

IMMIGRATION AND URBANIZATION

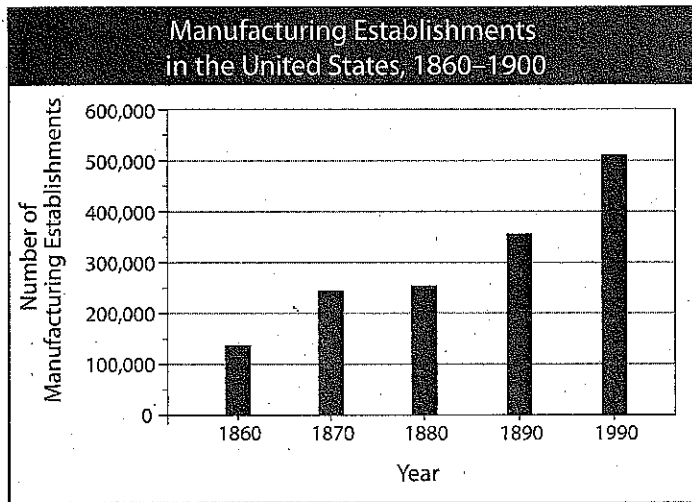
Reading a Chart

Consumerism

During the Gilded Age, Americans began buying new products and shopping in new ways. New forms of advertising helped create a demand for new products, and new industries arose to produce the consumer goods that people wanted. The production of steel and oil and the manufacturing of new machinery grew. The total annual value of all manufactured goods was about \$5.4 billion in 1879. Astonishingly, that value climbed to some \$13 billion by the turn of the century. Some people were critical of the conspicuous consumerism that these numbers reflected. It could not be denied, however, that the technological advances of the era improved life for many.

Directions: Look at the graph below. Then answer the questions that follow on a separate sheet of paper.

Manufacturing Establishments in the United States, 1860–1900



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, University of Virginia Library

Questions to Think About

1. In which year did the number of manufacturing establishments peak?
2. Which year saw the number of manufacturing establishments at their lowest point?
3. **Interpret Graphs** Describe the overall trend shown in this graph.
4. **Analyze Cause and Effect** During the 1870s, the United States experienced an economic depression. How is this fact reflected in the graph?