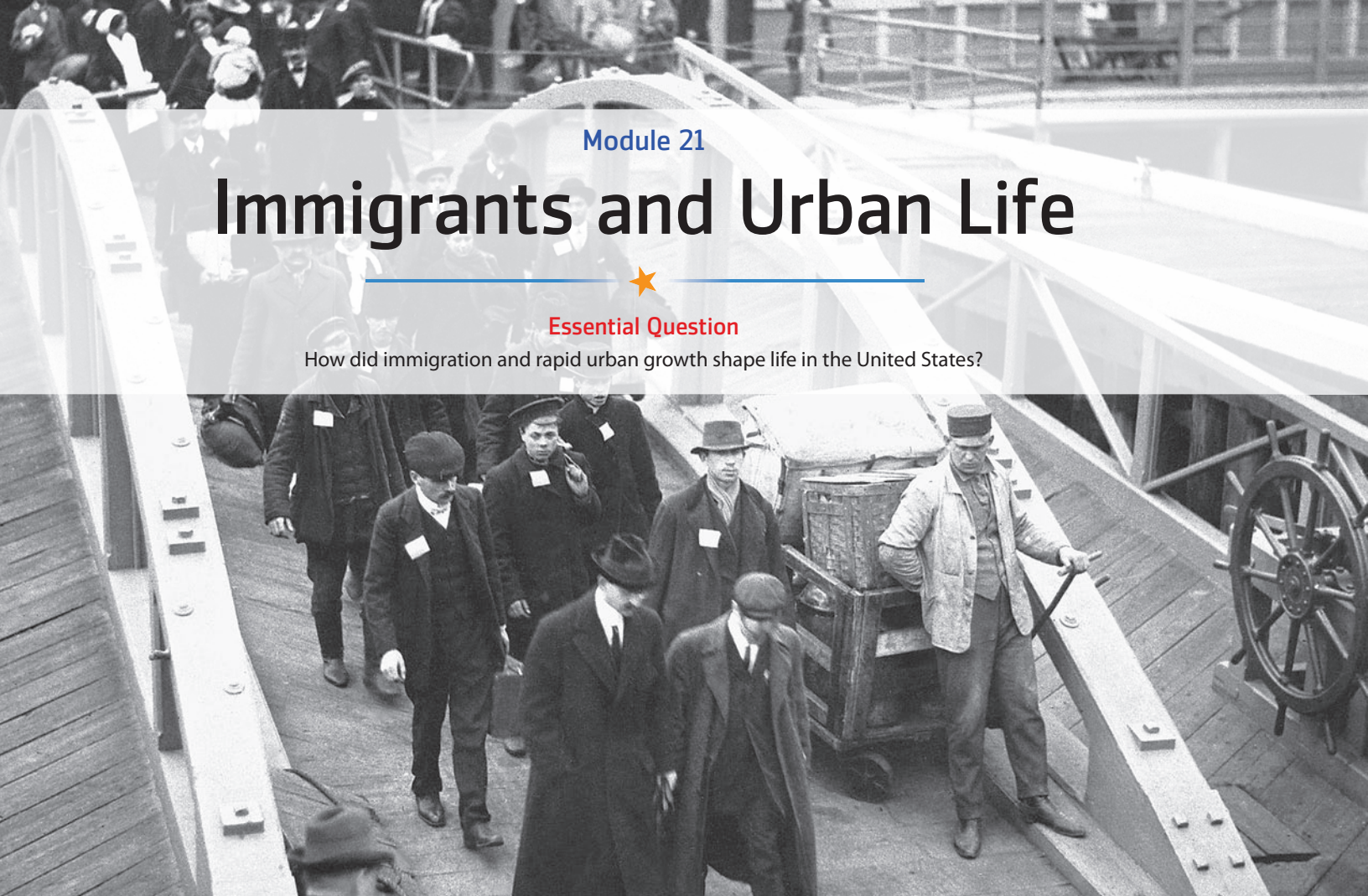


Immigrants and Urban Life



Essential Question

How did immigration and rapid urban growth shape life in the United States?



About the Photo: These immigrants to the United States entered through Ellis Island.

In this module you will learn about immigration and its effects on U.S. cities. You will also read about some of the challenges faced by these cities.

What You Will Learn ...

Lesson 1: A New Wave of Immigration. 664

The Big Idea A new wave of immigration in the late 1800s brought large numbers of immigrants to the United States.

Lesson 2: The Growth of Cities. 670

The Big Idea American cities experienced dramatic expansion and change in the late 1800s.

Lesson 3: City Life. 674

The Big Idea The rapid growth of cities in the late 1800s created both challenges and opportunities.

Explore ONLINE!



