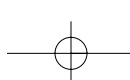# Immigrants and Urbanization

CHAPTER 7

IMMIGRANTS AND URBANIZATION

The intersection of Orchard and Hester Streets on New York City's Lower East Side, 1905.

1877 Rutherford B. Hayes is elected president.

1880 James A. Garfield is elected president.

1881 Chester A. Arthur succeeds Garfield after Garfield's assassination.

1884 Grover Cleveland is elected president.

1888 Benjamin Harrison is elected president.

1892 Grover Cleveland is elected to a second term.

USA

1880

1890

WORLD

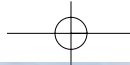**1876** Porfirio Díaz seizes power in Mexico.

1884 Berlin Conference meets to divide Africa among European nations.

1885 Indian National Congress forms.

1893 France establishes Indochina.

INTERACT
WITH HISTORY

The year is 1880. New York City's swelling population has created a housing crisis. Immigrant families crowd into apartments that lack light, ventilation, and sanitary facilities. Children have nowhere to play except in the streets and are often kept out of school to work and help support their families. You are a reformer who wishes to help immigrants improve their lives.

What would you do to improve conditions?

Examine the Issues

- How can immigrants gain access to the services they need?
- What skills do newcomers need?
- How might immigrants respond to help from an outsider?

RESEARCH LINKS CLASSZONE.COM

Visit the Chapter 7 links for more information about Immigrants and Urbanization.

1896 William McKinley is elected president.

1898 Hawaii is annexed by the United States.

1900 McKinley is reelected.

1903 The Wright Brothers achieve the first successful airplane flight.

1910 The appearance of Halley's comet causes widespread panic.

1912 Woodrow Wilson is elected president.

1900

1910

1901 The Commonwealth of Australia is founded.

1905 Workers revolt in St. Petersburg, Russia.

1908 Oil is discovered in Persia.

1912 Qing dynasty in China is overthrown.

1914 Panama Canal opens.

SECTION 1

The New Immigrants

| MAIN IDEA	WHY IT MATTERS NOW	Terms & Names
Immigration from Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, and Mexico reached a new high in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.	This wave of immigration helped make the United States the diverse society it is today.	•Ellis Island •Chinese •Angel Island Exclusion Act •melting pot •Gentlemen's •nativism Agreement

One American's Story

In 1871, 14-year-old Fong See came from China to "Gold Mountain"—the United States. Fong See stayed, worked at menial jobs, and saved enough money to buy a business. Despite widespread restrictions against the Chinese, he became a very successful importer and was able to sponsor many other Chinese who wanted to enter the United States. Fong See had achieved the American dream. However, as his great-granddaughter Lisa See recalls, he was not satisfied.
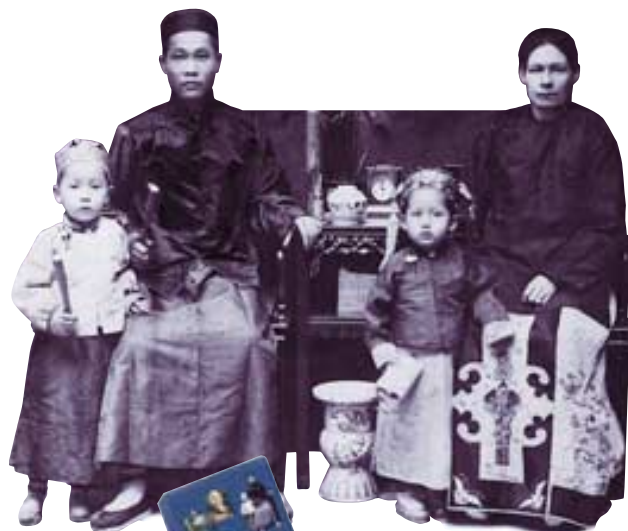
A PERSONAL VOICE LISA SEE

"He had been trying to achieve success ever since he had first set foot on the Gold Mountain. His dream was very 'American.' He wanted to make money, have influence, be respected, have a wife and children who loved him. In 1919, when he traveled to China, he could look at his life and say he had achieved his dream. But once in China, he suddenly saw his life in a different context. In America, was he really rich? Could he live where he wanted? . . . Did *Americans* care what he thought? . . . The answers played in his head—no, no, no."

—*On Gold Mountain*

VIDEO
FROM CHINA TO CHINATOWN
Fong See's American Dream

Despite Fong See's success, he could not, upon his death in 1957, be buried next to his Caucasian wife because California cemeteries were still segregated.

Through the "Golden Door"

Millions of immigrants like Fong See entered the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, lured by the promise of a better life. Some of these immigrants sought to escape difficult conditions—such as famine, land shortages, or religious or political persecution. Others, known as "birds of passage," intended to immigrate temporarily to earn money, and then return to their homelands.

EUROPEANS Between 1870 and 1920, approximately 20 million Europeans arrived in the United States. Before 1890, most immigrants came from countries in western and northern Europe. Beginning in the 1890s, however, increasing numbers came from southern and eastern Europe. In 1907 alone, about a million people arrived from Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Russia.

Background
From 1815 to 1848, a wave of revolutions—mostly sparked by a desire for constitutional governments—shook Europe. In 1830, for example, the Polish people rose up against their Russian rulers.

Why did so many leave their homelands? Many of these new immigrants left to escape religious persecution. Whole villages of Jews were driven out of Russia by pogroms, organized attacks often encouraged by local authorities. Other Europeans left because of rising population. Between 1800 and 1900, the population in Europe doubled to nearly 400 million, resulting in a scarcity of land for farming. Farmers competed with laborers for too few industrial jobs. In the United States, jobs were supposedly plentiful. In addition, a spirit of reform and revolt had spread across Europe in the 19th century. Influenced by political movements at home, many young European men and women sought independent lives in America.

CHINESE AND JAPANESE While waves of Europeans arrived on the shores of the East Coast, Chinese immigrants came to the West Coast in smaller numbers. Between 1851 and 1883, about 300,000 Chinese arrived. Many came to seek their fortunes after the discovery of gold in 1848 sparked the California gold rush. Chinese immigrants helped build the nation's railroads, including the first transcontinental line. When the railroads were completed, they turned to farming, mining, and domestic service. Some, like Fong See, started businesses. However, Chinese immigration was sharply limited by a congressional act in 1882.

