

Industrialization and Its Effects

Course: U.S. History Studies Since 1877 **Grades:** 9–12 **Time:** ~50 min standard · ~90 min block **Work mode:** Independent · pencil only Social Studies

Start Here

This is a **paper history investigation** about American **industrialization** — roughly the 1870s to the 1910s. You will read short summaries written for this packet, study a timeline of key events, and answer questions using a pencil. You do **not** need a computer, a textbook, or the internet — **everything you need is printed in this packet**. Work by yourself and do your best thinking. Write in complete sentences where you are asked to explain. If a question is hard, skip it, keep going, and come back. Reading the passages quietly aloud to yourself is allowed and encouraged. Keep your answers **non-partisan and grounded in the historical evidence** — analyze what the sources show about the period, not which modern side you favor.

Standard (~50 min): do Sources A–B and Questions 1–10, then the CER in Question 11. **Block (~90 min):** also read **Source C** and complete the block add-ons marked **[BLOCK]**, including the extended writing in Question 11.

Start Observe a Source 5 min

To **industrialize** is to shift from making goods by hand in homes and small shops to making them by machine in large factories. Warm up before you read.

1 Read this short public-domain excerpt, then answer below.

Public-domain excerpt — from the preamble to the U.S. federal law creating the Department of Commerce and Labor (1903): "...to foster, promote, and develop the foreign and domestic commerce, the mining, manufacturing, shipping, and fishery industries, [and] the labor interests... of the United States."

Type: primary source, public domain (an Act of Congress) · Creator: the U.S. Congress · Date: 1903 · Only a portion of the sentence is shown; the rest is left out (...).

Notice: Write **one thing you notice** about which parts of the economy the government said it wanted to "foster" and "develop" by 1903.

Predict: Based only on this list of industries, **predict one way** daily life or work in America might have been changing in this period.

2 Before reading the sources, why do you think building large factories in cities might change where and how ordinary people lived and worked? Give **one reason** in your own words.

Build Read the Sources 10–15 min

Source A — What drove and defined industrialization (written for this packet)

Between the 1870s and the 1910s, the United States changed from a mostly farming nation into the world's leading industrial power. Several forces came together to make this possible.

Causes. The country had vast **natural resources** — coal, iron ore, oil, timber, and water power. New **railroads**, tied together by a national network, moved raw materials to factories and finished goods to markets. New **technology** and **machines** (such as the Bessemer process for making cheap steel) let factories produce far more, far faster. A growing **supply of workers** — including people leaving farms and millions of **immigrants** — provided the labor, and **investment capital** from banks and businesses paid to build the mills and mines.

Effects on work. Much production moved into large factories organized around the **division of labor**: instead of one skilled craftsperson making a whole product, many workers each repeated one small task. This raised output but often meant long hours, low pay, monotonous work, and unsafe conditions.

Effects on cities and immigration. Factories clustered in cities, so people moved toward the jobs. Cities grew rapidly (**urbanization**), and large numbers of immigrants arrived to fill industrial jobs, reshaping the population of many towns.

Responses. Workers formed **labor unions** to bargain for better wages, shorter hours, and safer conditions. Over time, **reformers** and governments responded with new laws — for example, limits on child labor and rules meant to improve safety — though change came unevenly and slowly.

Type: original explanatory summary · Focus: causes and effects of U.S. industrialization, about 1870s–1910s

Source B — A factory-floor description (written for this packet)

This is an **original summary**, not a real quotation. It restates conditions that historians commonly describe in industrial workplaces of the era:

"In many mills the workday ran ten to twelve hours, six days a week. Machines set the pace, and a worker who fell behind could be replaced the same afternoon. The air was thick with dust and noise; injuries were common and rarely paid for. Wages were low enough that whole families — including children — often worked to make ends meet."

Type: original summary of typical conditions · Creator: not a real person · Focus: industrial working conditions, about 1870s–1910s · Not a genuine primary quotation.

Source C — Urban growth data [BLOCK]

Read Source C only if you are doing the ~90-minute block version. This is an **original data summary** written for this packet using the well-established pattern of the era: the share of Americans living in cities rose sharply as factories grew. The numbers below are rounded, illustrative figures that reflect that documented trend.

Year	Approx. share of U.S. people living in cities	Trend
1870	about 1 in 4 (~25%)	mostly rural nation
1890	about 1 in 3 (~35%)	cities growing fast
1910	about 4 in 9 (~45%)	nearly half urban

Type: original data summary (illustrative, rounded) · Focus: U.S. urbanization, 1870–1910 · Reflects the documented long-term rise in the urban share of the population; treat exact percents as approximate.

Word Bank

- industrialization
- the shift from making goods by hand to making them by machine in factories.
- urbanization

- the growth of cities as more people move to and live in them.
- immigration
 - people moving into a country to live and work.
- division of labor
 - splitting production into small tasks, each done by different workers.
- capital
 - money invested to build or run a business, such as factories or machines.
- labor union
 - an organized group of workers who bargain together for better pay and conditions.
- reform
 - a change meant to correct a problem, often through new laws or rules.
- cause
 - a reason something happens; it comes before an effect.
- effect
 - a result or consequence of a cause.
- point of view
 - the perspective or position from which a source was created.
- fact
 - a statement that can be checked and shown true or false.
- interpretation
 - an explanation of what evidence means; reasoned from facts.
- opinion
 - a personal belief or preference; not proven by evidence.

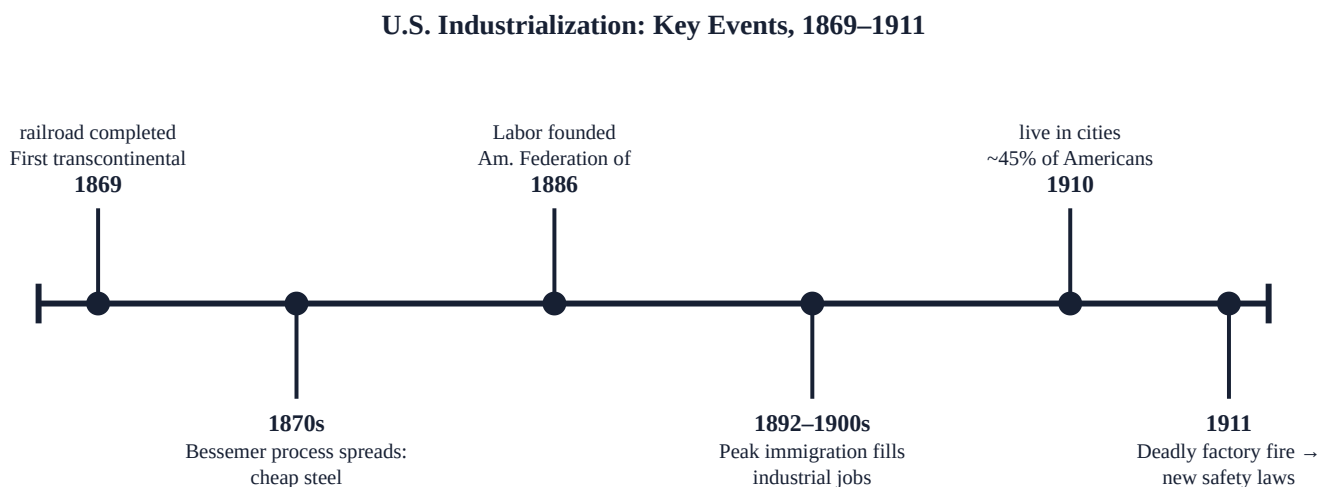


Figure 1. A timeline of U.S. industrialization from 1869 to 1911. Events above the line and below the line alternate for readability; all markers, dates, and labels are black on white so the figure reads clearly in grayscale.

3Using the timeline, list the **two earliest** events and the **two latest** events with their dates.

Earliest: _____ . _____

Latest: _____ . _____

Apply Analyze the Sources 20–25 min

4Source analysis. Look back at the **1903 excerpt in Question 1** and fill in what you can tell about it.

Creator: _____

Date: _____

Type of source (primary or secondary? public domain?): _____

Point of view: Who created it, and how might that shape what it emphasizes? Answer in one sentence.

5Cause-and-effect chain. Use Source A to complete the chain. Write one item on each blank so the arrows read from *cause* to *industrialization* to *effects*.

Causes (name two)	→ Industrialization	→ Effects (name two)
a) _____	Factories powered by machines	c) _____
b) _____	mass-produce goods	d) _____

Hint: causes might include resources, railroads, technology, workers, or capital; effects might touch labor, cities, or immigration.

6From cause to effect. In 2–3 sentences, trace **one** complete chain: pick a cause from Source A, explain how it helped industrialization grow, and name one effect it had on **workers, cities, or immigration**.

7Corroborate or contradict. Compare **Source A** (the overview) and **Source B** (the factory-floor description). Do they mostly **corroborate** (agree/support) or **contradict** each other about working conditions? Circle one and explain with one detail from each source.

Corroborate / Contradict

8Fact, interpretation, or opinion? Write **F** (fact you can check in the sources), **I** (interpretation reasoned from facts), or **O** (opinion / personal belief).

- ____ a) Railroads helped move raw materials to factories and goods to markets.
- ____ b) Long hours and unsafe conditions probably pushed many workers to form unions.
- ____ c) Factory work in this era was the worst kind of job anyone could ever have.
- ____ d) By 1910, close to half of Americans lived in cities.

9Evaluate a claim using the sources. A student claims: "*Industrialization was caused only by new machines — nothing else mattered.*" Do the sources support this claim?

- Yes — Source A says machines were the single cause.
- No — Source A names **several** causes working together (resources, railroads, technology, workers, and capital), not machines alone.
- The sources never mention machines at all.

Explain your choice using one detail from Source A:

10[BLOCK] Read a data source. Skip this if you are doing the standard version. Using **Source C**, describe the trend in the urban share of the U.S. population from 1870 to 1910, then explain in one sentence how **industrialization** (Source A) helps explain that trend.

Explain Claim–Evidence–Reasoning 10–20 min

Question 11 — Build a historical argument.

Of industrialization's effects on labor, cities, and immigration, which do you think was the most significant for the United States in this period? Write a **claim** that names one effect, support it with **two pieces of evidence**

from the sources or timeline, then explain your **reasoning**. There is no single "right" effect — your job is to argue from the evidence.

Sentence stems you may use: "The most significant effect of industrialization was _____ because..." · "One piece of evidence is... (from Source A / B / C or the timeline)." · "A second piece of evidence is..." · "This evidence supports my claim because..."

Claim

Evidence (two pieces)

Reasoning

[BLOCK] Extended writing — add a second source and a counter-consideration:

If you are doing the ~90-minute block, extend your argument on the lines below. (1) Bring in a **second source** you have not yet quoted (for example **Source C** or a specific timeline event) as added evidence. (2) Add a **counter-consideration**: name one reason someone might argue a *different* effect was most significant, then explain why you still hold your claim — or how your claim changes.

Close ACE Wrap-Up 5 min

Articulate

In your own words, explain what **industrialization** was, as if teaching a friend who missed today.

Connect

Point to one event on the timeline, or one line in a source, that shows a **cause** of industrialization *and* one that shows an **effect**. Name both.

Extend

Name one everyday product or job today that exists because of factory-based, machine production, and give one reason it connects to this history.

Continue Early Finisher optional · ~15 min

If you finish early (no new materials needed):

Match a reform to a problem. On the back of this page, pick **one** problem named in the sources (for example: long hours, unsafe conditions, or child labor). Then name **which reform response** from Source A (forming labor unions, or new laws such as limits on child labor and safety rules) **best addressed that problem, and why**. Use only the sources and timeline, and support your choice with one detail.

Turn in: Hand in this whole packet with your name, class period, and date filled in. Make sure questions 1–11 and the ACE box are answered (skip the items marked [BLOCK] if you did the standard ~50-minute version). The early-finisher task is optional but turn it in too if you did it.

HS_USH_Industrialization_01 — Industrialization and Its Effects Student Packet