



Summary

TELESCOPING THE TIMES *Life at the Turn of the Century*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW *As the twentieth century begins, American culture changes due to new technological advances, cultural forms, and mass media. Some Americans, though, protest discrimination that denies them rights.*

● Science and Urban Life

MAIN IDEA *Advances in science and technology helped solve urban problems, including overcrowding.*

Technological advances began to meet the nation's need for communication, transportation, and space. One advance was the use of steel frameworks to build tall buildings. Skyscrapers made cities grow vertically; streetcar lines helped them grow horizontally. People could now live in one part of a city and work in another. Soon transit lines linked cities and suburbs into larger areas. To avoid congestion on the streets, some cities built elevated train lines. Steel bridges joined sections of cities across rivers.

Urban planners made cities more livable by designing parks and recreational areas. One of the most extensive was Central Park in New York City. Both Boston and Chicago grew by following carefully laid-out plans.

Technology also improved communications. Orville and Wilbur Wright of Dayton, Ohio, built their first airplane. The government quickly adopted the new technology to transport mail across the continent. As the number of people who could read quickly increased, publishers printed more and more books, magazines, and newspapers. Improvements in papermaking, printing, and typesetting helped spur this growth as well.

Another invention made pictures, rather than words, more accessible. With George Eastman's camera, millions of Americans were able to take pictures as a hobby. Journalists used cameras to capture news as it happened.

● Expanding Public Education

MAIN IDEA *Reforms in public education led to a rise in national literacy and the promotion of public education.*

Reformers aimed to improve public education. Not all children attended school, and most of

those who did left after four years. In the latter decades of the 1800s, many states passed laws requiring children from 8 to 14 to attend school for anywhere from 12 to 16 weeks every year. Teachers did not always emphasize academic subjects, however, and relied on rote memorization and physical punishment. African-American children—especially those in the South—suffered from a lack of schooling.

The number of schools increased. Kindergartens grew from 200 in 1880 to 3,000 in 1900. High schools saw an even greater increase. The high-school curriculum expanded to include courses preparing students for industrial and office jobs.

While African Americans were blocked from attending school, the children of immigrants were welcome. Some immigrants hoped the schools would "Americanize" their children. Many adult immigrants attended school at night to prepare to become American citizens and to learn English.

Just over two percent of young people attended college in 1900. Most came from wealthy or middle-class homes. Still, the last two decades of the 1800s saw a tremendous growth in the number of colleges. The curriculum changed, too, as universities began to pursue research in science and technology and formed professional schools in law and medicine.

Some colleges were established to offer higher education for African Americans. They provided opportunities for only a small percentage of people, however. In 1895, W. E. B. Du Bois became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard.

At the dawn of the 20th century, millions were getting an education, although racial discrimination remained a thorn in the flesh of American society.