

# Cities Grow and Change

## MAIN IDEA

Industrialization and immigration caused American cities to grow rapidly.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Modern American city life first emerged during this period.

## TERMS & NAMES

urbanization	Jane Addams
tenement	Hull House
slum	political machine
social gospel	Tammany Hall

## ONE AMERICAN'S STORY

Carl Jensen came to the United States from Denmark in 1906. Like most of the millions of immigrants who came to America around the turn of the century, he immediately began to look for work.

### A VOICE FROM THE PAST

I wandered in search of work . . . waiting through rain and sleet and snow with gangs of longshoremen [dockworkers] to reach the boss before he finished picking the men he wanted. . . . Strong men crushed each other to the ground in their passion for work.

Carl Jensen, quoted in *A Sunday Between Wars*



Shipyards in growing cities provided jobs for many Americans.

At the turn of the century, the promise of work drew millions of people like Carl Jensen from around the world to American cities. In this section, you will read about the rapid growth of American cities.

## Industrialization Expands Cities

The Industrial Revolution, which had been changing how people worked, also changed *where* people worked. Since colonial days, most Americans had lived and worked in rural areas. But in the late 1800s, that began to change as more and more people moved to cities to find jobs.

Industries were drawn to cities because cities offered good transportation and plentiful workers. Increasing numbers of factory jobs appeared in America's cities, followed by more workers to fill those jobs. The growth of cities that resulted from these changes is called **urbanization**.

Many of the people who moved to American cities were immigrants like Carl Jensen. People also migrated from America's farms to the cities. Once there, even workers with few skills could usually find steady work.

### Taking Notes

Use your chart to take notes about changes in technology and politics.

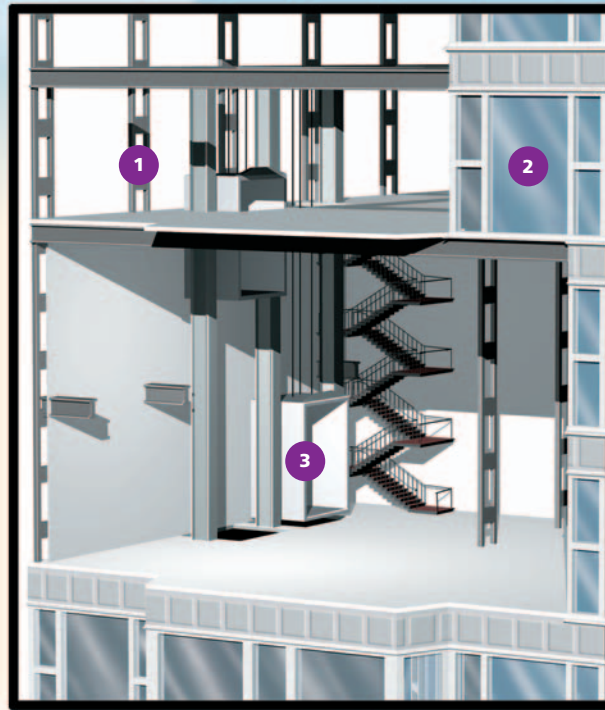
Changes in American Life

## CONNECTIONS TO SCIENCE

### Building a Skyscraper

Modern cities depend on skyscrapers to increase the space for people to live and work. Steel, electricity, and elevators make skyscrapers possible.

- 1 STEEL FRAMES** Steel beams can carry much more weight than brick or stone walls. The strength of the steel allows architects to design extremely tall buildings.
- 2 WINDOWS** In skyscrapers, the outer walls do not support the weight of the building; the steel beams do. As a result, many skyscrapers have outer walls made of glass to allow sunlight inside.
- 3 ELEVATOR** Tall buildings would be useless if people could not reach all of the floors. Elevators powered by electricity make such tall buildings practical.



## Technology Changes City Life

New technologies helped cities absorb the millions of people who flocked there. For example, new technologies made possible the construction of skyscrapers, buildings that looked tall enough to scrape the sky. Skyscrapers helped cities grow and made modern city life possible.

The elevator was a key invention for constructing tall buildings that could hold greater numbers of people. Before the 1860s, buildings rarely rose higher than four stories because it was hard for people to climb to the top. In 1889, the Otis Elevator Company installed the first electric elevator. Now buildings could be more than a few stories tall because people no longer had to walk up to the higher floors. As a result, buildings could hold more people.