In 1884, the Japanese government allowed Hawaiian planters to recruit Japanese workers, and a Japanese emigration boom began. The United States' annexation of Hawaii in 1898 resulted in increased Japanese immigration to the West Coast. Immigration continued to increase as word of comparatively high American wages spread. The wave peaked in 1907, when 30,000 left Japan for the United States. By 1920, more than 200,000 Japanese lived on the West Coast.

U.S. Immigration Patterns, as of 1900
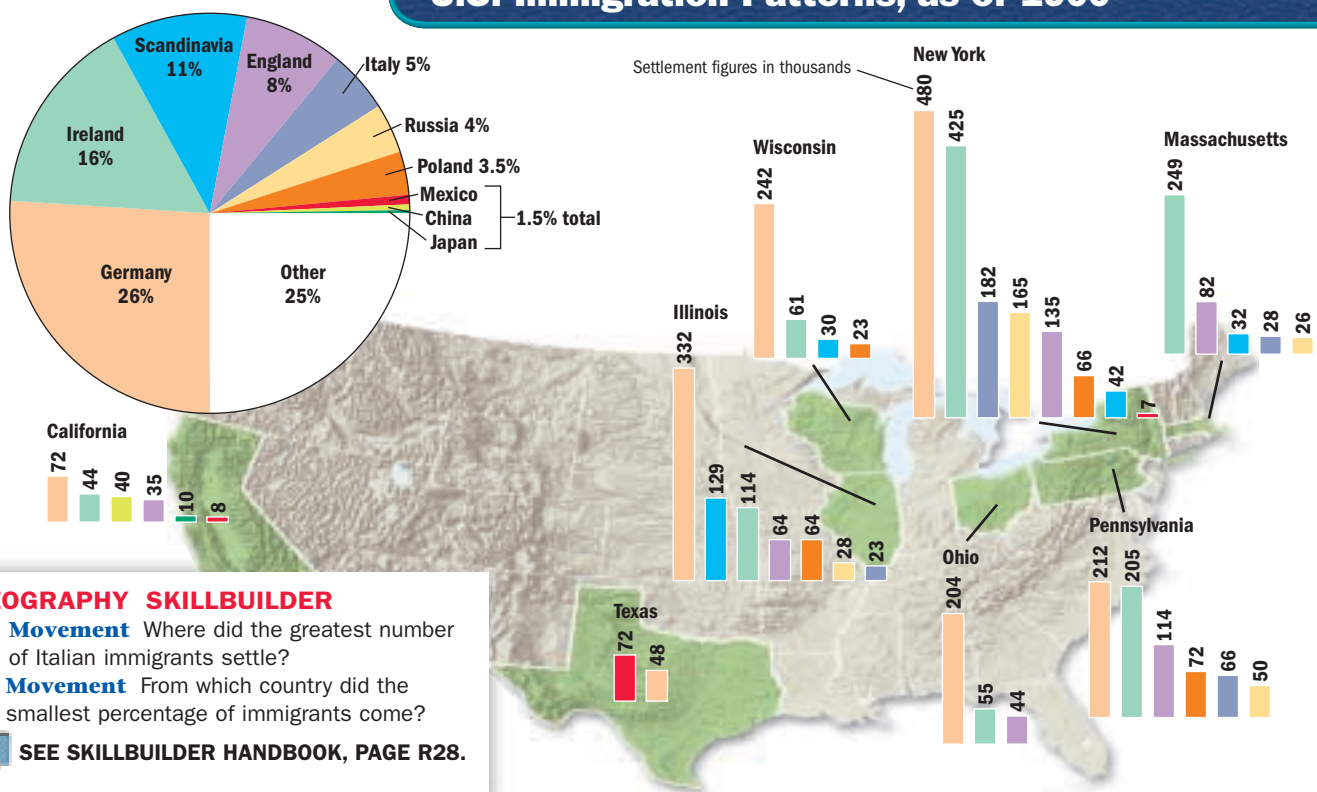
GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER
1. **Movement** Where did the greatest number of Italian immigrants settle?
2. **Movement** From which country did the smallest percentage of immigrants come?

SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R28.

Immigrants and Urbanization **255**

THE WEST INDIES AND MEXICO Between 1880 and 1920, about 260,000 immigrants arrived in the eastern and southeastern United States from the West Indies. They came from Jamaica, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other islands. Many West Indians left their homelands because jobs were scarce and the industrial boom in the United States seemed to promise work for everyone.

Mexicans, too, immigrated to the United States to find work, as well as to flee political turmoil. The 1902 National Reclamation Act, which encouraged the irrigation of arid land, created new farmland in Western states and drew Mexican farm workers northward. After 1910, political and social upheavals in Mexico prompted even more immigration. About 700,000 people—7 percent of the population of Mexico at the time—came to the U.S. over the next 20 years. **A**

Life in the New Land

No matter what part of the globe immigrants came from, they faced many adjustments to an alien—and often unfriendly—culture.

A DIFFICULT JOURNEY By the 1870s, almost all immigrants traveled by steamship. The trip across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe took approximately one week, while the Pacific crossing from Asia took nearly three weeks.

Many immigrants traveled in steerage, the cheapest accommodations in a ship's cargo holds. Rarely allowed on deck, immigrants were crowded together in the gloom, unable to exercise or catch a breath of fresh air. They often had to sleep in louse-infested bunks and share toilets with many other passengers. Under these conditions, disease spread quickly, and some immigrants died before they reached their destination. For those who survived, the first glimpse of America could be breathtaking.

★ **A PERSONAL VOICE** ROSA CAVALLERI

"*America!* . . . We were so near it seemed too much to believe. Everyone stood silent—like in prayer. . . . Then we were entering the harbor. The land came so near we could almost reach out and touch it. . . . Everyone was holding their breath. Me too. . . . Some boats had bands playing on their decks and all of them were tooting their horns to us and leaving white trails in the water behind them."

—quoted in *Rosa: The Life of an Italian Immigrant*

European governments used passports to control the number of professionals and young men of military age who left the country. ▼

ELLIS ISLAND After initial moments of excitement, the immigrants faced the anxiety of not knowing whether they would be admitted to the United States. They had to pass inspection at immigration stations, such as the one at Castle Garden in New York, which was later moved to **Ellis Island** in New York Harbor. About 20 percent of the immigrants at Ellis Island were detained for a day or more before being inspected. However, only about 2 percent of those were denied entry.