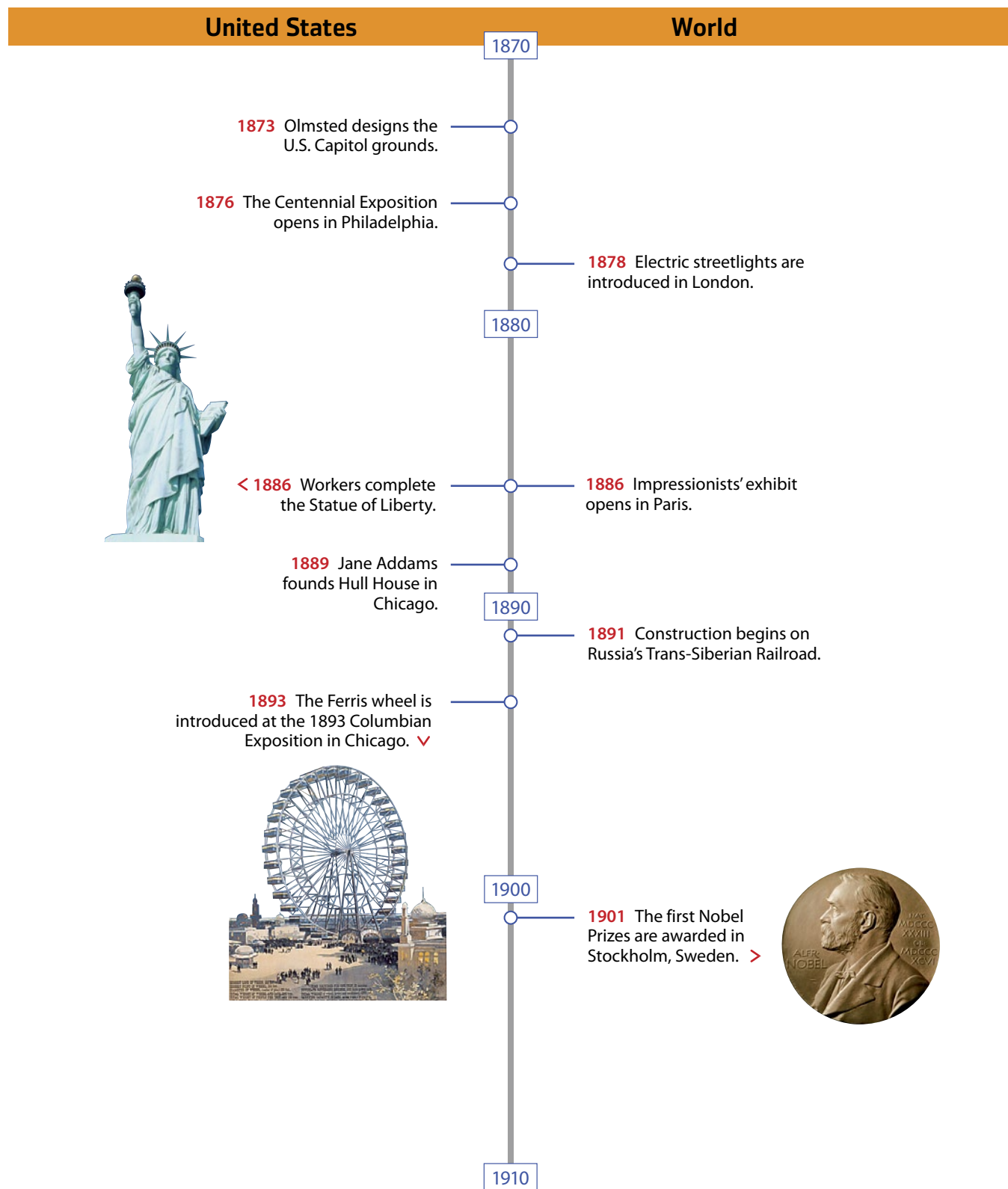
VIDEOS, including...

- Arrival at Ellis Island
- Angel Island: Ellis Island of the West
- Chicago Fire
- Jacob Riis

- ✓ Document-Based Investigations
- ✓ Graphic Organizers
- ✓ Interactive Games
- ✓ Image Carousel: Coming to America
- ✓ Image with Hotspots: Steel Beam Skyscrapers

Timeline of Events 1870–1910

Explore ONLINE!



Reading Social Studies

THEME FOCUS:

Economics, Society and Culture

In this module you will read about the changes in society and culture in the late 1800s. Among these changes was an increase in immigration. New immigrants to America found a society full of economic opportunities and hardships. Immigration and technology combined to change the way of life in cities.

READING FOCUS:

Understand Historical Fact versus Historical Fiction

When you read a book like *The Red Badge of Courage* or see a movie about World War II, do you ever wonder how much is fiction and how much is fact?

Distinguish Fact from Fiction Historical fiction gives readers a chance to meet real historical people and real historical events in the framework of a made-up story. Some of what you read in historical fiction could be verified in an encyclopedia, but other parts existed only in the author's mind until he or she put it on paper. As a good reader of history, you should know the difference between facts, which can be proved or verified, and fiction.

Notice how one reader determined which details could be verified or proved.

That was a woman filling her pail by the hydrant you just bumped against. The sinks are in the hallway, that all the tenants may have access—and all be poisoned alike by their summer stench. Hear the pump squeak! It is the lullaby of tenement house babes. In summer, when a thousand thirsty throats pant of a cooling drink in this block, it is worked in vain . . .

—from *How the Other Half Lives*,
by Jacob Riis

The woman filling her pail isn't a fact I can check. He's just using her as an example of what women did.

We could probably check city records to see whether the buildings really had sinks in the hallways.

The writer is generalizing here. We probably can't prove 1,000 thirsty throats. We could find out whether the city's water pumps actually went dry in the summer. That's verifiable.

You Try It!

The following passage is from *How the Other Half Lives* by Jacob Riis, a journalist and photographer who documented New York tenement life in the late 1800s. After you read it, answer the questions below.

This gap between dingy brick-walls is the yard. That strip of smoke-colored sky up there is the heaven of these people. Do you wonder the name does not attract them to the churches? That baby's parents live in the rear tenement here. She is at least as clean as the steps we are now climbing. There are plenty of houses with half a hundred such in. The tenement is much like the one in front we just left, only fouler, closer, darker—we will not say more cheerless. The word is a mockery. A hundred thousand people lived in rear tenements in New York last year. Here is a room neater than the rest. The woman, a stout matron with hard lines of care in her face, is at the wash-tub. "I try to keep the childer clean," she says, apologetically, but with a hopeless glance around.

—Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*

1. Which facts from the paragraph above can be confirmed?
2. What sources might you check to confirm some of these facts?
3. List two things from the passage that could not be confirmed.
4. Why are these two things not able to be confirmed?

As you read Module 21, notice which facts you could easily confirm.

Key Terms and People

Lesson 1

old immigrants
new immigrants
steerage
benevolent societies
tenements
sweatshops
Chinese Exclusion Act

Lesson 2

mass transit
suburbs
mass culture
Joseph Pulitzer
William Randolph Hearst
department stores
Frederick Law Olmsted

Lesson 3

Jacob Riis
settlement houses
Jane Addams
Hull House
assimilation
Florence Kelley

A New Wave of Immigration

The Big Idea

A new wave of immigration in the late 1800s brought large numbers of immigrants to the United States.

Main Ideas

- U.S. immigration patterns changed during the late 1800s as new immigrants arrived from Europe, Asia, and Mexico.
- Immigrants worked hard to adjust to life in the United States.
- Some Americans opposed immigration and worked to restrict it.

Key Terms and People

old immigrants
new immigrants
steerage
benevolent societies
tenements
sweatshops
Chinese Exclusion Act

If YOU were there . . .

You live with your family on a small farm in Italy in the 1890s. You want to earn some money to help your parents, but there are not many jobs nearby. You have heard that jobs are easy to find in the booming factories of the United States. But you speak no English and know no one in America.

