

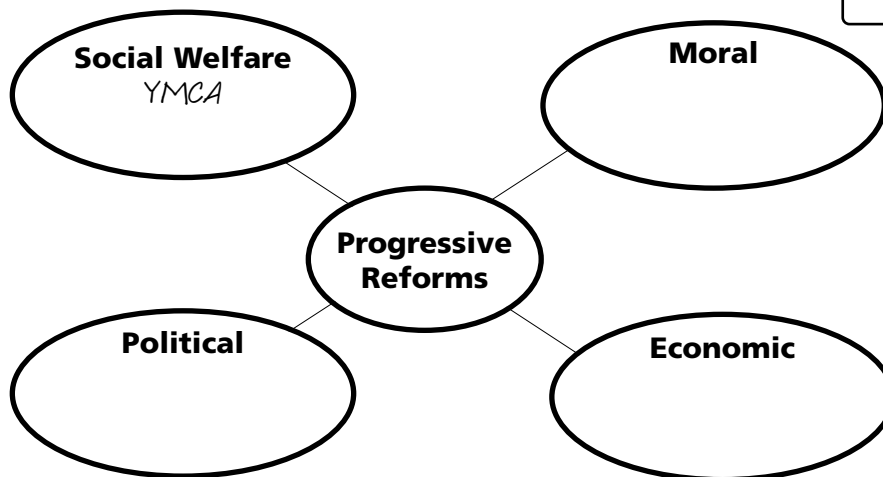
The Origins of Progressivism

BEFORE YOU READ

In this section, you will learn about the social reforms that made up the progressive movement.

AS YOU READ

Use this web diagram to take notes. Fill it in with names of the organizations and people who campaigned for the four types of reform. The notes will help you remember what you learned about the progressive movement.



Four Goals of Progressivism

What did reformers want?

As the 1900s opened, reformers pushed for a number of changes. Together their efforts built the **progressive movement**. The progressive movement had four major goals: (1) to protect social welfare, (2) to promote moral improvement, (3) to create economic reform, and (4) to foster efficiency.

Reformers tried to promote social welfare by easing the problems of city life. The YMCA built libraries and exercise rooms. The Salvation Army

TERMS AND NAMES

progressive movement Social reform movement in the early 20th century

Florence Kelley Social reformer

prohibition Making the sale or use of alcohol illegal

muckraker Writer who exposes wrongdoing

scientific management Using scientific ideas to make work more efficient

Robert M. LaFollette Progressive Wisconsin governor and senator

initiative A way for people to propose laws directly

referendum A way for people to approve changes in laws by a vote

recall A vote on whether to remove a public official from office

Seventeenth Amendment Amendment providing for senators to be elected directly

fed poor people in the cities and cared for children in nurseries. *Settlement houses* helped families. One reformer, **Florence Kelley**, helped to win the passage of the Illinois Factory Act in 1893. The law prohibited child labor and limited women's working hours. The law became a model for other states.

Reformers promoted moral reform by working for **prohibition**—the banning of alcoholic drinks. Many of these reformers, called prohibitionists, were members of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The well-organized union became the largest women's group the country had ever seen.

Reformers tried to make economic changes by pointing out the great *inequality* between the rich and the poor. They pushed for better treatment of workers. *Journalists* called **muckrakers** wrote stories about corruption and unfair practices in business.

To help make businesses more *efficient* and *profitable*, some reformers promoted the idea of **scientific management**. The idea was to apply scientific ideas to make each task simpler. One outcome was the *assembly line*.

1. How did reformers try to make businesses more efficient and profitable?

Cleaning Up Local Government

How did progressives change city governments?

Progressives also reformed politics. City governments were sometimes corrupt. For instance, they might be run by *party bosses* who gave jobs to their friends and bribed people to vote for them. One answer to this problem was a new system of city government called the commission system.

In the commission system a group of experts runs the city. Each expert takes charge of a different city department. By 1917, about 500 cities had commission forms of city government.

Another reform idea was the council-manager form of government. By 1925, nearly 250 cities had managers. These managers were appointed by councils elected by the people.

Some cities had progressive mayors. They improved cities without changing their system of government. They put in such reforms as fairer tax systems and lower public transportation fares.

2. How did the commission system help clean up city government?

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How did state laws change?

Reformers also worked at the state level. Many states had progressive governors. These states

passed laws to *regulate* railroads, mines, telephone companies, and other large businesses.

Robert M. La Follette, as governor of Wisconsin, led the way in regulating big business. His reforms of the railway industry taxed railroad property at the same rate as other business property. He set up a commission to regulate rates and forbade railroads to issue free passes to state officials.

Progressives also worked to improve conditions in the workplace and to end the employment of children. Factories hired children because children could do the same unskilled work as adults for less money. Often wages were so low that every member of the family needed to work.

Progressive reformers did not get a federal law to ban child labor. They did, however, get state legislatures to ban child labor. States also set maximum hours for all workers.

Progressives also won some reforms from the Supreme Court. In the case of *Muller v. Oregon*, the Court decided that a state could legally limit the working hours of women. In 1917, the Supreme Court upheld a ten-hour workday for men.

Electoral reforms at the state level gave voters more power. Oregon was the first to adopt the secret ballot, giving voters privacy. Three other reforms were important: (1) **initiative** gives voters themselves the right to propose a law, (2) voters could accept or reject the initiative by a direct vote on the initiative, called a **referendum**, and (3), voters got the right of **recall**, which meant they could force a government official to face another election.

Minnesota became the first state to use a mandatory statewide direct primary system. This meant that voters, instead of political machines, would choose candidates for public office through a special popular election. The direct primary led to the passage of the **Seventeenth Amendment** to the Constitution. This amendment called for senators to be elected directly by the people instead of by state lawmakers.

3. What are three ways progressive reforms helped ordinary people?
