced labor to Asia and Latin America for lower wages
- d. Consumerist culture and the ability to pay on installment plans

Explanations:

- a. **Incorrect:** Methods of mass production had been churning out products for decades. The assembly line was invented almost a decade prior to the information presented in the image.

- b. Incorrect: Most materials used in American-made products were sourced from within the country at this time.*
- c. Incorrect: Commercial products sold in America were still largely produced in America during the first half of the 20th Century.*
- d. Correct: Consumerism took society by storm in the 1920s as buying on credit expanded the purchasing power of the American public.*

8. Improved communication methods connecting the country contributed to all of the following except

- a. Greater awareness of regional identities
- b. Increased economic productivity
- c. Spread of a national culture
- d. Rapid decline of nativism and racism

Explanations:

- a. Incorrect: Regional identities did become more apparent to those outside their particular region, including that of blacks in the North through the Harlem Renaissance.*
- b. Incorrect: Communication technologies increased the efficiency of business, thus increasing economic productivity.*
- c. Incorrect: Mainstream, or popular, culture was a new phenomenon that reached new heights in the 1920s due to the widespread use of radios, telephones, and motion pictures.*
- d. Correct: Nativism and racism also reached new heights during the 1920s as skepticism of immigrants grew out of concern for communism influencing the United States as well as the continued oppression and terrorizing of blacks during the Jim Crow era.*

Questions 9-10 refer to the poster below.



9. Which of the following best represents the conditions to which the poster was responding to?

- a. Ineffectiveness of early New Deal policies
- b. Economic crisis due to market instability and bank failures
- c. Decline in international trade throughout the 1920s
- d. Overspending on new goods by American consumers

- a. **Incorrect:** Most relief efforts in the first months of the New Deal were largely successful. Banks were revived, farms bounced back, and unemployment decreased.
- b. **Correct:** President Roosevelt's New Deal was directly responding to the Great Depression, set off by a farming depression and stock market crash in the 1920s. This led to a "run" on the banks, leading to widespread bank closures.
- c. **Incorrect:** While a decline in international trade did contribute to the economic crisis of the 1930s, the New Deal was not directly responding to a global situation.
- d. **Incorrect:** Buying on credit also contributed to the growing stock market "bubble". However, the New Deal initially aimed to address the immediate effects of the Great Depression.

10. Which of the following groups would most likely disagree with the poster?

- a. Conservative Republicans
- b. President Franklin Roosevelt
- c. Midwestern farmers
- d. members of the Democratic Party

Explanations:

- a. **Correct:** Conservatives, including Herbert Hoover and many on the Supreme Court bench, viewed much of the New Deal as a socialist overreach of federal power.

- b. *Incorrect:*** FDR served as the impetus behind the New Deal, embracing Keynesian economic philosophy in order to stimulate the national economy.
- c. *Incorrect:*** Coupled with the Dust Bowl, farmers in the Great Plains region were the hardest hit by the Great Depression and sought new economic opportunities across the country.
- d. *Incorrect:*** The "Big Tent" party of FDR largely supported his New Deal efforts. Some even criticised the New Deal as not going far enough to provide relief to the unemployed and impoverished.