Would you travel to the United States in search of new opportunities?

Changing Patterns of Immigration

Millions of immigrants came to the United States from northern Europe in the mid-1800s. They came mainly from Great Britain, Germany, Ireland, and the countries of Scandinavia. Except for the Irish, who were Roman Catholics, most were Protestants. Many were skilled workers. Others settled in rural areas and became farmers. By the late 1800s immigrants from northern Europe were known as **old immigrants**. A newer and larger wave of immigration—from different parts of the world—was arriving in the United States.

New Immigrants During the 1880s more than 5 million immigrants arrived in the United States—about the same number of people as had arrived during the six decades from 1800 to 1860 combined. The majority of these **new immigrants** were from southern and eastern Europe. Thousands of Czechs, Greeks, Hungarians, Italians, Poles, Russians, and Slovaks came to the United States to find new opportunities and better lives. A young woman from Russia spoke for many of her fellow immigrants when she said she hoped “for all manner of miracles in a strange, wonderful land!”

New immigrants came from many different cultural and religious backgrounds. They included Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, and Jews. Some were escaping political or



Immigrants often arrived at Ellis Island with few belongings. This Italian family is looking for lost baggage.

Reading Check

Contrast How was the experience of immigrants at Ellis Island different from that of immigrants at Angel Island?

religious persecution. They were eager for the job opportunities created by the U.S. industrial boom of the late 1800s.

Arriving in a New Land Immigrants usually faced a difficult journey by ship to America. Most traveled in **steerage**—an area below a ship’s deck where steering mechanisms were located. Steerage tickets were inexpensive, but the cabins were hot, cramped, and foul-smelling. Many passengers were seasick for the entire journey. Some even died of diseases contracted along the way.

Once in the United States, new arrivals were processed through government-run immigration centers. The busiest center on the East Coast was Ellis Island, which opened in New York Harbor in 1892. The first immigrant processed through Ellis Island was Annie Moore Schayer, a 14-year-old from Ireland. Over the next 40 years, millions of European immigrants came through Ellis Island.

At immigration centers officials interviewed and examined immigrants to decide whether to let them enter the country. People with contagious diseases or legal problems could be turned away. “There was this terrible anxiety that one of us might be rejected,” remembered one immigrant traveling with his family. “And if one of us was, what would the rest of the family do?” This rarely happened, however. Less than 2 percent of the people who arrived at Ellis Island were not allowed into the country.

On the West Coast, many Chinese immigrants entered the United States through Angel Island, which opened near San Francisco in 1910. Because laws limited immigration from China, only people whose fathers were U.S. citizens were allowed into the country. Chinese immigrants were often kept at Angel Island for weeks or months while officials investigated their families.

Mexican immigrants also came to the United States in large numbers in the late 1800s. The main processing center for immigrants from Mexico was in El Paso, Texas. Most settled in the Southwest. They found work in construction, steel mills, and mines, and on large commercial farms.

Adjusting to a New Life

Once they entered the United States, immigrants began the hard work of adjusting to life in a new country. They needed to find homes and jobs. They had to learn a new language and get used to new customs. This was all part of building a new life.

Immigrant Neighborhoods Many immigrants moved into neighborhoods with others from the same country. In these neighborhoods, they could speak their native language and eat foods that reminded them of home. Immigrants could also practice the customs that their families had passed down from generation to generation. An Italian immigrant remembered that in his new neighborhood, “cheeses from Italy, sausage, salamis were all hanging in the window.”

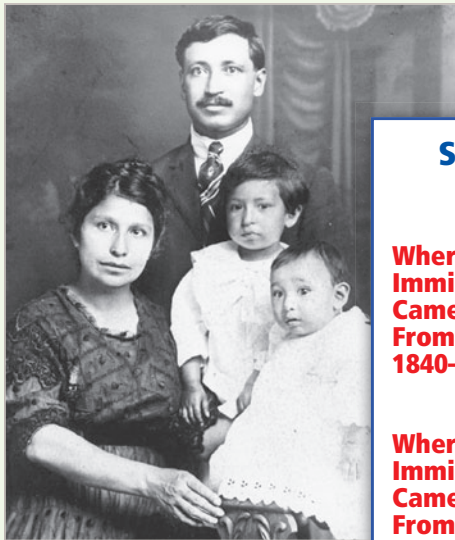
In their newly adopted neighborhoods, many immigrant groups published newspapers in their own languages. They founded schools, clubs,

Coming to America

During the late 1800s the places people came from began to change. The charts below show the percentages of people who moved from different places. The total number of immigrants reached a peak in the 1880s, when about 5 million people came to the United States.

Analyze Information

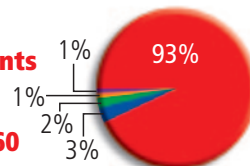
By how much did the percentage of immigrants from northern and western Europe change from 1840 to 1900?



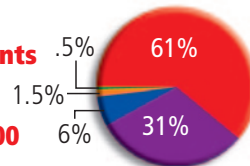
▲ Augustin and Maria Lozano and their two children are shown after moving from Mexico to California. Many Mexican immigrants moved into the Southwest.

Shifting Patterns of Immigration

Where Immigrants Came From, 1840–1860

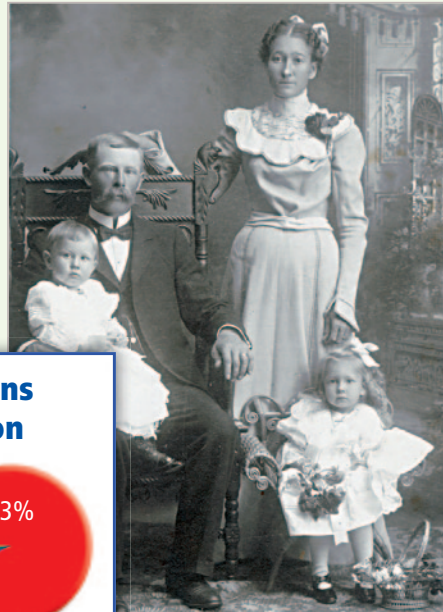


Where Immigrants Came From, 1880–1900



- Northern and western Europe
- Eastern and southern Europe
- North and South America
- Asia
- All other areas

Swedish immigrant Swan August Swanson followed his father to Wisconsin to help with the family farm. Like many new Americans, he married within the immigrant community. ▼



The son of Italian immigrants, Amadeo Peter Giannini founded the Bank of Italy in San Francisco in 1904. Due to his guidance and perseverance, it became the largest privately owned bank in the world. ▼



▲ In this photo, Japanese men and Chinese women leave the detention center on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. Angel Island was the processing center for many immigrants from Asia.



and places of worship to help preserve their customs. In New York City, for example, Jewish immigrants founded a theater that gave performances in Yiddish—the language spoken by Jews from central and eastern Europe.

