



▲ Workers in Armour's meatpacking house, Chicago, Illinois

WITNESS HISTORY

The New Urban America

Chicago—with its enormous stockyards and packinghouses, railroad depots, and machine-making plants—symbolized the new urban America perhaps more than any other city. Chicago attracted waves of immigrants who filtered into the city's ever-expanding ethnic neighborhoods. The poet Carl Sandburg describes the city:

“Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's
Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders. . . .
Come and show me another city with lifted head
singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong
and cunning.”

—Carl Sandburg, “Chicago,”
from *Chicago Poems*, 1916

Immigration and Urbanization

Objectives

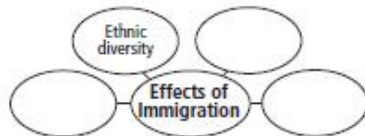
- Understand the reasons that immigrants came to America.
- Explain the immigrants' experience upon arriving in the United States.
- Identify the changes that took place in cities of the late nineteenth century.
- Describe the urban middle class.

Terms and People

Ellis Island	suburb
Angel Island	tenement

NoteTaking

Reading Skill: Understand Effects As you read the section, use a concept web to record the various effects of immigrants on American society.



Why It Matters “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,” Emma Lazarus wrote in the poem *The New Colossus* in 1883. But many Americans did not share her sentiments that the United States should welcome all newcomers. Instead, they feared that the waves of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, as well as from Asia, posed a threat to their American way of life. They feared immigrants would take their jobs and undermine their culture. Today, however, nearly all acknowledge that these immigrants helped build America into one of the most powerful nations in the world. Lazarus's poem now appears at the main entrance to the Statue of Liberty, reflecting the nation's vision of itself as a refuge for the immigrants of the world. **Section Focus Question:** Why did immigrants come to the United States, and how did they impact society?

New Immigrants Come to America

Immigration is central to American history. In the 1840s and 1850s, millions of Europeans came to America, especially from Ireland and Germany. Between 1880 and 1920, the United States experienced a second, even larger, wave of immigration. From afar, these immigrants saw America in biblical terms, as a “land of milk and honey.” Yet upon arrival, some, because of the hardships they had to endure, cursed their new homeland as a place of tears.

New Immigrants Arrive From Many Lands Between 1880 and 1920, more than 18 million European immigrants poured into the United States. Another quarter million immigrants came from Asia, especially from China. Unlike most who had preceded them, the European newcomers came from Southern and Eastern Europe. Most were Catholic or Jewish (instead of Protestant), which changed the religious makeup of the nation. They also did not speak English, had few skills, and had little experience living in cities.

Push-and-Pull Factors Much like those who came from Northern and Western Europe, the new wave of immigrants left their homelands for a variety of “push-and-pull” reasons. Religious persecution and mandatory military service were among the “push” factors. They were “pulled” to the United States by the prospect of finding work in the expanding industrial economy, as well as by the promise of greater political and religious freedom. Like earlier generations of immigrants, they hoped to provide a better future for their children.

✔ **Checkpoint** How did pre-Civil War immigrants differ from those who entered America between 1880 and 1920?



▲ Chinese immigrants on Angel Island, San Francisco Bay

The Immigrant Experience

Although no two immigrants had exactly the same experience, all of them had to endure the long journey to America and then find a job and a place to live. In addition to very difficult living and working conditions, they had to overcome prejudice, both from those who had been in the United States for generations and, in many cases, from their own assimilated countrymen who derided them as “greenhorns,” meaning they looked green, or new, to the American way of life.

Arriving in a New Land After a journey that could range from a week to several months, the immigrants would arrive in New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Galveston, or another American port. Starting in 1892, the vast majority first stepped on American soil at **Ellis Island** in New York Harbor. Government clerks asked the immigrants a series of questions at these entry points. If authorities believed the

newcomers posed a risk to public health, perhaps because they had polio or another disease, they would send them back to Europe.

From the early 1850s to 1882, hundreds of thousands of Chinese immigrants came to the West Coast, mostly to work on the new railroads that were being built. Between 1910 and 1940, most Asian immigrants disembarked at **Angel Island** in San Francisco Bay, where they experienced much harsher conditions than those at Ellis Island. Some waited months or even years before processing and questioning came to an end.

Opportunities and Challenges Some immigrants received help from fraternal organizations, such as the Irish Hibernian Association, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, and the Italian Knights of Columbus. Most had some kin or contacts from the old country who helped them find work and a place to live. Still, adjusting to **urban** industrial life could prove extremely difficult. Neighborhoods and living quarters were overcrowded; work was long, dangerous, and poorly paid; and the threat of disease, such as tuberculosis, was ever present.

