

Paper 2 topic

In this topic you will cover the following key areas:

Part 1: Key issue: How and why did the USA achieve prosperity in the 1920s?

Isolationism and its effects: American rejection of the Treaty of Versailles and refusal to join the League of Nations; the consequences for the USA Tariff policy: Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922

Economic Boom: Mass production (e.g. Ford and the Motor industry); consumer industries and advertising, Hire Purchase; purchase of shares; the stock market boom;

Republican Government policies: tariff's, immigration and laissez faire
Developments in the entertainment industries, e.g. the cinema, Jazz.

Key issue: How far was the USA a divided society in the 1920s?

Rich versus poor: continuation of poverty for some - e.g. farmers

Race: immigration controls; the quota system of 1921; National Origins Act of 1924; the Ku Klux Klan and its activities

Prohibition & organised crime: groups for and against prohibition; the impact on society of gangs

Women & Young people: fashions, flappers.

Key issue: Why did the US Stock Exchange collapse in 1929?

The problems of the 1920s: over-production, lack of credit control; the effects of tariff policy; unequal distribution of wealth

The Wall Street Crash: events and immediate consequences.

Part 1: The Growth of Isolationism

How Did America react to the end of World War I?

In November 1918 an Armistice ended the fighting in Europe. By January of 1919 the discussions for the Peace Conference began in Paris; this included the big 4 - Lloyd George of Britain, Orlando of Italy, Clemenceau of France, and Woodrow Wilson. It was February before Wilson returned to the USA to try to get support for the treaty from the Congress. Wilson tried to persuade his country to support the treaty. In September of 1919 Wilson's did an 8000 mile tour, gave 40 speeches in 29 cities in 22 days but he failed to get the people or Congress to accept the Treaty and therefore the USA was unable to join.

The TAFT RESERVATION

This said stated that The United States did not want have a legal obligation to have to protect any country in Europe (or the league) that was threatened. The USA did not want to have to send its navy or army to protect any other country. The USA wanted to be able to make up its own mind whether is should go to war to protect World Peace, not to be told by the League that it had to join.

In your own words list 3 things that the Taft Reservation said about US involvement abroad:

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-

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Why did the USA not want to join the League of Nations?

The Traditional Explanation

The American people had not wanted to go into World War One - America did not join in until 1917 - and when the war ended they rejected the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations. This is called 'isolationism' - the desire to keep out of foreign affairs.

IMAGE

American people were isolationist because of:

Isolatonism:

America saw itself as the 'New World' and did not want anything to do with the 'Old World', which they saw as being corrupt, old-fashioned and full of dangerous ideas like Communism. When Wilson went to the Versailles Conference, he was the first US President EVER to visit Europe. Most Americans liked the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, that America should stay out of Europe's affairs, and Europe should stay out of America's.

Money:

American businessmen were worried about the COST of the League - paying taxes to pay for its organisation, and losing trade if it decided to impose sanctions.

American soldiers:

100,000 soldiers had died in the First World War, and many Americans couldn't see why American soldiers should die keeping peace elsewhere in the world.

German immigrants:

Many Americans were immigrants from Europe and they still had ties there. So German immigrants HATED the Treaty of Versailles just as much as the Germans in Germany. (Also, many Irish immigrants HATED Britain so much they didn't want to have anything to do with a League of Nations with the British in it).

Empires:

The American colonies had once been part of an empire, but the American revolution was about freedom from empire. The Treaty of Versailles hadn't abolished the British Empires (indeed, it had added Mandates to them), and many Americans did not want to be part of a Treaty or a League with upheld the British Empire.

Use this mnemonic to help you to remember why the USA didn't want to join the League	Write a brief summary to explain why each word was a reason for the USA not joining the League
I solationalism:	
M oney:	
A merican soldiers	
G erman immigrants:	
E mpires:	

Political Differences

Another explanation for the USA not joining the League of Nations is about the **POLITICAL DIFFERENCES** in America.

- America was a democracy - Wilson could not sign the peace himself, but had to ask Congress (Parliament) to agree to the Treaty of Versailles.
- However, in the 1918 Elections the Republican Party had won a majority in the Senate, and Wilson was a Democrat.
- The Republican opposition to Wilson was led by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge - he and Wilson hated each other.
- Wilson set off on a nation-wide tour to drum up support for the League & Treaty, but the overwork caused a stroke and he had to stop.
- He went to Congress - the first American president to do for 130 years - but could not read his speech properly.
- The Treaty was defeated in Congress in November 1919.
- James Cox (Wilson's successor as leader of the Democrats) campaigned for the Treaty in the 1919 election, but his Republican opponent Warren Harding fought under the slogan '**return to normalcy**' and won the election.
- The Treaty of Versailles was finally rejected by the Senate in March 1920.

TASK

Using the information above answer the following questions in the spaces provided in this booklet:

1. What type of country was the USA politically? _____
2. What were the 2 main political parties in the USA? _____ & _____.
3. Which party did Woodrow Wilson belong to? _____
4. What did the Democrats campaign for as part of the 1919 election?

5. What was the slogan of Warren Harding's Republican election campaign of 1919? _____
6. What do you think the Republicans meant by a 'Return to Normalcy'?

TASK

In your own words write a few lines to sum up why Republicans won the 1919 election.

The Modern View

Modern historians deny that America rejected the Treaty because of isolationism. They point out that:

- Americans were NOT isolationist - opinion polls at the time showed that more than 80% of Americans supported the idea of a League of Nations.
- Only a dozen Senators were out-and-out isolationists.
- Senator Lodge was NOT an isolationist. He believed in a League of Nations and he wanted to build up an overseas US empire. What he and the Republicans wanted were 14 changes in the Treaty (the '14 reservations').
- Many Democrats could have accepted the 14 changes.

So why then did the Treaty fail - simply, say modern historians, because of Wilson stupidity.

He WOULD not compromise

He would not accept ANY change.

And in the end - rather than accept the 14 Reservations - Wilson's 23 supporters voted AGAINST the Treaty and destroyed it!

TASK

On the blank page overleaf draw a mind map to show all the main reasons why the USA did not join the League of Nations.

Part 1: 2

How Did the Policies of the American Government encourage Isolationism?

The new government of Warren Harding brought in two developments which are often thought to have caused 'isolationism' (although they had other causes).

The first was to increase **tariffs** on foreign imports to protect American industry.

The second was to **restrict immigration**.

