What Fueled Change?

Assessing the causes of three movements in the 1920s

USH.4.2 "Assess the causes of the resurgence of social movements, reform movements, and vigilante groups, including the Ku Klux Klan, the Red Scare, and Prohibition."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two causes in each paragraph, then circle the cause you judge most influential in that paragraph.

Fear, Reform, and Power

1. In the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan expanded far beyond the South. Its members threatened Black Americans, immigrants, Catholics, and Jews while claiming to defend "traditional" American life. The Great Migration had brought many Black families to northern cities, and immigration had changed some communities. Those changes did not cause hate by themselves. Klan leaders used existing racism and religious prejudice to turn anxiety into recruitment. Their parades and local political influence made the group seem acceptable to some neighbors.

2. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, some Americans feared that radicals would try to overthrow the U.S. government. A wave of strikes in 1919 and several bomb attacks made that fear feel urgent, although most strikers were not revolutionaries. During the first Red Scare, federal officials arrested suspected radicals, sometimes without respecting their rights. Newspapers often treated disagreement as a sign of danger. Real violence, labor conflict, and exaggerated claims together fueled demands for harsh action.

3. Prohibition had different roots. For decades, temperance reformers argued that banning alcohol would reduce poverty and family violence. During World War I, some supporters linked beer to German-American brewers, and wartime calls to conserve grain strengthened their case. In 1919, the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified, and the nationwide ban began in 1920. Support came from organized reform as well as wartime suspicion. Unlike the Klan's intimidation or Red Scare raids, Prohibition became federal law, though many Americans continued to drink.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the passage suggest that changing communities alone cannot explain the Klan's growth?

2. How did events in 1919 increase support for harsh action during the Red Scare, even though most strikers were not revolutionaries?

3. Why might Prohibition have gained support even without World War I?

4. Fear played a role in both the Klan's growth and the Red Scare. What different events or changes fed those fears?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine the strikes of 1919 had not occurred. In four sentences, explain which movement might have changed most, why it still might have gained support, and why one other movement would likely have changed less. Use evidence from the passage.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two causes in each paragraph, then circle the cause you judge most influential in that paragraph. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the passage suggest that changing communities alone cannot explain the Klan's growth?	**Klan leaders drew on existing racism and religious prejudice to turn anxiety about change into recruitment.**
2	How did events in 1919 increase support for harsh action during the Red Scare, even though most strikers were not revolutionaries?	**Strikes and bomb attacks made fears of revolution feel urgent, while exaggerated claims encouraged demands for harsh action.**
3	Why might Prohibition have gained support even without World War I?	**Temperance reformers had spent decades arguing that banning alcohol would reduce poverty and family violence.**
4	Fear played a role in both the Klan's growth and the Red Scare. What different events or changes fed those fears?	**The Klan exploited anxiety about the Great Migration and immigration. The Red Scare drew on the Russian Revolution, strikes, and bomb attacks.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Without the 1919 strikes, the Red Scare might have been less intense because strikes made fears of revolution seem urgent. The Russian Revolution and bomb attacks could still have frightened Americans. Prohibition would probably have changed less because temperance reformers had campaigned for decades. Wartime arguments about conserving grain and German-American brewers also strengthened the ban.

Accept supported judgments about which cause mattered most. For the open task, accept a different choice of movement if the response explains the likely effects using passage evidence.