Vocabulary Builder

urban—(ER buhn) *adj.* of, relating to, or characteristic of a city

● INFOGRAPHIC

ELLIS ISLAND

On a typical day in the early 1900s, thousands of immigrants steamed past the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor and landed at Ellis Island. As soon as immigrants arrived, they checked their baggage and then walked up to the Great Hall on the second floor. Doctors watched closely, looking for signs of illness. About one tenth of the immigrants were marked with chalk and sent for a closer medical examination. In the Great Hall, immigrants waited in long lines for an interview with a customs officer who checked their paperwork and determined whether they would be able to support themselves. If approved and admitted to the United States, immigrants would meet up with family members, whom they may not have seen in years. By 1924, an estimated 17 million immigrants had passed through this process at Ellis Island.



A city health official examines this woman's eyes for infection.



People sit at long tables in Ellis Island's dining hall.

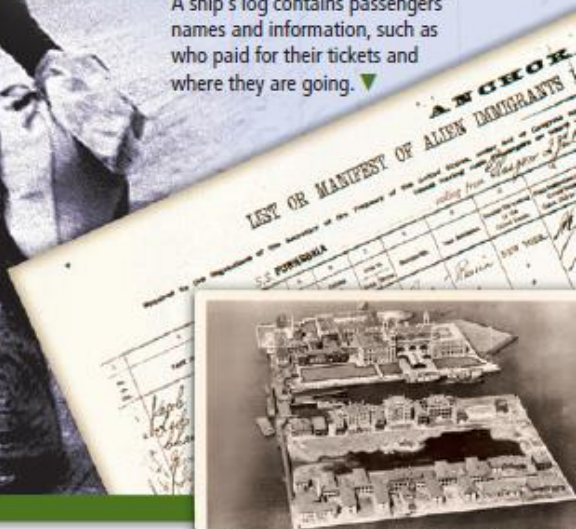


Immigrants land at Ellis Island, New York. Some carry a piece of paper in their mouth that they hope to exchange for a visa.

A ship's log contains passengers' names and information, such as who paid for their tickets and where they are going.

Thinking Critically

1. **Identify Point of View** What did immigrants experience upon their arrival at Ellis Island?
1. **Draw Conclusions** How might the culture of the United States be different if immigrants were not an integral part of its history? Explain.



▲ Aerial view of Ellis Island

The new immigrants contributed to the American economy and culture in countless ways. They built churches and synagogues, established foreign-language newspapers, and established cultural institutions, such as Yiddish theaters. Irving Berlin, who immigrated to the United States in 1893, composed "God Bless America" and "White Christmas," two of the most popular songs in American history. Still, some Americans did not recognize the new immigrants' contributions for many years.

✓ **Checkpoint** What experiences were common to most immigrants who came to America?

Cities Experience Growth and Change

Throughout most of U.S. history, the vast majority of Americans lived in rural areas. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, cities grew so rapidly that it became clear that urban Americans would soon make up the majority. At the same time, cities themselves changed. They grew larger, more complex, and much more diverse in terms of the ethnic heritage of their residents.

Immigrants and Farmers Move to Cities Both foreign-born immigrants and American-born farmers moved to cities for a variety of reasons. Foremost, as the centers of industry and commerce, cities offered newcomers jobs. They also promised a more cosmopolitan lifestyle than rural areas. Residents could attend the theater and sporting events; socialize at neighborhood bars, coffeehouses, and dance halls; and shop at department stores. Theodore Dreiser described the allure of a department store in *Sister Carrie*, a novel about a farm girl who moves to the big city.

Primary Source

“Carrie passed along the busy aisles, much affected by the remarkable display of trinkets, dress goods, station[e]ry, and jewelry. Each separate counter was a show place of dazzling interest and attraction. . . . There was nothing there, which she could not have used—nothing which she did not long to own. The dainty slippers and stockings, the delicately frilled skirts and petticoats, the laces, ribbons, hair combs, purses, all touched her with individual desire.”

—Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, 1900

Of course, as *Sister Carrie* soon discovered, she could not afford the items in the store. Like most immigrant workers, she had to adjust to the difficulties of urban life—overcrowding, vice, and crime. Most newcomers barely made enough money for necessities in their new neighborhoods.