1. **Tariffs**

The Fordney-McCumber Act, 1922

Wilson had believed in low tariffs. He had reduced tariffs in 1913, and refused to increase them.

By 1919 demand was growing, however, for higher tariffs. As soon as he became President, Warren Harding passed an **Emergency Tariff (May 1921)** to increase duties on food imports, and in 1922 Congress passed the **Fordney-McCumber Tariff**. This had two principles:

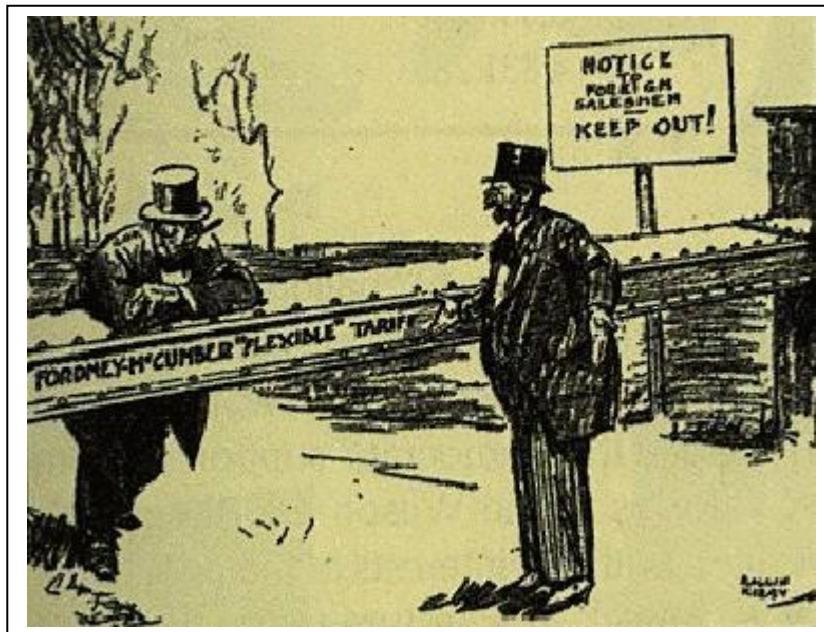
- a. '**Scientific tariff**': this linked tariffs to the wages in the country of export. If wages in, say Italy, were very low, then Italian goods were given a proportionately higher tariff. This negated the effect of lower wages in competitor countries.
- b. '**American Selling Price**': this linked tariffs to the price of American goods, not to the cost of production. A German company might be able to produce, say, a certain chemical for \$60, but if the selling price in America was \$80, and the US tariff was 50%, the tariff would be \$40. This meant that foreign imports were ALWAYS more expensive than American-produced goods, however cheaply they had been made.

The Fordney-McCumber Act established the highest tariffs in history, with some duties up to 400% and an average of 40%.

An anti-tariff American cartoon of the time, linking the tariff to isolationism. The French man is saying: 'But Monsieur, where does it end'.

TASK

Say what you see - annotate the source.



An anti-tariff American cartoon of the time, linking the tariff to isolationism. The French man is saying: 'But Monsieur, where does it end'.

Why did the Americans want high tariffs? = **WAIF**

Tariffs stop imports!

- a. **W**artime boom: American business had boomed during the war - possibly because the countries involved in the war hadn't been able to sell goods to America - and American businessmen wanted this to continue.
- b. **A**merican wages: American wages were rising, and American businessmen feared that low wages in Europe would allow European firms to undercut them. Thus Joseph Fordney claimed that tariffs would protect American workers' jobs.
- c. **I**solationism: American isolationists wanted America to be self-sufficient .
- d. **F**arm Bloc: Overproduction was causing a depression in farming. Farmers hoped that protection would help keep prices up.

Source A

If ever there was a time when Americans had anything to fear from foreign competition, that time has passed. If we wish to have Europe settle her debts, governmental or commercial, we must be prepared to buy from her.

Woodrow Wilson, speaking in March 1921

Wilson had just vetoed the Emergency Tariff Bill, just before he handed over the Presidency to Harding.

Look at Source A.

What does it tell you about Woodrow Wilson's attitude to tariffs in 1921? (3 marks)

How is his view different from most Republican politicians at the time?
(use WAIF to help you answer the question)

Were the tariffs good for the US economy?

In the long-run, the Fordney-McCumber Act damaged the American economy, because other countries retaliated by putting up their duties and stopping American exports. However, for the moment, America was a huge new country, and there was plenty of demand at home.

Immigration

Immigration Quotas

ALL Americans were immigrant families, of course, but until 1890 most immigrants were 'WASPs' (white Anglo-Saxon Protestants) from the wealthier countries of Europe such as Britain, Germany and Sweden. After 1890, more immigrants started arriving from Eastern Europe and Asia.

Demand was growing, however, to slow down immigration, and there followed a number of laws to restrict immigration:

a. **1917: Immigration Law**

This required all immigrants to prove they could read English, banned all immigration from Asia, and charged an immigration fee of \$8.

b. **1921: Emergency Quota Act**

This stated that the number of immigrants from 'the eastern hemisphere' could not be more than 3% of the number already in America in 1910. It set the maximum number of immigrants in any year at 357,000.

c. **1924: Reed-Johnson Act**

Maximum number of immigrants in any year at 154,000. Quota from eastern hemisphere reduced to 2% of those already in America in 1890; the South and the East of Europe were thus only allowed to send 20,000 immigrants per year, and non-Europeans only 4,000.

**Immigration Acts in the US
between 1917 and 1924**

TASK Complete the steps by filling in the name of the immigration act and explain how it limited immigration.

1917 -		

Annotate this source to say what you see.



Americanization

As well as passing Immigration Laws the US government took measures to make sure that people who were allowed to come into the USA were 'Americanized'.

- The Federal Bureau of Naturalization organised naturalization proceedings, and patriotic 'Americanization Day' rallies and Fourth of July celebrations.
- The Federal Bureau of Education organised courses on politics and democracy to prepare immigrants for the 'citizenship exam'.
- The courts clamped down harshly on political crimes by immigrants (The case you MUST know about is the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti - two immigrants from Italy who were anarchists - who in 1920 were found guilty of armed robbery and murder (and executed in 1927), even though the defence produced 107 witnesses that they were elsewhere at the time, and in 1925 the actual murderer came forward and gave himself up ... the jury did not believe the defence witnesses because they were all Italian immigrants).

Not all this was racism and prejudice - many social workers saw it as a way to help immigrants out of the terrible poverty many of them lived in.

