A Changing Decade

Trace who benefited from change in the 1920s, and who faced barriers.

9-12.US2.9 "Describe the impacts of economic, demographic, social, and cultural changes during the 1920s."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one economic, one demographic, one social, and one cultural change in the passage, then circle an impact of each change and give each change and its impact a matching number.

New Opportunities, Unequal Access

1 In 1926, a worker in Detroit might see new cars leave a factory every few minutes. Assembly-line production lowered the time and cost of making cars, helping more families buy them. Advertisements and installment plans, which let buyers pay over time, widened the market for cars and other goods. Auto factories also drew workers from farms and from the South, including Black Americans seeking better wages and relief from Jim Crow laws. Detroit grew, but many Black newcomers faced discrimination in hiring and housing. A booming industry changed where people lived and what they could afford, though its benefits were uneven.

2 Hundreds of miles away, Harlem, a New York City neighborhood, became a center of Black arts and public life. Migration from the South helped its Black population grow. Writers such as Langston Hughes described Black experiences in poetry, while musicians performed jazz in clubs and theaters. Radio and records carried jazz to listeners far beyond Harlem, shaping popular music nationwide. These new audiences created opportunities for performers, but racism still limited where Black artists could live, work, or perform. Harlem's cultural energy challenged stereotypes even as segregation showed how little some social barriers had changed.

3 Other shifts also reshaped daily life. After women gained the vote in 1920, some young women challenged older expectations through new clothing, paid work, and public leisure. Their choices sparked debate, but they did not represent all women, many of whom continued to face limits at work and home. Meanwhile, the 1924 Immigration Act sharply restricted arrivals from southern and eastern Europe and barred most immigration from Asia, reducing the number of new neighbors in many communities. Farmers, too, often struggled with falling crop prices and debt while cities celebrated rising sales. The decade brought new freedoms and connections, but not equal access to them.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did assembly-line production and installment plans change what some families could buy?

2. How did migration from the South change both Detroit and Harlem? Describe a different impact in each place.

3. How did radio and records affect jazz performers, and what barrier remained for Black artists?

4. How did women's voting rights and the 1924 Immigration Act change who could participate in American public life or join its communities?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short editorial arguing whether the decade's changes benefited Americans equally. Connect one economic change to one social or cultural change from the passage, and explain how their effects differed for two groups.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · 9-12.US2.9

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one economic, one demographic, one social, and one cultural change in the passage, then circle an impact of each change and give each change and its impact a matching number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did assembly-line production and installment plans change what some families could buy?	**Assembly-line production lowered car-making costs, and installment plans let buyers pay over time. Together, these changes helped more families buy cars and other goods.**
2	How did migration from the South change both Detroit and Harlem? Describe a different impact in each place.	**Detroit gained workers for its auto factories. Harlem's growing Black population helped make it a center of Black arts and public life.**
3	How did radio and records affect jazz performers, and what barrier remained for Black artists?	**Radio and records brought jazz to wider audiences and created opportunities for performers, but racism still limited where Black artists could live, work, or perform.**
4	How did women's voting rights and the 1924 Immigration Act change who could participate in American public life or join its communities?	**Women's voting rights expanded women's political participation. The 1924 Immigration Act restricted arrivals from southern and eastern Europe and barred most immigration from Asia, reducing the number of newcomers in many communities.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Detroit's busy auto plants make it tempting to call this a decade of opportunity. Lower car prices and installment plans help some families travel and shop, while factory jobs draw people from the South. Yet Black newcomers who help build our cities can face discrimination in housing and hiring. Harlem's poetry and jazz reach listeners across the country by radio and records, but performers still encounter racism. A bigger audience does not guarantee equal rights. We should measure progress not only by cars sold and songs heard, but by who can find a home and a fair job.

Accept other passage-supported cause-and-effect connections. For the editorial, look for a clear claim, a connection between economic and social or cultural change, and differing effects on two groups.