Technology Improves Urban Life As cities grew, city planners and workers scrambled to take advantage of new technologies to make life better for everyone. For example, new electric streetlights allowed factory workers to travel to and from work safely. New forms of transportation—from the horse-drawn trolley to the elevated railroad and electric trolleys—allowed cities to expand. These new forms of transportation eased travel and made possible the first

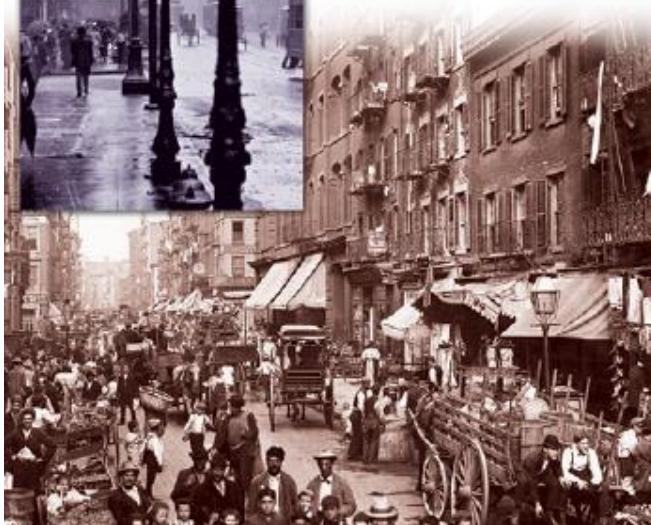
suburbs, residential areas surrounding the cities. Those who could not afford the new suburbs lived in densely populated urban ghettos, or areas where one ethnic or racial group dominates.

Although urban boosters celebrated the construction of the first skyscrapers and subways as symbols of technological advancement, perhaps the most important progress took place in the innards of the nation's cities. Public-works departments constructed miles of sewers and massive reservoirs, along with intricate systems of underground pipes to carry fresh water to residents and wastewater away from their homes. The ability of America's cities to quickly create the infrastructure necessary to support such a huge influx of residents remains one of the nation's greatest industrial accomplishments.

Urban Life Creates Problems Despite some of the technological advances, urban dwellers faced

Urban Life

New electric streetlights (top) line the streets in St. Louis, Missouri. Mulberry Street (bottom) in New York City is filled with life as the streets teem with people. *What was the impact of the rapid growth that occurred in cities during this time?*



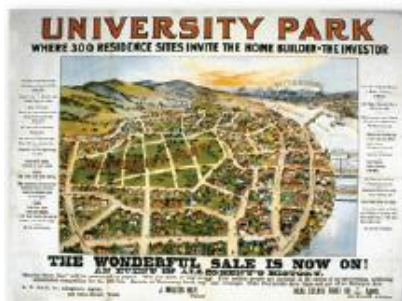
TRACK THE ISSUE



How does migration affect patterns of settlement in America?

Several migration trends have shaped settlement patterns in the United States. One is the movement of people to the West and to the southern “Sunbelt.” Another is the movement from rural to urban areas, which then developed suburbs. These migrations have had a great influence on American life. Use the timeline below to explore this enduring issue.

- **1862 Homestead Act**
Offer of free land brings settlers to the Great Plains
- **1880-1920 Urban Migration**
Millions of Americans leave farms for the city. By 1920, urban population exceeds rural population.
- **1910-1930 Great Migration**
Southern blacks move north, giving rise to the first large African American neighborhoods in northern cities.
- **1950s Suburban Flight**
Mass movement begins from central cities to suburbs.
- **1970s Present Sunbelt Growth**
Sunbelt states grow rapidly as Americans move to the warmer, southern half of the country.



A poster advertising a new suburb



A modern suburb of Las Vegas, Nevada

DEBATE THE ISSUE

Expanding Suburbs American suburbs began in the 1800s but mushroomed after World War II. By 1990, nearly half of all Americans lived in suburbs. These communities offered many benefits. But critics say they have contributed to urban sprawl, traffic congestion, and other problems.

“Suburbanization represents a significant improvement in the quality of life for people who settle there. Most people who move out of their older homes do so because their needs have changed. Suburban and rural areas often meet these new needs better than older, more densely populated central cities.”

—Samuel Stanley, Reason Public Policy Institute

“Sprawling patterns of growth are an inefficient use of land that scatters jobs, houses, schools and shopping across the landscape. . . . It leaves people little choice but to use their auto for any trip. . . . It fragments the ecosystems that protect our drinking water and wildlife habitat and that provide recreational opportunities that we all enjoy.”

