

Chapter 18: The Progressive Era, 1900 to 1916: Worksheet

1. What was the Triangle Factory fire of 1911, and why did it have such an impact of the need for government to regulate industry?
2. How would you define Progressivism as a concept and as a force in American political life? Why do you think that most Progressivism began as a “movement” among America’s privileged, white, educated, prosperous elite?
3. What was the economy like in the Progressive era and how did this effect reform? (Remember, aside from the Great Depression of 1929-1941, Americans only show interest in reform when times are good) How did urban growth influence Progressive politics?
4. What were Muckrakers and what did they want? Who were some? How did they communicate and does muckraking work?
5. Where were most immigrants to the US from in the Progressive era, and why did they come to America? What did they think they were getting into and what were they getting into? What do you know about an Italian immigrant called Charles Ponzi?
6. What is “consumer freedom?” What was a “nickelodeon” and why do you think people liked them? How is consuming linked to citizenship and conformism in American life?
7. What was “Fordism” and how did it impact American life? What did Henry Ford do in 1914 and why? Why do you think Henry Ford hired anti-union thugs to discourage the formation of labor organizations in his plants? What was “Fordlandia”?
8. Who was Edward Bernays and what was his impact on the advertising industry? He invented the term “public relations” and pioneered the use of Freudian psychological insights into the science of selling.
9. Read about and understand the “varieties of Progressivism” such as in the workplace, the influence of E. V. Debs and of socialism, organized labor, striking, feminism, the impact of Freud (he lectured in America in 1909). How come there is no section on southern Progressivism?
10. Read about Native American Progressivism and the words about Carlos Montezuma (perhaps the model for Dee Brown’s Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee.)
11. What did John Dewey have to say about governments and freedom? Who was Robert LaFollette? Who was Jane Addams? Who was Louis Brandeis?
12. When was the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt and what were his main goals and accomplishments
13. When was the presidency of William H. Taft and what did he do?
14. When was the presidency of Woodrow Wilson and what were his main accomplishments