

The Roaring Twenties- US

Back to Normal...or Not? World War I left a scar on American life.

1. The Economy: When soldiers returned home, the government didn't need extra workers to make supplies for them anymore; this led to high unemployment.
2. Labor: Wages and prices had been kept down during the war; after the war, prices went up, but not wages, leading to strikes.
3. Nativism and Racism: With a lack of jobs, racism and anti-immigrant feelings rose- "They're taking *our* jobs!"

The Red Scare Americans were afraid the Communist takeover in Russia would repeat itself in the US and put an end to capitalism. This led to the Red Scare, a fear of communists, or Reds and other radicals. When bombings took place across the country, Reds were blamed, and Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer led the Palmer Raids on suspected communists, socialist, and anarchists, often without warrants, and had no major discoveries. Labor unions were deemed communist organizations, and when workers began to strike, violent government intervention was seen as justified. The trial and execution of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti suggested that the Red Scare had a nativist foundation: the two Italian born anarchists were sentenced to death for supposedly killing 2 men during a robbery. They probably didn't get a fair trial.

Harding's Republicanism Americans wanted to return to the "normal" way of life before the war. During the 1920 presidential election, Warren G Harding, a Republican senator from Ohio, made this idea his campaign promise. The Return to Normalcy had idealized pre-war America. A strong believer in small government, as president, he instituted income tax reductions, especially for the wealthy, and high tariffs.

Teapot Dome Scandal Harding appointed his friends from Ohio, many of whom were unqualified and corrupt, to important positions. Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall was convicted of accepting bribes from oil executives for rights to drill on government land in Teapot Dome, Wyoming, which became known as the Teapot Dome Scandal. When Harding died of a heart attack on August 2, 1923, his vice president, Calvin Coolidge, became president.

Calvin Coolidge Coolidge was seen as quiet and honest. He believed in laissez-fair economics and tried to keep the government out of the economy. He was re-elected in 1924 on the strengths of his beliefs in minimal government, high tariffs, and low taxes. Coolidge is known for the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928, which made war illegal. More than 60 nations signed the agreement- but thing about it: How do you enforce something that says that you cannot fight?

In 1924, the year Coolidge was reelected, Nellie T Ross of Wyoming and Miriam A Ferguson of Texas were elected the nation's first female governors. In 191, Jeanette Rankin had become the first woman elected to the US Congress.

Automobiles By the 1920s, prosperity was on the rise again, which meant Americans wanted to own fancy new things - like Henry Ford's Model T automobile- the Tin Lizzie. Ford made the price of his car affordable using the assembly line system and let customers pay on an Installment Plan. How did automobiles affect American life? People got jobs for good pay in the automobile plants. Industries that supplied materials for cars - glass, steel, fuel, rubber, etc., - prospered. Other industries used Ford's mass production practices. Easier commutes meant more people could move to the suburbs. The travel industry and roadside restaurants and highway construction boomed.

All that Jazz People had shorted workdays, more leisure times, and a live-for-today attitude. Young people moved to the cities. The excitement and modernity of this time period gave it the

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nickname the Roaring Twenties. Radio became a part of every home and radio networks like NBC and CBS made sure that Americans from coast to coast listened to the same programs and ads. The film industry grew. Hollywood became the center of a major industry. Talkies, as opposed to silent movies, were introduced. Americans followed the lives of celebrities from sports stars like Babe Ruth, to pilots like Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart. Women were voting, were better educated, and were working as nurses, teachers, secretaries, and clerks. Women called flappers wore their hair and skirts shorter to rebel against traditional ideas of ladylike behavior. Other new aspects of popular culture were Art Deco architecture, crossword puzzles, and dances like the Charleston. Music was a big part of pop culture, specifically Jazz. Jazz originated in New Orleans. It was influenced by African American music and is a truly American art form. This decade is also called the Jazz Age.

The Harlem Renaissance During WWI, many African Americans moved from the South to the North to work in factories in the Great Migration.

African Americans brought jazz and the blues with them to the North. The Great Migration was met with resistance, especially by the KKK, which was no longer limited to the South. The KKK was virtually wiped out after the Force Acts under the Grant administration. It returned after DW Griffith released his film, *The Birth of a Nation*, which portrayed the KKK as heroic defenders of white womanhood and children. To fight back, organizations like the NAACP worked to secure civil rights. A reformer, Marcus

African Americans weren't the only minority group fighting for their civil rights in the 1920s. The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was founded and the Indian Citizenship Act, granting full citizenship to Native Americans, was passed.

Garvey, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and advocated for a large scale return to Africa. The plans fell short but he did encourage Black Nationalism, a sense of African American racial dignity. African American communities thrived in New York City's Harlem, a neighborhood where overdevelopment had driven down the price of real estate. Harlem became home to many artists and gave rise to the Harlem Renaissance- a movement of vibrant intellectual and artistic developments. Prominent names of this movement include writers like Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston and jazz artists such as Duke Ellington.

Backlash Rapid modernization also created a backlash, especially in rural areas. More **Nativism**: The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 and the National Origins Act of 1924 set limits on the number of immigrants who could come to the US. **Fundamentalism**: This religious movement centered on the belief in a literal interpretation of the Bible, particularly Creationism, the belief that man was created by God exactly as described in the Judeo-Christian Bible. In 1925, a teacher named John Scopes broke Tennessee law by teaching his students about evolution. During his trial, famous known as the Scopes Monkey Trial, Williams Jennings Bryan represented the prosecution and Clarence Darrow – along with the American Civil Liberties Union – defended Scopes. Scopes was originally found guilty of violating the law, but the state supreme court overturned the ruling on a technicality. The law itself was eventually ruled unconstitutional. However, it was not repealed until 1967. **Prohibition**: Prohibition, a ban on alcohol, began in 1920. It was hard to enforce because people could make their own alcohol or buy in in underground bars called speakeasies. Outlaws known as bootleggers also smuggled alcohol. Some worked with gangsters like Al Capone. Prohibition made organized crime worse. It was repealed by the 21st Amendment in 1933. **The Lost Generation**: Many well educated and creative people – including writers like Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald – grew disenchanted with the violence of WWI, consumerism, and the US in general. Many lived as expatriates, someone who chooses not to live in his home country.

Questions: Respond in complete sentences on lined paper.

1. What caused unemployment after WWI?
2. What were the Palmer Raids meant to uncover?
3. Why were the twenties "roaring"?
4. What were the musical origins of jazz?
5. How did Harlem become a thriving neighborhood of African American artists?
6. What was the verdict in the Scopes Monkey Trial?
7. How did Prohibition support the spread of organized crime?
8. Which parts of American culture were member of the Lost Generation upset about?

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