



## **AP<sup>®</sup> US History (Operational) 2004 Sample Student Responses**

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The progressive era beginning around 1900 began with President Theodore Roosevelt and continued through to Woodrow Wilson's presidency, cracking down on trusts and seeking world peace. The New Deal came in the early 1930s and after the great stock market crash and of Black Tuesday in 1929, and focused on internal improvements initiated by the government. Although both the Progressive era and the New Deal period helped the lower class through its policies, the New Deal provided a much more government-organized and long-term reforms for the entire country.

The Progressive era mainly consisted of president T. Roosevelt cracking down on trusts and monopolies in a time when big names like Andrew Carnegie and John Rockefeller ~~entirely~~ had a stronghold on the nation's production and supply of steel and oil. As a result, the ~~poor~~ corporations could implement any policies, prices and conditions that they saw fit, taking advantage of the poor. The government's attitude had stayed fairly laissez-faire until Roosevelt stepped in with the Sherman Antitrust Act and outlawed such monopolies.

The New Deal, on the other hand, was caused not by monopolies, but by the Great Depression. Again, the lower class had nowhere to look but to the aid of the government. The Depression affected the whole nation, not just those at the poverty level. Franklin Roosevelt took a similar, but much more dramatic approach by implementing over a dozen programs within a year. The AAA, Agricultural Adjustment Act, reached out to the farmers to get them to produce less so the prices could go up. The PWA, Public Works Administration, helped create numerous

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jobs for the common man in areas such as construction. There was also the HOLC, ~~here~~ which helped loan money to families struggling to own their own homes. In contrast to the Progressive era, the New Deal period aggressively attacked the nation's socio-economic issues by implementing many more programs and causing the government to take a much more active role in the common citizen's life. In fact, programs such as ~~the~~ Social Security were created during the New Deal period and are still prevalent today.

Although both the Progressive era and the New Deal period had similar goals to ~~reach~~ reach out to those living in poverty, the New Deal had a much more aggressive approach. It did not simply lend a helping hand to such people by cracking down on trusts or implementing certain ideals like reducing child labor and implementing health programs like the Progressive era, but was a much more drastic step on behalf of the government to get the nation's people to start over, boost the economy, and boost their morale in ways that continue today. The difference in the nation's state ~~is~~ is what is largely responsible for this.

The pre-world war I Progressives were doing well and had economic prosperity ahead of them, whereas the New Deal reformers had to start from the bottom of a depression and work their way up. Nevertheless, both programs did great things for helping the nation at the time and helping ~~to~~ ensure security in the future.

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The <sup>early</sup> twentieth century was marked by extensive economic and social reform in the United States, especially during the Progressive Era and the New Deal Era. While the leaders of each movement pushed for the rights of workers, the two eras were both marked with different approaches to the problems of the economy. While the Progressive Era was mostly involved with the creation of new policies and laws to benefit the poor workers of the country, the New Deal designers took a much more active approach ~~in~~ in their economic-aid programs. Much of the success of the New Deal can actually be traced back to the Progressive Era, as many of the key leaders in Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration learned most of their knowledge ~~from~~ from most of their experience in the Wilson administration.

The reform movements of the Progressive Era were sparked by the harsh treatment of factory laborers in the late-eighteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Therefore, much of the reform legislation that was passed during the Progressive Era was in the area of workers' rights, especially with reference to the powers of workers' unions. Among the legislation passed in the Progressive Era were laws concerning working hours, wages, and factory conditions. These laws were very effective in controlling these aspects of the workplace. However, the unemployment rates

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throughout the country were not lowered very effectively because of the lack of effective government employment services.

This problem of unemployment was much more intense during the Depression of the 1930s. However, the government, under the leadership of FDR, took a different approach to the problem than did the Progressives. Through various government employment agencies, including the WPA and the TVA, the government was able to not only give the unemployed men jobs but also increase funds for the ~~the~~ government. The Tennessee Valley Authority was probably the most effective at this, as the government employed thousands of men to build dams and electric systems throughout the Tennessee Valley River in order to decrease the unemployment rate and also to supply the rural areas of the valley with electrical systems. ~~The benefits of this program~~ The benefits of this program did not end there, however, as these dams were owned by the government and all funds that were gained through the sale of this electricity were given to the government. The Works Progress Administration was another New Deal program that was highly effective in its goal of reducing the unemployment rate. The WPA hired millions of unemployed men throughout the country to work on public building projects. Therefore, through the use of the WPA, the

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government was not only able to decrease the unemployment rate, but also insure the construction of numerous new buildings for governmental use throughout the country.

Clearly, both the Progressive Era and the New Deal Era witnessed the effective use of government power to counter the economic problems of the day. While the Progressives had only to deal with the harshness of working conditions in factories, FDR and his administration had to counter the mass unemployment of America caused by the Depression. Because of the relative simplicity of the problems facing the Progressives, they needed only to campaign for new laws that would benefit the poor factory workers of America. The New Deal designers had a much different problem in the unemployment rate. Therefore, FDR found it necessary to ~~make~~ make the government a more active force in employment. Forcing ~~its~~ its way past various accusations of Communist sympathies and dictatorship, the FDR administration was able to effectively use the power of the federal government to counter the economic problems caused by the Depression. Although the Progressive Era and New Deal Era ~~each~~ each faced different problems with the economy and each administration used different means

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to counter these problems, both administrators were highly effective in enhancing the conditions of the lower class in America.

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The lives of America's <sup>poor</sup> ~~poor~~ have often been hidden in American history except in times of common economic depression or reform. Before the Progressive Movement there was little to no legislation providing support for the nation's underprivileged. However, as industry and manufacturing created massive urban centers, and as the number of immigrants entering the country continued to increase, a common reform movement swept the country. ~~The New Deal~~ and addressed, among other things, the hidden lives of the poor. As well, the New Deal tried to effectively better those rearing the negative effects of America's ~~most~~ worst Depression. While both instances tried to better the living conditions for Americans in poverty, the Progressive ~~the~~ Era sought to form a better society, while the New Deal focused on immediate cash payments towards the needy. While the Progressive Era was revealed in many layers of societal reform, the New Deal was a political device used to better the economy.

At the turn of the century, the Progressive Movement strove to better conditions regarding all aspects of American life, especially those revolving around the poor. The 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment ~~was~~ (progressive income tax) sought to decrease the distribution of income between individuals, thus creating a more equal society. The movement focused on improving conditions for those living in poverty as well. Jane Addams's Hull House tried to better the lives of poor immigrant families by extending cultural and ~~and~~ educational opportunities along





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The passage of FERA produced straight-forward economic aid to the needy and the Home Owners' Refinancing Act sought to keep the poor from having their homes being taken from them. During the New Deal, the increased government intervention in giving economic aid to the needy ~~was~~ deemed as revolutionary by many historians. The creation of the state created a new precedent for living today in American politics that the government has a direct responsibility to financially support the needy. The New Deal programs and policies sought to quickly solve the problems of the Depression by handing out money, directly and indirectly to those who needed it.

While both the Progressive era and New Deal tried to make life easier for those living at ~~the~~ and ~~below~~ below the poverty line, the Progressive reforms sought to create a better society and increased opportunities for the nation's poor while the New Deal simply sought to keep the poor fed and warm. Similarly, both movements left out groups of people, such as African-Americans, women, and Native Americans ~~the~~ who should have been focused on most directly. However, the legacy of the Progressive reform is that it strived to create a better society for the poor and the New Deal tried to fix the Depression. The Progressive reform was motivated by the people, and the New Deal was motivated by politics.