Today’s Questions

3. What did Americans spend their disposable income on in the Twenties?

4. What were 5 popular leisure activities during the Roaring Twenties?

5. How did society change during the 1920s?
Society and Leisure in the Roaring Twenties

“The uncertainties of 1919 were over. America was going on the greatest, gaudiest spree in history” – F. Scott Fitzgerald
Under-25

- Rebelled against values of the past and authority of elders
- Wanted fun and freedom
  - Fashions
  - Attitudes
  - Behaviors
Women

- Flappers
  - American women who wore bobbed hair, makeup, and dresses that fell just below the knee and were usually eager to try new fashions, behaviors, dances, and fads
“Today women are on the whole much more individual. They possess as strong likes and dislikes as men. They live more and more on the plane of social equality with men . . . [and] there is more enjoyable companionship and real friendship between men and women.” – Margaret Sanger, quoted in *A More Perfect Union*
Women

- More personal freedom
  - Drove cars
  - Played sports
  - Went to college
  - Worked before marriage or to help out in a family crisis

- Marriage
  - Equal partnership
  - But women still had responsibility of housework and child rearing

- New job opportunities
  - Business offices
  - Retail stores
  - Factories

- College graduates
  - Still teachers & nurses
  - Librarians
  - Social workers
  - Bankers

- Less educated women
  - Factories
  - Typists
  - Secretaries
  - Store clerks
  - Cashiers
African Americans

- NAACP
  - An organization formed to protect the constitutional rights of African Americans and make people aware of crimes against African Americans

- Marcus Garvey led a back to Africa movement

- KKK
  - Had up to 5 million members
  - Expanded outside the South
  - Still tried to use violence to keep African Americans from voting
Fundamentalism

- Fundamentalism
  - The belief in a literal, word-for-word interpretation of the Bible

- Theory of evolution
  - Living things developed over millions of years from earlier and simpler forms of life

- Fundamentalists did not want theory of evolution taught in public schools because it opposed their belief in the biblical story of creation

- The Scopes Trial
  - Dayton, TN biology teacher John Scopes tested the law by teaching evolution
  - Trial received national attention and radio coverage
Leisure

- Americans had more time and money for fun
  - Laborsaving appliances
  - Shorter working hours
  - Higher wages
- African Americans and Hispanic American’s leisure activities were limited
  - Income
  - Race

Spent $4 billion on leisure in 1929
- Movies
- Museums
- Public libraries
  - Books
  - Magazines
- Radio
- Telephone
- Playing games
- Driving
Roaring Leisure Activities

- The Charleston and dance marathons
- Crossword puzzles
- Mah-jongg
- Flagpole sitting
JAZZ

- Jazz
  - Music developed by African-Americans in New Orleans that combined African rhythms, blues, and ragtime to produce a unique sound
JAZZ

Popularized by mass media and became a part of popular culture

- Mass media – communications that reach a large audience to entertain and provide info on latest fashions and lifestyles (radio and movies)

- Popular culture – songs, dances, fashions, and even slang that are cool!
Harlem Renaissance

- Symbolized a rebirth of hope for African Americans through cultural activities of writers, musicians, singers, painters, sculptors, and scholars.
Heroes

- Sports figures
  - Captured imagination of American public
  - Restored Americans’ belief that people could improve their lives
- Charles Lindbergh
- Amelia Earhart
The Lost Generation

- Artists and writers who viewed the decade after the war as a time of deep despair with resentment and little hope for the future and not celebration after progressivism and senseless war.

- It's the fellow with four to ten thousand a year . . . and an automobile and a nice little family in a bungalow . . . that makes the wheels of progress go round! . . . That's the type of fellow that's ruling America today; in fact, it's the ideal type to which the entire world must tend, if there's to be a decent, well-balanced . . . future for this little old planet! – Sinclair Lewis, *Babbitt*