

## History Year 10 Coursework

### Describe the main features of the economic boom in the 1920's?

During the 1920's the U.S.A. experienced an economic boom. This was caused by the world's newly found technology and production methods. Probably the biggest and most important of these new products was the T-Ford made by Henry Ford. He came up with the new method of manufacturing called '**THE MOVING ASSEMBLY LINE**'. Now an unskilled worker would do the same job over and over again with the materials being brought to them on moving belts. Instead of the person moving to the materials with skilled workers having to put a whole car together on their own. Ford could now produce 9000 cars per day one being produced every twenty seconds. Ford produced business for other industries like the steel, rubber, glass and oil. The steel, rubber and glass were needed in the production of the car itself. This had major effects on the companies, which harvested the raw materials, manufacturing them and even down to the people who delivered them. Another business that was affected was road builders. Before now the road system wasn't that good because there was no need for it. But after a lot of money was spent on building new roads and repairing and improving old ones. The oil was used in the engines of the cars but even more importantly in the making of petrol. With this America now produced 32 percent of the total world products in 1913. This was more than Britain and Germany put together. In 1929 this increased to 46 percent. This was due to America having so much raw materials. Because of this new mass production prices fell from \$760 in 1908 to \$260. This made the car available to a lot more increasing sales and so profits.

The car wasn't only new product to be invented, mass-produced and sold. Now radios became extremely popular. When the first broadcast went out in 1920 telling people of President Harding's election victory on KDKA in Pittsburgh not many people heard it but by 1922 two hundred and twenty radio stations broadcasted to 3 million people. This had increased enormously to 50 million people in 1928. This again made more jobs and more money for the country. Of course though these new products were only for those people who could afford them. Vacuum cleaners also came about at this time. The type of work that some people did also changed. It became less labour orientated. For example on farms there was now machinery that could do the work with less labour. This machinery was only for the people who could afford. Most of these new products needed electricity to run them. So more jobs and money was made in power stations.

With the new products available, the increase in the amount of money people had came new fashion. The black slaves from Africa had brought with them and developed blues music. This in turn developed into jazz music, which at this time became very big during this period of time. Also at this time due to these factors a new type of women appeared. They were named '**THE FLAPPER**'. They were less conventional and conservative. They were described as having bobbed hair and wearing pudding basin hats, rouge lipstick and short waistless skirts. They were also said to drink illegal alcohol, and go to the cinema with boyfriends and kiss. At the time this would have been unacceptable to people of the older generation. With these new fashions women gained a lot of freedom. They now didn't have to go out with a chaperone and could smoke in public. In the 1920's cigarette sales doubled. They also didn't have to wear the restrictive clothing that they were used to like corsets.

Not everyone succeeded because of the boom. Farmers at this time made up 25 percent of the population. But demand from Europe that they had got used to during the war disappeared out because the countries didn't want their own economies affected. In 1924 six hundred thousand farmers lost their farms. Many people also couldn't find well-paid jobs. For 12 million people the average yearly wage was \$1500 well below the poverty line.

By David Arnold 10A