

## Progressive Era Reforms Project

Though industrialization in the United States raised standards of living for many, it had a dark side. Corporate bosses, sometimes referred to as “**robber barons**,” pursued unethical and unfair business practices aimed at eliminating competition and increasing profits. Factory workers, many of them recent immigrants, were frequently subjected to brutal and dangerous working and living conditions. Political corruption enriched politicians at the expense of the lower and working classes, who struggled to make ends meet. The gap between the “haves” and the “have-nots” was widening

The **Progressive movement** arose as a response to these negative effects of industrialization. Progressive reformers sought to regulate private industry, strengthen protections for workers and consumers, expose corruption in both government and big business, and generally improve society. Progressive Era reformers sought to harness the power of the federal government to eliminate unethical and unfair business practices, reduce corruption, and counteract the negative social effects of industrialization.

Your job: To create a poster that summarizes a particular Progressive Era reform

- Break up your poster into various sections
  - List the topic in big, bold letters
  - Problems
  - Muckrakers
  - Solutions
- **Type** answers to all of the questions
- Include at least 3 visuals that relate to your Progressive Era reform
- Present it to the class when we review this material together
- Use the links provided (they have been identified as having quality information that will help you answer the questions directly)

### Topic 1: Ending political corruption

- The Problem (<http://www.ushistory.org/us/38d.asp>)
  - What is a “political machine?” How did they gain control of government?
  - How did political machines corrupt government (provide examples)?
  - Who was “Boss Tweed?” How was he an example of a corrupt official?
- Muckraker (<https://blog.mcny.org/2013/09/24/thomas-nast-takes-down-tammany-a-cartoonists-crusade-against-a-political-boss/>)
  - How did Thomas Nast expose Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall?
- Solutions (US History textbook – p. 278-279; 287)
  - How did the following reforms give more power to the people and end corruption in government?
    - Primary Election
    - Referendum
    - Initiative
    - Recall
    - 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment

## Topic 2: Trustbusting

- The Problem ([http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3169](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3169))
  - What were the negative impacts of the growth of monopolies in the Industrial Era?
- The Muckraker (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-woman-who-took-on-the-tycoon-651396/>)
  - Explain how Ida Tarbell exposed John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company
- The Solution (<http://www.ushistory.org/us/43b.asp>)
  - What actions did Teddy Roosevelt take as President to break up monopolies? What companies did he target? What laws were passed?

## Topic 3: Protecting the American consumer

(<http://www.crf-usa.org/bill-of-rights-in-action/bria-24-1-b-upton-sinclairs-the-jungle-muckraking-the-meat-packing-industry.html>)

- The Problem:
  - Explain conditions for workers in the meat industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - How were the meat companies abusing consumers?
- The Muckraker
  - Explain what Upton Sinclair wrote about in his book *The Jungle*. How did his book become a national bestseller?
- The Solution
  - How did the government respond to the outcry following publication of *The Jungle*? How did these laws protect American consumers?
    - Pure Food and Drug Act
    - Meat Inspection Act

## Topic 4: Conserving America's natural resources

<http://www.ushistory.org/us/43d.asp>

<https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/historyculture/theodore-roosevelt-and-conservation.htm>

- The Problem
  - What was happening to the environment in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century?
- The Solution
  - What is conservation? What efforts did President Teddy Roosevelt take to protect the environment?
  - What other efforts were taken as part of the conservation movement to protect the environment?
  - Why did Teddy Roosevelt care about the environment so much?

## Topic 5: Tenement Reform and Urban Poverty

- Problem (<http://www.ushistory.org/us/38b.asp>)
  - What problems did American cities face in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century?
- Muckraker (<http://www.history.com/topics/tenements>)
  - Explain what Jacob Riis did in his book *How the Other Half Lives* to call attention to the problem of urban poverty
- Solution
  - How did tenement laws help to change living conditions in cities? (<http://www.history.com/topics/tenements>)
  - How did Jane Addams and the settlement house movement seek to address urban poverty? (<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=4948>)

## Topic 6: Prohibition

<http://www.history.com/topics/prohibition>

[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3383](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3383)

<http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/prohibition/unintended-consequences/>

- The Problem
  - Why did alcohol become the target of reformers? Why did they want to ban it?
  - What was the difference between temperance and prohibition?
- The Solution
  - What actions did the government take to ban alcohol?
  - Was the ban effective? Did it work?
  - What unintended consequences did Prohibition have? (discuss the rise of organized crime)