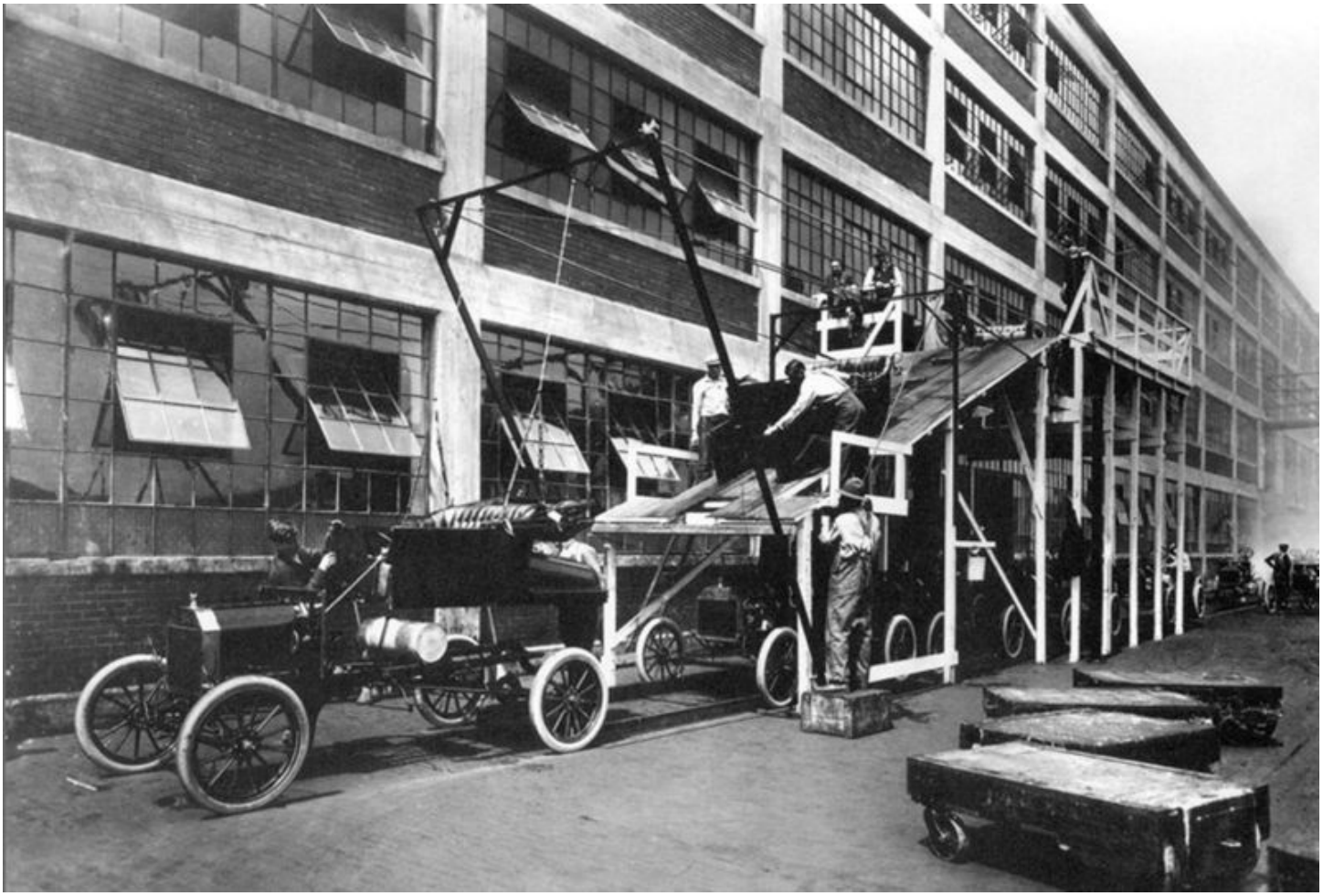
Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Interpreting History – Document A

Directions: Examine the items below and answer the questions that follow.