The use of steel also helped to increase the height of buildings. In 1885, the Home Insurance Building in Chicago boasted an iron and steel skeleton that could hold the immense weight of the skyscraper's floors and walls. The building climbed to ten stories. Skyscrapers changed city skylines forever.

## The Streetcar City

As electricity helped change the way people traveled inside buildings, it also changed how people traveled around cities. Before industrialization, people walked or used horse-drawn vehicles to travel over land. But by 1900, electric streetcars in American cities were carrying more than 5 billion passengers a year. Streetcars and trains changed the walking city into the streetcar city.

### ReadingHistory

**A. Recognizing Effects** How did industry and technology help cities grow?

### Background

Streetcars are also called trolleys.



In 1888, Richmond, Virginia, became the first American city to have a transportation system powered by electricity. Other cities soon installed their own electric streetcars. The streetcars could quickly carry people to work and play all over the city. Some cities, such as Chicago, moved their electric streetcars above the street level, creating elevated, or “el,” lines. Other cities, like New York, placed their city rail lines in underground tunnels, making subways.

The streetcar city spread outward from the city’s center in ways the walking city never could. The ability to live farther away from work helped new suburbs to develop around cities. Some people in the suburbs wanted to become part of the city they bordered. That way they also could be served by the city’s transportation system. Largely due to public transportation, cities expanded. For example, in 1889, Chicago annexed several suburbs and more than doubled its population as well as its area.

**Vocabulary**  
annex: to add

## Urban Disasters and Slums

The concentration of people in cities increased the danger of disasters because people and buildings were packed closely together. For example, in 1906, a powerful earthquake rocked San Francisco. The tremors caused large fires to tear through the city. The central business district was destroyed. About 700 people died, and nearly \$400 million in property was damaged. But natural disasters were not the only source of danger for the people of the cities. Poverty and disease also threatened their lives.

As people flocked to cities, overcrowding became a serious problem. It was especially serious for families who could not afford to buy a house. Such families usually lived in rented apartments or tenements. A **tenement** is an apartment house that is usually run-down and overcrowded.

Old buildings, landlord neglect, poor design, and little government control led to dangerous conditions in many tenements. Poor families who could not afford to rent a place of their own often needed to move in with other families. This resulted in severely overcrowded tenements. Inadequate garbage pick-up also caused problems. Tenants sometimes dumped their garbage into the narrow air shafts between tenements. There was little fresh air, and the smell was awful.

Many tenements had no running water. Residents had to collect water

**ReadingHistory**  
**B. Summarizing**  
What was it like to live in a turn-of-the-century tenement?

### HISTORY throughART

This photograph by Lewis Hine shows a family of Italian immigrants in their cramped, decaying tenement in New York City in 1912. Often photographers, such as Hine, had their subjects pose for their pictures to create the strongest effect.

**What effect do you think Hine wanted this photograph to have?**



from a faucet on the street. The water could be heated for bathing. But it was often unsafe for drinking. Sewage flowed in open gutters and threatened to spread disease among tenement dwellers.

A neighborhood with such overcrowded, dangerous housing was called a **slum**. The most famous example was New York City's Lower East Side. But every city had slums. After visiting Chicago's slums, the British writer Rudyard Kipling wrote in disgust, "Having seen it [Chicago], I urgently desire never to see it again."

## Reformers Attack Urban Problems

Many Americans were also disgusted by poverty and slums. Some people fought to reform, or create changes, that would solve these problems. They were known as urban reformers.

The social gospel movement provided one basis for these beliefs. The **social gospel** movement aimed to improve the lives of the poor. Led by Protestant ministers, the ideas of the movement were based on Christian values. The most important concerns of the social gospel movement were labor reforms, such as abolishing child labor. Some reformers inspired by the movement opened settlement houses. They helped the poor and immigrants improve their lives. Settlement houses offered services such as daycare, education, and health care to needy people in slum neighborhoods.

### ReadingHistory

**C. Making Inferences** How did Christian values support the social gospel movement?

## CITIZENSHIP TODAY

### Community Service

Since the United States began, citizens have shared concerns about their communities. Many citizens, such as Jane Addams in 1889, have identified problems and proposed solutions to them.

