

# Gilded Age & Big Business and & Semi-Organized Labor

We precede this section with **brief** backgrounds on the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Compromise of 1877, and the Constitution. If you do not know what the term **organized labor** means, please ask. **Tip:** *italic*—like the prior letters—is used for words used as words.)

Lesson 1—**like** the other Lessons—provides a copy of the section of the Study Guide for **this** lesson.

## Key Background on the Gilded Age—and the Future

11. 13<sup>th</sup> amendment
12. Defeat of the South, but Andrew Johnson
13. Southern black codes and race riots
14. Reconstruction, and military reconstruction
15. 14<sup>th</sup> amendment
  - “due process” and states
  - citizenship - and why necessary
16. 15<sup>th</sup> amendment
17. Scandals in Grant’s terms
18. Election of 1876, Compromise of 1877, and troops

## Lesson 1 -----

Use the **3 Learning Quizzes 1<sup>st</sup>**.

Gilded Age (meaning of the term)

19. Republican Party, policy pre-Civil War/post-secession
20. Republican party, early years of Gilded Age
21. Rise of Industrial Capitalism and:
  - Rockefeller and his industry
  - Carnegie and his industry
  - Horizontal integration / vertical integration
  - Monopoly, trust (and anti-trust)
22. Rise of financial capitalism and J.P. Morgan
23. Technology 1877-1887 (mainly for new industries)
24. Technology 1887-1893 (mainly for urban life)
25. North, workers in big business
  - Average work week/pay/living costs for laborers
  - Child labor – why?
  - Types of Unions
    - Knights of Labor (industrial- attempted)
    - American Federation of Labor (union of unions—only skilled trade unions)
  - Strikes (Haymarket, Homestead, Pullman)
26. Prohibition (WCTU) – President Frances Willard (1873 to end of the 1800s and beyond)

This world of about 1877 to 1890s is different than before.

1. The name itself- The Gilded Age

From a novel in the early 1870s, *The Gilded Age* and most associated with humorist Mark Twain

Want to understand this better? Look up these 2 words in *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*:

- The phrase *golden age*
- The word *gild*

2. Using this link [Summary of Political Parties](#), what does the Republican Party become:
  - By 1860 – See Evolution of Republican Issues
  - After secession of the South - Republican Issues Revealed by Post-Secession Actions
  
3. Given that, what are the 1<sup>st</sup> big changes (ones that determine the future):

**Tip:** The power of drawing to **figure things out** and the power of placing information in its relationship to other information. Look at a US map and where the new homesteaders were and where the new railroads were.

  - Internal improvements –meaning of term, how are they initially funded, and what would happen with that kind of funding
  
  - Railroads – Think it through: where (and who was there before), what is needed to build them, who has the power to give its leaders what they want, and how do its leaders get that.  
Who depends on railroads? What’s the Homestead Act got to do with this? What does it do?  
[1867 1877 Andrew Johnson to Hayes Color Coded to Show Trends](#) –and who stops what is going on? Notice the pattern about corruption and scandals; do not try to learn all the facts.
  
  - What’s a tariff for revenue? How is that different from a protective tariff?  
Protective tariff for manufacturers – Think it through: where, who has the power to give its leaders what they want, and how do its leaders get that. Who depends on them for business success? Who pays them? Who gets the money from tariffs?  
Who does not have protective tariffs to protect them? Who sells in a free market and buys in a protected market?
  
  - Currency and “sound money” and debtors / creditors – meaning of terms. Think it through: where are their banks, who has the power to give its leaders what they want, and how do its leaders get that. Who depends on them? Who does not have banking?  
Think it through: Who is poor? Who is in debt? (What do you have to have to get in debt?)  
Crime of ’73 and the gold standard
  
  - What about immigration **before** the 1890s? What did US law say at that time?
  
4. Industrial capitalism and new industries building on:
  - Prior legal concepts (incorporation, trusts) used for new purposes
  - Horizontal (Rockefeller) integration (all the oil) – Examples of how he created monopoly.
  - Vertical (Carnegie) integration (all from the mines to the mills to transport)
  
5. Finance capitalism and J.P. Morgan (Part of this is covered with the Panic of 1893 and the disasters that follow.)

6. What are the new technologies for business and for urban life and what are a few examples of what they do to and for people?
- [Study Tool: Chronological Events of the 1877-1887 Era](#) - Look at the column US Economic Development.  
**Purpose:** Notice the technologies are primarily **about new industries**.
  - [Study Tool: Chronological Events of the 1887-1893 Era](#) - Look at the list of inventions beneath the table.  
**Purpose:** Notice the technologies are primarily **about urban life**.
7. What are the early attempts to deal with problems in America? (More are covered in Lesson 2.)  
Example: WCTU (Women’s Christian Temperance Union) from about 1873 to the end of 1800s (but they still exist today)  
Leader: Frances Willard (gender?)  
Major Issue: Temperance – with the Anti-Saloon League developing later and the result of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment (for a while)  
Later Issue: Women’s suffrage
8. What happens to laboring people—and who are they and what are the differences in what they have to sell?  
[Snapshot of America in the 1870s-1890s](#) (PDF) – This **provides** a searchable resource.
9. What are laborers’ attempts to organize, what’s the difference in the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of labor, and what is the response to labor by varied levels of government and business?  
What do these words mean: Pinkertons, state militia, federal troops?
- **Without answers for self-testing:** [Comparison of Labor Events from 1874 through 1893 – and to the End of the 1890s](#)
  - **With answers for observing patterns:** [Comparison with Answers](#)  
**Purpose:** Notice where is the labor unrest and in what industries. Notice how strikes are stopped—is that what you expected to be the method?

What are these labor events and how do they reveal unions and big business at this time. (You are not expected to be able to recognize details but to understand these as significant examples of what happened in the Gilded Age. They are usually very different from what freshman students expect.)

- Haymarket – 1886 Chicago - What’s anarchism? Socialism?  
Police and a peaceful demonstration where someone throws a bomb. Police shoot into the crowd. Trial is usually discussed as having false testimony.
- Homestead – 1892 Pennsylvania – A Carnegie plant. Lowering of wages, the Pinkertons and a gun battle with the union and assistance from the government. Lowering of wages remains.
- Pullman – 1894 Pullman, Illinois – Company town (away from other working places) with a factory making Pullman cars. Lowering of wages, but not lowering of prices in the company store. Strike, observations by the governor of the state (Altgeld). Lowering of wages remains.

