Focus Question: How did the booming economy of the 1920s lead to changes in American life?

As you read, note specific examples that support the idea that the economy changed during the 1920s.
In the 1920s, new \textit{mass-production} techniques helped workers make more goods in less time. This led to a booming economy. The automobile industry played a major role in the economic boom. Carmaker \textbf{Henry Ford} hired \textbf{scientific management} experts to improve his \textit{assembly-line} production of automobiles. He was able to greatly reduce the time it took to build his \textbf{Model T} automobile. This made the Model T affordable for most Americans, and automobile ownership skyrocketed.

Ford also used innovation to manage his employees. He more than doubled their wages, shortened their workday, and gave them both Saturday and Sunday off.

The increase in automobile ownership helped other industries, such as steel, glass, rubber, asphalt, wood, gasoline, insurance, and road construction. These industries created new, better-paying jobs. More Americans had more money to spend. A flood of new, affordable goods became available, creating a \textbf{consumer revolution}.

Consumers used a new kind of credit called \textbf{installment buying} to buy things they otherwise could not have afforded. They paid a small amount at first, then paid the rest of the price in monthly payments. With a \textbf{bull market} soaring, Americans also bought stock on credit, which is called \textbf{buying on margin}. They paid as little as 10 percent of the stock price upfront to a broker. If the price of the stock rose, buyers made a profit. If it fell, they owed money to the broker.

The economic boom was felt more in cities than in rural areas. Farmers in particular suffered under growing debt, while at the same time crop prices were falling. For farmers, and many others, it was not a decade of prosperity.

\textbf{Review Questions}

1. How did mass production influence the economy?

2. What was installment buying?
Focus Question: How did domestic and foreign policy change direction under Harding and Coolidge?

As you read, note similarities and differences between the characters and policies of Presidents Harding and Coolidge.
In 1920, fun-loving Warren G. Harding was elected President. Favoring big business, he named banker Andrew Mellon as Secretary of the Treasury. Harding raised protective tariff rates, which made it easier for U.S. producers to sell goods at home. In response, Europeans also raised tariffs, weakening the world economy. Harding did not like laws designed to protect workers and reform business. Instead, his Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, asked businesses to make voluntary changes.

Harding was a friendly man but not very intelligent. He named his poker-playing friends to important government positions. One friend, Charles Forbes, wasted millions of dollars while running the Veterans’ Bureau. Another, Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall, took bribes to transfer control of oil reserves from the United States Navy to private oilmen. The incident became known as the Teapot Dome scandal. Fall was later sentenced to a year in jail. Harding died in 1923, before the full extent of the scandal came to light.

The new President, Calvin Coolidge, was quiet and honest. He appointed trustworthy men to jobs in the government. Like Harding, he mistrusted laws that restricted businesses. He reduced the national debt and lowered taxes to give incentives to businesses. Still, he ignored the country’s other problems, such as low farm prices, racial discrimination, and low wages for workers.

In foreign policy, Coolidge pushed European governments to repay war debts. The 1924 Dawes Plan made it easier for Germany, Britain, and France to repay those loans. In 1928, 62 nations signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact. This treaty outlawed war, but it was quickly forgotten because it could not be enforced.

**Review Questions**

1. What was the Teapot Dome scandal?

2. How did Presidents Harding and Coolidge feel about laws that restricted businesses?
Differing Viewpoints

| Education                      | • Viewpoint 1: Urban Americans tended to value education highly.  
|                               | • Viewpoint 2: |
| Evolution                      | • Viewpoint 1: Fundamentalists opposed the theory of evolution. Tennessee made it illegal to teach evolution in their public schools.  
|                               | • Viewpoint 2: |
| Immigration                    | • Viewpoint 1: |
|                               | • Viewpoint 2: |
|                               | • Viewpoint 1: |
|                               | • Viewpoint 2: |
|                               | • Viewpoint 1: |
|                               | • Viewpoint 2: |
As the 1920s began, striking differences arose between urban and rural America. Urban Americans enjoyed a rising standard of living and a modern view of the world. They valued education, and tended to be advocates of science and social change. By contrast, in rural America times were hard. Formal education was considered less important than working the farm, and people were generally less open to scientific discoveries and social change. Many rural Americans believed in the literal truth of the Bible. This belief was called fundamentalism. It opposed modernism, which stressed science. The two beliefs clashed head-on in the 1925 Scopes Trial. That year, Tennessee passed a law making it illegal to teach the theory of evolution in the state’s public schools. The attorney Clarence Darrow defended John Scopes for teaching this scientific theory to his high school class. Scopes was found guilty.

