

## Unit 5

1890s –  
1920s

# The Progressive Movement

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, many Americans wanted to do something to solve the problems that were created by the rapid growth of industry, cities, and immigration. They wanted to push America to make progress toward a better future, so they were called Progressives.

What were their main concerns? The list would certainly include these: unsafe working conditions in factories, child labor, and overcrowded cities. Voting rights for women was a goal for most Progressives. Many people wanted something done about the widespread problems caused by alcohol.

This unit tells the story of the Progressive Movement. It explains how the people who were part of it tried to reform and improve American life.

Internet resources:

[www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap)

Words and people to know:



Progressive Movement

reform / reforms

child labor

monopolies / trusts

labor union

organized labor

wage / wages

strike

American Federation of Labor

Homestead Strike

Pullman Strike

Triangle Factory fire

women's suffrage

19th Amendment

Susan B. Anthony

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Alice Paul

Lucy Burns

temperance movement

18th Amendment

Prohibition

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**Internet Support Site: [www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap](http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/ffap)**

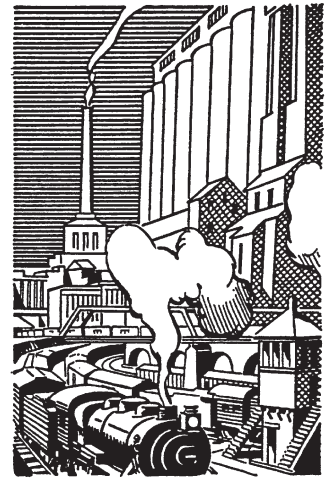
**Notes:**

# Outline – The Progressive Movement

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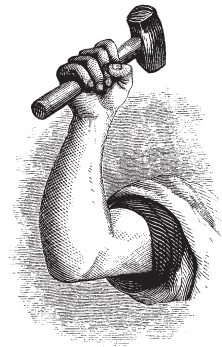
## 1. The Progressive Movement (1890s - 1920s) wanted to improve American life.

- A. It included many different people pushing for reforms to improve city life, workers' rights, women's rights, schools, and more.
- B. It was a response to problems caused by rapid industrialization (the growth of industry) in America, especially these problems:
  - \* child labor
  - \* low wages (pay) and long hours for workers
  - \* unsafe working conditions
  - \* the rise of monopolies / trusts
  - \* pollution to the environment



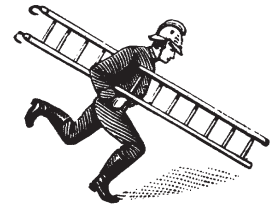
## 2. Labor unions tried to improve life for workers.

- A. Labor unions gave workers a way to join together to demand higher pay and better work conditions.
  - \* Unions can use strikes (a refusal to continue working) to try to force businesses to improve pay and work conditions.
- B. The **American Federation of Labor** - a national labor union that promoted workers' rights and encouraged the growth of local unions.
- C. Labor unions faced strong resistance from business owners.
  - \* The Homestead Strike at a steel mill near Pittsburgh (1892) turned violent and failed.
  - \* The Pullman Strike against railroads nationwide (1894) turned violent and failed.



## 3. The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire (1911) led to new factory safety laws.

- A. The fire killed 146 factory workers, mostly young women.
- B. Locked doors made it difficult for the workers to get out.
- C. The tragedy increased public support for passing laws to protect workers' rights and improve factory safety.



## 4. Progressive Movement workplace reforms had lasting results.

- A. Improved safety conditions in factories.
- B. Reduced work hours and higher pay.
- C. New laws restricting child labor began to be passed.



## Outline – *continued*

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### 5. Women organized to win voting rights and greater equality.

- A. Women's suffrage (the right to vote) was guaranteed by the 19th Amendment. It took effect nationwide in 1920.
- B. Famous leaders of the women's suffrage movement included:
  - \* Susan B. Anthony
  - \* Elizabeth Cady Stanton
  - \* Alice Paul
  - \* Lucy Burns
- B. As women organized to gain the vote, they also called for and won greater opportunities for education.
  - \* New colleges for women were created, and more colleges began admitting both men and women.



### 5. The temperance movement pushed to outlaw alcohol.

- A. Temperance group leaders believed that alcohol was a big cause of poverty, crime, and family violence.
- B. The 18th Amendment prohibited the manufacture, sale, and transport of alcoholic beverages. (1920)
  - \* Prohibition (the ban on alcohol) was ended in 1933.