Immigrants often opened local shops and small neighborhood banks. Business owners helped new arrivals by offering credit and giving small loans. Such aid was important for newcomers because there were few commercial banks in immigrant neighborhoods. In 1904 Italian immigrant Amadeo Peter Giannini started the Bank of Italy in San Francisco. This bank later grew and became the Bank of America.

Some immigrant communities formed **benevolent societies**. These aid organizations offered immigrants help in cases of sickness, unemployment, or death. At that time, few national government agencies provided such aid.

Even with neighborhood support, however, immigrants often found city life difficult. Many immigrants lived in **tenements**. These were poorly built, overcrowded apartment buildings. Lacking adequate light, ventilation, and sanitation, tenements were very unhealthy places to live. Disease spread rapidly in the crowded conditions.

The plight of tenement dwellers sparked preliminary efforts at reform. In some cities, local boards of health were established to set sanitation rules. Enforcement was often uneven, however, and the poorer neighborhoods received less attention than richer ones.

Immigrants worked hard to adjust to their new country. Children often learned American customs more quickly than their parents. In public schools, immigrant children learned English from McGuffey's Readers. The Readers were illustrated textbooks that taught reading and writing.

Finding Work Many new immigrants had worked on farms in their homelands. Few could afford to buy land in the United States, however. Instead, they found jobs in cities, where most of the country's manufacturing took place.

Having come from rural areas, few new immigrants were skilled in modern manufacturing or industrial work. They often had no choice but to take low-paying, unskilled jobs. They often worked in garment factories, steel mills, or construction. Long hours were common.

Not all industrial labor took place in large factories. Some immigrants worked for little pay in small shops or mills located in their own neighborhoods. Often associated with the clothing industry, these workplaces were called **sweatshops** because of long hours and hot, unhealthy working conditions. One young immigrant worker remembered:

“When the shirtwaists were finished at the machine . . . we were given scissors to cut the threads off. It wasn't heavy work, but it was monotonous [boring], because you did the same thing from seven-thirty in the morning till nine at night.”

—Pauline Newman, quoted in *American Mosaic: The Immigrant Experience in the Words of Those Who Lived It*,
by Joan Morrison and Charlotte Fox Zabusky

Asian Americans Today

Today, almost 15 million people in the United States are of Asian origin. They account for about 5 percent of the U.S. population—or about 1 in 20 Americans. Asian Americans trace their roots to various countries, including China, India, the Philippines, and, like this family, Vietnam. Many of these people left their homeland to escape oppression. They sought a life of freedom in the United States. Most Asian Americans live in the West. California has by far the largest Asian American population of any state.

Analyze Information

What push-pull factors do you think caused so many people to move to the United States?



Reading Check

Summarize

How did new immigrants help themselves and others to try to make successful lives in the United States?

Immigrants with skills that were in demand sometimes found work outside factories and sweatshops. Some worked as bakers, carpenters, masons, or skilled machinists. Others saved or borrowed money to open small businesses such as laundries, barbershops, or street vending carts. New immigrants often opened the same types of businesses in which other immigrants from the same country were already succeeding. They worked hard for long hours to become successful themselves.

Opposition to Immigration

Some Americans welcomed new immigrants. Many business leaders, for example, wanted immigrant workers who were willing to work for low pay. In general, however, anti-immigrant feelings grew as immigration increased in the late 1800s. Some labor unions opposed immigration because their members believed immigrants would take jobs away from native-born Americans.

Other Americans called nativists also feared that too many new immigrants were being allowed into the country. Many nativists held racial and ethnic prejudices. They thought that the new immigrants would not learn American customs, which might harm American society.

Some nativists were violent toward immigrants. Others **advocated** laws and policies to stop or limit immigration. For example, in 1880 about 105,000 Chinese immigrants lived in the United States. Two years later, Congress passed the **Chinese Exclusion Act**. This law banned new immigrants to the United States from China for ten years. This was the first time a nationality was banned from entering the country. Although the

Academic

Vocabulary

advocate to plead in favor of

Reading Check

Analyze Why did nativists oppose immigration?

law violated treaties with China, Congress continued to renew it for several decades. Other immigration policies included another law passed in 1892 that restricted convicts, immigrants with certain diseases, and those likely to need public assistance from entering the country.

Despite such opposition, immigrants continued to arrive in large numbers. They worked for low pay in factories. They built buildings, highways, and railroads. Their labor helped power the continuing industrial growth of the late 1800s and early 1900s. They did not always achieve their dreams as quickly as they had hoped. But most immigrants remained confident about the future for themselves and their families in the United States. A Jewish immigrant from Russia named Abraham Hyman expressed this idea, saying, “Your feeling is that a better time is coming, if not for yourself, for your families, for your children.”

Summary and Preview Immigrants helped build the nation’s economy and cities, but they met resistance from some native-born Americans. In the next lesson you will learn about what life was like in urban America.

Lesson 1 Assessment

Review Ideas, Terms, and People

1. a. **Identify** What was Ellis Island?
b. **Contrast** What differences existed between the old immigrants and the new immigrants?
2. a. **Identify** What job opportunities were available to new immigrants?
b. **Summarize** How did immigrants attempt to adapt to their new lives in the United States?
c. **Elaborate** Why do you think many immigrants tolerated difficult living and working conditions?
3. a. **Recall** What was the purpose of the Chinese Exclusion Act?
b. **Explain** Why did some labor unions oppose immigration?
c. **Predict** How might the growing opposition to immigration lead to problems in the United States?

Critical Thinking

4. **Categorize** In this lesson you learned about the benefits and challenges new U.S. immigrants faced. Create a graphic organizer similar to the one below and categorize the challenges immigrants faced in different areas of life.



The Growth of Cities

The Big Idea

American cities experienced dramatic expansion and change in the late 1800s.