TASK

Explain three ways in which the US government tried to 'Americanize' new immigrants.

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-
-

Why stop immigration [PRT]

Racism and mistrust!

- a. **Prejudice:** after 1880, many immigrants were poor Catholics and Jews from eastern Europe. This worried the WASPs; one Senator in the 1920s said that the American pioneers were turning into 'a race of mongrels'.
- b. **Red scare:** Communism terrified Americans; a number of bombs were planted in 1919-21, one by an immigrant Italian. Immigrants were suspected of being communists and anarchists.
- c. **Trade Unions:** opposed immigration because they feared that immigrants would work for lower wages and take their jobs.

TASK

Read source E. Underline any words that show the attitude of some Americans to new immigrants.

Source E

As soon as they step off the decks of their ships our problem has begun - bolshevism, red anarchy, black-handers and kidnappers, challenging the authority and integrity of our flag...

Thousands come here who never take the oath to support our constitution and to become citizens of the United States. They pay allegiance to some other country while they live upon the substance of our own. They fill places that belong to the loyal wage-earning citizens of America... They are of no service whatever to our people. They constitute a menace and a danger to us every day..

Speech by an American Senator, 1921

Source C

America is God's Melting Pot, where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! Germans, Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians - into the Melting Pot with you all! God is making the American.

Israel Zangwill, *The Melting Pot* (1908)

Read source C.

In your own words what do you think Israel Zangwill meant by the term 'Melting Pot'?

Part 2:1

How far did the USA achieve prosperity in the 1920s?

A 'how far' question ALWAYS indicates that there are two sides to the argument.



So, on the one hand you can give evidence of growing prosperity -



On the other hand there is evidence that there were many who did not share in the prosperity.

What were the causes of the Economic boom in the USA?

The Booming Economy

There are many reasons why the US economy boomed in the 1920's. These can be placed under 5 headings: Industrial Strength; The First World War, Republican policies; New industries and methods, the state of mind of the US people.

1. Industrial Strength



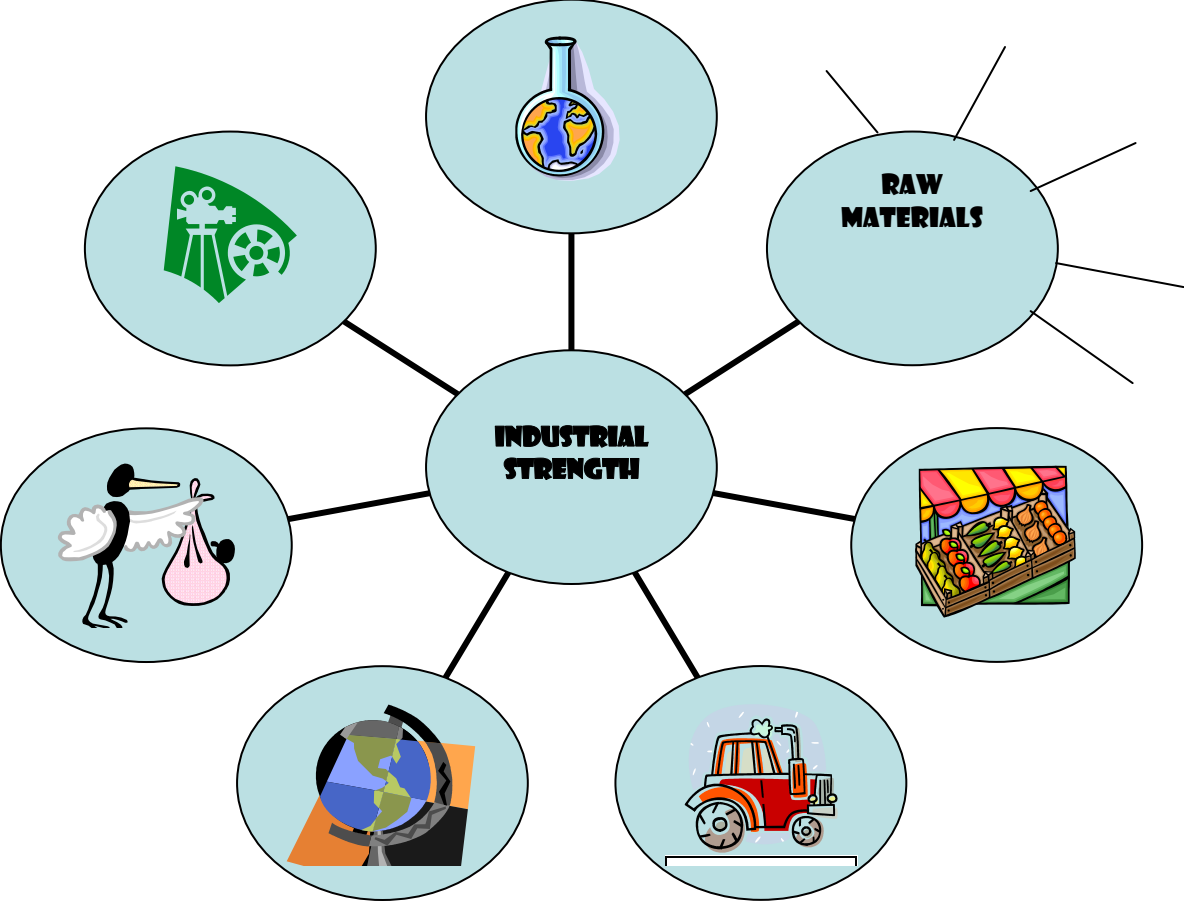
The USA was a huge country with lots of raw materials and a growing population. By the start of the First World War the US was the leading producer of most industrial goods. It had massive iron, coal, steel and textile industries plus was the world's largest oil producer. During the war the US had overtaken Germany as the number one producer of Chemicals such as nylon and rayon. To top it off, the USA had a growing film industry.

Large Markets - Many US products were being sold not only in the USA but also in Europe, Latin America and the Far East.

Finally agriculture in the US had become the most efficient and productive in the world.

Based on its natural resource the USA was poised for an economic boom.

TASK using the notes on **industrial strength** make a spider diagram to show the key points. Use the picture prompts to help you.



2. The First World War



- USA did not join the First World War until 1917, because of this they were able to benefit from the war financially.
- The USA lent money to the Allies during World War One and sold munitions, supplies and food to Britain and France = LOADS OF PROFIT & INTEREST
- USA was able to take over European trade whilst Europe was involved in the fighting.
- Before the war Germany had the biggest chemical industry, but war stoooped this in its tracks. The USA were able to produce far more products and in the attempt to make explosives a range of by-products such as plastics, nylon and rayon, became industries in their own right.
- When the USA finally joined the war, they were not in it long enough for it to cripple them financially like it did France and Germany.

