

Mulberry Street, New York City c. 1900



Courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York

Hancock Homestead, 1910



Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration

The Rise of Industrial America, 1877–1900

Excerpt

The expansion of agricultural lands led to what superficially seems a paradox: the more farmers there were—and the more productive farmers became—the smaller was agriculture's share of the economy. Farmers had the largest share of the dollar value of American economic output until 1880, when commerce's 29 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) edged out their 28 percent. In 1890 manufacturing and mining at 30 percent share of the GNP both exceeded agriculture's 19 percent share. During the same period, the percentage of workers employed in agriculture fell. Most of the nation's workers were farmers or farm laborers in 1860, but by 1900 the figure had declined to 40 percent.

Guiding Question:

- Why would more productive farming lead to urbanization?

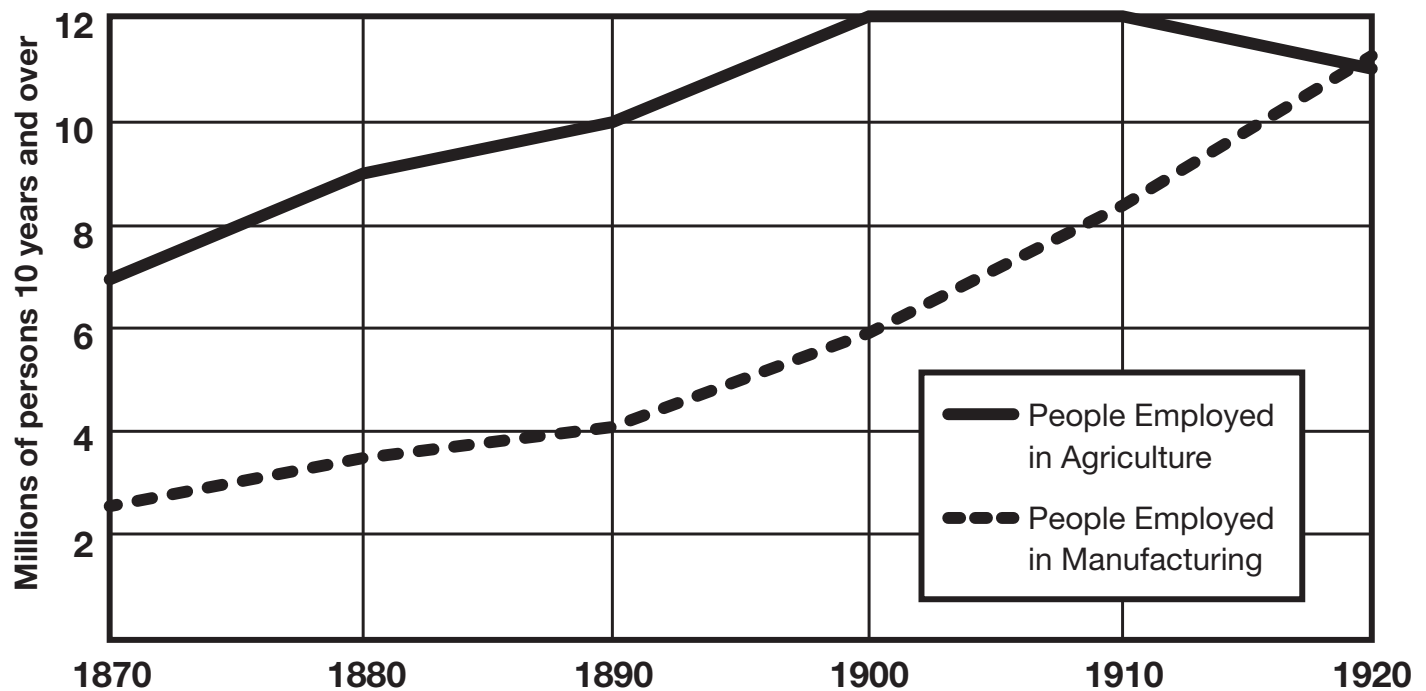
Rural to Urban Note-Taking Template

Document: <i>The Rise of Industrial America, 1877–1900</i> Main Points:	Document: <i>Labor Force and Employment</i> Main Points:	Document: <i>Industrial Cities</i> Main Points:
Document: <i>City Life in the Late 19th Century</i> Main Points:	Document: <i>Increasing Urbanization</i> Main Points:	Document: <i>American Dream Historical Context</i> Main Points:

Guiding Questions:

- How do the documents differ with regard to the reason that cities began to grow?
- How are the documents similar?
- What theory or thesis corroborated by evidence is found in the different documents?

Labor Force and Employment (Agricultural vs. Manufacturing, 1870–1920)



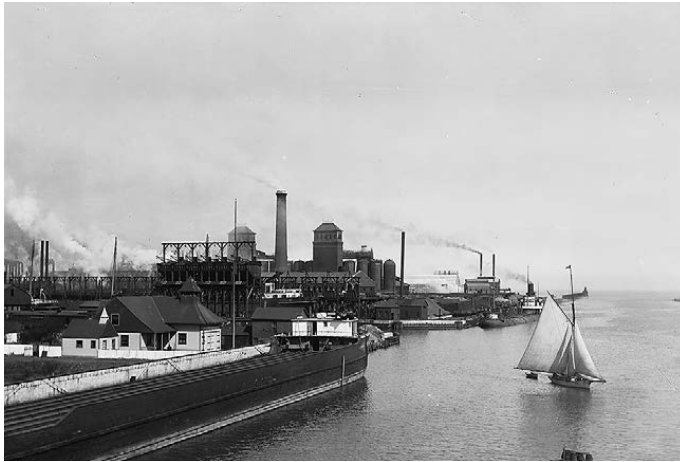
Guiding Questions:

- What is the title of the graph?
- How many Americans were employed in agriculture in 1870?
- How many Americans were employed in manufacturing in 1870?
- In what year did more Americans work in manufacturing than agriculture?
- What trend does this graph show about the United States labor force? What evidence from the graph supports your analysis?
- What impact would this trend have on urban areas?

Industrial Cities

Historical Context

Driven by a wealth of natural resources, inventive minds, and risk-taking industrialists, the nation's industries grew dramatically during the late 1800s. As industries grew, so did the towns and small cities in which they were located. Needing labor, transportation, housing, power, and so on, small cities and towns became booming industrial centers with thousands of workers. In the photos below, examples of industries in “industrial cities” are pictured.



Guiding Questions:

- In what ways do you think the industries pictured above led to the creation of industrial cities?
- What do you think were the characteristics of industrial cities?
- Based on what you observe in the photos, why do you think many people believed that industrialization was both a blessing and a curse to the cities in which industries were located?