The processing of immigrants on Ellis Island was an ordeal that might take five hours or more. First, they had to pass a physical examination by a doctor. Anyone with a serious health problem or a contagious disease, such as tuberculosis, was promptly sent home. Those who passed the medical exam then reported to a government inspector. The inspector checked documents and questioned immigrants
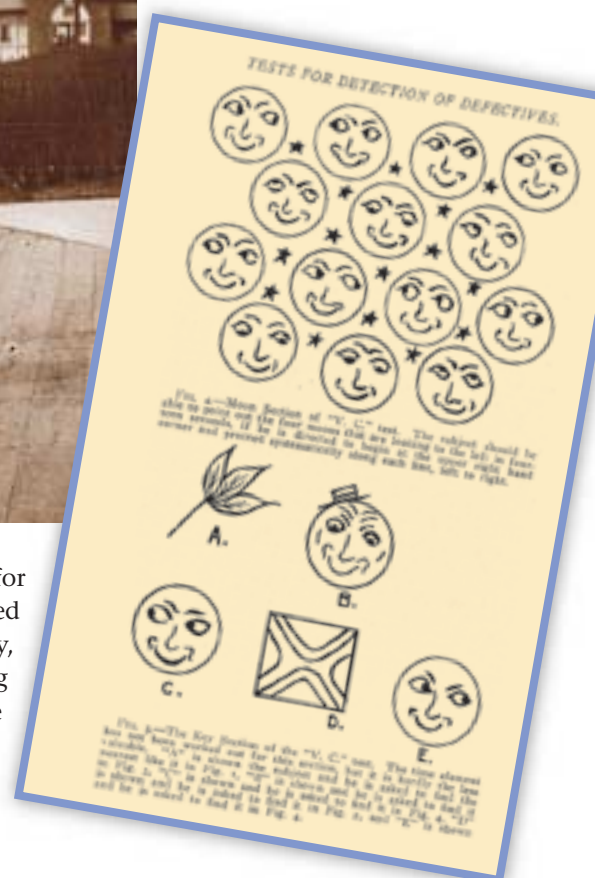
Vocabulary
tuberculosis: a bacterial infection, characterized by fever and coughing, that spreads easily

◀ Many immigrants, like these arriving at Ellis Island, were subjected to tests such as the one below. To prove their mental competence, they had to identify the four faces looking left in 14 seconds. Can you do it?

Vocabulary
felony: any one of the most serious crimes under the law, including murder, rape, and burglary

to determine whether they met the legal requirements for entering the United States. The requirements included proving they had never been convicted of a felony, demonstrating that they were able to work, and showing that they had some money (at least $25 after 1909). One inspector, Edward Ferro, an Italian immigrant himself, gave this glimpse of the process.

⭐ **A PERSONAL VOICE** EDWARD FERRO
"The language was a problem of course, but it was overcome by the use of interpreters. . . . It would happen sometimes that these interpreters—some of them— were really softhearted people and hated to see people being deported, and they would, at times, help the aliens by interpreting in such a manner as to benefit the alien and not the government."

—quoted in *I Was Dreaming to Come to America*

From 1892 to 1924, Ellis Island was the chief immigration station in the United States. An estimated 17 million immigrants passed through its noisy, bustling facilities.

ANGEL ISLAND While European immigrants arriving on the East Coast passed through Ellis Island, Asians—primarily Chinese—arriving on the West Coast gained admission at **Angel Island** in San Francisco Bay. Between 1910 and 1940, about 50,000 Chinese immigrants entered the United States through Angel Island. Processing at Angel Island stood in contrast to the procedure at Ellis Island. Immigrants endured harsh questioning and a long detention in filthy, ramshackle buildings while they waited to find out whether they would be admitted or rejected. **B**

COOPERATION FOR SURVIVAL Once admitted to the country, immigrants faced the challenges of finding a place to live, getting a job, and getting along in daily life while trying to understand an unfamiliar language and culture. Many immigrants sought out people who shared their cultural values, practiced their religion,

MAIN IDEA
Identifying Problems
B What difficulties did immigrants face in gaining admission to the United States?

and spoke their native language. The ethnic communities were life rafts for immigrants. People pooled their money to build churches or synagogues. They formed social clubs and aid societies. They founded orphanages and old people's homes, and established cemeteries. They even published newspapers in their own languages.

Committed to their own cultures but also trying hard to grow into their new identities, many immigrants came to think of themselves as "hyphenated" Americans. As hard as they tried to fit in, these new Polish- and Italian- and Chinese-Americans felt increasing friction as they rubbed shoulders with people born and raised in the United States. Native-born people often disliked the immigrants' unfamiliar customs and languages, and viewed them as a threat to the American way of life. **C**

Immigration Restrictions

Many native-born Americans thought of their country as a **melting pot,** a mixture of people of different cultures and races who blended together by abandoning their native languages and customs. Many new immigrants, however, did not wish to give up their cultural identities. As immigration increased, strong anti-immigrant feelings emerged.

THE RISE OF NATIVISM One response to the growth in immigration was **nativism,** or overt favoritism toward native-born Americans. Nativism gave rise to anti-immigrant groups and led to a demand for immigration restrictions.

Many nativists believed that Anglo-Saxons—the Germanic ancestors of the English—were superior to other ethnic groups. These nativists did not object to immigrants from the "right" countries. Prescott F. Hall, a founder in 1894 of the Immigration Restriction League, identified desirable immigrants as "British, German, and Scandinavian stock, historically free, energetic, progressive." Nativists thought that problems were caused by immigrants from the "wrong" countries— "Slav, Latin, and Asiatic races, historically down-trodden . . . and stagnant."

Nativists sometimes objected more to immigrants' religious beliefs than to their ethnic backgrounds. Many native-born Americans were Protestants and thought that Roman Catholic and Jewish immigrants would undermine the democratic institutions established by the country's Protestant founders. The American Protective Association, a nativist group founded in 1887, launched vicious anti-Catholic attacks, and many colleges, businesses, and social clubs refused to admit Jews.

In 1897, Congress—influenced by the Immigration Restriction League—passed a bill requiring a literacy test for immigrants. Those who could not read 40 words in English or their native language would be refused entry. Although President Cleveland vetoed the bill, it was a powerful statement of public sentiment. In 1917, a similar bill would be passed into law in spite of President Woodrow Wilson's veto.

