

# Studying 4 Major Issues of the Post-World War I and 1920s Era with Primary Sources

Center for Legislative Archives

---

**Summary:** In this lesson students will analyze primary source documents from the National Archives and political cartoons drawn by Clifford K. Berryman to learn about topics and major events in U.S. History from 1919 - 1930.

**Rationale:** Students develop critical thinking skills by analyzing primary source documents and political cartoons about four major issues of the Post-World War I and 1920s Era. This lesson complements studies of the Roaring 20s topics of economic growth, the Harlem Renaissance, flappers, jazz, and prohibition by addressing four topics highlighting the contest of old and new directions for America.

**Guiding Question:** How do the issues of the 1920s demonstrate a contest between old and new ideas? Were old ideas or new ideas more powerful in regard to each of the issues studied in this lesson?

**Materials:** Graphic organizers, primary source documents, political cartoons

**Recommended Grade Levels:** Grades 7-12

**Courses:** U.S. History

**Topics included in this lesson:** Political cartoons, international diplomacy, U.S. economic foreign policy, woman suffrage, African American civil rights

**Learning Activities:**

**Preparing the Materials**

1. Make one copy of the four Graphic Organizers and the Reflection Question Worksheet for each student.
2. Establish four stations, one for each page of the Graphic Organizer.
3. Make one additional copy of the Graphic Organizer to provide a page for each station.
4. Make one copy of the Primary Source Sheets and cut along the dotted lines of each sheet. Keep each cartoon, caption, and description together with a paper clip.
5. Place a copy of one Graphic Organizer and the related cut-outs at each station. Mix up the cartoons, captions, and descriptions at the station so that students must match the ideas together.

**Note:** Non-image documents should be printed in larger format or projected at the stations for greater legibility.

**Classroom Activity**

[www.archives.gov/legislative/resources](http://www.archives.gov/legislative/resources)



# Studying 4 Major Issues of the Post-World War I and 1920s Era with Primary Sources

Center for Legislative Archives

---

1. Divide the students into four groups.
2. Carousel the groups through the four stations.
3. Provide each group with enough time at each station for students to:
  - a. Match the political cartoon to the reading and summarize the text on their individual Graphic Organizer.
  - b. Match the caption to the political cartoon (the reading will help provide scaffolded support) and write the caption on their individual Graphic Organizer.
  - c. Explain how the cartoon matches the caption on their individual Graphic Organizer.
4. When each group has completed work at their fourth station, distribute Graphic Organizer 5, in which the students will draw conclusions from their work at the other stations.

## Reflection Activity

1. When the groups have completed the five graphic organizers, instruct each student to work individually to complete the Reflection Questions Worksheet and prepare to share their responses with the full class.
2. Have a whole group discussion of the Reflection Questions.