TASK

Give 4 reasons to show why the USA benefitted by joining World War One later than everyone else.

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-
-
-

2. Republican Policies



- The Republican Party was in power between 1920 and 1932. They also dominated Congress. This meant that whatever the President wanted, Congress usually agreed with him.

4 of their policies to encourage the US economy to boom.

a) Laissez-faire

- Republicans believed that the government should not interfere in the everyday lives of the people. This attitude is called 'Laissez-faire'. This meant the government left businessmen alone to do their job. It allowed them to take massive risks but get large profits if they were successful.

b) Tariffs

- Republicans believed in import tariffs (government puts a tax on goods brought into the country to sell) to protect American goods from foreign competition.
- In 1922 President Harding introduced the Fordney McCumber tariff which made imported food expensive in the USA.

c) Low taxation

- A government collects tax from people & use it pay for their policies (e.g. if they want to build a new school, hospital, war etc...).
- The Republican policy was to keep taxation as low as possible. This meant that they did not have much money to spend on public works such as hospitals, schools and pensions.
- The Republicans thought that if they kept taxes low then people would have more money to spend on American goods. This would help the economy to grow.

d) Trusts

Definition

- *A trust is an organisation (sometimes an individual or a small group of people) that has control over several businesses or firms, usually in the same industry. The purpose of a trust is to control as much of a market as possible so that they can set high prices for their goods without facing competition. In England we call such trusts monopolies.*
- The Republicans allowed large trusts to develop. Wilson and the Democrats had been against trusts as it gave too few people a great amount of power and meant that a lot wealth was controlled by a few people.
- In America individuals such as Carnegie (steel) and Rockefeller (oil) controlled almost all of their vital industry.
- The Republicans thought that trusts were good because they believed the individuals who controlled them knew more about industry than politicians did and would therefore make decisions that would be good for the economy.

TASK

Using your notes on Republican Policy, match up the heads and tails to show which definition is correct. You should write the correct word next to the right definition.

WORD	DEFINITION
	These were placed on foreign goods coming in to the country in order to protect US goods from competition.
	These were a group of people that controlled one product for example the steel or oil industry
	These made the foreign goods more expensive
	Republican government kept these low in order to give people more spending money.
	This was an idea that meant that people should be left to do what they wanted with as little government interference as possible.

You can use each word more than once. One word should not be used at all.

Trusts	Tariffs	Laissez-faire	Republican	taxation
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4. New industries and new methods of productions

In the 1920's new industries and new methods of production were developed in the USA. The country took advantage of it vast raw materials to produce steel and chemicals, glass and machinery

New Products = CONSUMER GOODS



TASK

Under each picture write the label to show what the **new consumer goods** are.

Another new commodity

A new Structure:

			<p>A town is nothing without a</p>
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New methods of production



Conveyor belt system	Giant shed	Skeleton car
Small jobs	Specialisation of labour	Buy bulk
1927	10 seconds	4.8 million

TASK

The two pictures above show the use of mass production at the Ford car company in Detroit in the USA in the 1920's. Use these and p189 in Walsh (paragraph 5) to write a paragraph in the space below that describes mass production.

Mass production is

How could Americans afford all of these new goods?

Hire Purchase = "Buy now pay later".

This is where people were allowed to buy a product by paying a minimum of 10% of the cost and borrowing the rest from a bank. They would then pay the loan back over a period of weeks or even years.

There was no limit to how many loans someone was allowed so you could buy lots of different items at any one time and owe a lot of money.

The banks liked to lend money to people to do this because they would get interest on the amount owed.

Facts and figures: 8 out of 10 radios and 6 out of ten cars were bought on credit.

As long as the person borrowing the money had a job, then no one seemed to worry about the amount they owed.

How did people know about all the different products?

