

Muckrakers, Robber Barons, and the Gilded Age in America

The period in American history from after the Civil War (1865) to around the beginning of World War I (1914 for Europe) was marked by great achievements and striking shortcomings. Mark Twain labeled the era the “Gilded Age” because it appeared America was “shiny” on the outside while on the inside it was “cheap” and lacking in fairness for normal citizens.

Robber Barons

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robber_baron (industrialist)

1. How did the “robber barons” get their name?
2. What is a “monopoly” (find a definition for the word) and why are they bad for consumers?

Choose one of the robber barons listed in the article above and answer the following questions and find the following resources about them and their business.

3. How did they make their money? (ex. Railroads, textiles, shipping)
4. What type of lifestyle did they lead?
5. Did they leave any money to charity? If your chosen Robber Baron left any money to a charity how much and to whom?

Child Labor in the Gilded Age

<http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/>

6. What types of jobs were children employed to do?
7. What types of things did they do to have fun?
8. What kinds of common conditions do you see in many of these photographs? (dangers, ages, clothing, facial expressions)

Child Labor Today

<http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/>

9. How are the pictures of child labor today similar to the ones of the gilded age?
10. How do they seem different?

Immigration

11. Why did European immigrants leave their home country?
12. Where did they enter the United States?

Urbanization and City Life

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jacob-Riis>

13. Who was Jacob Riis and why was he considered a muckraker?
14. What types of conditions did he document in New York City?

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Jungle

15. Who was Upton Sinclair and why was he considered a muckraker?
16. What types of conditions did he document in Chicago?