Something is GILDED if it is covered with gold on the outside but made of cheaper material inside.

A gilded age might appear to sparkle, but critics pointed to corruption, poverty, crime and great differences in wealth between the rich and poor.
Individualism

✦ The belief that no matter what a person’s background is, he or she can still become successful through effort.
✦ “Rags to Riches”
✦ Success is a combination of hard work and LUCK.

Social Darwinism

✦ A philosophy based on Charles Darwin’s theories of evolution and natural selection, asserting that humans have developed through competition and natural selection with only the strongest surviving.
Herbert Spencer

- British philosopher who applied Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection to human society.
- Argued that humans evolved through competition and natural selection.
- Believed that society became better because only the fittest people survived.
- Some industrial leaders used Social Darwinism to justify their support of laissez-faire capitalism.

Carnegie’s Gospel of Wealth

- Believed in a gentler version of Social Darwinism called the “Gospel of Wealth.”
- Wealthy Americans should engage in philanthropy to help people help themselves.
- Building schools and hospitals was better than giving handouts to the poor.
- Funded libraries to give people information to help them get ahead in life.
Jane Addams

- Founded the Hull House. The house provided services for the immigrant and poor population living in the Chicago area.
- Public schools were crucial to the success of immigrant students, teaching English, and American culture.
- AMERICANIZATION

Realism & Mark Twain

- Realism in Art and Literature portrayed people as they truly are.
- Samuel Clemens: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn published in 1884.
- Wrote in local dialect with a sense of humor. Characters question right and wrong in society.
- Tackled REAL subjects like racism, violence and poverty.