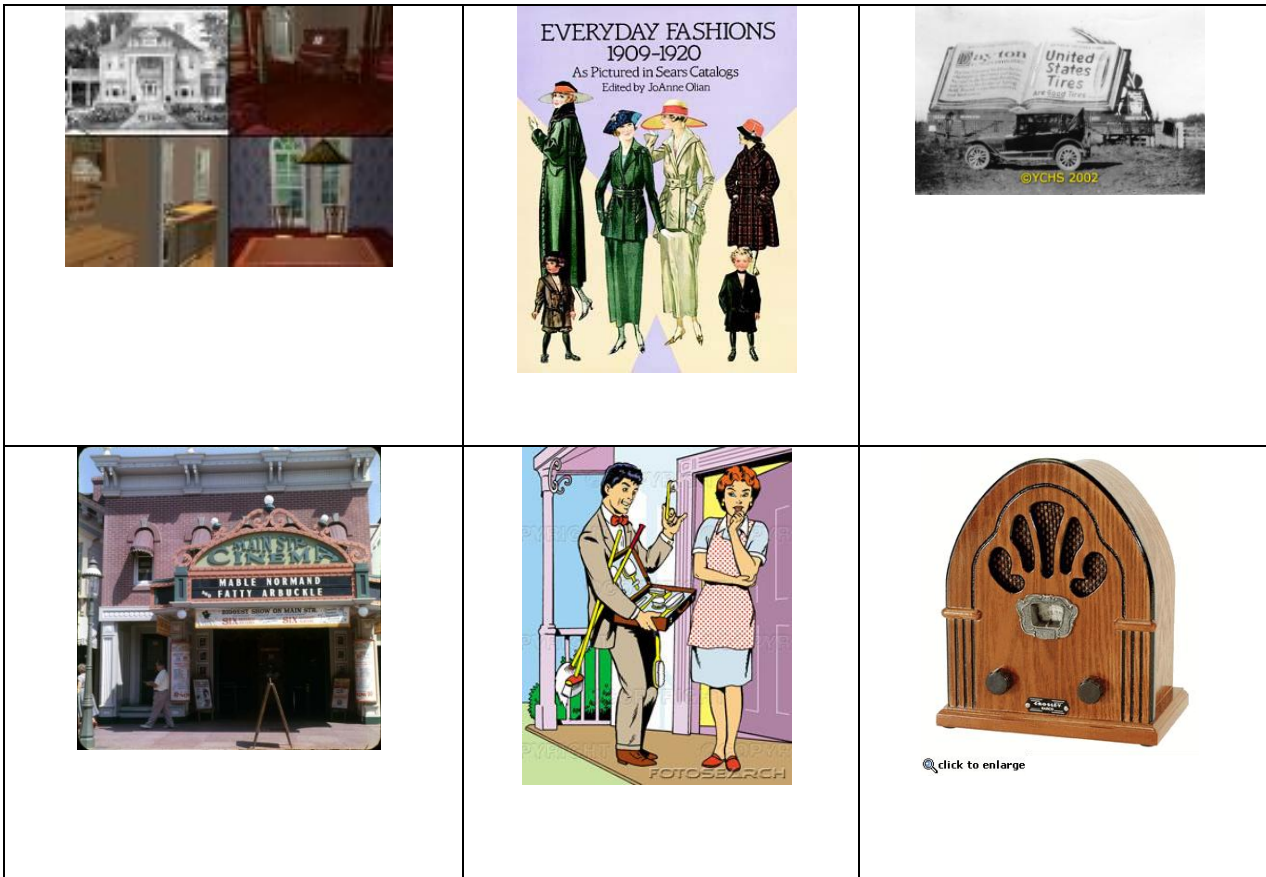
ADVERTISING

Big industries used
MASS NATIONWIDE ADVERTISING
Which had been used for the 1st time in the war to get people
to support the war effort.

TASK

Put these labels under the pictures to show which different types of advertising that were used in 1920's USA

Radio advertisement, door to door salesmen, billboards, trailers at movies, Catalogues, Department Store adverts



5. STATE of MIND

- The final cause of the US economic boom in the 1920's has been put down to how people think.
- Most Americans believed that they had the right to be prosperous and have a good lifestyle.
- This would include a nice house, a good job and plenty to eat. They wanted their home to be filled with lots of nice consumer goods.
- Before 1920 being thrifty or careful with money had been seen as a good quality, but after the First World War this attitude was replaced with the belief that spending money (even if you had to borrow money to spend) was the right thing to do.
- This attitude led economic growth as people bought new products and this created new jobs in industries that made such products.

Was the car the Driving force of the boom?

By the end of 1929 the motor car industry was the biggest industry in the USA.

It employed 100,000's of workers directly but it also kept workers in other industries employed.

For example:

Glass, leather, steel and rubber were all required to build new cars.

Cars took up 75% of all US glass production.

Petrol was needed to run them.

Roads were needed to drive them on. (Road construction was the single biggest employer in USA in the 1920's.

Motels were needed for people to sleep in on long drives.

In Europe in the 1920's, owning a car was a rich persons privilege, but in the USA there was 1 car to every 5 people compared to 1 to 43 in Britain & 1 to 7000 in the USSR.

The car meant people no longer had to live in the cities; they could buy a house in the suburbs and take the car to work in the middle of town.

As people travelled around they also wanted to eat. Diners, hotdog stands, petrol stations, holiday resorts and billboard roadside advertising were all boomed.

Task

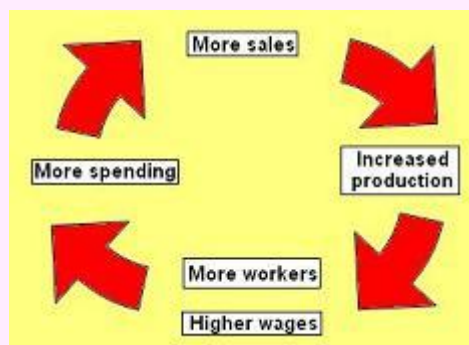
On a piece of A3 paper place a picture of a car at the centre and design a mind map that focuses on the question:

Was the Car the driving force of the Boom?

RECAP & REVISION

Why Industry boomed [PAT GOT CASH]

- a. **P**opulation growing rapidly increased demand for consumer goods.
- b. **A**bundant raw materials - esp. coal, iron and oil - allowed cheap production.
- c. **T**ariffs - protected American industry from competition.
- d. **G**overnment - the government relaxed regulations and reduced taxes (this is called 'laissez faire').
- e. **O**pportunities of New Technology (e.g. electrical goods, radio, film, nylon).
- f. **T**echniques of production- Ford's Assembly line method, and Frederick Taylor's time and motion.
- g. **C**ycle of prosperity - increased prosperity increased prosperity.



- h. **A**dvertising (e.g. billboards, radio commercials).
- i. **S**ales methods (e.g. commercial travellers, mail order, chain stores such as Woolworths).
- j. **H**ire Purchase - instalments allowed people to buy now, pay later.

DID EVERYONE BENEFIT FROM THE ECONOMIC BOOM?

1. The Farmers

Most American farmers did not benefit from the boom.

US farm income dropped from \$22 billion in 1919 to \$13 billion in 1928.

Reasons why farming suffered:

- After WW1 Europe imported less food from the USA. Europe was poor and USA had put high tariffs on goods.
- Foreign competition from Canadian wheat - US farmers could not match their cheap price.
- Improved machinery meant more land was farmed in less time. - combine harvesters & better fertilizers led to OVER PRODUCTION.

In 1921 alone farm prices fell by 50%.

There were 5 x as many farm bankruptcies as between 1900 and 1919.

Why was it such a problem?

- Half of all Americans lived in rural areas.
- Most worked on farms or in businesses that sold goods to farmers.
- Problems affecting farming directly affected 60 million people in the USA.
- 6 million rural Americans, mainly farm labourers were forced to leave the land and look for jobs in cities.
- The worst hit was the Black population who had usually done the unskilled jobs in rural areas. $\frac{3}{4}$ of million Black people became unemployed.

TASK

Write a letter to the President Calvin Coolidge to complain about Republican policies. Explain to the President why farming is in such a poor state and why his government should do something about it.

Who else failed to benefit from the boom?

Workers in older TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES such as COAL, LEATHER AND TEXTILES did not benefit either. Coal suffered from competition from new industries such as OIL AND ELECTRICITY. Leather and textiles were protected by tariffs from foreign competition, but not from domestic (home) competition. New MAN MADE MATERIALS were developed that they struggled to compete against. They also struggled to compete with cheap LABOUR from the Southern states. The wages of workers in these industries did not go up as much as workers in other industries.

Problems

In 1928 there was a STRIKE in the COAL industry. Workers were only paid \$18 (men) and \$9 (women) for a 70 hour week when the minimum wage considered necessary for a decent life was \$48.

