

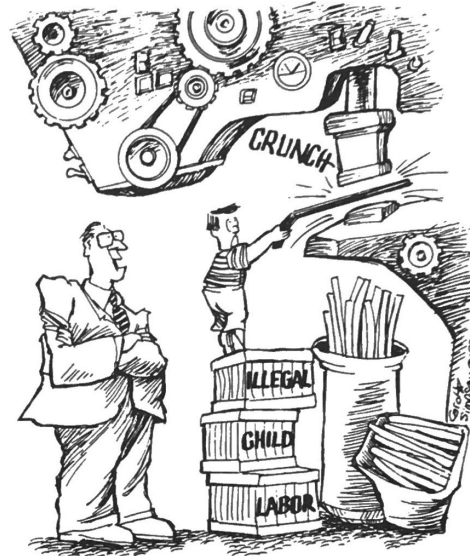
# Child Labor in America

One of the evils that reformers of the Progressive Era fought against was the use of child workers in factories, mines, and other businesses. In 1900, the U.S. Census reported that more than 1.7 million American children were working in such enterprises. Historians estimate that the actual number was even higher.

In 1916, thanks in part to the progressive reformers, Congress passed a law restricting child labor. But as the cartoons below suggest, young people still work illegally in the U.S. Cartoon A is a 1913 view of the issue. Cartoon B, which expresses a similar perspective, was drawn 76 years later in 1989. Study the cartoons and use the information in them to answer the questions at the bottom of this page.



**CARTOON A**



*"Look at the bright side, kid... you're solving the overcrowded schools problem."*

**CARTOON B**

1. What do you think the word "exploiter" means on the chariot in Cartoon A?

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2. The man riding in the chariot looks pretty well-fed compared with the children who are pulling him. Do you think the cartoonist purposely made the man look this way? Explain your answer.

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3. What do you think Cartoonist A was trying to say about child labor when he drew money bags and dollar signs on the chariot?

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4. Look at the boxes that the boy in Cartoon B is standing on. Why do you suppose the cartoonist labeled these "illegal child labor" rather than simply calling it "child labor"?

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5. Cartoon A identifies the man in the chariot as a child-labor exploiter, while Cartoon B makes no such reference to the man in the business suit. Is there a difference between the two adults?

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