

The Roaring Life of the 1920s**Section 2****The Twenties Woman****Terms and Names**

flapper Young woman who embraced the new fashions and values of the 1920s

double standard Set of principles granting one group more freedom than another group

Before You Read

In the last section, you read about some lifestyle changes in the 1920s. In this section, you will learn how women's lives changed during the 1920s.

As You Read

Use a web diagram to take notes on the changes women experienced in the 1920s.

YOUNG WOMEN CHANGE THE RULES (Pages 440–441)**What was a flapper?**

In some ways, the spirit of the twenties was a reaction to World War I. Many young soldiers had witnessed horrible events in Europe. This led them to rebel against traditional values. They wanted to enjoy life while they could.

Young women also wanted to take part in the rebellious, pleasure-loving life of the twenties. Many of them demanded the same freedom as men.

The new urban culture also influenced many women. Their symbol was the **flapper**. She was an emancipated young woman. She held new independent attitudes and liked the sophisticated new fashions of the day.

She wore make-up, short skirts, short hair, and more jewelry than would have been proper only a few years before. She often smoked cigarettes and drank alcohol in public. She went dancing to new, exciting music.

Other attitudes changed, too. Many young men and women began to see marriage as more of an equal partnership.

At the same time, churches and schools protested the new values. The majority of women were not flappers. Many people felt torn between the old values and the new ones.

One result of this clash between old values and the image of the flapper was the **double standard**. This was a set of principles or values generally accepted by society. One American double standard allowed men to have greater sexual freedom than women. Women still had to observe stricter standards of behavior than men did.

1. How did the flapper represent the spirit of the twenties?

Section 2, *continued***WOMEN SHED OLD ROLES AT HOME AND AT WORK**

(Pages 441–443)

How did women’s roles change?

Many women had gone to work outside the home during World War I. This trend continued in the twenties. But their opportunities had changed after the war. Men returned from the war and took back traditional “men’s jobs.” Women moved back into the “women’s professions” of teaching, nursing, and social work.

Big business provided another role for women: clerical work. Millions of women became secretaries. Many others became salesclerks in stores. Many women also worked on assembly lines in factories. By 1930, 10 million women had paid jobs outside the home. This was almost one-fourth of the American work force.

Women did not find equality in the workplace. Few women rose to jobs in management. Women earned less than men. Men regarded women as temporary workers whose real job was at home keeping house and raising children. In the twenties, patterns of discrimination against women in the business world continued.

Family life changed, too. Families had fewer children. Electrical appliances made

housework easier. Many items that had been made at home—from clothing to bread—could now be bought ready-made in stores.

Public agencies took over some family responsibilities, too. They provided services for the elderly and the sick. Nevertheless, most women remained homemakers. Some women had to work and also run their homes. It was hard for them to combine these roles.

In the 1920s, marriages were more often based on romantic love than arranged by families. Children were no longer part of the work force. They spent their days in school and other activities with people of their own age. Peer pressure began to be an important influence on teens’ behavior. This reflected the conflict between traditional attitudes and modern ways of thinking.

2. Describe two changes in women’s roles in the workplace.

Section 2, *continued*

As you read about women's changing roles in the 1920s, fill out the chart by writing notes in the appropriate spaces.

Social Life in the 1920s	
1. Note two ways women's fashions changed.	
2. Note two ways women's social behavior changed.	
3. Note two words that describe the attitude reflected by these changes.	

Work and Home Life in the 1920s	
4. Note one way women's work opportunities improved.	
5. Note two ways women's home and family life improved.	

6. Note three negative effects that accompanied women's changing roles in the 1920s.	
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