**Document 1: An Immigrant’s Story**

“We began to make inquiries about jobs and were promptly informed there were plenty of “pick and shovel.” We were also given to understand by our fellow-boarders that “pick and shovel” was the only work available to Italians….. I practiced for a day until I could say “peek” and “shuvle” to perfection. Then I asked a fellow roommate to take me to see what the work was like. He did. He led me to Washington street…where some excavation work was going on, and there I did see with my own eyes, what the “peek” and “shuvle” were all about. My heart sank within me, for I had thought it some form of office work. “

**Source: From *The Soul of an Immigrant* by Constantine Panuzio. The Macmillian Company, 1921.**

**Constantine Panuzio is an Italian immigrant who immigrated to the United States during the Gilded Age.**

**Document 2: The First Department Store**

“In Philadelphia everybody goes to Wanamaker’s (department store). His store (Mr. Wanamaker’s store) is already the largest business in the world, when by recent purchase of a giant establishment in New York he made it more largest still. Now the working of Wanamaker’s is this. It is no use going there to get what you want. You most go to get what Mr. Wanamker wants to sell. He tells you each morning in the newspaper what he has got today, and if you want it you better go and get it: the chances it will be gone tomorrow. “

“All this is magnificent for the customer….. But plainly somebody has to pay, and who? The small trader.

**Source: From *Eyewitness to America: 500 years of America in Words of Those Who Saw it Happen*, edited by David Colbert. Pantheon Books, 1997. In this excerpt, George Steevens of Great Britain gives his first person account of John Wanamaker’s Philadelphia department store.**

**Document 3: Railroads in America**

“If a Western Rip Van Winkle had fallen asleep in 1869 and awakened in 1896, he would not have recognized the lands that the railroads had touched. Bison had yielded to cattle; mountains had been blasted and bored. Great swaths of land that had once whispered grass now screamed corn and wheat. Nation-states had conquered Indian peoples, slaughtering some of them and confining and controlling most of them. Population had increased across much of this vast region, and there were growing cities along its edges. A land that had once run largely north-south now ran east-west. Each change could have been traced back to the railroads.”

**Source: From *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* by Richard White. W. W. Norton & Company, 2011.**

**Richard White is a notable American Historian**

**Document 4: Housing Conditions**

“Look at the “dens of death” in Baxter Street….”house,” says the health inspector, “into which the sunlight never enters….that are dark, damp, and dismal throughout all the days of the year, and for which it is no exaggeration to say that the money paid to the owners as rent is literally the “price of blood.””…. The mortality officially registered in those “dens of death” was 17.5 percent of their population…. A dozen steps away in Mulberry Street called “Death’s Thoroughfare” in the same report, were the “Old Church Tenements.”….”One of the largest contributors to the hospitals.”

“Where the “dens of death” were in Baxter Street, big barracks crowded out the old shanties. Some had been built only a little while when complaint came to the Board of Health of smells in the houses.”

**Source: From *The Battle with Slums* by Jacob A. Riis. The Macmillan Company, 1902.**

**Jacob A. Riis is a Danish American social reformer.**

**Document 5: Child Labor**

“We find in the textile mills, steel and iron mills, glass houses and machine shops employing children that, in proportion to the number of children employed, accidents to children under sixteen years of age are from 250 to 300 per cent more frequent than to adults. These unfeeling figures present a terrible description of our industrial system. All our boasted protection of home and childhood stands ashamed before the bare fact that, in working out our industrial purposes in America, we subject our little children to a danger nearly three times as great as that incurred by men….

The menace to morals is not less than that to health. The life of a little boy in the coal breaker is exposed to all of the rough usage and the hardening surroundings which characterize a form of labor requiring a maximum of manual and a minimum of mental exertion. “

**Source: From “Child Labor in the Coal Mines,” *Annals of the American Academy* of Political and Social Sciences, January-June, 1906. Owen R. Lovejoy provided this firsthand account. The report comes from Owen R. Lovejoy, a member of the National Child Labor Committee, which worked to stop child labor.**

**Document 6: Shopping in America**

“[Department stores] were along the line of the most effective retail organization, with hundreds of stores coordinated into one and laid out upon the most imposing and economic basis. They were handsome, bustling, successful affairs, with a host of clerks and a swarm of patrons. Carrie passed along the busy aisles, much affected by the remarkable displays of trinkets, dress goods, stationery, and jewelry. Each separate counter was a showplace of dazzling interest and attraction. She could not help feeling the claim of each trinket and valuable upon her personally.

**Source: Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, a novel, 1900.**