ANTI-ASIAN SENTIMENT Nativism also found a foothold in the labor movement, particularly in the West, where native-born workers feared that jobs would go to Chinese

Chinese immigrants wait outside the hospital on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay, 1910. ▼

immigrants, who would accept lower wages. The depression of 1873 intensified anti-Chinese sentiment in California. Work was scarce, and labor groups exerted political pressure on the government to restrict Asian immigration. The founder of the Workingmen's Party, Denis Kearney, headed the anti-Chinese movement in California. He made hundreds of speeches throughout the state, each ending with the message, "The Chinese must go!"

In 1882, Congress slammed the door on Chinese immigration for ten years by passing the **Chinese Exclusion Act.** This act banned entry to all Chinese except students, teachers, merchants, tourists, and government officials. In 1892, Congress extended the law for another ten years. In 1902, Chinese immigration was restricted indefinitely; the law was not repealed until 1943.

THE GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT The fears that had led to anti-Chinese agitation were extended to Japanese and other Asian people in the early 1900s. In 1906, the local board of education in San Francisco segregated Japanese children by putting them in separate schools. When Japan raised an angry protest at this treatment of its emigrants, President Theodore Roosevelt worked out a deal. Under the **Gentlemen's Agreement** of 1907–1908, Japan's government agreed to limit emigration of unskilled workers to the United States in exchange for the repeal of the San Francisco segregation order.

Although doorways for immigrants had been all but closed to Asians on the West Coast, cities in the East and the Midwest teemed with European immigrants—and with urban opportunities and challenges.

▲
Fear and resentment of Chinese immigrants sometimes resulted in mob attacks, like the one shown here.

ASSESSMENT

1. TERMS & NAMES For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.
- Ellis Island
- Angel Island
- melting pot
- nativism
- Chinese Exclusion Act
- Gentlemen's Agreement

MAIN IDEA

2. TAKING NOTES
Create a diagram such as the one below. List two or more causes of each effect.

Causes ———→	Effects
1. 2. 3.	Immigrants leave their home countries.
1. 2. 3.	Immigrants face hardships in the United States.
1. 2. 3.	Some nativists want to restrict immigration.

CRITICAL THINKING

3. IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS
Which group of immigrants do you think faced the greatest challenges in the United States? Why?

4. ANALYZING EFFECTS
What were the effects of the massive influx of immigrants to the U.S. in the late 1800s?

5. EVALUATING
What arguments can you make against nativism and anti-immigrant feeling? **Think About:**
- the personal qualities of immigrants
- the reasons for anti-immigrant feeling
- the contributions of immigrants to the United States

Immigrants and Urbanization **259**

The Challenges of Urbanization

MAIN IDEA	WHY IT MATTERS NOW	Terms & Names
The rapid growth of cities forced people to contend with problems of housing, transportation, water, and sanitation.	Consequently, residents of U.S. cities today enjoy vastly improved living conditions.	•urbanization •Americanization movement •tenement •mass transit •Social Gospel movement •settlement house •Jane Addams

One American's Story

In 1870, at age 21, Jacob Riis left his native Denmark for the United States. Riis found work as a police reporter, a job that took him into some of New York City's worst slums, where he was shocked at the conditions in the overcrowded, airless, filthy tenements. Riis used his talents to expose the hardships of New York City's poor.

A PERSONAL VOICE JACOB RIIS

" Be a little careful, please! The hall is dark and you might stumble over the children pitching pennies back there. Not that it would hurt them; kicks and cuffs are their daily diet. They have little else. . . . Close [stuffy]? Yes! What would you have? All the fresh air that ever enters these stairs comes from the hall-door that is forever slamming. . . . Here is a door. Listen! That short hacking cough, that tiny, helpless wail—what do they mean? . . . The child is dying with measles. With half a chance it might have lived; but it had none. That dark bedroom killed it. "

—How the Other Half Lives

▲ As many as 12 people slept in rooms such as this one in New York City, photographed by Jacob Riis around 1889.

Making a living in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was not easy. Natural and economic disasters had hit farmers hard in Europe and in the United States, and the promise of industrial jobs drew millions of people to American cities. The urban population exploded from 10 million to 54 million between 1870 and 1920. This growth revitalized the cities but also created serious problems that, as Riis observed, had a powerful impact on the new urban poor.

Urban Opportunities

The technological boom in the 19th century contributed to the growing industrial strength of the United States. The result was rapid **urbanization,** or growth of cities, mostly in the regions of the Northeast and Midwest.
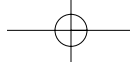
IMMIGRANTS SETTLE IN CITIES
Most of the immigrants who streamed into the United States in the late 19th century became city dwellers because cities were the cheapest and most convenient places to live. Cities also offered unskilled laborers steady jobs in mills and factories. By 1890, there were twice as many Irish residents in New York City as in Dublin, Ireland. By 1910, immigrant families made up more than half the total population of 18 major American cities.

The **Americanization movement** was designed to assimilate people of wide-ranging cultures into the dominant culture. This social campaign was sponsored by the government and by concerned citizens. Schools and voluntary associations provided programs to teach immigrants skills needed for citizenship, such as English literacy and American history and government. Subjects such as cooking and social etiquette were included in the curriculum to help the newcomers learn the ways of native-born Americans. **A**

