


Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Introduction

Causes of the Progressive Movement

Introduction



The social, economic, and political issues in the United States created the Progressive Movement. The Progressive Movement began as a social movement and grew to include the economic and political issues that plagued the United States. In this interactivity, click each of the panels to learn about the causes of the Progressive Movement.

- Lavish Lifestyles
- Income Disparity
- Dangerous Working Conditions
- Child Labor
- Job Requirements and Benefits
- Company Towns
- Employment of Women


The social, economic, and political issues in the United States created the Progressive Movement. The Progressive Movement began as a social movement and grew to include the economic and political issues that plagued the United States. In this interactivity, click each of the panels to learn about the causes of the Progressive Movement.

Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Lavish Lifestyles

Causes of the Progressive Movement

Lavish Lifestyles



The upper-class experienced lavish lifestyles while the lower-class struggled. Captains of industry like Andrew Carnegie, J.D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and J.P. Morgan generated huge profits while hardly paying their workers and eliminating all business competitors. They lived in large mansions and threw extravagant parties.

Image: The summer home of Cornelius Vanderbilt in Newport, Rhode Island

Income Disparity

Dangerous Working Conditions

Child Labor

Job Requirements and Benefits

Company Towns

Employment of Women

The upper-class experienced lavish lifestyles while the lower-class struggled. Captains of industry like Andrew Carnegie, J.D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and J.P. Morgan generated huge profits while hardly paying their workers and eliminating all business competitors. They lived in large mansions and threw extravagant parties.

Image: The summer home of Cornelius Vanderbilt in Newport, Rhode Island

Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes


Income Disparity

Causes of the Progressive Movement

Lavish Lifestyles

Income Disparity

Income Disparity



Income Disparity

The Captains of Industry could also be considered Robber Barons. They were cruel and ruthless businessmen who would stop at nothing to achieve great wealth. Other successful upper-class businessmen and factory owners joined the likes of Carnegie, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, and Morgan. Robber Barons made the severe income disparity between the upper class and working class highly noticeable.

Image: Andrew Carnegie's mansion

Dangerous Working Conditions

Child Labor

Job Requirements and Benefits

Company Towns

Employment of Women

The Captains of Industry could also be considered Robber Barons. They were cruel and ruthless businessmen who would stop at nothing to achieve great wealth. Other successful upper-class businessmen and factory owners joined the likes of Carnegie, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, and Morgan. Robber Barons made the severe income disparity between the upper class and working class highly noticeable. They used trusts and monopolies to gain great wealth and prevent competition that could improve conditions. They also exploited natural resources found in the country for their economic benefit. These Robber Barons got ahead through economic exploitation.

Image: Andrew Carnegie's mansion

Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Dangerous working conditions


Causes of the Progressive Movement

Lavish Lifestyles

Income Disparity

Dangerous Working Conditions

Dangerous Working Conditions



Working conditions in the later Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century were not ideal for workers in factories, mills, and mines. Unsafe machines, moving belts, molten steel, and furnaces all posed potential risks for workers. Workers were in danger of making mistakes that could lead to injury or death.

Image: Young coal miners, 1908

Child Labor

Job Requirements and Benefits

Company Towns

Employment of Women

Working conditions in the later Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century were not ideal for workers in factories, mills, and mines. Unsafe machines, moving belts, molten steel, and furnaces all posed potential risks for workers. Workers were in danger of making mistakes that could lead to injury or death. Work-related illnesses were also common. For example, many coal miners developed lung disease from inhaling too much mining dust.

Image: Young coal miners, 1908

Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Child labor

Causes of the Progressive Movement

Lavish Lifestyles

Income Disparity

Dangerous Working Conditions

Child Labor

Child Labor



Child labor already existed in the United States, but was mostly limited to agriculture. As industrialization occurred, factory employment provided new opportunities for child labor. Child labor was advantageous for business owners because children worked for lower wages, were easily managed, and could not be organized by labor unions.