## Progressive Reforms for the Workplace



The Progressive Movement led to the creation of new laws that tried to solve the negative effects caused by industrialization.

Industrialization brought many benefits to the American people in the decades after the Civil War. Life for workers in the growing industries, however, was often harsh and dangerous. By the 1890s, more and more Americans were demanding that the government step in to do something. New laws began to be passed to try to improve life for America's workers.



### Negative effects of industrialization

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### Progressive Movement workplace reforms

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# Labor Unions in the Progressive Era

Labor unions grew more common in the late 1800s and early 1900s as a response to the negative effects of industrialization.

- United Mine Workers
- Bakers' Union
- United Brotherhood of Carpenters
- Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers

*Did you know?*

Labor unions are also called **organized labor**.

... and many, many more!



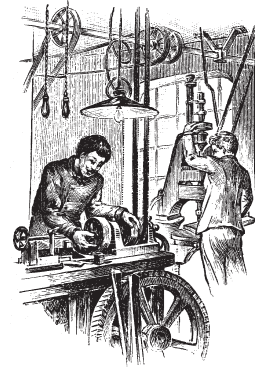
What exactly are labor unions?

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What happens when a labor union goes on strike?

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What was the American Federation of Labor?

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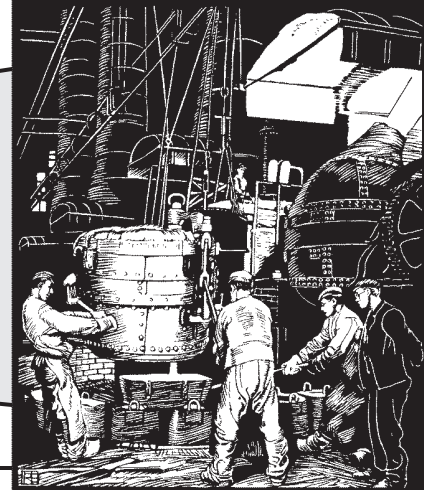
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## Three Famous Events in Labor History

These are just a few examples that illustrate the struggle by workers and labor unions in the effort to win better pay and work conditions.



Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Hundreds of skilled workers at a steel mill in Pittsburgh went on strike to stop a plan by the company to reduce their pay and end the union. The steel mill hired armed guards, and the strike turned violent on both sides.

Outcome: \_\_\_\_\_

Event: \_\_\_\_\_

This strike was started by several thousand workers who built railroad cars at the Pullman Company factories near Chicago. The dispute spread, however, and quickly involved railroad workers in many states. Riots occurred in some areas.

Outcome: \_\_\_\_\_

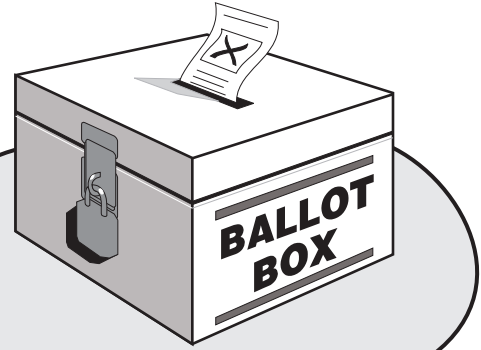
Event: \_\_\_\_\_

The fire began in a tall building in New York City, where the Triangle Shirtwaist Company made clothing. Many workers - mostly young immigrant women - were trapped and died because some of the doors to exits and stairwells were locked.

Outcome: \_\_\_\_\_

## Women's Suffrage: Getting the Vote

Women won the right to vote (called suffrage) with passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. It took effect nationwide in 1920.



The struggle by women to win the right to vote began in the mid-1800s. By 1900 a few states did give women voting rights. Susan B. Anthony and her friend Elizabeth Cady Stanton were the most famous of the early leaders in the movement.

After their deaths in the early 1900s, two younger women, Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, became key leaders. They organized a push by women demanding that an amendment be added to the U.S. Constitution to guarantee women the right to vote in all states.

Many men and even some women in those days argued against the idea. They said voting by women would be "unladylike."

The 19th Amendment, ratified in 1920, settled the matter once and for all.



The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

*- from the 19th Amendment to the Constitution*

*A Big Bonus!*



# The Temperance Movement: Banning Alcohol



The temperance movement was made up of groups that wanted to ban the drinking of alcohol.

