

Kennedy, Chapter 31: American Life in the “Roaring Twenties,” 1919 – 1929

Group Assignment – AP United States History

The class will be divided into five groups based on the topics listed below. Each group must read the sections in Chapter 31 that pertains to the assigned topic and prepare “notes” for the rest of the class.

Schedule:

Monday, February 26 (DE mods) Tuesday, February 27 (F mod)	Receive assignment; assign groups
Monday, February 26 to Wednesday, February 28 (at home)	Read Kennedy, Chapter 31; prepare notes for your group
Thursday, March 1	Group Planning Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile <u>BRIEF NOTES</u> for your group (limit to one page); turn-in at end of class • Prepare 2 broad-topic questions or sub-topics to discuss in seminar
Friday, March 2	Seminar Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of group notes will be distributed to the entire class • 5-7 minutes per group

Group Assignments:

Group # 1 – Red Scare, KKK, and 1920s Nativism

Information should come from the following sections: “Seeing Red”; “Hooded Hoodlums of the KKK”; “Stemming the Foreign Flood”

Group # 2 – Prohibition and Gangsterism

Information should come from the following sections: “The Prohibition ‘Experiment’”; “The Golden Age of Gangsterism”

Group # 3 – Scopes Monkey Trial and Changes for 1920s Society

Information should come from the following sections: “Monkey Business in Tennessee”; “The Dynamic Decade”

Group # 4 – Mass Consumption Economy, Auto and Air Transportation

Information should come from the following sections: “The Mass-Consumption Economy”; “Putting America on Rubber Tires”; “The Advent of the Gasoline Age”; “Humans Develop Wings”

Group # 5 – Radio, Hollywood, and Cultural Shock?

Information should come from the following sections: “The Radio Revolution”; “Hollywood’s Film Land Fantasies”; “Cultural Liberation”

General Information:

Remember that for Unit 10, it will be **your responsibility** to read this chapter completely and understand all material. Attached are some general topics to think about (from the Ch. 31 essay questions):

- ___ 1. The 1920s was a time of “heroes.” Why? Why were Charles Lindbergh, Babe Ruth, and Henry Ford all so greatly admired in this decade? What were the similarities and differences in their appeal?
- ___ 2. Describe the dominant themes of American literature in the 1920s. Explain why these themes prevailed.
- ___ 3. Do you think that the 1920s should be most noted as a decade of anxiety and intolerance or a decade of cultural innovation and liberation? What were the deepest forces shaping American culture in this period?
- ___ 4. Do you think that the “noble experiment” of prohibition did more harm than good or vice versa? Explain your view by citing specific consequences of the prohibition amendment.
- ___ 5. Some historians have considered the tensions of the 1920s in terms of a rural backlash against a rising urban America. Do you agree with this proposition? Why or why not?
- ___ 6. List at least five major economic and/or technological developments of the 1920s. Select the three most significant ones and explain your choices.
- ___ 7. What were the greatest changes in religious and moral values in the 1920s? How did Americans respond to these changes?
- ___ 8. Would you like to have lived in the 1920s? Why or why not? Explain what you find most alluring about the decade and what you would *not* have liked.
- ___ 9. In what ways did writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and Theodore Dreiser reflect the prevalent American culture of the 1920s? In what ways did they criticize it?
- ___ 10. What part did African American artists, writers, and musicians play in the new culture of the 1920s? How do you explain this burst of cultural creativity at a time when most blacks were still oppressed and segregated?
- ___ 11. What explains the rise of Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association movement? Why was Garvey such an important figure even though his movement failed?.
- ___ 12. The text authors argue that immigration legislation in the 1920s “caused America to sacrifice something of its tradition of freedom and opportunity, as well as much of its color and variety.” How do you react to this argument? Do you agree that immigration restrictions were necessary? Why or why not?
- ___ 13. How did the arguments of “cultural pluralists” like Horace Kallen and Randolph Bourne anticipate later American debates over “multiculturalism”? In what ways did the technological and cultural developments of the 1920s make it more difficult for smaller cultural groups to retain their traditions?
- ___ 14. Do you see any hidden dangers in the social and economic life that Americans pursued in the 1920s for which they would one day have to pay? What were these dangers, and in what way were they potentially threatening?