

What was the Great Migration?

The WW1 Great Migration was the movement of African Americans from the farmlands in the south to the towns and cities in the north. The date of the WW1 Great Migration was from 1915 – 1920. It is estimated that between 300,000 and 500,000 migrated during the WW1 Great Migration

The Great Migration map shows the flow of movement along the rural to urban corridors.

The Great Migration



1. Using the Map name the 12 southern states African Americans left during the Great Migration and color them yellow.
2. Name the 7 Northern States African Americans were moving to and color them Green
3. Name 4 major cities in northern states whose population dramatically increased as a result the great migration.

Causes of the Great Migration

Examine the causes of the great migration below. Next to each cause label it as **Social** (having to do with the way people lived) **Economic** (having to do with how people make and spend money) or **Political** (having to do with laws, the government, or people's rights and freedom)

1. The number of white workers drafted in World War One, and the halt of immigration from Europe, led to a need for additional labor in factories and industries in the north.

2. The increase in war production led to the increased demand for labor in the North, but the draft had removed many workers from the labor force.

3. Northern companies and corporations sent labor agents (recruiters) to the South to persuade African Americans to take advantage of new job opportunities, better education and the modern facilities in the Northern cities.

4. World War One cut immigration from Europe to America in 1914 from 1.2 million to just 300,000. The downward trend in immigration, and fresh labor, continued throughout the war.

5. In 1915 and 1916 floods and boll-weevil infestations ruined the cotton crop in Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and Louisiana causing great hardship to black farmers.

6. Racial segregation, the Jim Crow system, threats of lynching, fear of mobs, white supremacy and the climate of violence persuaded Southern families to move to the freedom and greater prosperity in the North

7. Easier mobility and transportation. People traveled North by train that provided easy access to New York, Chicago and other Northern cities.

Facts about the Great Migration WW1

Directions: Read the following passage and take annotated notes. In the margins.

Then complete the chart at the bottom.

In the years leading up to World War One the African American population were entirely rural. (In the years since 1920 this changed to more than 90% urban city dwellers). Why did African Americans move from the rural life in the countryside to the urban life in the cities? To seek new job opportunities in the North and leave racism and segregation in the South. The [American Industrial Revolution](#), and the second period of Industrialization, occurred in the latter half of the 19th century when steam power was replaced by electric power and iron was replaced by steel. [Industrialization](#) transformed the United States from an agricultural to an industrial society with the emergence of mass production techniques in huge factories that required vast numbers of cheap,

unskilled labor. The number of Black Americans employed in the farming industry dropped from 90% to just 50% in less than 50 years.

During WW1 the newly-formed [NAACP](#) led the fight against discrimination and segregation and to prevent mistreatment of African Americans in the military. 400,000 African Americans were drafted during the war, and 42,000 African Americans served overseas as combat troops including the famous [Harlem Hellfighters](#). African Americans in the South were urged to move to the cities of the North by the black northern press. Labor shortages during World War I provided African Americans with jobs in the shipbuilding, steel and automotive industries as well as in ammunition and meat packing factories. Between 300,000 and 500,000 African Americans left the South during World War I to settle in Northern cities which became known as the "Great Migration". Between 750,000 and one million left the South in the 1920s. African American migrants settled in cities such as Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Columbus, Cincinnati, Louisville, Springfield, St. Louis, Detroit and Chicago.

The massive influx of people in the cities led to the squalid conditions and problems of [Urbanization in America](#). The majority of the movement to the cities happened during the early 1900s (America was majority urban by 1921) African Americans and foreign immigrants formed ethnic enclaves in America's cities where members of minority groups lived - referred to as ghettos.

Impact: The massive demographic shift of the Great Migration dramatically altered African-American history socially, politically and culturally.

1. Next select 3 facts to list (rewrite in your own word) in each column.

Social	Political	Economic
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