42% of American lived below the poverty line. This meant that they did not have the money for essentials like FOOD, CLOTHING, HOUSING AND HEATING.

Unemployment remained a problem in the 1920's. The GROWTH in industry did not create many new jobs. Industries grew through MECHANISATION or by ELECTRIFYING production. About 5 % were unemployed in 1929 at the peak of the boom as there were in 1920.

These millions of people were not sharing in the boom. It meant that many of these families were too poor to buy many of the consumer products.

The Republican government policy was not to INTERFERE so they did nothing to about UNEMPLOYMENT or POVERTY. Despite there being great inequalities of wealth; the top 5% of the population earned 33% of the income, while 60% of Americans earned less than \$2000. 40% were below the poverty line (notably farmers/ Black Americans/ immigrants).

Case study - Chicago

(Use Walsh p193 to complete this part of the word fill).

Chicago was one of the USA's biggest cities. It was the centre of the STEEL, MEAT AND CLOTHING industries. These employed many UNSKILLED workers. These industries had busy and slack periods. In slack periods the workers would be 'SEASONALLY' unemployed. Many of these workers were POLISH OR ITALIAN immigrants or BLACK MIGRANTS workers from the southern states of the USA.

From this group of people only 3% of semi-skilled workers owned a CAR compared to rich areas where 29% owned a car.

On the whole workers in Chicago didn't like to buy things on CREDIT or HP. They preferred to save for when they might not have a JOB. Many of them bought smaller items on credit instead such as PHONOGRAM (record players) and RADIO. Chicago became the centre of a growing record industry specialising in Polish and Italian music for the IMMIGRANT communities.

Poor WHITES did not benefit much from the new CHAIN stores that had revolutionised (quickly changed) shopping in the 1920's. These stores sold the same standard goods all across the country but they mostly served the MIDDLE CLASSES. Poorer white workers preferred to shop at the local grocery store where the owner was more flexible and might give them CREDIT, but these local stores were often more expensive.

The poor did join the MOVIE CRAZE. There were 100's of CINEMA'S in Chicago with 4 performances a day. Working people in Chicago spent more than half their leisure budget on movies.

Even those who were so poor that they were on Monetary Aid Assistance went. Poorer people went to the local cinema because they couldn't afford the \$1 entrance fee or bus fare that they needed to get to the posh city centre cinemas that rich people went to.

In summary complete the chart using the groups from the boxes below, to show which groups of people failed to benefit from the boom and which people benefited.

People who did benefit	People who didn't benefit

1. Italian semi skilled workers	2. Rich individuals like Rockefeller
3. Middle classes	4. Black migrant workers from southern states.
5. Semi skilled poor whites	6. Skilled workers

Revision:

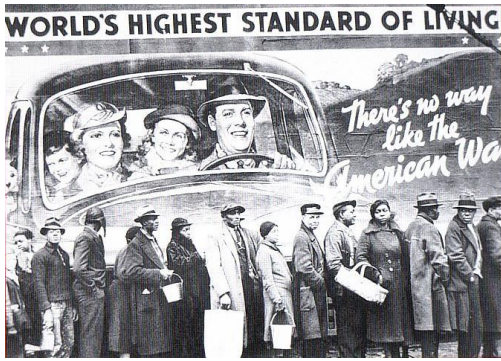
Particular problems included **FLOP CUTS:**

Farming - machinery and overproduction led to rapidly falling

Low wage earners - e.g. unskilled and casual workers, or the 2 million who were unemployed - could not share in the prosperity

Old Industries - overproduction of coal (being replaced by oil and gas) led to mine closure and falling wages. 1929 a coal miners wage was 1/3 of the national average income. Also problems in the textiles industry ('flapper' fashions were reducing the amount of cloth used to make clothes).

Poor Black Americans - 1 million black farm workers lost their jobs in the 1920s. Black workers in the northern towns were the lowest paid; only jobs available were low-paying, menial jobs. New York's black Harlem district was a very overcrowded and segregated community, with more than 250,000 citizens crammed into an area 50 blocks long and eight blocks wide. Many of these people had to sleep in shifts, going to bed when others went off to work. 'Rent parties' were common on Saturday nights, to raise money to pay the landlord on Sunday.



This photo is from the 1930s, but it sums up the position of Black people in the 1920s - they can SEE the prosperity, but they don't SHARE in it.

Cartels, trusts and monopolies - 'fixed the market' and tried to keep prices high and wages low.

Uneemployment - new technology was throwing more and more people out of work; the number of unemployed stood at 2 million throughout 1920s.

Trade problems - high tariffs caused other countries to retaliate, as well as reducing the buying power of those countries, which made it hard for American companies to export their products abroad. Farmers, who relied on exporting wheat, were especially hard-hit by this.

Stock Exchange - the biggest problem; Wall Street was 'over-heating'. So great was over-confidence that people were even buying shares in imaginary companies. Many were buying shares 'at the margin' (a person could get a loan of up to 90% to buy shares) expecting to make enough profit to repay the loan when the shares were resold - brokers' loans almost trebled 1926-9. All this threatened disaster if share prices ever *stopped* rising.

Part 2

Key issue: How far was the USA a divided society in the 1920s?

This huge topic is really five topics, each one a big subject, and - as well as a question about the 'Roaring Twenties' as a whole topic - you have to be prepared for a specific question on just one of the five topics in the exam.

One the positive side, there were exciting developments in entertainment and women's lives.

On the negative side, there was Racism, Prohibition, and Organised Crime.

One way to remember the five aspects of life in America in the 1920s would be POWER:

- Prohibition
- Organised crime
- Women's lives
- Entertainment
- Racism

Entertainment

If the term 'roaring twenties' applies to anything, it applies to entertainment, in which area there were many exciting developments:

a. Films:

- Movie actors such as Charlie Chaplin, Rudolf Valentino and Mary Pickford became 'stars'.
- In 1927, *The Jazz Singer* starring Al Jolson, was the first 'talkie'.
- A well-known early two-colour film was *The Toll of the Sea* (1922) and two-colour films were common by the end of the 1920s; after 1932, films were produced in three-colour technicolour.
- Mickey Mouse was created by Walt Disney in 1928 (who released *Snow White* in colour in 1937).
- By 1930, 100 million Americans went to the movies every week.
- Companies like United Artists and MGM produced hundreds of films a year.
- Films taught people new fashions (e.g. smoking) and new ways to behave - many girls wanted to be like It' girl, Clara Bow.

b. Jazz:

