

A Nation of Cities



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- Analyze urban growth in the late 1800s.
- Explain how technology improved city life.
- Evaluate the problems caused by rapid urban growth and ways that city dwellers tried to solve them.

Americans Migrate to Cities

Urbanization- The movement of people moving to, & living, in cities

People in the country worked outside on the farms, people in the cities year long in factories

Cities attracted large number of immigrants & rural Americans for factory work or service industry

Those with money opened shops, educated people joined the middle class, the poor worked the factory floors

Jobs

Women found new opportunities working in factories for piecework or domestic servants

Cities offered glamour, entertainment, & variety & transportation made life accessible

By 1900, most cities were made up of 40% immigrant populations

Rural-to-Urban Migrants- People who moved to cities in the 1890s

Technology Improves City Life

As cities grew, politicians & inventors sought to improve technology to improve living conditions

Skyscrapers- Steel buildings designed by artists & architects to magnify their height

Elisha Otis- Invented the safety elevator that would not fall if a line broke

Architecture became a specialized career & central heating changed the comfort of life

New Industries

Street cars powered by overhead electric cables began a transportation revolution

Mass Transit- Public transportation systems that could carry large numbers of people inexpensively

Subways were developed for cities that couldn't handle the hanging cables of street cars

Suburbs- Areas outside the city that people lived away from work, shops, & entertainment

City Living/ Social Issues

Mass transit allowed city planners to segregate parts of the city by zoning purposes

Frederick Law Olmsted- Developed New York's Central Park; Parks & recreational spaces became important areas of cities

Overcrowding & poverty became major concerns & immigrants crammed into “little” cities

Tenements- Low-cost multifamily housing designed to squeeze in a large number of people into one unit

Living Issues

Tenements were usually in undesirable locations in cities with few windows & sanitation

Many places were overflowing with garbage or toilets were constantly overflowing & shared

Cholera- bacterial infection in intestine that causes dehydration

Police & fire departments were created & utilized for public safety, but still faced concerns