**4 Major Problems in the Gilded Age – 1870’s to Early 1900’s**

*LT 2.2-Describe significant problems created by American’s industrial and urban transformation*

**Mark Twain, on the United States Motto during the Gilded Age:**

**“Get rich; dishonestly if we can, honestly if we must.”**

The word “gilded” refers to something covered with a thin plate of gold. Mark Twain called this era the Gilded Age because he believed that the tremendous growth of industry and business was covering up deep social and economic problems in the United States. Calling the era a Gilded Age meant that we were covering up our problems with money.

Describe 4 of the major problems the U.S. was experiencing during the Gilded Age by answering the questions for each topic.

**Child Labor (615-616, Working Conditions Handout)**

* How old were some of the youngest child laborers seen by Marie Van Vorst?
* What percent of boys and girls under the age of 15 held full time jobs?
* What are some of the jobs children held?
* Use your prior knowledge to explain how child labor became such a major issue. Think about growth of industry and immigration.

**Monopolies (Use your brain)**

* What is a monopoly?
* Why were monopolies a problem?
* What is a trust? Why is a trust bad for the economy?

**Poor Working Conditions (585, 615, WORKING CONDITIONS)**

* Approximately how many people were injured and hurt in 1900 from industrial accidents?
* Describe a normal workday:
* What was the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire?
* On page 585-586, how did the loss skilled workers with better technology make for dangerous working conditions? What was Fredrick W. Taylor’s idea of scientific management?

**Political Corruption (606-608)**

* During the Gilded Age, politics were run by organizations called political machines. Political machines tried to influence politics. What are some examples of things they would do and what was the major machine in New York City?
* What were “bosses” and how did they gain power and get things done?
* William Marcy Tweed was one of the most famous bosses. What was he most famous for?
* Why did people view President Grant as corrupt?
* What was the Credit Mobilier Scandal?