

# Student Handout: Unit 1 Lesson 4



## 1920's and the Changing World of Work

Suggested time: 1 Period

### What's important in this lesson:

The economy affects the way people work and live. The 1920's were a prosperous decade for most people. After World War I, the way Canadians worked and lived changed due to new technology and an upswing in the economy. In this lesson, you will learn how these changes in the economy and the way we worked caused social change in Canada.

### Complete these steps:

1. Your 'Dream Car'
  - a) Design and draw your 'dream' car. If you are not an artist, then you can look through newspaper or car magazines to find your ideal car. What special features does it have: Why is it your 'dream' car?
  - b) Answer the following questions underneath the design:
    - How much do you think your car would cost to purchase?
    - Where do you think your car would be built?
    - Who would be able to afford to buy the car you designed?
  - c) If possible, share your design with your teacher or fellow classmates.
2. Technology and the economy changed in Canada after World War I.
  - a) Read "After the War", Handout 1.
  - b) Using a textbook or information provided by the teacher, fill in the chart on Branch Plants in Canada, Handout 2.
  - c) On the back of the Branch Plant Chart paper, answer the question: Why do you think we shifted from Great Britain to the United States as our major trading partner?
3. The Business Cycle
  - a) The ability to purchase the products made on assembly lines or factories depended on the Business Cycle. On your copy of "The Business Cycle", Handout 3, work with your teacher to fill in what happens during each stage.
  - b) Use *The Canadiana Scrapbook*, *The Confident Years: Canada in the 1920's*. On a piece of paper, write or draw five (5) examples that would show that Canada was in the 'prosperity' stage of the business cycle.
  - c) Read "The Automobile Changes the Way We Work and Live", handout 4, and answer the questions on the question sheet, Handout 5. Hand these in for marking.

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## Hand-in the following to your teacher:

1. Car design and answers
2. "Branch Plant Chart", Handout 2, and answers
3. Completed business examples from the scrapbook
4. Answers and a paragraph based on "The Automobile Changes the Way We Work and Live", Handout 5, reading

## Questions for the teacher:

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## **“After the War”**

**--by Colleen Wray**

World War 1 ended in November 1918. Many Canadians hoped that their life would be better after the war but many of them lost their jobs as the war-time industries were no longer needed. After the war, Canada loosened their ties with Great Britain as Canada became a more independent nation, both politically and economically.

It was not until the middle of the 1920's that Canada's economy began to grow. People were beginning to spend their money on automobiles, radios, and other new 'gadgets' that were becoming popular.

Canada now looked to the United States as their major trade partner. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Great Britain was the biggest foreign investor in Canada. During the war, British investment in Canada slowed down and American investment increased. Americans invested their money in Canadian pulp and paper, mining, and hydroelectric power.

When Britain invested in Canada, it did not take much control over the industry. The British generally left Canadian business people to run the business in their own way. American investors took greater control over the industries they invested in.