"I will build a car for the great multitude. It will be large enough for the family, but small enough for the individual to run and care for. It will be constructed of the best materials, by the best men to be hired, after the simplest designs that modern engineering can devise. But it will be so low in price that no man making a good salary will be unable to own one — and enjoy with his family the blessing of hours of pleasure in God's great open spaces."

-Henry Ford, 1922

American Automobile Sales in the 1920s

Year	Number of Cars Sold
1920	2 million
1921	1.5 million
1922	2.5 million
1923	3.6 million
1924	3.2 million
1925	3.7 million
1926	3.7 million
1927	3 million
1928	3.7 million
1929	4.5 million

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Questions

1. Examine the picture at the top of the page. Write down you initial impressions. What do you think is happening?

2. How might this be different from the way the task may have been done before?

3. What would be the benefit of doing the task this way instead of the old way?

4. Now read the quote at the bottom of the page. Explain what Henry Ford is saying as it relates to the picture.

5. Now interpret the chart at the bottom of the page. Does the chart reflect what you would expect based on the picture and the quote? Why or why not?

6. Think about the automotive industry. What other industries might benefit from more cars being sold?

7. Finally, put it all together. How does the information on this page help answer the overall question – What caused the economic growth of the 1920s?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Interpreting History – Document B

Directions: Examine the items below and answer the questions that follow.

"No nation in the history of the world was ever sitting as pretty. If we want anything, all we have to do is go buy it on credit. So that leaves us without any economic problems whatsoever, except perhaps someday having to pay for them. But we are certainly not thinking of that this early."

-Will Rogers
Radio commentary,

Percentage of American Families Owning Various Appliances, 1920 and 1930

	1920	1930
Inside flush toilets	20%	51%
Central heating	1%	42%
Home lighting with electricity	35%	68%
Mechanical refrigerators	<1%	8%
Washing machines	8%	24%
Vacuum cleaners	9%	30%
Radios	<1%	40%
Automobiles	26%	60%

Source: Lebergott, Stanley. 1976. The American Economy: Income, Wealth, and Want. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Questions

1. Examine the advertisements at the top of the page. What products are being advertised?

2. How do the ads try to convince consumers that they need these products?

3. Why would these products be beneficial to the consumer?

4. Now read the quote at the bottom of the page. What does Will Rogers say about buying products in the 1920s?

5. Now interpret the chart at the bottom of the page. Does the chart reflect what you would expect based on the pictures and the quote? Why or why not?

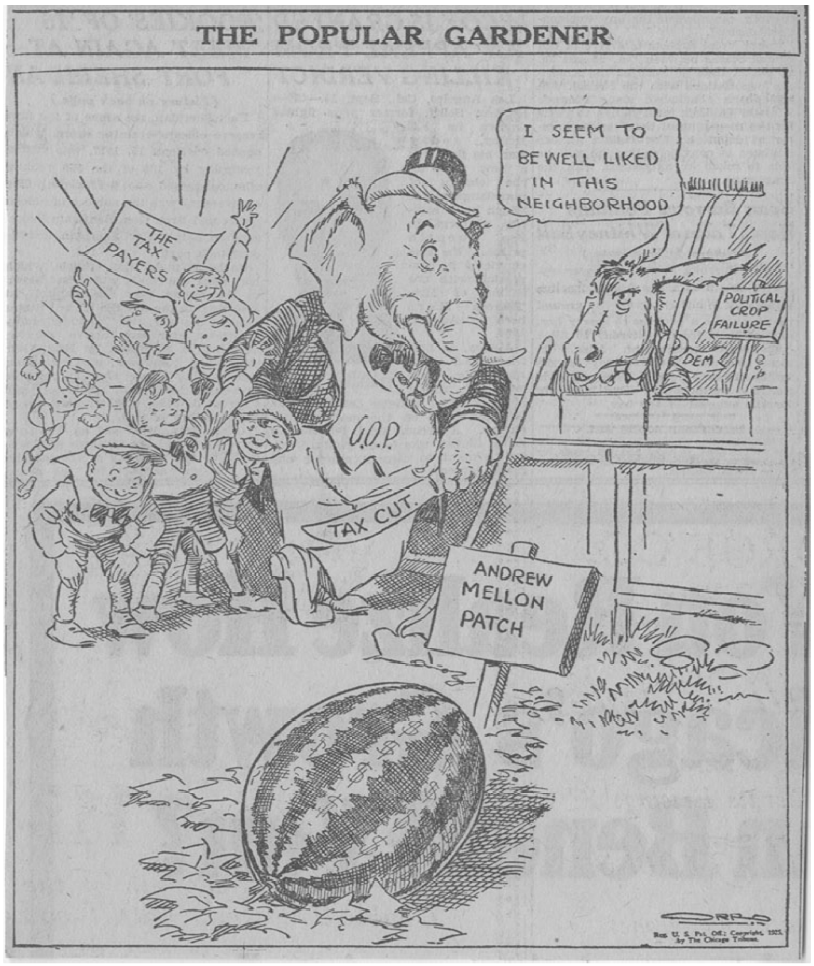
6. How does credit work? What are the positives and negatives of buying items on credit?

