

B Rich and Poor

World War I broke out in Europe in 1914. The Allies—Great Britain, France, and Russia—fought against the Central Powers—Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey.

The United States Enters the War

At first, the United States tried to remain **neutral**. Neutral means not taking sides. It was not easy staying neutral. In 1915, a German submarine sank the passenger ship *Lusitania*, killing over 100 Americans. In 1917, the British intercepted a German telegram. It promised American territory if Mexico would join the Central Powers. Many Americans saw the telegram as an attack on the United States. President Woodrow Wilson called for war.

The United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917. The arrival of American troops quickly brought victory to the Allies. The Treaty of Versailles ended the war in 1919.

The Roaring Twenties

In the years after the war, the stock market and the economy grew rapidly. Radio and movies became popular. Famous people included pilot Charles Lindbergh and actress Mary Pickford.

In 1920, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution established **Prohibition**, making it illegal to buy or sell alcoholic drinks. (In 1933, the 21st Amendment **repealed**, or cancelled, the 18th Amendment.)

- 1 People who could afford it bought automobiles in the 1920s.





Men without jobs wait in a bread line to get needed food.

Moving North

Hoping to find better jobs, many African Americans moved from rural areas in the South. They wanted to escape racial violence and Jim Crow laws that took away their rights. Also, beetles had ruined the cotton crop. This caused many people in the South to lose their jobs. They hoped to find jobs and a better life in the North.

This movement of African Americans is called the **Great Migration**. The Great Migration led to African American communities in Northern cities, such as Harlem in New York City.

A number of African American artists lived in Harlem. Poet Langston Hughes, musician Duke Ellington, and writer W.E.B. Du Bois were all part of the **Harlem Renaissance**—a time of creativity in the 1920s. Harlem became a center for African American culture.

Crash!

Many people bought stocks, hoping to get rich. On October 29, 1929, the stock market “crashed.” Prices fell to

record lows. The crash ended the Roaring Twenties. It started a period in the 1930s called the **Great Depression**. Many people have no jobs or money during a depression.

A Plan to End the Great Depression

In 1932, New York Governor Franklin Roosevelt was elected President. In his first speech as President, Roosevelt boldly declared, “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” His first act was to call for a “bank holiday.” Banks were closed for three days to stop people from removing all of their money at once.

President Roosevelt’s plan was called the **New Deal**. Social Security was established to provide income to retired Americans. Other programs paid for new roads and to bring electricity to rural areas. These projects provided jobs and improved life for New Yorkers and other Americans.

 **QUICK CHECK** How did the stock market affect the 1920s and 1930s? *Cause and Effect*