Despite these efforts, many immigrants did not wish to abandon their traditions. Ethnic communities provided the social support of other immigrants from the same country. This enabled them to speak their own language and practice their customs and religion. However, these neighborhoods soon became overcrowded, a problem that was intensified by the arrival of new transplants from America's rural areas.
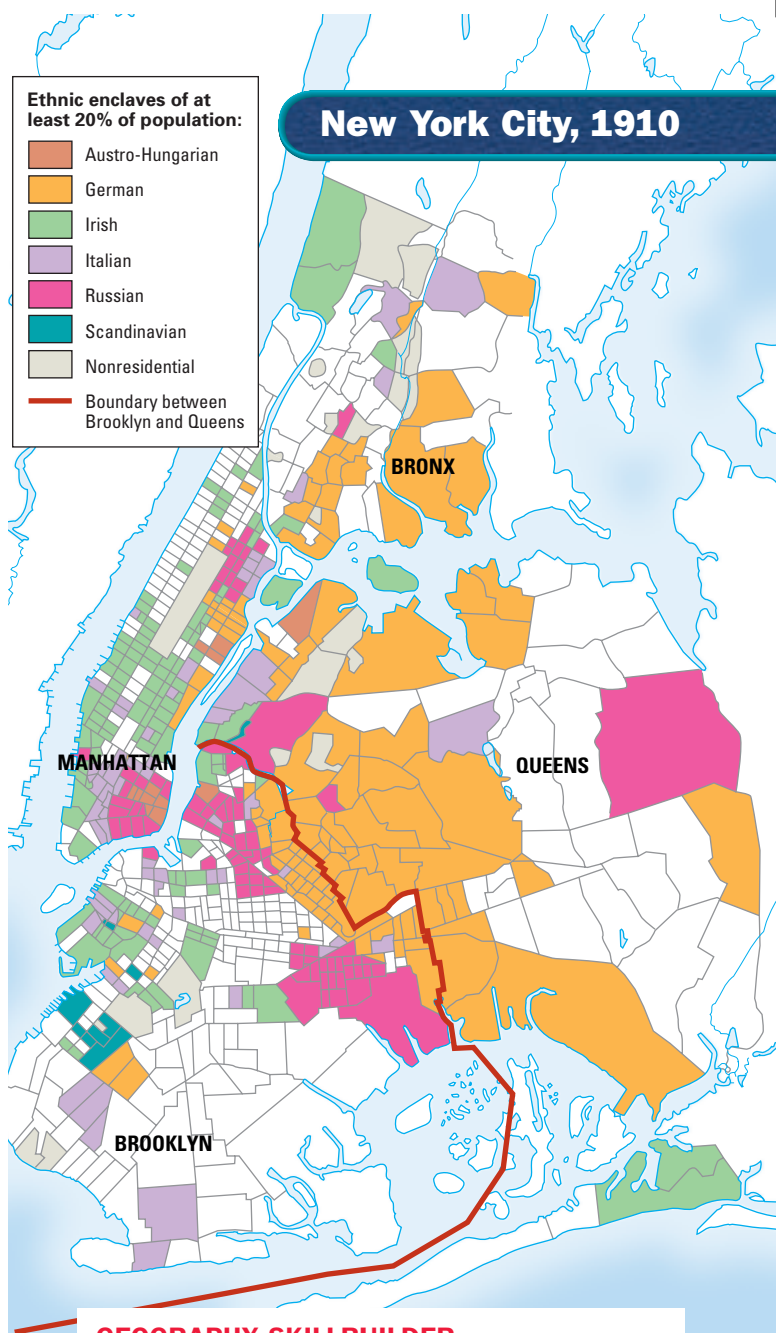
MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Motives
A Why did native-born Americans start the Americanization movement?

New York City, 1910

Ethnic enclaves of at least 20% of population:
- Austro-Hungarian
- German
- Irish
- Italian
- Russian
- Scandinavian
- Nonresidential
- Boundary between Brooklyn and Queens

BRONX
MANHATTAN
QUEENS
BROOKLYN

GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER
1. Place What general pattern of settlement do you notice?
2. Movement Which ethnic group settled in the largest area of New York City?

MIGRATION FROM COUNTRY TO CITY Rapid improvements in farming technology during the second half of the 19th century were good news for some farmers but bad news for others. Inventions such as the McCormick reaper and the steel plow made farming more efficient but meant that fewer laborers were needed to work the land. As more and more farms merged, many rural people moved to cities to find whatever work they could.

Many of the Southern farmers who lost their livelihoods were African Americans. Between 1890 and 1910, about 200,000 African Americans moved north and west, to cities such as Chicago and Detroit, in an effort to escape racial violence, economic hardship, and political oppression. Many found conditions only somewhat better than those they had left behind. Segregation and discrimination were often the reality in Northern cities. Job competition between blacks and white immigrants caused further racial tension.

Urban Problems

As the urban population skyrocketed, city governments faced the problems of how to provide residents with needed services and safe living conditions.

HOUSING When the industrial age began, working-class families in cities had two housing options. They could either buy a house on the outskirts of town, where they would face transportation problems, or rent cramped rooms in a boardinghouse in the central city. As the urban population increased, however, new types of housing were designed. For example, row houses—single-family dwellings that shared side walls with other similar houses—packed many single-family residences onto a single block.

After working-class families left the central city, immigrants often took over their old housing, sometimes with two or three families occupying a one-family residence. As Jacob Riis pointed out, these multifamily urban dwellings, called **tenements,** were overcrowded and unsanitary.

In 1879, to improve such slum conditions, New York City passed a law that set minimum standards for plumbing and ventilation in apartments. Landlords began building tenements with air shafts that provided an outside window for each room. Since garbage was picked up infrequently, people sometimes dumped it into the air shafts, where it attracted vermin. To keep out the stench, residents nailed windows shut. Though established with good intent, these new tenements soon became even worse places to live than the converted single-family residences. **B**

TRANSPORTATION Innovations in **mass transit,** transportation systems designed to move large numbers of people along fixed routes, enabled workers to go to and from jobs more easily. Street cars were introduced in San Francisco in 1873 and electric subways in Boston in 1897. By the early 20th century, mass-transit networks in many urban areas linked city neighborhoods to one another and to outlying communities. Cities struggled to repair old transit systems and to build new ones to meet the demand of expanding populations.

WATER Cities also faced the problem of supplying safe drinking water. As the urban population grew in the 1840s and 1850s, cities such as New York and Cleveland built public waterworks to handle the increasing demand. As late as the 1860s, however, the residents of many cities had grossly inadequate piped water—or none at all. Even in large cities like New York, homes seldom had indoor plumbing, and residents had to collect water in pails from faucets on the street and heat it for bathing. The necessity of improving water quality to control diseases such as cholera and typhoid fever was obvious. To make city water safer, filtration was introduced in the 1870s and chlorination in 1908. However, in the early 20th century, many city dwellers still had no access to safe water.

SANITATION As the cities grew, so did the challenge of keeping them clean. Horse manure piled up on the streets, sewage flowed through open gutters, and factories spewed foul smoke into the air. Without dependable trash collection, people dumped their garbage on the streets. Although private contractors called scavengers were hired to sweep the streets, collect garbage, and clean outhouses, they

Sanitation problems in big cities were overwhelming. It was not unusual to see a dead horse in the street.
▼

MAIN IDEA

Identifying Problems
B What housing problems did urban working-class families face?

Vocabulary
chlorination: a method of purifying water by mixing it with the chemical chlorine

often did not do the jobs properly. By 1900, many cities had developed sewer lines and created sanitation departments. However, the task of providing hygienic living conditions was an ongoing challenge for urban leaders. **C**

CRIME As the populations of cities increased, pickpockets and thieves flourished. Although New York City organized the first full-time, salaried police force in 1844, it and most other city law enforcement units were too small to have much impact on crime.

