

The Gilded Age 1878–1897

Literature and the Arts

Mark Twain helped establish an American literary style. He wrote *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and many other novels and short stories.

Bret Harte wrote popular regional stories about the gold-mining life.

Edith Wharton wrote novels about society and focused on the newly wealthy Americans.

James Whistler and **John Singer Sargent** painted portraits and scenes of society life.

Winslow Homer painted seascapes.

Who Was President during the Gilded Age?

Year	President	Political Party	Influence
1880	James A. Garfield	Republican	Assassinated just 100 days after becoming president
1881	Chester A. Arthur	Republican	Focused on domestic (national) affairs
1884	Grover Cleveland	Democratic	Known for his honesty and owning up to his mistakes
1888	Benjamin Harrison	Republican	Focused on international affairs
1892	Grover Cleveland	Democratic	Only president to serve nonconsecutive terms
1896	William McKinley	Republican	Positioned America to be a world superpower



Did You Know?

Some of America's favorite pastimes emerged way back then.

During this period, people began to have time for recreational pursuits. Riding bicycles, sailing, and ice-skating became popular pastimes. Baseball, horse racing, and other spectator sports emerged. Circuses traveled through the countryside, by wagon at first, then by rail, to entertain rural and small-town audiences. In large cities, a type of stage show called "vaudeville" became popular. These variety shows featured many kinds of performers as individual acts.

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