Main Ideas

- Both immigrants and native-born Americans moved to growing urban areas in record numbers in the late 1800s and early 1900s.
- New technology and ideas helped cities change and adapt to rapid population growth.

Key Terms and People

mass transit

suburbs

mass culture

Joseph Pulitzer

William Randolph Hearst

department stores

Frederick Law Olmsted

If YOU were there . . .

The year is 1905 and you have just come to the city of Chicago from the small town where you grew up. People rush past as you stop to stare up at the skyscrapers. Elevated trains roar overhead, and electric streetcars clatter along streets already crowded with pushcarts and horse-drawn wagons.

Will you stay and look for work in this big city?

Growth of Urban Areas

In 1850 New York City was the only U.S. city with a population of more than 500,000. By 1900 New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Boston, and Baltimore all had more than half a million residents. More than 35 U.S. cities had populations greater than 100,000. About 40 percent of Americans now lived in urban areas.

As you have read, new immigrants were responsible for a lot of this urban growth. So were families from rural areas in the United States. As farm equipment replaced workers in the countryside, large numbers of rural residents moved to the cities in search of work in manufacturing and related fields. This fundamental shift in the economy had far-reaching social effects. Previously, most Americans had worked on farms. People worked for themselves, kept the profits they earned, and made much of what they needed.

Americans who worked in factories faced a far different economic situation. They were wage earners. That is, instead of earning income from their own work, they were paid a set amount by business owners. Instead of making the things they needed, they had to buy them—using limited wages—from merchants in the city where they lived.

African Americans from the rural South also began moving to northern cities in the 1890s. They hoped to escape discrimination and find better educational and economic opportunities. Cities such as Chicago; Cleveland,

Academic Vocabulary
factor cause

Reading Check
Identify Cause and Effect
What factors led to massive population growth in urban areas during the late 1800s and early 1900s?



In the late 1800s, cities like Chicago took bold steps to alleviate crowding by testing new forms of construction and transportation.

Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; and New York City saw large increases in their African American populations during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of urban growth was the rise of Chicago. The city's population exploded from 30,000 in 1850 to 1.7 million in 1900. Chicago passed St. Louis as the biggest city in the Midwest. Along with the large numbers of African Americans moving to the city, many of Chicago's new residents were immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. In 1900 immigrants and their children made up three-quarters of Chicago's population.

Chicago's location was another **factor** in its rapid growth. Many of the new railroad lines connecting the East and West coasts ran through Chicago. This put Chicago at the heart of the nation's trade in lumber, grain, and meat. Thousands of new Chicago residents found work in the city's huge slaughterhouses and meatpacking plants. Here, meat from the West and Midwest was packed into refrigerated train cars and shipped to growing eastern cities, where it could be sold in shops to customers.

Changing Cities

American cities such as Chicago were ill-prepared for the rapid urban growth of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Where was everyone going to live? How were people going to get from home to work on crowded city streets? Several new technologies helped cities meet these challenges. These technologies forever changed the look and function of U.S. cities.

Building Skyscrapers With so many people moving to urban areas, cities quickly ran out of building space in downtown areas. One solution would be to build taller buildings. Typical city buildings in the mid-1800s were only five stories tall, but taller structures were impossible to construct because the building materials available were either too weak or too heavy.

This changed with the rise of the American steel industry in the late 1800s. Mills began producing tons of strong and inexpensive steel. Soon, architects such as Louis Sullivan of Chicago began designing multistory buildings called skyscrapers. Architects used steel beams to make sturdy frames that could support the weight of tall buildings. This allowed builders to use limited city space more efficiently.

The safety elevator, patented by Elisha Otis in the 1850s, helped make skyscrapers practical. Previous elevators had been unsafe because they would crash to the ground if the elevator cable snapped. Otis's safety elevator included a device to hold the elevator in place if the cable broke.

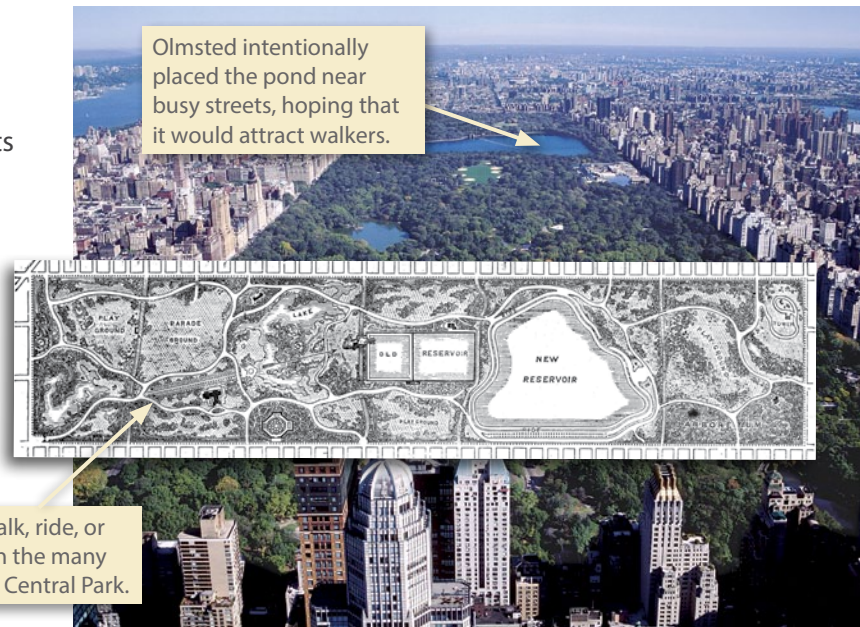
Getting Around Taller buildings made it possible for more people to live and work in city centers. This increased the need for **mass transit**, or public transportation designed to move many people. By the late 1860s New York City had elevated trains running on tracks above the streets. Chicago followed in the 1890s.

Some cities built underground railroads, known as subways. In 1897 the first subway in the United States opened in Boston. In 1904 the first line of the New York City subway system began operation. Cable cars and

Frederick Law Olmsted

Connect to the Arts Frederick Law Olmsted designed Central Park to serve as a place where New York City residents could relax, exercise, and enjoy nature. Olmsted included areas for horseback riding, ice-skating, boating, and baseball. The Children's District was designed as a place where parents could bring children to stay cool in the summer.