- **Jazz** was first played in **New Orleans** by black musicians such as Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton. After 1917, racist violence forced many of them to leave New Orleans, so they went north to play in the **night clubs** of towns like **Chicago and New York**.
- The invention of **radio and the phonograph** (record player) made it available in people's homes. The **first jazz record** was made **in 1917** by the Dixieland Jazz Band. They were called '**race records**', because they were recorded by **black musicians**.
- Because it was often played in speakeasies (cafes selling illegal alcohol), by black musicians, it was seen as **wild and exciting** - which soon made it very popular.
- Jazz music contributed to many of the **social developments** of the age - **baggy trousers** and **short skirts, wild dancing** such as the Black Bottom, and a new kind of convention-free poetry called '**jazz poetry**' (poets such as TS Eliot and EE Cummings). It was part of the **Harlem Renaissance**, and the growth of black pride (see below).

c. **Dances:**

- The **Charleston** was a fast dance developed in Black communities which was adopted by flappers, who danced it alone **to challenge the 'drys'** (people who didn't drink alcohol) who wouldn't go out to clubs. (Both Joan Crawford and Ginger Rodgers began their movie careers by winning Charleston competitions.)
- The '**Black Bottom Stomp**' was first recorded by Jelly Roll Morton and named after Black Bottom - a Black neighbourhood in Detroit. After 1926 it became the most popular dance.
- The dances **scandalised many Americans**, who thought they were immoral.

Women

How significant were the changes in women's lives in the 1920s?

Argument 1 - VERY significant:

- Work:** Many women had taken over **jobs** traditionally reserved for men (such as **manufacturing**), and **1920-29** the number of working women increased by **25%**; many went to be **teachers** and **secretaries**.
- Vote:** In **1920 the 19th Amendment** gave women the vote. The former suffrage campaigners formed themselves into the Woman's Joint Congressional Committee, which lobbied successfully for a Maternity and Infancy Protection Act (1921), equal nationality rights for married women (1922), and the Child Labour Amendment (1925).
- Flappers:** dumped the old restrictive fashions, corsets etc. in favour of **short skirts, short hair, and the flat-chested 'garcon' look**. Many of them wore men's clothing. They **smoked, drank, used make-up, played tennis, and**

danced wildly in jazz clubs. Some were openly lesbian, others were sexually active. Flappers were seen as immoral.

Argument 2 - NOT significant:

- a. **Work:** most working women were in low-paid jobs, and they were paid less than men for the same job. 10 million women were working in 1930 ... but this was still only a quarter of the females age 15 and over; the rest worked for free in the home and on the farm.
- b. **Vote:** Apart from exceptions such as Florence Kelley and Alice Paul, few suffrage campaigners went into politics; they gave up politics and returned to being housewives. Women campaigned in vain after 1920 for an Equal Rights Act.
- c. **Flappers:** The flappers scandalised many Americans - the Anti-Flirt Association tried to persuade young Americans to behave decently. Most girls, especially in rural America, still behaved 'decently' & had good morals. They got married and had babies.

Sport

Sport was another boom area. Baseball became a big money sport with legendary teams like the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox. Prominent figures like Al Capone were baseball fans. Boxing was also a popular sport with heavyweight heroes like Jack Dempsey.

Growing Cities

More Americans lived in towns and cities for the first time in their history. Every town had to have a skyscraper even if they were not short on space. Throughout the 1920's there was tension between the rural USA (traditional values) and Urban (cities seen as lacking moral values) USA.

Race Relations

How far were the 1920s a time of racism and discrimination for Black Americans?

Argument 1 - A time of racism [**HACKLE**]:

- a. **H**ostility to immigrants: and the Red Scare' - see notes on immigration quotas for more details p13 - 17 of this booklet.
- d. **A**merican Government: refused to pass laws banning lynchings or giving Black Americans the vote. Once oil had been discovered in the southern states of the US, the Federal (central) government did not want to upset the white people in the south by passing unpopular laws that improved the rights of Black People.
- c. **J**im **C**row Laws: the name for laws passed in the southern states which prevented Black Americans from mixing with whites ('segregation'), denied them equality of education and civil rights, and prevented them from voting.

- b. **Ku Klux Klan:** an organisation to maintain WASPs supremacy, which had 5 million members by 1925. Many supporters were poor whites, who did not want Black Americans to be their equals/fear they would take their jobs, but many were racism wealthy white Americans. They wore white sheets and hoods, and marched with burning crosses. They spoke with each other in a secret language which they called 'Klonversations'. They attacked, tortured and killed Black Americans, but also Jews and Catholics and 'immoral' people such as alcoholics.
- e. **Lynchings:** mobs of white people often hanged ('lynched') Blacks Americans whom they suspected of a crime (usually the police turned a blind eye).
- f. **Even in the north:** Black Americans ended up with the low-paid menial jobs, such as janitors, bootblacks, cooks, houseboys, baggage handlers, waiters, doormen, dishwashers and washroom attendants. In 1919, white Americans in Chicago rampaged through Black neighbourhoods after a drowning black man clinging to a log had drifted into a whites-only swimming area.

Argument 2 - A time of improvement [RHINO]:

- a. **Role models:** some Black Americans became famous - the sprinter Jesse Owens, the baseball player Jackie Robinson, the dancer Josephine Baker. They were an inspiration to other Black Americans.
- b. **Harlem Renaissance:** a cultural flowering in the New York Black neighbourhood of Harlem, based on jazz, but also excellent Black architects, novelists, poets and painters. Many of these believed in 'Artistic Action' - winning equality by *proving* they were equal.
- c. **Identity:** in 1925 Alain Locke wrote *The New Negro*, who had to smash the old image of 'Uncle Tom' and 'Sambo', and develop a new identity, 'uplift' the race and fight for equality. There were Black newspapers and magazines. This was the time when the phrase was coined: 'Black is Beautiful'.
- d. **NAACP:** Set up in 1909, it campaigned for civil rights.
- e. **One-and-a-half million** Black Americans migrated from the south to the north. Although many of them ended up in low-paid jobs, some of them formed a new Black middle class, and were educated at university.

Prohibition

In 1919 - as the result of a long and powerful campaign - the 18th Amendment to the Constitution made the manufacture, transport or sale of alcoholic drinks illegal. The Volstead Act, passed at the same time, declared any drink more than 5% proof 'alcoholic'.