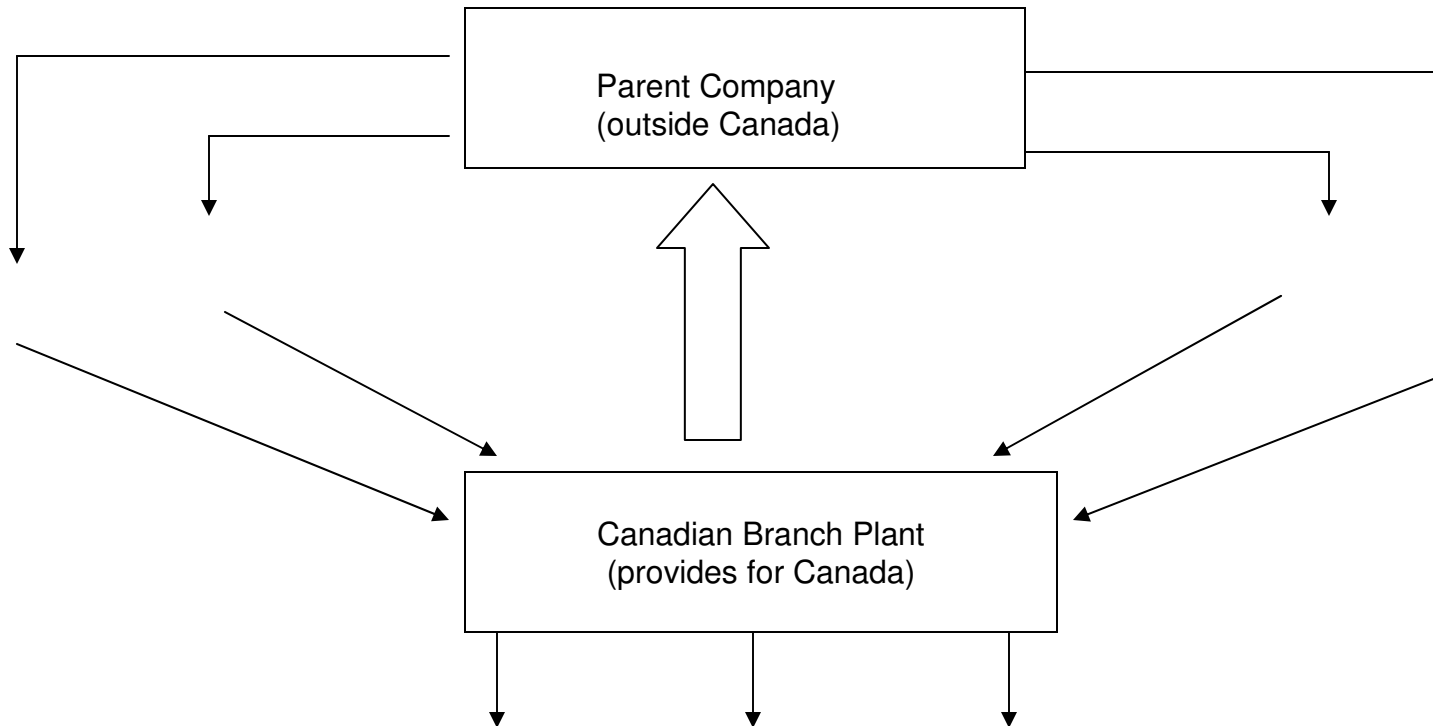
### **Branch Plants in Canada**

The Americans introduced the branch plant system to Canada. These branch plants were copies of the original parent company in the United States. The branch plant made the same items as the original American company. However, the item could be marked “Made in Canada”. Because the article was marked “Made in Canada” the parent company in the United States avoided paying tariffs (a tax for imports at the border).

Some people believed that American investment was good for Canada. They felt that American capital (money) would help develop Canada into a great economic country.