In 1993, sixth-grader David Levitt asked his principal if the leftover food from the school cafeteria could be sent to a program to feed needy people. David was told that many restrictions prevented giving away the food.


Determined to get food to people who needed it, David talked to the school board, the state health department, and private companies to convince them to back his program. Today, more than 500,000 pounds of food from schools has been given to hungry people in the Seminole, Florida, area.

David Levitt carries supplies for his food pantry program.




### How Do You Participate in Your Community?

1. In a small group, think about problems within your community. Make a list of those problems.
2. Choose one problem to work on.
3. Gather information about the problem. Keep a log of your sources to use again.
4. After you gather information, brainstorm solutions to the problem. Create a plan to carry out one solution.
5. Present the problem and your plan to the class.

 See the Citizenship Handbook, page 286.

For more about community service . . .

 **RESEARCH LINKS**  
CLASSZONE.COM

Many settlement house founders were educated middle-class women. **Jane Addams** founded Chicago's **Hull House** in 1889 with Ellen Gates Starr. Hull House soon became a model for other settlement houses, including New York's Henry Street Settlement House, which Lillian D. Wald established in 1889.

## Political Machines Run Cities

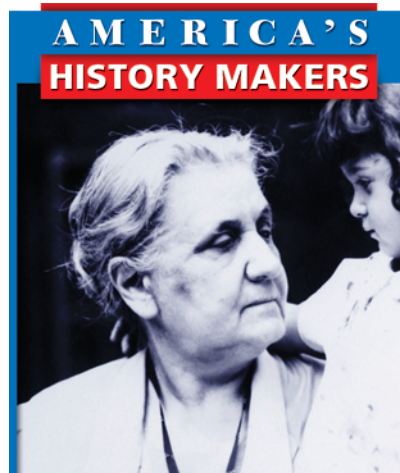
Political machines were another type of organization that addressed the problems of the city. A **political machine** is an organization that influences enough votes to control a local government.

Political machines gained support by trading favors for votes. For example, machine bosses gave jobs or food to supporters. In return, supporters worked and voted for the machine. Political machines also did many illegal things. They broke rules to win elections. They accepted bribes to affect government actions.

The most famous political machine was **Tammany Hall** in New York City. It was led by William Marcy Tweed. Along with his greedy friends, "Boss" Tweed stole enormous amounts of money from the city.

Despite such corruption, political machines did a number of good things for cities. They built parks, sewers, schools, roads, and orphanages in many cities. In addition, machine politicians often helped immigrants get settled in the United States by helping them find jobs or homes. Many immigrants gratefully supported the political machine after this kind of help. In the next section, you will learn more about immigration.

**ReadingHistory**  
D. Comparing and Contrasting How were settlement houses and political machines similar? How were they different?



## AMERICA'S HISTORY MAKERS

**JANE ADDAMS**  
1860–1935

Jane Addams founded Hull House as an "effort to aid in the solution of the social and industrial problems which are [caused] by the modern conditions of life in a great city."

In addition to Hull House, Addams was active in many other areas. She fought for the passage of laws to protect women workers and outlaw child labor. She also worked to improve housing and public health. In 1931, she was awarded a share of the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts.

**Why did Jane Addams found Hull House?**

### Section 1 Assessment

#### 1. Terms & Names

**Explain the significance of:**

- urbanization
- tenement
- slum
- social gospel
- Jane Addams
- Hull House
- political machine
- Tammany Hall

#### 2. Using Graphics

Use a chart like the one below to show the causes and effects of urban growth.

Cause	Effect
Steel	
Elevators	
Streetcars	
Immigration	

#### 3. Main Ideas

- Why did immigrants and farmers settle in big cities at the end of the 19th century?
- What are two inventions that made modern city life possible?
- What urban problems did reformers try to solve?

#### 4. Critical Thinking

**Evaluating** What were some of the advantages and disadvantages of machine politics?

#### THINK ABOUT

- the problems faced by immigrants and cities
- Tammany Hall and "Boss" Tweed

#### ACTIVITY OPTIONS

#### LANGUAGE ARTS

#### ART

It is 1900, and you have just moved to an American city. Write a **letter** to friends back home or draw a **picture** that describes your new home.