Why do you think a city dweller might be attracted to Central Park?



electric trolleys also became common. These streetcars cheaply and quickly carried people in the cities to and from work.

Many Americans who could afford it moved to **suburbs**, residential neighborhoods outside of downtown areas that had begun springing up before the Civil War. Mass transit networks made such moves possible. People could live in the suburbs and take trolleys, subways, or trains into the cities.

New Ideas In the late 1800s the United States also began to develop forms of **mass culture**, or leisure and cultural activities shared by many people. One factor contributing to mass culture was a boom in publishing. The invention of the Linotype, an automatic typesetting machine, greatly reduced the time and cost of printing. In 1850 there were fewer than 300 daily newspapers in the country. Because of the use of Linotype machines, by 1900 there were more than 2,000 newspapers.

Big cities often had many newspapers, so publishers had to compete for readers. In 1896 **Joseph Pulitzer** added a color comic to his *New York World* newspaper. More people started buying Pulitzer's paper. **William Randolph Hearst** was publisher of the *New York Journal*. He saw that comics helped sell newspapers. So he added a color comic strip to his paper. Soon, newspapers across the country were adding comic strips.

Mass culture affected how people shopped as well. Giant retail shops, or **department stores**, appeared in some cities during the late 1800s. One of the earliest was Marshall Field in Chicago. Field's offered low prices and large quantities of products. It also was the first department store to offer its customers a restaurant where they could eat while shopping. Newspaper and magazine advertising was used to bring in customers. Advertisers realized that women made most purchasing decisions about household goods, so they targeted their messages to them. The public was also attracted by fancy window displays.

Reading Check
Summarize
What forms of mass
culture were available
in urban areas?

Advertisers also tried new approaches to win customers. Food companies often used wholesome farm images to convey a sense of purity. Some companies came up with clever brand names, such as Uneeda Biscuit crackers, to help customers remember their products.

Rural dwellers did not have access to urban department stores. But they could purchase a huge variety of goods from mail-order companies. In 1897 Sears, Roebuck and Company produced a 507-page catalog. It offered everything from slippers to stoves to saddles. Mail-order customers simply made their selections, sent in their payments, and waited for the merchandise they ordered to arrive by rail or post.

World fairs were another example of mass culture. Fairs brought merchants together, which sometimes resulted in new ideas and products. At the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, for example, a Syrian food vendor began making cones for a nearby ice cream vendor who had run out of dishes. Ice cream cones became popular throughout the country.

The demand for public entertainment also led to the creation of amusement parks, such as New York's Coney Island. The inexpensive entry tickets made Coney Island a favorite destination for children and families. For a nickel, visitors could ride a new invention called the Switchback Railway—the country's first roller coaster.

As cities grew, people became aware of the need for open public space. Landscape architect **Frederick Law Olmsted** became nationally famous. He designed Central Park in New York City, as well as many state and national parks. Some of his other well-known projects include Prospect Park in Brooklyn, New York, and the U.S. Capitol grounds, which he worked on between 1874 and 1895.

Summary and Preview Immigration and new technology helped cities grow in the late 1800s. In the next lesson you will learn about some of the problems caused by rapid urban growth.

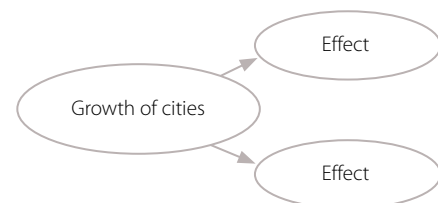
Lesson 2 Assessment

Review Ideas, Terms, and People

- Identify** What groups of people began moving to cities in the late 1800s?
 - Explain** Why did African Americans begin to move to northern cities in the 1890s?
 - Predict** Do you think cities such as Chicago continued to grow in the 1900s? Why or why not?
- Define** What is mass transit? What made mass transit necessary?
 - Explain** How did new inventions make it possible for people to build skyscrapers?
 - Evaluate** Which improvement to urban living do you think had the greatest impact on people's lives? Explain your answer.

Critical Thinking

- Identify Cause and Effect** In this lesson you learned about the causes for the growth of cities. Create a graphic organizer similar to the one below and identify the effects of city growth. You may need to add more circles.



City Life

The Big Idea

The rapid growth of cities in the late 1800s created both challenges and opportunities.

Main Ideas

- Crowded urban areas faced a variety of social problems.
- People worked to improve the quality of life in U.S. cities.

Key Terms and People

Jacob Riis
settlement houses
Jane Addams
Hull House
assimilation
Florence Kelley

If YOU were there . . .

You live in a fast-growing city in 1895. When you walk the streets, you meet families who are packed into run-down apartments in crowded, filthy neighborhoods. You meet immigrants who want to study English but have no money for classes. You are determined to help these city residents improve their lives.

What would you do to help improve life in your city?

Urban Problems

In cities of the late 1800s and early 1900s, there was a shortage of affordable housing. This forced many poor families to squeeze into tiny tenement apartments, which were frequently unsafe and unsanitary. Journalist and photographer **Jacob Riis** became famous for exposing the horrible conditions in New York City tenements. Riis wrote about one typical tenement family:

“There were nine in the family: husband, wife, an aged grandmother, and six children . . . All nine lived in two rooms, one about ten feet square that served as parlor, bedroom, and eating-room, the other a small hall-room made into a kitchen.”

—Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*

Overcrowding caused sanitation problems. Most cities did not have a good system for collecting trash, so garbage often piled up outside apartment buildings. An article in the *New York Tribune* described the garbage in front of one tenement as a “mass of air poisoning, death-breeding filth, reeking in the fierce sunshine.”

Unsafe conditions were also common in tenements. Before 1900 most cities did not have laws requiring landlords to fix their tenements or to maintain safety standards. A fire on one floor could easily spread, and fire escapes were often blocked or broken.

Overcrowded city tenements caused problems such as disease, fire, and crime.

Quick Facts

Tenement Life

Causes

- Overcrowding
- Unsafe buildings
- Unsanitary conditions
- Scarce running water
- Poor ventilation

Effects

- Diseases such as tuberculosis and cholera
- High child death rates
- Fire
- Crime



Tenement rooms had few or no windows to let in fresh air and sunshine. Comfort was also scarce, with so many people crowded into such small spaces. Running water and indoor plumbing were also scarce. So was clean water. Cities often dumped garbage into local rivers that were used for drinking water.