FIRE The limited water supply in many cities contributed to another menace: the spread of fires. Major fires occurred in almost every large American city during the 1870s and 1880s. In addition to lacking water with which to combat blazes, most cities were packed with wooden dwellings, which were like kindling waiting to be ignited. The use of candles and kerosene heaters also posed a fire hazard. In San Francisco, deadly fires often broke out during earthquakes. Jack London described the fires that raged after the San Francisco earthquake of 1906.

A PERSONAL VOICE JACK LONDON

"On Wednesday morning at a quarter past five came the earthquake. A minute later the flames were leaping upward. In a dozen different quarters south of Market Street, in the working-class ghetto, and in the factories, fires started. There was no opposing the flames. . . . And the great water-mains had burst. All the shrewd contrivances and safeguards of man had been thrown out of gear by thirty seconds' twitching of the earth-crust."

—"The Story of an Eye-witness"

At first, most city firefighters were volunteers and not always available when they were needed. Cincinnati, Ohio, tackled this problem when it established the nation's first paid fire department in 1853. By 1900, most cities had full-time professional fire departments. The introduction of a practical automatic fire sprinkler in 1874 and the replacement of wood as a building material with brick, stone, or concrete also made cities safer.

### FIRE: Enemy of the City

**The Great Chicago Fire** October 8–10, 1871

- The fire burned for over 24 hours.
- An estimated 300 people died.
- 100,000 were left homeless.
- More than 3 square miles of the city center was destroyed.
- Property loss was estimated at $200 million.
- 17,500 buildings were destroyed.

The San Francisco Earthquake April 18, 1906

- The quake lasted 28 seconds; fires burned for 4 days.
- An estimated 1,000 people died.
- Over 200,000 were left homeless.
- Fire swept through 5 square miles of the city.
- Property loss was estimated at $500 million.
- 28,000 buildings were destroyed.

Immigrants and Urbanization **265**
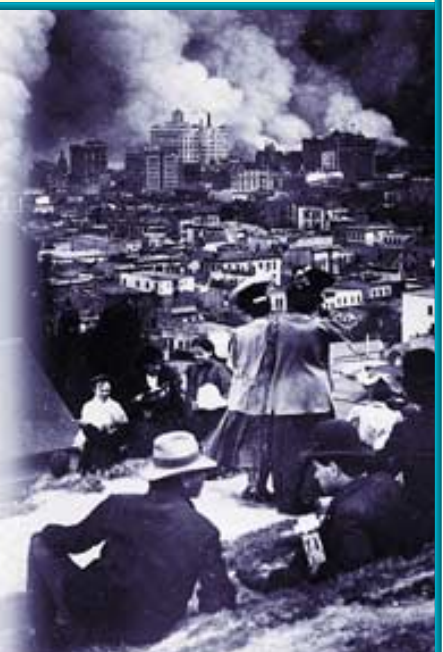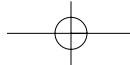
KEY PLAYER

**JANE ADDAMS
1860–1935**

During a trip to England, Jane Addams visited Toynbee Hall, the first settlement house. Addams believed that settlement houses could be effective because there, workers would "learn from life itself" how to address urban problems. She cofounded Chicago's Hull House in 1889.

Addams was also an antiwar activist, a spokesperson for racial justice, and an advocate for quality-of-life issues, from infant mortality to better care for the aged. In 1931, she was a co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Until the end of her life, Addams insisted that she was just a "very simple person." But many familiar with her accomplishments consider her a source of inspiration.

Reformers Mobilize

As problems in cities mounted, concerned Americans worked to find solutions. Social welfare reformers targeted their efforts at relieving urban poverty.

THE SETTLEMENT HOUSE MOVEMENT An early reform program, the **Social Gospel movement,** preached salvation through service to the poor. Inspired by the message of the Social Gospel movement, many 19th-century reformers responded to the call to help the urban poor. In the late 1800s, a few reformers established **settlement houses,** community centers in slum neighborhoods that provided assistance to people in the area, especially immigrants. Many settlement workers lived at the houses so that they could learn firsthand about the problems caused by urbanization and help create solutions.

Run largely by middle-class, college-educated women, settlement houses provided educational, cultural, and social services. They provided classes in such subjects as English, health, and painting, and offered college extension courses. Settlement houses also sent visiting nurses into the homes of the sick and provided whatever aid was needed to secure "support for deserted women, insurance for bewildered widows, damages for injured operators, furniture from the clutches of the installment store."

Settlement houses in the United States were founded by Charles Stover and Stanton Coit in New York City in 1886. **Jane Addams**—one of the most influential members of the movement—and Ellen Gates Starr founded Chicago's Hull House in 1889. In 1890, Janie Porter Barrett founded Locust Street Social Settlement in Hampton, Virginia—the first settlement house for African Americans. By 1910, about 400 settlement houses were operating in cities across the country. The settlement houses helped cultivate social responsibility toward the urban poor.


SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

1. TERMS & NAMES For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.
- urbanization
- Americanization movement
- tenement
- mass transit
- Social Gospel movement
- settlement house
- Jane Addams

MAIN IDEA

2. TAKING NOTES
Re-create the spider map below on your paper. List urban problems on the vertical lines. Fill in details about attempts that were made to solve each problem.

Solutions to Urban Problems
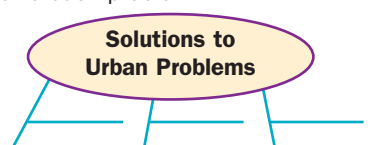
CRITICAL THINKING

3. ANALYZING MOTIVES
Why did immigrants tend to group together in cities?

4. EVALUATING
Which solution (or attempted solution) to an urban problem discussed in this section do you think had the most impact? Why?

5. ANALYZING EFFECTS
What effects did the migration from rural areas to the cities in the late 19th century have on urban society?
Think About:

- why people moved to cities
- the problems caused by rapid urban growth
- the differences in the experiences of whites and blacks

Politics in the Gilded Age

MAIN IDEA	WHY IT MATTERS NOW	Terms & Names
Local and national political corruption in the 19th century led to calls for reform.	Political reforms paved the way for a more honest and efficient government in the 20th century and beyond.	• political machine • graft • Boss Tweed • patronage • civil service • Rutherford B. Hayes • James A. Garfield • Chester A. Arthur • Pendleton Civil Service Act • Grover Cleveland • Benjamin Harrison

One American's Story

Mark Twain described the excesses of the late 19th century in a satirical novel, *The Gilded Age*, a collaboration with the writer Charles Dudley Warner. The title of the book has since come to represent the period from the 1870s to the 1890s. Twain mocks the greed and self-indulgence of his characters, including Philip Sterling.

