

Though the boom benefitted
many people...

It didn't benefit them all...



Who benefitted from the boom?

Most people

Workers in cities

Bosses

Middle classes

Rich

White Anglo Saxon Protestants

Generally, quality of life improved.

How far was America a divided society?

- Town and country
- North and South
- Black and White
- Traditional and modern
- Men and women
- Upper and working class

Who didn't benefit from the boom?

Farmers:

Almost half of all Americans were involved in farming.

- Tractors, combine harvesters and other new machines helped farmers produce more food.
- BUT this led to too much food (a **surplus**). As a result, food prices dropped by 50%.
- Total US farming income fell from \$22 billion in 1919 to just \$13 billion in 1928.
- Many farmers lost money and had difficulty paying their mortgages, some were evicted, others were forced to sell.
- Many migrated to the cities, but they were unskilled and it was difficult to find employment.

Who didn't benefit from the boom?

Old Industries:

Although all industries were protected from foreign competition by the tariffs they were not protected from domestic competition.

- The coal industry suffered from competition from new industries such as oil and electricity.
- Leather and textiles suffered from the development of new man-made materials (the first plastics were being produced).
- Industry in the north suffered when factors moved south where labour was cheaper.
- In 1928, coal workers in North Carolina were being paid \$18 for a 70-hour week, when \$48 per week was considered the minimum required for a decent life.

Who didn't benefit from the boom?

Black Americans:

- Most black Americans were involved in farming and they were some of the worst hit as they were often the first to be fired if a farm ran into difficulty.
- Almost 1 million black farm workers lost their jobs.
- Many moved from their homes in the rural south to cities in the north looking for work.
- They faced the same problems as their white, unskilled, farm labouring peers but theirs was compounded by racism.