Argument 1 - A failure [**DAMAGE**]:

- a. **D** Drinking continued: impossible to enforce (not enough police - only 4000 agents, many of whom were sacked for taking bribes).
- b. **A** Available: the liquor trade just 'went underground'. Speakeasies (illegal bars), moonshine (illegally-made alcohol), bootlegging (smuggling alcohol to sell). It is sometimes asserted that there were more speakeasies than there had been saloons (not true, but there were 200,000 speakeasies in 1933).
- a. **M** Made criminals of ordinary people
- a. **A** Adverse effects: moonshine was poor quality and sometimes killed people. 'Jackass brandy' caused internal bleeding, 'Soda Pop Moon' contained poisonous alcohol.
- a. **G** Gangsterism flourished running the illegal trade: It became hugely profitable, and led to a growth of violence, protection rackets etc. associated with the illegal trade (see 'Organised Crime' below). The general flouting brought the rule of law in general into disrepute as police 'turned a blind eye'. Corruption grew.
- a. **E** End: in 1933 the 21st Amendment abolished Prohibition (= 'proved' that it failed).

Argument 2 - A Success [**ALE**]:

- a. **A** Alcohol destroyed: in 1929, 50 million litres of illegal alcohol were discovered and destroyed.
- b. **L** Legacy: the actual consumption of alcohol fell, not just during prohibition, but for many years after - did not reach pre-1914 levels until 1971
- c. **E** Eliot Ness and the Untouchables: became famous as examples of the high standards police SHOULD achieve.

Source B

Why Prohibition [**ACRIME**]

- a. **A**nti-Saloon League - campaigned that drink hurt families because men wasted money on beer, that it ruined their health and lost them their jobs, and that it led to domestic violence and neglect.
- b. **C**hristian organisation - esp. Women's Christian Temperance Union - supported prohibition. (The early 20th century was a time of Christian revival.)
- c. **R**ural America - scandalised by behaviour in the towns - supported it.
- d. **I**solationism - it was said that money spent on drink 'flew away to Germany' because much of the beer drunk in America was brewed there.
- e. **M**adness, crime, poverty and illness were seen as caused by alcohol - many (including BOTH my grandparents, 'signed the pledge' *never* to drink.)
- f. **E**asy Street - Charlie Chaplin's comic film (1917) showed how drink damaged, and Christianity nurtured, families' happiness and prosperity.

Organised Crime

Organised crime stepped in to take over from the breweries and spirits manufacturers:

- a. They ran the speakeasies, and bootlegging.
- b. They also ran protection rackets, prostitution and drug-running.
- c. They bribed trade union leaders, police, lawyers, judges and even Senators.
- d. The most famous gangster was Al Capone, who earned \$100,000 a year from beer sales alone, ran a private army of more than 700 mobsters, and is thought to have murdered more than 200 opponents.
- e. They fought with each other for control of their 'territory' - the most famous incident was the **St Valentine's Day Massacre** in 1929, when 'torpedoes' from Capone's gang shot dead 7 members of Bugs Moran's gang.

Prohibition

In 1919 - as the result of a long and powerful campaign (see Source B) - the 18th Amendment to the Constitution made the manufacture, transport or sale of alcoholic drinks illegal. The Volstead Act, passed at the same time, declared any drink more than 5% proof 'alcoholic'.

Argument 1 - A failure [DAMAGE]:

- a. **Drinking continued:** impossible to enforce (not enough police - only 4000 agents, many of whom were sacked for taking bribes).
- b. **Available:** the liquor trade just 'went underground'. speakeasies (illegal bars), moonshine (illegally-made alcohol), bootlegging (smuggling alcohol to sell). It is sometimes asserted that there were more speakeasies than there had been saloons (not true, but there were 200,000 speakeasies in 1933).
- a. **Made criminals of ordinary people**
- a. **Adverse effects:** moonshine was poor quality and sometimes killed people. 'Jackass brandy' caused internal bleeding, 'Soda Pop Moon' contained poisonous alcohol.
- a. **Gangsterism flourished running the illegal trade:** It became hugely profitable, and led to a growth of violence, protection rackets etc. associated with the illegal trade (see '[Organised Crime](#)' below). The general flouting brought the rule of law in general into disrepute as police 'turned a blind eye'. Corruption grew.
- a. **End:** in 1933 the 21st Amendment abolished Prohibition (= 'proved' that it failed).

Argument 2 - A Success [ALE]:

- a. **Alcohol destroyed:** in 1929, 50 million litres of illegal alcohol were discovered and destroyed.
- b. **Legacy:** the actual consumption of alcohol fell, not just during prohibition, but for many years after - did not reach pre-1914 levels until 1971 ([see the figures](#)).
- c. **Eliot Ness and the Untouchables:** became famous as examples of the high standards police SHOULD achieve.

5. Organised Crime

Organised crime stepped in to take over from the breweries and spirits manufacturers:

- a. They ran the speakeasies, and bootlegging.
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- c. They bribed trade union leaders, police, lawyers, judges and even Senators.
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- e. They fought with each other for control of their 'territory' - the most

Links

[Essay on the causes of Prohibition](#)

[Good essay](#) arguing the traditional case that Prohibition was a failure.

[Interesting site](#) arguing that prohibition reduced alcohol consumption permanently.

[This site](#) shows that Americans used many other addictive substances before 1919

 [Great student's video](#)

Powerpoint:

- Prohibition [ppt](#).

Source B

Why Prohibition [ACRIME]

- a. **Anti-Saloon League** - campaigned that drink hurt families because men wasted money on beer, that it ruined their health and lost them their jobs, and that it led to domestic violence and neglect.
- b. **Christian organisation** - esp. Women's Christian Temperance Union - supported prohibition. (The early 20th century was a time of Christian revival.)
- c. **Rural America** - scandalised by behaviour in the towns - supported it.
- d. **Isolationism** - it was said that money spent on drink 'flew away to Germany' because much of the beer drunk in America was brewed there.
- e. **Madness**, crime, poverty and illness were seen as caused by alcohol - many (including BOTH my grandparents, 'signed the pledge' *never* to drink.)
- f. **Easy Street** - Charlie Chaplin's comic film (1917) showed how drink damaged, and Christianity nurtured, families' happiness and prosperity.

Source C

Why Prohibition Failed [NCP]

- a. **Not enough Agents** - only 4000
- b. **Corruption and bribes** - one tenth of Agents sacked for taking bribes
- c. **Public support** - most people did NOT support a ban.

famous incident was the [St Valentine's Day Massacre](#) in 1929, when 'torpedoes' from Capone's gang shot dead 7 members of Bugs Moran's gang.