★ A PERSONAL VOICE
MARK TWAIN AND CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

"There are many young men like him [Philip Sterling] in American society, of his age, opportunities, education and abilities, who have really been educated for nothing and have let themselves drift, in the hope that they will find somehow, and by some sudden turn of good luck, the golden road to fortune. . . . He saw people, all around him, poor yesterday, rich to-day, who had come into sudden opulence by some means which they could not have classified among any of the regular occupations of life."

—*The Gilded Age*

▲ A luxurious apartment building rises behind a New York City shanty-town in 1889.

Twain's characters find that getting rich quick is more difficult than they had thought it would be. Investments turn out to be worthless; politicians' bribes eat up their savings. The glittering exterior of the age turns out to hide a corrupt political core and a growing gap between the few rich and the many poor.

The Emergence of Political Machines

In the late 19th century, cities experienced rapid growth under inefficient government. In a climate influenced by dog-eat-dog Social Darwinism, cities were receptive to a new power structure, the political machine, and a new politician, the city boss.

THE POLITICAL MACHINE An organized group that controlled the activities of a political party in a city, the **political machine** also offered services to voters and businesses in exchange for political or financial support. In the decades after the Civil War, political machines gained control of local government in Baltimore, New York, San Francisco, and other major cities.

The machine was organized like a pyramid. At the pyramid's base were local precinct workers and captains, who tried to gain voters' support on a city block or in a neighborhood and who reported to a ward boss. At election time, the ward boss worked to secure the vote in all the precincts in the ward, or electoral district. Ward bosses helped the poor and gained their votes by doing favors or providing services. As Martin Lomasney, elected ward boss of Boston's West End in 1885, explained, "There's got to be in every ward somebody that any bloke can come to . . . and get help. Help, you understand; none of your law and your justice, but help." At the top of the pyramid was the city boss, who controlled the activities of the political party throughout the city. Precinct captains, ward bosses, and the city boss worked together to elect their candidates and guarantee the success of the machine. **A**

THE ROLE OF THE POLITICAL BOSS Whether or not the boss officially served as mayor, he controlled access to municipal jobs and business licenses, and influenced the courts and other municipal agencies. Bosses like Roscoe Conkling in New York used their power to build parks, sewer systems, and waterworks, and gave money to schools, hospitals, and orphanages. Bosses could also provide government support for new businesses, a service for which they were often paid extremely well.

It was not only money that motivated city bosses. By solving urban problems, bosses could reinforce voters' loyalty, win additional political support, and extend their influence.

IMMIGRANTS AND THE MACHINE Many precinct captains and political bosses were first-generation or second-generation immigrants. Few were educated beyond grammar school. They entered politics early and worked their way up from the bottom. They could speak to immigrants in their own language and understood the challenges that newcomers faced. More important, the bosses were able to provide solutions. The machines helped immigrants with naturalization (attaining full citizenship), housing, and jobs—the newcomers' most pressing needs. In return, the immigrants provided what the political bosses needed—votes. **B**

"Big Jim" Pendergast, an Irish-American saloonkeeper, worked his way up from precinct captain to Democratic city boss in Kansas City by aiding Italian, African-American, and Irish voters in his ward. By 1900, he controlled Missouri state politics as well.

▲ A corrupt 19th-century boss robs the city treasury by easily cutting government red tape, or bureaucracy.

★**A PERSONAL VOICE** JAMES PENDERGAST

"I've been called a boss. All there is to it is having friends, doing things for people, and then later on they'll do things for you. . . . You can't coerce people into doing things for you—you can't make them vote for you. I never coerced anybody in my life. Wherever you see a man bulldozing anybody he don't last long."

—quoted in *The Pendergast Machine*

MAIN IDEA

Summarizing
A In what way did the structure of the political machine resemble a pyramid?

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Motives
B Why did immigrants support political machines?

Municipal Graft and Scandal

While the well-oiled political machines provided city dwellers with services, many political bosses fell victim to corruption as their influence grew.

ELECTION FRAUD AND GRAFT When the loyalty of voters was not enough to carry an election, some political machines turned to fraud. Using fake names, party faithfuls cast as many votes as were needed to win.

Once a political machine got its candidates into office, it could take advantage of numerous opportunities for **graft,** the illegal use of political influence for personal gain. For example, by helping a person find work on a construction project for the city, a political machine could ask the worker to bill the city for more than the actual cost of materials and labor. The worker then "kicked back" a portion of the earnings to the machine. Taking these kickbacks, or illegal payments for their services, enriched the political machines—and individual politicians.

Political machines also granted favors to businesses in return for cash and accepted bribes to allow illegal activities, such as gambling, to flourish. Politicians were able to get away with shady dealings because the police rarely interfered. Until about 1890, police forces were hired and fired by political bosses.

THE TWEED RING SCANDAL William M. Tweed, known as **Boss Tweed,** became head of Tammany Hall, New York City's powerful Democratic political machine, in 1868. Between 1869 and 1871, Boss Tweed led the Tweed Ring, a group of corrupt politicians, in defrauding the city.

One scheme, the construction of the New York County Courthouse, involved extravagant graft. The project cost taxpayers $13 million, while the actual construction cost was $3 million. The difference went into the pockets of Tweed and his followers.

Vocabulary
extortion: illegal use of one's official position to obtain property or funds

Thomas Nast, a political cartoonist, helped arouse public outrage against Tammany Hall's graft, and the Tweed Ring was finally broken in 1871. Tweed was indicted on 120 counts of fraud and extortion and was sentenced to 12 years in jail. His sentence was reduced to one year, but after leaving jail, Tweed was quickly arrested on another charge. While serving a second sentence, Tweed escaped. He was captured in Spain when officials identified him from a Thomas Nast cartoon. By that time, political corruption had become a national issue.

▲ **Boss Tweed, head of Tammany Hall.**

Analyzing *Political Cartoons*

"THE TAMMANY TIGER LOOSE"

Political cartoonist Thomas Nast ridiculed Boss Tweed and his machine in the pages of *Harper's Weekly*. Nast's work threatened Tweed, who reportedly said, "I don't care so much what the papers write about me—my constituents can't read; but . . . they can see pictures!"