—Robert J. Pirani, Regional Plan Association, New York



TRANSFER Activities

1. **Compare** How do the two quotations differ in their perspective on suburbs?
2. **Analyze** How did the growth of the suburbs affect urban life and growth?
3. **Transfer** Use the following Web site to see a video, try a WebQuest, and write in your journal. www.pearsonschool.com/ushist



▲ A traffic jam of people, horse-drawn trolleys, and electric trolleys in Chicago, Illinois

the problem of overcrowding. Rapid growth led to a shortage of housing, and unscrupulous landlords often took advantage of the newcomers' desperate need for a place to live. Immigrants crowded into subdivided homes called **tenements**. These tenements often housed twenty families, each in a virtually airless, tiny, cramped space where parents and children slept, ate, and often worked together. With few windows and little sanitation, tenements were unhealthy and dangerous. To make matters worse, few parks or public squares existed, leaving children only the streets as play areas. There, they encountered heaps of garbage, thieves, and rival street gangs.

✔ **Checkpoint** What was urban life like for most city residents?

Social and Cultural Trends

Even with its problems, industrialization and urbanization created the foundation for the emergence of a more modern society. Instead of providing just basic needs for survival, the economy began to generate a wide variety of consumer goods and leisure activities. Besides the wealthy elite, a growing middle class had the ability to take advantage of many of these new goods and services. The working classes also occasionally had the opportunity to attend a ballgame or visit an amusement park.

A New Middle Class Emerges As industries grew larger and more sophisticated, they generated a demand for skilled white-collar workers—engineers, accountants, and attorneys. Big businesses hired salesclerks to sell their goods and managers to supervise their workers. In turn, these workers (mostly men) and their families had enough money to purchase items that historically only the elite could afford. Advances in technology and greater business efficiency and productivity further expanded the variety of goods and services within their reach.

One place where the middle class could find the things they desired was at the modern department store. New York shoppers flocked to Macy's, and Philadelphians flooded Wanamaker's. To boost sales, these department stores advertised in local newspapers and magazines, creating an atmosphere that made shopping fun.

Culture and Entertainment Abound The growing middle class also supported an expansion of higher education. At the same time, colleges and universities began to transform their curriculums. Some even began to focus on training graduate students. An increasing number of women went to college. Overall, illiteracy declined and a high school diploma came within reach for more and more people.

Alongside the expansion of education, the arts thrived. Some of the nation's greatest authors wrote during this time period. Among them were Edith Wharton and Mark Twain. Ironically, Twain considered the era crass and often satirized

it. Other well-known authors included the poet Emily Dickinson and the novelist Henry James.

Perhaps one of the most important cultural developments of the era was the rise of mass entertainment, from collegiate and professional sports to amusement parks. Major league baseball, with teams in many of the nation's largest cities and in stadiums that charged admission, led the way. Mark Twain touted baseball as "the very symbol, the outward and visible expression of the drive and push and rush and struggle of the raging, tearing, booming nineteenth century." Daily newspapers advanced the fortunes of professional sports by establishing sports pages dedicated to covering the games.

Religion Attracts Urban Masses As America's cities grew, religious leaders appealed to the urban masses. Liberal theologians stressed the importance and value of each individual person. Building on this idea, Walter Rauschenbusch and others developed the Social Gospel movement, which promoted better working conditions and decent wages.

Dwight L. Moody and other evangelical Protestants traveled from city to city with their religious revival meetings. Moody used preaching, inspirational prayer, and gospel songs to spread a message of Christian love and compassion. After Moody left town, local congregations would swell with new members.

 **Checkpoint** How did religious leaders appeal to city residents?

The Department Store

Pedestrians peer into a Marshall Field's department store (below). Even people in rural areas had access to department-store items from a Sears, Roebuck and Company catalog (below left).



SECTION 2 Assessment

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-test with vocabulary practice
www.pearsonschool.com/ushtst

Comprehension

1. Terms and People For each term below, write a sentence explaining how it relates to either immigration or urbanization.

- Ellis Island
- Angel Island
- suburb
- tenement

2. NoteTaking Reading Skill:

Understand Effects Use your completed concept web to answer the Section Focus Question: Why did immigrants come to the United States, and how did they impact society?

Writing About History

3. Quick Write: Gather Evidence In order to prepare for an oral presentation, you should gather information on your selected topic. Research to gather evidence on the growth and development of cities as discussed in this section. List several sources and image ideas after your preliminary research.

Critical Thinking

4. Identify Point of View What challenges did immigrants face upon their arrival in America?

5. Recognize Cause and Effect (a) How did technology affect the growth of cities? (b) How did the growth of cities affect housing within them?

6. Identify Central Issues How did industrialization and urbanization lead to the rise of the middle class?