7. Finally, put it all together. How does the information on this page help answer the overall question – What caused the economic growth of the 1920s?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Interpreting History – Document C

Directions: Examine the items below and answer the questions that follow.



Source: Orr, Carey. Chicago Tribune. September 16, 1925.

"We mean to have less of Government in business and more business in Government."

-President Warren Harding

"After all, the chief business of the American people is business. They are profoundly concerned with producing, buying, selling, investing and prospering in the world."

- President Calvin Coolidge

FIGURE 2 – UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (1920-1930)

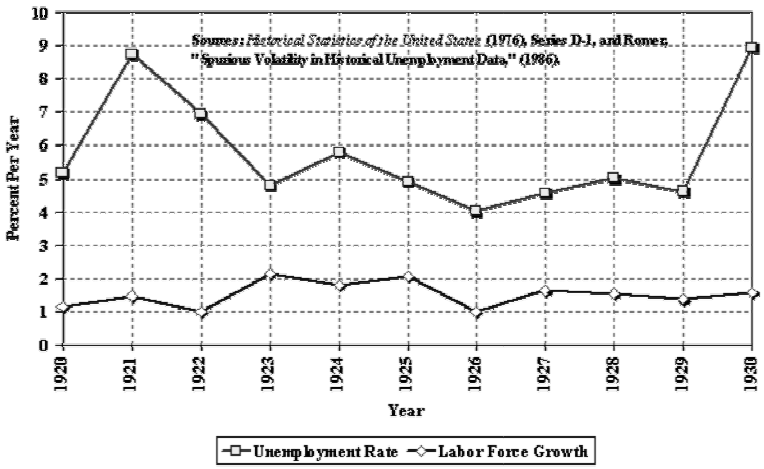
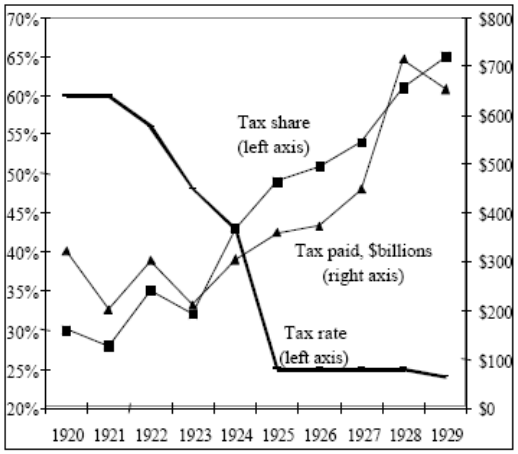


FIGURE 1 – MARGINAL TAX RATE FOR THOSE WITH INCOME OVER $100, 000



Source: U.S. Department of Treasury, "Statistics of Income," annual 1920 to 1929. The tax rate shown is for taxpayers at $100,000; for years before 1925, the top rate was even higher.

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Questions

1. Examine the political cartoon at the top of the page. Write down your initial impressions. What do you think it is trying to express?