Image: Young girl working in a textile mill

Job Requirements and Benefits

Company Towns

Employment of Women

Child labor already existed in the United States, but was mostly limited to agriculture. As industrialization occurred, factory employment provided new opportunities for child labor. Child labor was advantageous for business owners because children worked for lower wages, were easily managed, and could not be organized by labor unions. Child labor was a social injustice that helped cause the Progressive Movement.

Image: Young girl working in a textile mill

Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Job requirements and benefits

Causes of the Progressive Movement

Lavish Lifestyles

Income Disparity

Dangerous Working Conditions


Child Labor

Job Requirements and Benefits

Company Towns

Employment of Women

Job Requirements and Benefits



Prior to the Progressive Movement, workers experienced long demanding hours of work. Workers were easily replaced by new immigrants, which afforded business owners the ability to keep wages low. Workers could generally not afford to miss work for fear that they would be replaced. None of the working class received benefits like health insurance.

Image: Workers, 1920

Prior to the Progressive Movement, workers experienced long demanding hours of work. Workers were easily replaced by new immigrants, which afforded business owners the ability to keep wages low. Workers could generally not afford to miss work for fear that they would be replaced. None of the working class received benefits like health insurance or workingmen's compensation. Workers that got sick or injured on the job would be replaced.

Image: Workers, 1920

Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Company Towns

Causes of the Progressive Movement

Lavish Lifestyles

Income Disparity

Dangerous Working Conditions


Child Labor

Job Requirements and Benefits

Company Towns

Employment of Women

Company Towns



A company town is a location where all of the stores and housing are owned by the company that is also the employer. The company provides the housing, churches, stores, transportation, sewerage, and water required for workers to move there and live. Company towns were located in remote areas so that residents could not shop or commute elsewhere. The workers' lives were connected to the success of the company.

Image: Company town in West Virginia

A company town is a location where all of the stores and housing are owned by the company that is also the employer. The company provides the housing, churches, stores, transportation, sewerage, and water required for workers to move there and live. Company towns were located in remote areas so that residents could not shop or commute elsewhere. The workers' lives were connected to the success of the company. The way companies used company towns to control their workers' living conditions is another example of a social injustice which contributed to the Progressive Movement.

Image: Company town in West Virginia


Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Employment of Women

Causes of the Progressive Movement

- Lavish Lifestyles
- Income Disparity
- Dangerous Working Conditions
- Child Labor
- Job Requirements and Benefits
- Company Towns
- Employment of Women**

Employment of Women



Women in the 1900s were able to select from only a limited number of occupations. Women could become teachers, dressmakers, nurses, domestic service workers, or work in textile mills. Women were still subjected to dangerous working conditions. Fearing that they would be replaced, women would work while pregnant. There are reports that some women even gave birth while on the job.

Image: Women workers in a textile mill

Women in the 1900s were able to select from only a limited number of occupations. Women could become teachers, dressmakers, nurses, domestic service workers, or work in textile mills. Women were still subjected to dangerous working conditions. Fearing that they would be replaced, women would work while pregnant. There are reports that some women even gave birth while on the job. The lack of gender equality found at this time was another social injustice which helped cause the Progressive Movement.

Image: Women workers in a textile mill


Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 5 Content: Causes of the Progressive Movement Notes

Other Social Injustices

Causes of the Progressive Movement

- Lavish Lifestyles
- Income Disparity
- Dangerous Working Conditions
- Child Labor
- Job Requirements and Benefits**
- Company Towns
- Employment of Women
- Other Social Injustices**

Other Social Injustices



they were advertised to be. In addition, the racial and ethnic inequalities of the time caused frustration among some people. These causes, plus the ones previously mentioned, all contributed to the start of the Progressive Movement.

Image: Workers in the union stockyards removing animal hides

There were other causes that contributed to the rise of the Progressive Movement. For example, many people were fed up with the lack of consumer protections available. Food and drugs were not always what they were advertised to be. In addition, the racial and ethnic inequalities of the time caused frustration among some people. These causes, plus the ones previously mentioned, all contributed to the start of the Progressive Movement.

Image: Workers in the union stockyards removing animal hides