

In Search of the American Dream: the USA, c.1917-96
Topic 4: The changing quality of life

Key Term	Meaning
GNP (Gross National Product)	The aggregate value of goods and services produced in a country and by Americans abroad.
GDP (Gross Domestic Product)	The value of goods and services produced by a country.
The Wall Street Crash	Major American stock market crash that occurred in the Autumn of 1929.
Dividend	A regular, usually yearly payment made by companies to their shareholders.
Bull Market	This is when share prices rise and people expect this to continue
Buying on the margin	Buying shares with borrowed money to sell quickly at a profit.
The Federal Reserve Board (Fed)	The Federal Reserve Board (Fed) was set up in 1913 to regulate banking.
Bear Market	This is when the price of shares falls and people expect the fall to continue.
Boll weevil	A beetle that eats young cotton plants. The boll weevil working its way across the USA from the late 1800s and had caused a 34 per cent drop in production by 1921.
Money supply	The amount of money in circulation in a country. The government can affect this by printing more money.
Welfare state	A state that looks after its citizens from 'the cradle to the grave.'
Alphabet agencies	Federal government bodies set up by the Roosevelt administration during the New Deal, so called because they became known by their initials, e.g TVA
Consumer society	A society in which there is exceptional interest in acquiring consumer goods such as cars and kitchen gadgets.
Materialism	Preoccupation with material possessions and wealth.
White flight	The post-World War Two exodus of white Americans from inner-city areas that were then left to minorities such as African Americans.
Franchises	When entrepreneurs pay a big company to operate and profit from a local branch of that company.
Food Stamp Program	First used during the Great Depression, revived by President Kennedy and made permanent by the Food Stamp Act (1964); impoverished individuals present stamps provided by the government as payment for food.
Medicare	Federally funded health insurance for over-65s and those with disabilities, regardless of their income or existing medical treatment for impoverished residents, introduced under President Johnson in 1965.
Medicaid	Federal government financial assistance to states to help them provide medical treatment for

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	impoverished resident. Introduced under President Johnson in 1965.
Head Start	Federal government programme to help economically disadvantaged pre-schooler, providing educational, health, social and other services.
Upward Bound	Federal government-financed by President Johnson and linking higher education institutions to poor students with college potential.
Poverty line	An imaginary line drawn by the federal government. Those whose annual family income was below this were legally defined as 'poor', which impacted upon federal aid entitlements.
Rust Belt	The old manufacturing areas of the Eastern seaboard and the Midwest, where the old industries had declined and mostly disappeared, for example Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.
Blue-collar	Manual workers, e.g steel workers
Stagflation	When business stops expanding and stagnates, while inflation continues.
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	An index compiled by the US Bureau of Statistics that shows how the cost of a number of basic foods (including milk, butter, bread, meat and eggs) varies from year to year.

Expectation: You need to learn the spelling and definition of these key terms off by heart!

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