

1920s Consumerism Student Worksheet

Introduction:

The nation's economy soared during the 1920s. Manufacturing, for example, rose by more than 60 percent during the decade. With the economic boom came the new notion of "consumerism," which maintained that customers should be able to buy items not just because of need, but for the sheer pleasure of buying and owning. Many middle-class citizens purchased new "luxuries" such as electric refrigerators, washing machines, and vacuum cleaners. Growth in retailing and merchandising increased during this "get rich quick" era. Department stores in major urban centers sought to attract customers by presenting the latest fashions using innovative marketing techniques.

Directions:

Follow the steps below to find the 1920s advertisements on the Internet and fill in the chart below.

Go to <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/coolhtml/coolhome.html>

Click on "Introduction to Prosperity and Thrift"

Briefly navigate each section, take notes on anything you think may be important

Go back to the home page

Click on "Guide to People, Organizations, and Topics in Prosperity and Thrift"

Click on "Social Science Research"

Click on "[An analysis of over 3,000,000 inquiries received by 98 firms from 2,339 magazine advertisements](#)," (1927) by Daniel Starch.

Click on "[Here](#)" to see the full text of this document

Click on "[PART XIV Twelve Advertisements](#)"

Click on "[page image viewer](#)" Type in "36" in the space that says, "[Turn to Image](#)."

Below will appear the first advertisement for Wallace Silver. If you type in the number 40, you will find the second advertisement for Log Cabin's Maple Syrup. If you click on the actual images they become enlarged.

Compare and contrast the 1920s magazine advertisements to magazine advertisements today. Your teacher will provide you with an ad from a current magazine.