

1 ☐ Warm-up

- ☐ For many immigrants, the trip to America was a grim and frightening experience. One steerage passenger, a Jewish immigrant who sailed from Bremen, Germany, to New York, observed: *Who can depict the feeling of desolation, homesickness, uncertainty, and anxiety with which an emigrant makes his first voyage across the ocean? I proved to be a good sailor, but the sea frightened me. The thumping of the engines was drumming a ghastly accompaniment to the awesome whisper of the waves. I felt in the embrace of a vast, uncanny force.*
- ☐ Suppose that you are a newspaper reporter writing an article about a typical immigrant's journey across the Atlantic to America. What questions might you ask steerage passengers to give your readers a realistic portrayal of their trip?

2 ☐ Politics in the Gilded Age

TEKS

2(A), 12(B), 23(A)

3 ☐ Listen

- ☐ The years from 1870 to 1915 saw a continuation of the social, economic, and political divisions that had characterized the nation even before the Civil War. This was not a "nation united" as much as it was a collection of political factions and machines, ghettos, neighborhoods, ethnic enclaves, and extremes of rich and poor all competing to realize their version of the "American Dream."

4 ☐ Listen

- ☐ Called the **Gilded Age**, the period following Reconstruction found some Americans very wealthy. But most Americans suffered low wages and poor working conditions. The federal government followed a **laissez-faire** policy of seldom interfering with business practices. Some businesses received a **subsidy**, a payment made by the government to the development of certain key industries, such as railroads.

5 ☐ Listen

- ☐ Many businessmen supported politicians with gifts of money. Scandals often erupted when industries used money to influence leading government officials. The spoils system was also a problem. Under this system, elected officials appointed friends and supporters to **civil service** posts, government jobs held by nonelected people. In 1877 President Rutherford B. Hayes tried to fight the spoils system, but to no avail. After the assassination of President Garfield, a public outcry went out against the spoils system. President Chester A. Arthur and Congress passed the **Pendleton Civil Service Act** in 1883, which created the Civil Service Commission to test employees.

6 ☐ Listen

- ☐ Tariffs became the top political issue and caused President Grover Cleveland to lose reelection to Benjamin Harrison. The new President increased tariffs, causing an economic collapse in 1893. The economic downturn was blamed on President Cleveland, who returned to office in 1892. Cleveland's second term was marred with economic disaster, leading to the election of Republican President William McKinley. McKinley oversaw a new tariff bill and a stronger gold standard, but he was assassinated in 1901 before he could see the effects of his economic policy.

7 ☐ Politics in the Gilded Age

Begin Taking Notes

1. How did business influence politics during the Gilded Age?
2. In what ways did government reform the spoils system and regulate railroads?
3. What effect did the transition from depression to prosperity have on politics in the 1890s?

8 ☐ The Business of Politics

9 ☐ The Spoils System

- ☐ Under the Spoils System, candidates for political office would offer potential jobs in exchange for votes. The spoils system also gave supporters access to money and political favors.

- During the Gilded Age, the Republicans and Democrats had roughly the same number of supporters. To keep party members loyal, candidates rewarded supporters and tried to avoid controversial issues.

10 The Spoils System

- The Republicans appealed to the industrialists, bankers, and eastern farmers. They favored the gold standard, high tariffs, and the enforcement of blue laws, regulations that prohibited certain activities people considered immoral.
- The Democratic party attracted the less privileged groups such as northern urban immigrants, laborers, southern planters, and western farmers.

11 Reforming the Spoils System

1

President Rutherford B. Hayes

- Elected in 1877
- Hayes began to reform the civil service, the government's nonelected workers, by appointing qualified political independents instead of giving positions to supporters.
- He did not have the support of Congress or his own Republican party.
- Hayes did not seek a second term.

2

President James A. Garfield

- Before the 1880 presidential election the Republican party was split into three factions.
 - The Stalwarts defended the spoils system.
 - The Half-Breeds hoped to reform the system.
 - The Independents opposed the spoils system.
- Garfield wanted to reform the system. His running-mate was Chester Arthur, a Stalwart.
- On July 2, 1881 Garfield was assassinated by a Stalwart who wanted Arthur as president.

12 Arthur Reforms the Civil Service

- After the assassination, President Arthur was able to get congressional support for the Pendleton Civil Service Act. This act created a commission which classified government jobs.

13 Regulating Railroads

- By 1880, about 14 states had railroad commissions that looked into complaints about railroad practices. One practice that caused problems was railroads offering rebates, partial refunds, to favored customers.
- In 1877, the Supreme Court, in *Munn v. Illinois* allowed states to regulate certain businesses within their borders, including railroads. But since railroads cross state borders, it was argued that only the federal government could regulate them.
- In 1887, Congress passed the Interstate Commerce Act and set up the nation's first federal regulatory board, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). However, the ICC did not have the power to set railroad rates and was often overruled in the Supreme Court.

14

15 Politics in the Gilded Age—Assessment

What did Mark Twain mean by the phrase The Gilded Age?

- A) Everything was wonderful because it was covered with gold.
- B) He supported the economics of the gold standard .
- C) It was a prosperous time for all people.
- D) There was a glittering layer of prosperity that covered the poverty and corruption that existed in much of society.

What did Rutherford B. Hayes do to ensure that he wouldn't be reelected?

- A) He regulated the railroad industry.
- B) He appointed qualified people to civil service positions.
- C) He supported laissez-faire economics.
- D) He supported the enforcement of blue laws.

16 Politics in the Gilded Age—Assessment

What did Mark Twain mean by the phrase The Gilded Age?

- A) Everything was wonderful because it was covered with gold.
- B) He supported the economics of the gold standard .
- C) It was a prosperous time for all people.
- D) There was a glittering layer of prosperity that covered the poverty and corruption that existed in much of society.

What did Rutherford B. Hayes do to ensure that he wouldn't be reelected?

- A) He regulated the railroad industry.
- B) He appointed qualified people to civil service positions.
- C) He supported laissez-faire economics.
- D) He supported the enforcement of blue laws.

17 ☐ Work

Look over your notes from today.

1. Answer the 3 questions from today's lecture.

2. In five sentences, write a brief summary of what we went over in class today. Use the **highlighted key terms** in your summary!

Title the paper the same as the Lecture Notes.

Make sure to put your Name, Date, and Period in the upper right hand corner of your page.

Turn this in at the *beginning of class tomorrow* – put it in the hand-in/collection basket.

Worth 25 out of 100 points for this week's Daily grade.

ERROR: undefined
OFFENDING COMMAND:

STACK: