**Progressive Era Document Based Investigation**

**Historical Context:** During the late 1800s and early 1900s, Progressive reformers worked to improve the social, political, and economic problems in American society.

**Objective:** 6.6 Read and interpret a primary source document reflecting the dynamics of the Gilded Age American society (e.g., Sojourner Truth "Ain't I A Woman," Jane Addams' Hull House accounts, Jacob Riis photographs and/or writings, a sweatshop worker's personal story).

Source 1a

See Page H-31 in your Text

Source 1b

. . . The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures. . . .

— 17th Amendment, Section 1, 1913

1. Who are the bosses of the senate according to cartoonist Joseph J. Keppler in this cartoon? What are they wearing? Who are the other characters in the cartoon? What is the message of the cartoon?

2. How did the 17th amendment addressed the concern expressed in the cartoon?
Source 2a

See Page H-30 in your Text

Photo by Jacob Riis, 1890

Source 2b

See Page H-33 in your Text

. . . It is ten years and over, now, since that line [between rich and poor] divided New York’s population evenly. To-day three-fourths of its people live in the tenements, and the nineteenth century drift of the population to the cities is sending ever increasing multitudes to crowd them. The fifteen thousand tenant houses that were the despair of the sanitarian in the past generation have swelled into thirty-seven thousand, and more than twelve hundred thousand persons call them home. The one way out he saw—rapid transit to the suburbs—has brought no relief. We know now that there is no way out; that the “system” that was the evil offspring of public neglect and private greed has come to stay, a storm-centre forever of our civilization. Nothing is left but to make the best of a bad bargain. . . .

Source: Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1890

3. Based on these documents, describe six problems faced by cities in the United States in the late 1800s. What is the author’s goal in publishing these documents?
According to the New York Times, how did The Jungle and other reports influence President Theodore Roosevelt’s actions? (Cite at least five pieces of evidence from the document in your response)
6. Based on this document, describe five effects of poor working conditions in this factory.


There were the men in the pickle rooms, for instance, where old Antanas had gotten his death; scarce a one of these that had not some spot of horror on his person. Let a man so much as scrape his finger pushing a truck in the pickle rooms, and he might have a sore that would put him out of the world [lead to his death]; all the joints in his fingers might be eaten by the acid, one by one. Of the butchers and floorsmen, the beef boners and trimmers, and all those who used knives, you could scarcely find a person who had the use of his thumb; time and time again the base of it had been slashed, till it was a mere lump of flesh against which the man pressed the knife to hold it. The hands of these men would be criss-crossed with cuts, until you could no longer pretend to count them or to trace them. They would have no nails,—they had worn them off pulling hides; their knuckles were swollen so that their fingers spread out like a fan.

There were men who worked in the cooking rooms, in the midst of steam and sickening odors, by artificial light; in these rooms the germs of tuberculosis might live for two years, but the supply was renewed every hour. There were the beef luggers, who carried two-hundred-pound quarters into the refrigerator cars, a fearful kind of work, that began at four o’clock in the morning, and that wore out the most powerful men in a few years. . . .

7. Based on this document, describe four social problems Jane Adams wanted to reform.

Source: Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House with Autobiographical Notes*, MacMillan, 1912

. . . During the same winter three boys from a Hull-House club were injured at one machine in a neighboring factory for lack of a guard which would have cost but a few dollars. When the injury of one of these boys resulted in his death, we felt quite sure that the owners of the factory would share our horror and remorse, and that they would do everything possible to prevent the recurrence of such a tragedy. To our surprise they did nothing whatever, and I made my first acquaintance then with those pathetic documents signed by the parents of working children, that they will make no claim for damages resulting from “carelessness.”

The visits we made in the neighborhood constantly discovered women sewing upon sweatshop work, and often they were assisted by incredibly small children. I remember a little girl of four who pulled out basting threads hour after hour, sitting on a stool at the feet of her Bohemian mother, a little bunch of human misery. But even for that there was no legal redress [remedy], for the only child-labor law in Illinois, with any provision for enforcement, had been secured [achieved] by the coal miners’ unions, and was confined to children employed in mines. . . . There was at that time no statistical information on Chicago industrial conditions, and Mrs. Florence Kelley, an early resident of Hull-House, suggested to the Illinois State Bureau of Labor that they investigate the sweating system [sweatshops] in Chicago with its attendant [use of] child labor. The head of the Bureau adopted this suggestion and engaged Mrs. Kelley to make the investigation. When the report was presented to the Illinois Legislature, a special committee was appointed to look into the Chicago conditions. I well recall that on the Sunday the members of this commission came to dine at Hull-House, our hopes ran high, and we believed that at last some of the worst ills under which our neighbors were suffering would be brought to an end. . . .
Indeed, the growth of fundamental democracy in this country is astonishing. Thirty years ago the secret ballot was regarded as a passing craze by professional politicians. Twenty years ago it was a vital issue in nearly every American state. To-day the secret ballot is universal in American politics. Ten years ago the direct primary was the subject of an academic discussion in the University of Michigan by a young man named La Follette of Wisconsin. Now it is in active operation in over two-thirds of our American states, and over half of the American people use the direct primary as a weapon of self-government. Five years ago the recall was a piece of freak legislation in Oregon. To-day more American citizens are living under laws giving them the power of recall than were living under the secret ballot when [President] Garfield came to the White House, and many times more people have the power to recall certain public officers today than had the advantages of the direct primary form of party nominations when [President] Theodore Roosevelt came to Washington. The referendum is only five years behind the primary.

Prophecy with these facts before one becomes something more than a rash guess. [With these facts in mind, predicting the future becomes something more than rash guessing.] . . .


8. According to William Allen White, what were three reforms the Progressives supported? How did these reforms expand democracy?

9. Who is the figure in the Thomas Nast cartoon and what is he doing? How were the progressive reforms intended to correct the problem?
10. What is the goal of Sojourner Truth’s “Ain’t I a Woman” speech? What arguments does she use to support that goal?

11. How do you think Sojourner Truth reacted to the 15th amendment that only gave the right to vote to men?