Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ HW #3: The Progressive Presidents

Due: Wednesday 2/13/13

**Theodore Roosevelt**

Theodore Roosevelt became the vice president under President William McKinley. Some Republican leaders were not supportive of Theodore Roosevelt. Within his first year in office, President McKinley was assassinated. Theodore Roosevelt became the youngest president at age 42. President McKinley had supported big business. Roosevelt actively supported the Progressive movement.

In 1902 the Justice Department brought a suit against the Northern Securities Company. The company was a railroad monopoly that controlled transportation in the Northwest. The Supreme Court said that the business had violated the Sherman Antitrust Act by limiting trade. It ordered that the trust be taken apart. During his term, Roosevelt brought legal charges against 25 trusts in beef, oil, and tobacco. Roosevelt was called a ***trustbuster*** because he broke up so many trusts. He claimed that all trusts should not be broken, but should be regulated. The trusts that benefited the public should remain in place.

In 1902 the United Mine Workers went on strike. The strike involved over 100,000 miners. The miners demanded better pay, a shorter workday, and union recognition. The mine owners were unwilling to negotiate with the miners. The coal strike grew more serious as winter came. President Roosevelt invited the representatives from both sides to a meeting at the White House. The mine owners were still unwilling to negotiate. Roosevelt threatened to send federal troops to the mines to produce coal. It was the first time a president made threats to use force on the side of the strikers. The owners agreed to ***arbitration,*** settling the dispute by agreeing to accept the decision of an impartial outsider. Mine workers won the pay increase and a shorter workday. They did not gain union recognition.

In the election of 1904, Roosevelt ran for president. He promised to offer people a ***square deal,*** fair and equal treatment for all. The square deal included increased regulations for businesses. Most previous presidents treated businesses with a ***laissez-faire*** attitude. *Laissez faire* is a French term meaning “let people do as they choose.”

Roosevelt backed the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act. Both of these acts allowed the government to enter businesses and inspect products. ***Conservation,*** or the protection and preservation of natural resources, was another interest of President Roosevelt. He wanted to save the natural resources in the country. He urged Congress to set aside millions of acres of forests. He also created the first wildlife sanctuaries. In 1905 he introduced the U.S. Forest Service. Roosevelt tried to strike a balance between the interests of businesses and conservation.

**William Howard Taft**

Roosevelt decided not to run for president in 1908. Roosevelt chose William Howard Taft to run for president. Taft continued and surpassed many of Roosevelt’s Progressive goals. Progressives supported taxing the income of people. They believed it was a way to raise money for the federal government. The income tax would allow the government to lower tariffs. The Progressives thought the high tariffs on products were creating hardships for the poor. Taft supported the Sixteenth Amendment that gave Congress the

power to tax income.

Taft did not work to lower tariffs. He favored businesses when making conservation decisions. Roosevelt was frustrated with Taft. He decided to run against Taft for the Republican nomination for president. Roosevelt had many supporters and won the primaries. Taft had the support of the Republican Party leaders. Big businesses also supported Taft. Taft won the Republican nomination. Roosevelt and his followers started

a new party, the Progressive Party. They nominated Roosevelt as their candidate. The split in the Republican Party led to the election of Democrat Woodrow Wilson.

Wilson had criticized big business and big government. He convinced Congress to lower tariffs on essential goods such as sugar, wool, steel, and farm equipment. The income lost from the tariffs would be regained through the new income tax. The government gained control over the banking industry. Congress passed the Federal Reserve Act to regulate banking. Any national bank was required to follow the rules of the Federal Reserve System. Wilson worked to gained more governmental control over businesses. The Federal Trade Commission was started in 1914. The commission would investigate unfair trade operations. The Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914 increased the power of the government in fighting trusts. By the end of Wilson’s term, many Progressive goals had been achieved.

**Prejudice and Discrimination**

In the 1800s most Americans were white and Protestant. Most had also been born in the United States. Many people thought that America should stay that way. People who were different faced ***discrimination,*** or unequal treatment because of their race, religion, ethnic background, or place of birth. The government remained uninvolved where discrimination occurred.

Many Americans faced discrimination because of their religion. Many feared the Catholic immigrants threatened their way of life. Others thought the Catholics were trying to take over the country. Jewish immigrants were often fleeing discrimination from their homeland. Some found it difficult to rent a home, find work, or attend school in the United States because of prejudice against Jews. Many Americans faced discrimination because of their race. There was much intolerance in California against Asians. Some people claimed that the Chinese took jobs from white Americans because they would work for less money. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 so that Chinese immigrants could not enter the country. California also created difficulty for Japanese immigrants. They were not allowed to become citizens. One school board tried to make a separate school for Asians so they would not attend the same schools as white children. President Roosevelt put a stop to that separation. He did allow, however, an agreement with Japan that would limit their entrance into the United States. California and other Western states passed laws that made it illegal for Japanese immigrants to buy land.

Although African Americans were free, they still faced discrimination in both the North and the South. Most could only accept low-paying jobs or work as sharecroppers on a farm. They were separated from the white population. African Americans had their own neighborhoods, schools, parks, restaurants, theaters, and cemeteries. The Supreme Court supported this separation in the case of *Plessy* v. *Ferguson.* The Court said

African Americans should have “separate but equal” facilities. A new Ku Klux Klan emerged to build up the white Protestant America. Violence broke out as African Americans and other minorities were blamed for the poor economy. Lynching of African Americans in the South and the Chinese in the West happened often.

While the Progressive movement aimed to help those facing hardships, many minorities were excluded. One reform would help one group but discriminate against another. African Americans were not allowed to join trade unions. It was believed that the negotiations would be unsuccessful if African Americans were included. The temperance movement focused on Irish Catholic immigrants. The civil service reforms required an education to pass the tests. Therefore, many immigrants could not qualify.

**Struggle for Equal Opportunity**

Many minorities struggled against reforms that excluded them. Some worked to create their own reforms to the benefit of many others. Booker T. Washington had been born enslaved. He taught himself to read and founded the Tuskegee Institute in 1881. The institute taught farming and industrial skills to other African Americans. Washington also founded the National Negro Business League. He wanted to develop business for

African Americans. His book, *Up from Slavery,* encouraged African Americans to work patiently and peacefully toward equality. Ida B. Wells was the editor of an African American newspaper. She published the names of people involved in a lynching. As a result, she was forced to leave town. Her book, *A Red Record,* claimed that most lynching was directed toward African Americans who had been successful in business. George Washington Carver was a chemist and director of agricultural research at Tuskegee Institute. He discovered plant products that helped the economy of the South. Maggie Lena was the first American woman to be a bank president. She founded the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank.

In the early 1900s, many Mexicans crossed the border to the United States. Mexican Americans faced discrimination and violence. They formed self-defense associations called mutualistas. These groups raised money for insurance and legal help. In the ***barrios,*** or Mexican neighborhoods, they formed groups to help with

overcrowding, poor sanitation, and low public services. Many leaders surfaced to seek justice and improve their circumstances.

**Answer the questions and complete the chart on a separate sheet of paper:**

**1.** How did President Roosevelt get the mine owners to negotiate during the coal strike?

**2.** Why did Roosevelt choose to run against Taft in the election of 1912?

**3.** How were African Americans kept separate from white society?

**4.** According to Ida B. Wells, what was a primary reason for the lynching of African Americans?

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| African American Leaders | Contributions |
| Booker T. Washington |  |
| Ida B. Wells |  |
| George Washington Carver  |  |
| Maggie Lena |  |