

Roaring 20s Presentation Topic Focus Questions

Directions: Complete this packet of questions based on the in-class presentations, our discussion and the use of your textbook reading.

The Red Scare

1. What was/is communism? What aspects of communism did Americans especially fear?
2. During the Red Scare, what were people in America afraid of? Why was it called the "Red" scare?
3. Who was A. Mitchell Palmer? What were the Palmer raids? What happened to the people involved?
4. In what way did the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik takeover in Russia lead to a panic about Communism in America (the Red Scare)?
5. Were people's Constitutional right violated by the Palmer raids and during the Red scare period?
6. Why were unions and union leaders particularly focused on with the Palmer raids? Why were unions often associated with communism?

Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti

1. Who were Sacco and Vanzetti? What were they accused of?
2. How did Sacco and Vanzetti's status as immigrants contribute to them being feared, arrested, and executed?
3. What does it mean to say that Sacco and Vanzetti were anarchists? What is an anarchist? Did they have the right to be anarchists?
4. Was there a lot of evidence to support the charges against Sacco and Vanzetti? Why were they convicted and executed?
5. What is the connection between the arrest and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti and the Red Scare?

Music in the "Jazz Age"

1. Identify at least 3 forms of dance that became popular during the 1920s.
2. What was Jazz music? How was it different from traditional music before the 1920s?
3. Who were the major figures in Jazz and entertainment during the 1920s? What were they known for?
4. In what way did these new forms of dance and music represent the rebellious spirit of the 1920s?

Changing View of Women

1. Describe some of the trends in clothing and dress during the 1920s.
2. What was a flapper? In what way were flappers rebellious?
3. How did flappers challenge society's traditional ideas about how women should act?
4. What is a feminist? Did flappers represent an early form of feminism?

Airplane Innovation

1. Who was Charles Lindbergh? What did Charles Lindbergh do to become famous in the 1920s?
2. Why was Charles Lindbergh a hero for so many people during the 1920s?
3. How did Lindbergh's accomplishment represent the adventurous spirit of the 1920s?
4. What tragic event is Lindbergh also famous for?
5. In what way were Lindbergh's political views in the 1930s and 1940s controversial?

Literature of the Lost Generation

1. Who were some famous members of the Lost Generation?
2. Why were these writers called the Lost Generation?
3. What was the connection between WWI and the writing style of the lost generation?
4. Describe a sample story or poem from a lost generation author and explain how the story or verse is a good example of the themes of the lost generation.

The Harlem Renaissance

1. What was the Harlem Renaissance? Identify a few of the artists from the Harlem Renaissance.
2. What was the connection between the Harlem Renaissance and African American migration north during the 1920s?
3. What were some of the themes or messages from the Harlem Renaissance?
4. Discuss a sample story or poem from the Harlem Renaissance and explain how its theme or message is a good example of the Harlem Renaissance.

The Scopes Trial

1. What was the subject of the Scopes Monkey Trial?
2. What were the arguments presented by each side at the trial?
3. What was the outcome of the trial?
4. How did the scopes monkey trial represent the cultural conflict within America during the 1920s? How did it represent the conflict between science and religion?
5. Is the subject of the trial still an issue in America today? Explain.

The Great Migration

1. What was the African American Migration?
2. What factors caused African American to leave the south and move north?
3. What did African Americans hope to find in the North?
4. Did African Americans find exactly what they hoped to find in northern cities?
5. How did the population of northern cities change as a result of the African American Migration?

Organized Crime

1. What was the Prohibition amendment? What did it do?
2. What was the Volstead Act? What did it do?
3. What were underground bars and "speakeasies"? How did the "speakeasies" get their name?
4. How did organized crime and gangsters like Al Capone profit from prohibition?
5. What was the Valentine's Day massacre? How is it a good example of the violence caused by prohibition?
6. When and how was prohibition repealed?

Baseball's Golden Age

1. Why was baseball so important in the 1920s?
2. Who was Babe Ruth? What was he famous for? In what way did Babe Ruth represent the spirit of the 1920s?
3. What were the Negro leagues? Why did Negro leagues exist? In what way did baseball represent the segregation and racism that still existed during the 1920s?
4. Who was Satchel Paige? What famous African American baseball players played in the Negro leagues?
5. How and when did African Americans finally get the chance to play Major League Baseball? Who was the first African American player to play MLB?

The Harding Administration Scandals

1. Explain what the Teapot Dome scandal was. What did the members of Harding's government do wrong?

2. Why was Harding blamed for the Teapot Dome Scandal?

3. Why were the people Harding brought into the government called the "Ohio Gang"? What did the term mean (other than that they were from Ohio!)?

4. How was the Ohio Gang and the Teapot Dome Scandal an example of government corruption?

Consumerism

1. Identify some of the new consumer goods of the 1920s. How did these goods affect every day life?
2. What is a durable good? Why are durable goods usually expensive? Which of the new consumer goods are considered durable goods?
3. What is credit? Why did many people buy the new consumer goods of the 1920s on credit?
4. How did buying on credit make it seem like both people and businesses had more money than they actually did?

Stock Market Crash of 1929

1. Describe what happened to stock prices throughout most of the 1920s.
2. Explain what buying stock on margin is. How did margin buying drive the price of stocks higher?
3. Describe what Black Thursday was? What happened?
4. Explain what a margin call is. How did margin calls contributed to the rapid decline of stock prices?
5. Overall, describe the effect of the stock market crash on American society.

Postwar Peace Attempts

1. What was the Washington Naval Conference? Was it successful?
2. What was the Fordney-McCumber Tariff? How did it affect the different countries involved?
3. What was the Dawes Plan?
4. What were the long term results of these actions?

Labor Unrest

1. What were the reasons for labor unrest?
2. What was the Boston Police Strike? How was it resolved?
3. What tactics did both sides use during the Steel Mill Strike? How was it resolved?
4. What were the results of the Coal Miners' Strike?
5. Why was there a decline of labor membership in the 1920s?