Disease-causing bacteria grew easily in these conditions. Diseases such as cholera, typhoid, influenza, and tuberculosis spread quickly in crowded neighborhoods. Children were the most vulnerable to these diseases. For example, babies born in Chicago in 1870 had only a 50 percent chance of living to the age of five.

Air pollution was also a serious environmental problem in many growing cities. This was a time when many business leaders were building huge oil refineries, steel mills, and other factories. The steel mills of Andrew Carnegie, for example, helped make Pittsburgh the nation's steel-making center in the late 1800s. Steel mills brought jobs and wealth to Pittsburgh. But they also caused some of the nation's worst environmental issues. "Every street appears to end in a huge, black cloud," said one writer. "Pittsburgh is smoke, smoke, smoke—everywhere smoke." The air was so polluted at times that the city had to turn on outdoor lighting during the day.

The work of many city governments slowly helped to lessen some of these urban problems. By the late 1800s new sewage and water purification systems improved city sanitation. Many major cities began hiring

Reading Check

Summarize

What challenges did many city residents face in the late 1800s?

full-time firefighters and police officers. Police officers in cities were typically placed in one neighborhood. They knew the local residents and were frequently involved in local activities. They could spot local problems and, in many cases, provide help to immigrants.

Improving City Life

Jacob Riis hoped his book *How the Other Half Lives* would shock many Americans—and it did. A reformer named Lawrence Veiller helped lead the effort to improve conditions in tenements. Describing the effects of tenement living on children, he wrote:

“A child living its early years in dark rooms, without sunlight or fresh air, does not grow up to be a normal, healthy person . . . It is not of such material that strong nations are made.”

—Lawrence Veiller, quoted in *Readings in American History*, Vol. 2

Veiller worked with an organization called the Charity Organization Society (COS) to get changes made to New York laws. In 1900 he and the COS sponsored an exhibit of photographs and maps graphically showing the conditions of New York tenements. More than 10,000 people visited the exhibit, and they were shocked by what they saw. The work of Veiller and the COS helped pass the 1901 New York State Tenement House Act. This law required new buildings to have better ventilation and running water. It became a model for housing reform in other states.

Because there was little government aid available in the 1800s, private organizations generally took on the task of helping the urban poor. Some individuals set up **settlement houses**, or neighborhood centers in poor areas that offered education, recreation, and social activities.



Hull House

Neighborhood children attended kindergarten at Hull House. Their parents typically had low-paying jobs, and many were children of immigrants. Children like these had few other options for education.

How did Hull House try to improve the lives of children?

Jane Addams 1860–1935

Jane Addams was born in Cedarville, Illinois. Like many upper-class women of the era, she received a college education but found few jobs open to her. In 1888, on a visit to England with classmate Ellen Gates Starr, she visited a London settlement house. On their return to the United States, Addams and Starr opened a settlement house in Chicago. They started a kindergarten and a public playground. Addams also became involved in housing safety and sanitation issues, factory inspection, and immigrants' rights. In 1931 she shared the Nobel Peace Prize for her work with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Summarize

How did Jane Addams try to improve the lives of workers?



Settlement houses were staffed by professionals and volunteers. Many were educated women who came from wealthy families. In 1886 Charles B. Stover and Stanton Coit established the first settlement house in the United States. It was called Neighborhood Guild and was located on the Lower East Side in New York City. In 1889 **Jane Addams** and Ellen Gates Starr moved into a run-down building in a poor Chicago neighborhood and turned it into **Hull House**, the most famous settlement house of the period.

The Hull House staff focused on the needs of immigrant families. By 1893 Hull House was serving 2,000 people a week. Some families went through a process of **assimilation**, in which they adopted some American beliefs and aspects of American culture. The Hull House staff helped to assimilate the immigrants by providing English classes, day care, and cooking and sewing classes. Children and adults took part in club meetings, art classes, plays, and learned American sports.

Jane Addams and the staff at Hull House also worked for reforms. They studied the problems facing immigrants and poor city dwellers, then searched for ways to improve conditions. **Florence Kelley** was one important reformer at Hull House. She visited sweatshops and wrote about the problems there. Her work helped convince lawmakers to take action. Illinois passed a law in 1893 to limit working hours for women and to prevent child labor.

Kelley became the state's chief factory inspector and helped enforce the law. Although she believed more reforms were needed, she did report some improvements:

Reading Check
Draw Conclusions
How did Hull House
help improve city life?

“Previous to the passage of the factory law of 1893, it was the rule of [a candy] factory to work the children . . . from 7 A.M. to 9 P.M., with twenty minutes for lunch, and no supper, a working week of eighty-two hours . . . Since the enactment of the factory law, their working week has consisted of six days of eight hours each, a reduction of thirty-four hours a week.”

– Florence Kelley and Alzina P. Stevens, from *Hull House Maps and Papers*

As Hull House gained recognition, the settlement house movement spread to other cities. Most settlement houses continued to provide programs and services for city dwellers through the early 1900s. Some, such as Germantown Settlement in Pennsylvania, remain active today.

Summary and Preview Reformers in the late 1800s worked to solve urban problems. In the next module you will learn how Progressives pushed for further reforms.

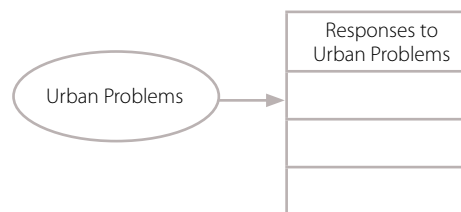
Lesson 3 Assessment

Review Ideas, Terms, and People

1. **a. Describe** What were conditions like in tenements?
b. Summarize What problems resulted from the rapid growth of cities?
c. Draw Conclusions Why do you think people lived in tenements?
2. **a. Define** What is a settlement house?
b. Explain How did settlement houses help city dwellers?
c. Evaluate Do you think settlement houses were successful? Why or why not?

Critical Thinking

3. **Categorize** In this lesson you learned about urban problems. Create a chart similar to the one below and identify the responses to those problems.



Social Studies Skills

Make Comparisons

Define the Skill

Understanding similarities is important when studying history. Comparing two or more people, things, events, or ideas highlights the similarities between them. Making comparisons can help clarify larger historical issues. This is true when comparing different time periods or when comparing different things from the same time period. Making comparisons is important in identifying historical connections.