SKILLBUILDER Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. Under the Tammany tiger's victim is a torn paper that reads "LAW." What is its significance?
2. Boss Tweed and his cronies, portrayed as noblemen, watch from the stands on the left. The cartoon's caption reads "What are you going to do about it?" What effect do you think Nast wanted to have on his audience?

📒 **SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R24.**

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES (1877–1881)

"Nobody ever left the presidency with less regret . . . than I do."

JAMES A. GARFIELD (1881)

"Assassination can be no more guarded against than death by lightning."

CHESTER A. ARTHUR (1881–1885)

"There doesn't seem to be anything else for an ex-president to do but . . . raise big pumpkins."

Civil Service Replaces Patronage

The desire for power and money that made local politics corrupt in the industrial age also infected national politics.

PATRONAGE SPURS REFORM Since the beginning of the 19th century, presidents had complained about the problem of **patronage,** or the giving of government jobs to people who had helped a candidate get elected. In Andrew Jackson's administration, this policy was known as the spoils system. People from cabinet members to workers who scrubbed the steps of the Capitol owed their jobs to political connections. As might be expected, some government employees were not qualified for the positions they filled. Moreover, political appointees, whether qualified or not, sometimes used their positions for personal gain.

Reformers began to press for the elimination of patronage and the adoption of a merit system of hiring. Jobs in **civil service**—government administration—should go to the most qualified persons, reformers believed. It should not matter what political views they held or who recommended them. **C**

REFORM UNDER HAYES, GARFIELD, AND ARTHUR Civil service reform made gradual progress under Presidents Hayes, Garfield, and Arthur. Republican president **Rutherford B. Hayes,** elected in 1876, could not convince Congress to support reform, so he used other means. Hayes named independents to his cabinet. He also set up a commission to investigate the nation's customhouses, which were notoriously corrupt. On the basis of the commission's report, Hayes fired two of the top officials of New York City's customhouse, where jobs were controlled by the Republican Party. These firings enraged the Republican New York senator and political boss Roscoe Conkling and his supporters, the Stalwarts.

When Hayes decided not to run for reelection in 1880, a free-for-all broke out at the Republican convention, between the Stalwarts—who opposed changes in the spoils system—and reformers. Since neither Stalwarts nor reformers could win a majority of delegates, the convention settled on an independent presidential candidate, Ohio congressman **James A. Garfield.** To balance out Garfield's ties to reformers, the Republicans nominated for vice-president **Chester A. Arthur,** one of Conkling's supporters. Despite Arthur's inclusion on the ticket, Garfield angered the Stalwarts by giving reformers most of his patronage jobs once he was elected.

On July 2, 1881, as President Garfield walked through the Washington, D.C., train station, he was shot two times by a mentally unbalanced lawyer named Charles Guiteau, whom Garfield had turned down for a job. The would-be assassin announced, "I did it and I will go to jail for it. I am a Stalwart and Arthur is now president." Garfield finally died from his wounds on September 19. Despite his ties to the Stalwarts, Chester Arthur turned reformer when he became president. His first message to Congress urged legislators to pass a civil service law.

The resulting **Pendleton Civil Service Act** of 1883 authorized a bipartisan civil service commission to make

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Causes
C How did patronage contribute to government incompetence and fraud?
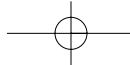
appointments to federal jobs through a merit system based on candidates' performance on an examination. By 1901, more than 40 percent of all federal jobs had been classified as civil service positions, but the Pendleton Act had mixed consequences. On the one hand, public administration became more honest and efficient. On the other hand, because officials could no longer pressure employees for campaign contributions, politicians turned to other sources for donations.

Business Buys Influence

With employees no longer a source of campaign contributions, politicians turned to wealthy business owners. Therefore, the alliance between government and big business became stronger than ever. **D**

HARRISON, CLEVELAND, AND HIGH TARIFFS Big business hoped the government would preserve, or even raise, the tariffs that protected domestic industries from foreign competition. The Democratic Party, however, opposed high tariffs because they increased prices. In 1884, the Democratic Party won a presidential election for the first time in 28 years with candidate **Grover Cleveland.** As president, Cleveland tried to lower tariff rates, but Congress refused to support him.

In 1888, Cleveland ran for reelection on a low-tariff platform against the former Indiana senator **Benjamin Harrison,** the grandson of President William Henry Harrison. Harrison's campaign was financed by large contributions from companies that wanted tariffs even higher than they were. Although Cleveland won about 100,000 more popular votes than Harrison, Harrison took a majority of the electoral votes and the presidency. Once in office, he won passage of the McKinley Tariff Act of 1890, which raised tariffs to their highest level yet.

In 1892, Cleveland was elected again—the only president to serve two nonconsecutive terms. He supported a bill for lowering the McKinley Tariff but refused to sign it because it also provided for a federal income tax. The Wilson-Gorman Tariff became law in 1894 without the president's signature. In 1897, William McKinley was inaugurated president and raised tariffs once again.

The attempt to reduce the tariff had failed, but the spirit of reform was not dead. New developments in areas ranging from technology to mass culture would help redefine American society as the United States moved into the 20th century.

3 ASSESSMENT

1. TERMS & NAMES For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- political machine
- graft
- Boss Tweed
- patronage
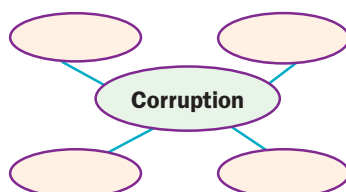- civil service
- Rutherford B. Hayes
- James A. Garfield
- Chester A. Arthur
- Pendleton Civil Service Act
- Grover Cleveland
- Benjamin Harrison

MAIN IDEA

2. TAKING NOTES
In a chart like the one shown, list examples of corruption in 19th-century politics.

Corruption

CRITICAL THINKING

3. EVALUATING LEADERSHIP
Reread the quotation from James Pendergast on page 268. Explain whether you agree or disagree that machine politicians did not coerce people.

4. ANALYZING CAUSES
Why do you think tariff reform failed? Support your response with evidence from the chapter.

5. HYPOTHESIZING
How do you think politics in the United States would have been different if the Pendleton Civil Service Act had not been passed?
Think About:
- the act's impact on federal workers
- the act's impact on political fundraising
- Republican Party conflicts