Many Americans did not appreciate the nation’s growing diversity. A wave of immigration inspired nativist politicians to pass laws creating a quota system to set limits on the number of new immigrants allowed into the country. In 1915, the Ku Klux Klan was reorganized in Georgia. This violent group, whose leaders had titles such as Grand Dragon and Imperial Wizard, promoted hatred of African Americans, Jews, Catholics, and immigrants.

Prohibition was also a controversial issue. In 1919, the states ratified the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbade the manufacture, distribution, and sale of alcohol. Congress then passed the Volstead Act to enforce the amendment. Organized crime rose as an unexpected result of Prohibition. Bootleggers illegally sold alcohol but also involved themselves in prostitution, drugs, robbery, and murder.

Review Questions

1. What were some of the issues and beliefs that rural and urban America clashed over in the 1920s?

2. What did quota system laws do?
Focus Question: How did the new mass culture reflect technological and social changes?

A. As you read, look for examples of the ways in which American culture changed during the 1920s.

TIP: Look for clues in headings throughout the section.
Focus Question: How did the new mass culture reflect technological and social changes?

B. As you read, classify the various types of changes that took place in women’s lives in the 1920s.

<table>
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<th>Women in the 1920s</th>
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<td><strong>Social Changes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Flappers wore shorter skirts.</td>
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As wages rose in the 1920s, American workers also enjoyed shorter workweeks. People had more free time and more money to spend on entertainment. Each week, 60 to 100 million people attended movies. Actors such as comedian Charlie Chaplin, heartthrob Rudolf Valentino, and cowboy William S. Hart became stars of these silent films. Then in 1927, the movie The Jazz Singer became the first movie to include sound matched to the action. The era of “talkies” began.

For entertainment at home, Americans bought phonographs and radios. Americans all across the continent listened to the same songs, learned the same dances, and shared a popular culture as never before. People admired the same heroes, such as baseball player Babe Ruth, the home-run king, and aviator Charles Lindbergh, who was the first person to fly alone across the Atlantic Ocean.

American women challenged political, economic, social, and educational boundaries. The Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote, and many ran for political office or joined the workforce. Some women, known as flappers, shocked society by wearing short skirts and bobbed hair. At home, new electric appliances made housework easier. Popular magazines, sociological studies, novels, and movies all featured the “New Woman” of the 1920s prominently.

A spirit of modernism grew, especially in cities. Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud contributed to this spirit with his theory that humans behave the way they do because of hidden desires rather than rational thought. Painters experimented with new styles. Writers, including F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway, wrote masterpieces that examined subconscious desires and the dark side of the American dream.

Review Questions
1. What were some of the advances in technology in the 1920s?

2. What changes allowed urban Americans to enjoy more entertainment?
Focus Question: How did African Americans express a new sense of hope and pride?

As you read, identify the main ideas.

I. New “Black Consciousness”
   A. New Chances, New Challenges
      1. Migration to North continues
      2. 
      3. 
   B. Garvey Calls for Racial Pride
      1. 
      2. 
      3. 

II. The Jazz Age
   A. Unique American Music Emerges
      1. 
      2. 
   B. 
      1. 

III. The Harlem Renaissance
   A. 
      1. 
   B. 
      1. 

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After World War I, millions of African Americans left the South to find a better life in the North. In New York, Chicago, and Detroit, they found good-paying jobs, a middle class of African American professionals, and a growing political voice. About 200,000 migrants from the South and immigrants from the Caribbean settled in New York City’s Harlem neighborhood. One of these immigrants was a Jamaican named Marcus Garvey. Seeing that blacks were treated poorly everywhere, he created a “Back to Africa” movement and urged black unity and separation of the races.

The 1920s saw the birth of a new musical form, jazz. Jazz is a truly indigenous American music. It emerged in the South as a combination of African American and European musical styles. Jazz became famous around the world thanks to the talents of musicians such as trumpet player Louis Armstrong. Singer Bessie Smith was so popular that she became the highest-paid African American entertainer of the 1920s.

The decade also saw the Harlem Renaissance, an outpouring of art and literature that explored the African American experience. Among its most famous writers was Claude McKay, whose novels and poems were militant calls for action. Langston Hughes celebrated African American culture. Zora Neale Hurston wrote about women’s desire for independence.

The Great Depression ended the Harlem Renaissance. However, the pride and unity it created provided a foundation for the future civil rights movement.

Review Questions
1. Why did many African Americans migrate north?

2. What was the “Back to Africa” movement?