

American History Honors, 2008 - 2009
Group Seminar: 1920s Culture (Text, Chapter 21)

Before Class Activity

First, assign each member of the group one of the sections below. If there are more than four members of your group, assign by sub-section. If there are less than four, decide who will take an extra section.

Next, each person should read his/her assigned section and research the material online at home. There are plenty of helpful websites available to you on the internet. Here is what you should do:

- Go to the textbook's website (available from our website). Select Chapter 21 and then "Chapter Links." There are plenty of helpful resources there as well.
- If you are still in need of helpful information, use Google.

Prepare a set of notes for your group. You are encouraged to bring outside information or visual aids. B

In-Class Activity: Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Meet in your groups to discuss the material. Have each person present his/her section to the group. In each discussion, be sure that the following topics are addressed. Please notice that on the next page is a list of general items for discussion that cover several topic areas. (I will be walking around to check your progress)

Section 1: Changing Ways of Life (American morality?)

Ideas to Consider:

- How did the way people lived (and where they lived) change? Why?
- What were some of the causes of Prohibition? Effects?
- Why did the Prohibition experiment fail?
- Would there have been the development of organized crime (i.e. gangsters) if not for prohibition?
- What were the major beliefs of fundamentalism?
- Give a brief description of the Scopes Monkey Trial to your group.

(Sections 2-4 on next page)

Section 2: The Twenties Woman

Ideas to Consider:

- What was the flapper and did this lifestyle describe all women of the 1920s?
- How did the roles of women change?
- What happened to families in the 1920s?
- What is the concept of "double-standard" and is it accurate?

Section 3: Education and Popular Culture

Ideas to Consider:

- How did schools change in the 1920s?
- How did technology create a distinctly new culture in America?
- What new styles did writers, artists, and composers experiment with in the decade?
- How did the literature of the time express a clash of values within society?
- How did the media and "mass culture" create a sense of national community? (Shared American culture?)

Section 4: The Harlem Renaissance

Ideas to Consider:

- Why did many African-Americans move to northern cities and in what ways did African-American leaders combat discrimination and violence?
- Local History Note: James Weldon Johnson was a lawyer here in Jacksonville, Florida.
- Why was there an African-American renaissance in the 1920s?
- How did the Harlem Renaissance contribute to both black and general American history?
- What is Jazz Music and why is it significant?

General Topics to discuss:

- What contributed to the drastic social and cultural changes of the 1920s?
- Can the 1920s be considered conservative in some respects?
- What social and economic problems were looming in this decade (including those that seem to be overlooked)?

How you will be graded...

As I walk around, I will be checking for the following:

- Did each person do his/her own work? (i.e. preparation before class)
- Is each person actively contributing to the discussion?
- Is the group on-task? (i.e. not socializing)