2. Look at Figure 2, how does it relate to the political cartoon?

3. Now look at Figure 1. What do you notice about unemployment? How might that relate to the political cartoon and Figure 2?

4. Now read the quotes at the top of the page. What do these quotes from Presidents Harding and Coolidge tell you about the focus of government in the 1920s?

5. What are some ways in which the government can stimulate business?

6. Finally, put it all together. How does the information on this page help answer the overall question – What caused the economic growth of the 1920s?

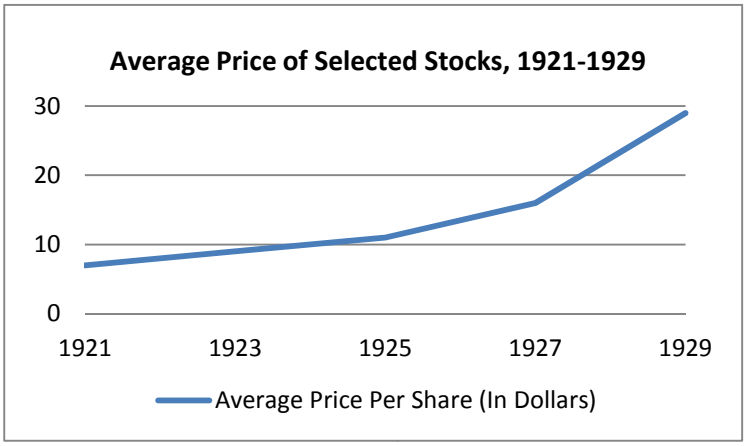
Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Interpreting History – Document D

Directions: Examine the items below and answer the questions that follow.

"Stock prices have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau. "

- Irving Fisher
Summer 1929



Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Questions

1. Examine the picture at the top of the page. Write down your initial impressions. What do you think is happening?

2. Now read the quote at the bottom of the page. Explain what Irving Fisher is saying as it relates to the picture.

3. Now interpret the chart at the bottom of the page. Does the chart reflect what you would expect based on the picture and the quote? Why or why not?

4. What causes stock prices to rise and fall?

5. Finally, put it all together. How does the information on this page help answer the overall question – What caused the economic growth of the 1920s?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Interpreting History – Document E

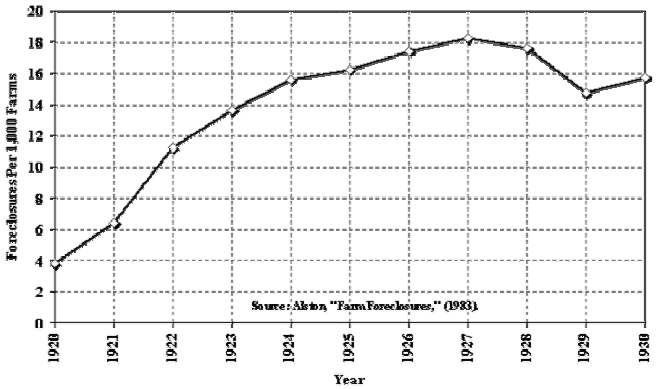
Directions: Examine the items below and answer the questions that follow.

"The farmer has to be an optimist or he wouldn't still be a farmer."

"Every time somebody has thought of relief for the farmer it has been to make it so he could borrow more money. What he needs is some way to pay back. Not some way to borrow more."

Will Rogers

TABLE 1 - FARM MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE RATE



Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Questions

1. Examine the picture at the top of the page. Write down you initial impressions. What do you think is happening?

   _____
   _____
   _____

2. Now read the quote at the bottom of the page. Explain what Will Rogers is saying as it relates to the picture.

   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Now interpret the chart at the bottom of the page. Does the chart reflect what you would expect based on the picture and the quote? Why or why not?

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. What might explain the situation farmers faced in the 1920s? What causes crop prices to rise and fall?

   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Finally, put it all together. How does the information on this page help answer the overall question – What caused the economic growth of the 1920s? (Hint: Maybe it doesn't. What else could this tell you?)

   _____
   _____
   _____