## Key Points:

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**The manufacture, sale, or transport of intoxicating liquors . . . for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.**

*- from the 18th Amendment to the Constitution*

The temperance movement was one of the largest and best organized efforts to change American life in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Why did temperance groups oppose alcohol so much?

One reason was the fact that drinking could lead to drunkenness and physical violence in families. Excessive drinking sometimes left families without enough money for food and rent.

Temperance groups convinced Congress to write the 18th Amendment. It made the manufacture, sale, or transport of alcoholic beverages illegal. The new law took effect nationwide in 1920.

Prohibition - the prohibiting of alcohol - was not successful, however. Illegal bars called "speakeasies" operated in almost every city with smuggled supplies of beer, wine, and liquor.

Many people became convinced that Prohibition was creating more problems than it solved. In 1933, Prohibition was ended with the passage of another amendment. Alcoholic beverages became legal in the U.S. once again.

**18th Amendment** - the amendment to the U.S. Constitution that made the manufacture, transportation, or sale of alcohol illegal. It took effect in 1920. It was repealed (canceled) by the 21st Amendment in 1933.

**19th Amendment** - the amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote nationwide. It took effect in 1920. Some states, particularly in the West, were already allowing women to vote by that time.

**American Federation of Labor** - the "union of unions" formed in 1886 to help organize the workers' rights movement at a national level. It played a key role in the fight for the 8 hour work day (rather than the 10 or 12 hour day common around 1900.)

**Anthony, Susan B.** - the most famous leader in the long fight for women's suffrage (voting rights). She became involved in the anti-slavery movement before the Civil War, but after the war focused her energy on winning support for women's rights issues. She died in 1906 at her home in Rochester, New York.

**Burns, Lucy** - a leader of the women's suffrage (voting rights) movement in the early 1900s.

**child labor** - the use of children as workers. The effort to pass laws to make child labor illegal became part of the Progressive movement. Child labor was common in most areas, however, well into the 1930s.

**Homestead Strike** - a famous strike by workers at the Carnegie steel mill in Homestead, Pennsylvania in 1892. The steel workers were resisting a cut in wages and the number of workers. Like many labor disputes of the late 1800s, it involved deadly violence on both sides. The strike was unsuccessful, and its violence turned some people against the labor union movement.

**labor union** - an organization of workers that tries to bargain with the employer to raise wages and improve working conditions. Also called a trade union.

**monopolies / trusts** - companies that have gained control of all or almost all of the supply of a product. That means the company can set the price of the product, since there is little or no competition from other businesses. Monopolies were also called "trusts" in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

**organized labor** - labor unions.

**Paul, Alice** - a leader of the woman suffrage (voting rights) movement in the early 1900s.

**Progressive Movement** - the widespread efforts to reform and improve life that many Americans took part in during the late 1800s and early 1900s. It included many different goals, such as ending child labor, passing laws to improve conditions for factory workers, and winning voting rights for women.

**Prohibition** - the term for the period from 1920 to 1933 during which the manufacture, transportation, or sale of alcohol were prohibited in the U.S.

**Pullman Strike** - a strike in 1894 by thousands of workers at the Pullman railroad car factory near Chicago. The strike spread to involve railroad workers in many states, and turned violent in some places. A federal court ordered the workers to end the strike.

**reform / reforms** - to make changes with the goal of improving laws, habits, and patterns of life.

**strike** - when workers decide, as a group, to stop working. Normally the goal is to force the employer to pay higher wages or improve working conditions.

**Stanton, Elizabeth Cady** - an early leader in the movement to improve women's rights and win the right to vote. She lived in New York State, and was a friend of Susan B. Anthony. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was the organizer in 1848 of the Seneca Falls Convention. That was the famous meeting in Seneca Falls, New York, that called for full and equal rights for women.

**temperance movement** - the effort to reduce alcohol drinking and pass laws restricting or prohibiting the sale of alcohol.

**Triangle Factory fire** - a deadly fire at a clothing factory in New York City in 1911. Many workers were unable to escape the flames because some of the exit doors and stairwells were locked during work hours. It took the lives of 146 workers - most of them young immigrant women. Public outrage over the deaths led to new factory safety laws.

**wage / wages** - the amount one is paid for one's work, usually expressed in dollars per hour, day, or week.

**women's suffrage** - women's voting rights. "Suffrage" is the technical term for the right to vote.