Learn the Skill

When you encounter similar people, things, events, or ideas in history, use the following guidelines to make comparisons.

1. Identify who or what you are going to compare.
2. Look for similarities between them. Find examples of what makes them alike. Note any differences as well.
3. Use comparison words such as “like,” “both,” and “similar” to point out similarities.

In this module you have learned about several reformers, including Lawrence Veiller and Florence Kelley. Veiller helped lead the effort to improve conditions in tenements. Kelley was a reformer who worked at Hull House.

Lawrence Veiller and Florence Kelley were alike in many ways. Although Veiller focused on tenements and Kelley concentrated on factory work, both were concerned with problems that affected children. Both did research about their issues. Both then wrote about the poor conditions they found.

Both Veiller and Kelley worked successfully for laws that would improve those conditions. Kelley’s work helped convince Illinois lawmakers to pass a law to limit child labor. Similarly, Veiller helped to get the 1901 New York State Tenement House Act passed.

Practice the Skill

Review the module to find two people, things, events, or ideas that are similar. Then apply the guidelines to answer the following questions.

1. Which people, things, events, or ideas will you compare? Why is each of them important?
2. How are they alike? How are they different?

Module 21 Assessment

Review Vocabulary, Terms, and People

Identify the descriptions below with the correct term or person from the module.

1. Public transportation systems built to move many people and ease traffic in crowded cities
2. Founded Hull House with Ellen Gates Starr in 1889
3. Organizations created by immigrants to help each other in times of sickness, unemployment, or other troubles
4. Law banning Chinese people from moving to the United States
5. Neighborhood centers in poor urban areas that offered education, recreation, and social activities
6. Landscape architect who designed New York City's Central Park
7. Small shops or mills where immigrants worked for long hours in hot, unhealthy conditions

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

Lesson 1

8.
 - a. **Identify** From what parts of the world did the wave of new immigrants come?
 - b. **Analyze** In what ways did immigration patterns in the United States change in the late 1800s?
 - c. **Elaborate** In your opinion, were the difficulties that immigrants faced worth the benefits of life in the United States? Explain.

Lesson 2

9.
 - a. **Recall** Why did U.S. cities experience such rapid growth in the late 1800s?
 - b. **Analyze** How did new technologies help cities deal with population growth?
 - c. **Elaborate** Would you have preferred to live in a city or in a suburb? Why?

Lesson 3

10.
 - a. **Recall** What were conditions like in tenements in the late 1800s?
 - b. **Make Inferences** Why did rapid population growth cause problems in cities?
 - c. **Elaborate** Why do you think the settlement house movement grew in the late 1800s and early 1900s?

Review Themes

11. **Economics** What role did economics play in the growth of cities?
12. **Society and Culture** How did the lives of city dwellers change with the rise of mass culture?

Module 21 Assessment, continued

Reading Skills

Understand Historical Fact versus Historical Fiction Use the Reading Skills taught in this module to answer the question about the reading selection below.

Mass culture affected how people shopped as well. Giant retail shops, or department stores, appeared in some cities during the late 1800s. One of the earliest was Marshall Field in Chicago. Field's offered low prices and large quantities of products. It also was the first department store to offer its customers a restaurant where they could eat while shopping. Newspaper and magazine advertising was used to bring in customers. Advertisers realized that women made most purchasing decisions about household goods. The public was also attracted by fancy window displays.

13. Which facts above can be verified? Where would you look to verify them?

Social Studies Skills

Make Comparisons Use the Social Studies Skills taught in this module to complete the activity below.

14. Choose two reforms that were discussed in this module. Make a comparison between the two.

Focus on Writing

15. **Write a Memo** In this module you learned about the people, places, and events of the late 1800s. Suppose you are a writer at a television network developing a story idea for a drama series set in this time period. Decide which people, places, and events you will include in your television drama series. Then draft a one- or two-paragraph memo to your boss describing the series. Remember to describe the basic plot, setting, and characters.

Ellis Island

A detailed 3D cutaway illustration of the Ellis Island Immigration Station. The main building is a large, red-brick structure with a red-tiled roof and multiple levels. It is filled with a large crowd of people, representing immigrants. The building is surrounded by a body of water with several large steamships. The sky is blue with some clouds. The cutaway shows the interior of the building, including a large hall with a high ceiling and arched windows. The building is surrounded by a low wall and a small garden area. The overall scene depicts the busy atmosphere of the immigration station.

For most European immigrants, Ellis Island was the first stop. Between 1892 and 1954, the immigration station processed over 12 million immigrants. These immigrants went through an inspection before they were allowed to enter the United States. Those with serious health problems were sent home, as were those who did not meet various legal requirements. Others were sent home because they exceeded immigration quotas.

However, if immigrants could clear these hurdles, they were free to enter the United States and begin their new lives.

Go online to explore some of the personal stories and recollections of immigrants who made the journey to America and passed through Ellis Island. You can find a wealth of information, video clips, primary sources, activities, and more through your online textbook.

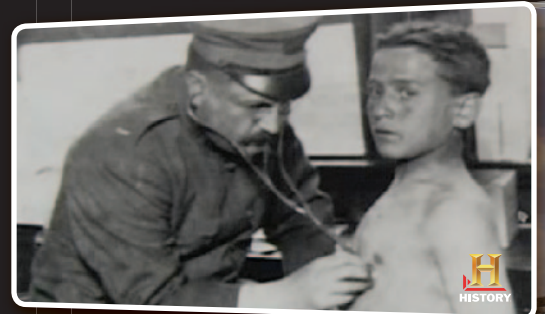


- 1** Doctors examined immigrants as they headed upstairs to the Great Hall.
- 2** Lines were long, but the inspection often lasted only a few minutes.
- 3** Immigrants who passed the inspection could exchange money, send mail or telegrams, or buy train tickets.
- 4** Immigrants then met relatives or loved ones.
- 5** Immigrants who had to stay overnight were assigned to dormitories.



The Golden Door

Watch the video to see how and why immigrants traveled to the United States.



Examination

Watch the video to see the physical examination that immigrants experienced at Ellis Island.



Quotas

Watch the video to see how immigration quotas affected immigrants trying to come to the United States.