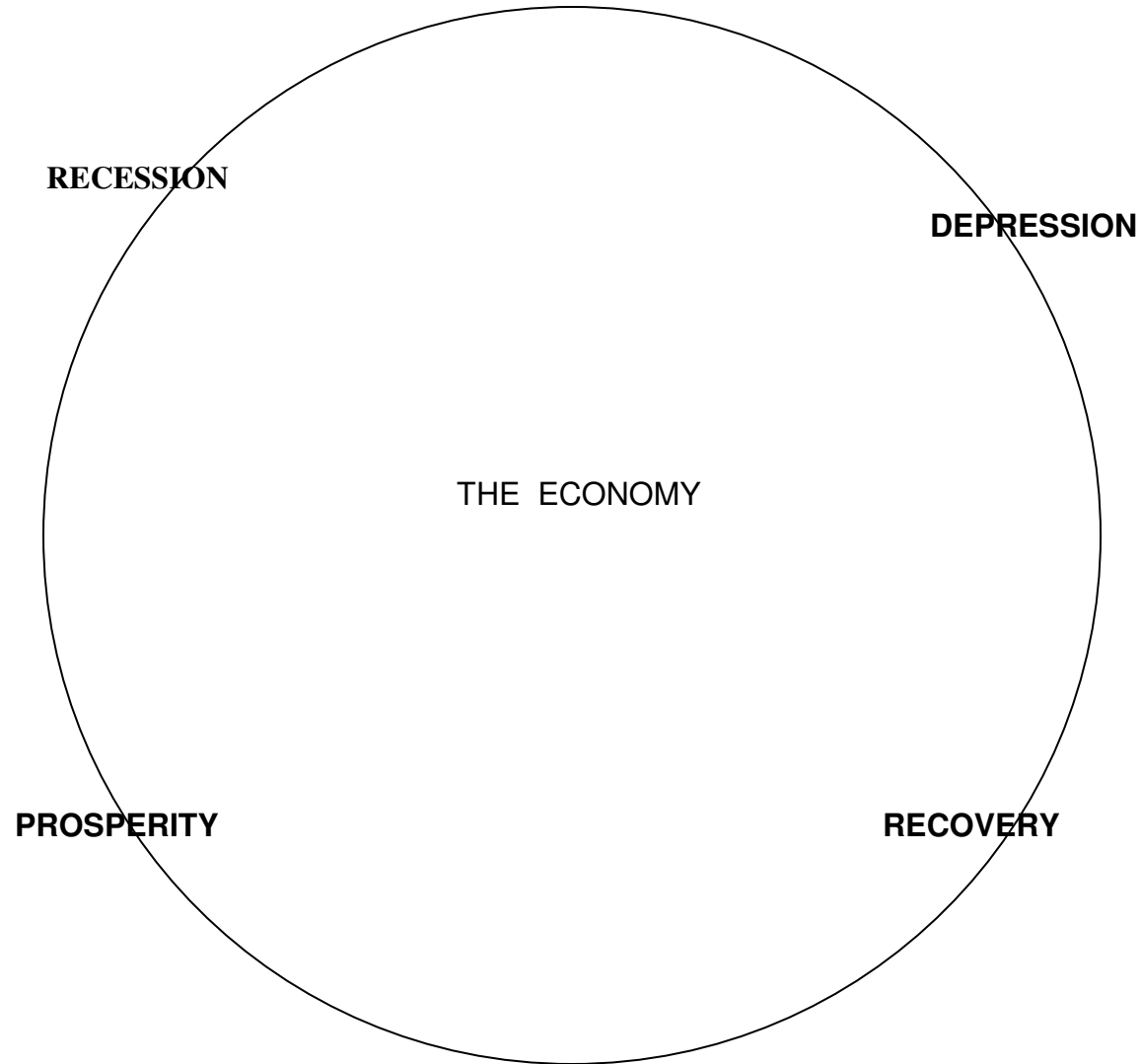
Other Canadians believed that too much American investment in Canada would result in American control of the Canadian economy or the “Americanization of the Canadian economy”. They feared that too many decisions about the Canadian branches were being made in the United States and the profits from the branch plants were sent back to the U.S. Some Canadians felt that the government should limit the amount of American investment in Canada.

## Branch Plants in Canada



Why do you think we shifted from Great Britain to the United States as our major trading partner?

# The Business Cycle



Circle the stage Canada was in during the 1920's.

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### The Automobile Changes the Way We Work and Live

--by Colleen Wray

The American, Henry Ford, build his first car in 1893. It took a long time to build because it had 500 parts. By 1908, Ford built the car that would make him famous – the Model T. The Model T was an inexpensive car that almost anyone could afford. By the 1920's the sale of the car was very successful and Ford could not produce enough cars to keep up with the demand.

Ford decided to use a method to car manufacturing that was being used in other industries, **mass production**. He wanted to mass-produce the Model T or “tin lizzie” so that it would take less time to produce and make it even more affordable.

Ford set up an **assembly line** that ran from one end of a building to another. At one end of the line were the frames of the cars. The line moved itself like a conveyor belt. Each car moved along the belt at 15 cm a minute and each worker added only one part. By the time the car reached the end of the line, it had been assembled and was ready to drive.

Each worker on the assembly line had a separate job. Some added parts while others secured the parts in place. Each part was the same, or standardized, and mass-produced. This made the car parts cheaper and lowered the price of the car. The Model T's were built in a **branch plant** in Windsor, Ontario.

The automobile has probably done more than any other machine to change our way of living. The United States and Canada became a car culture; paved roads, gas stations, parking lots, and motels were created to reflect this new way of life.

People working on the assembly line were physically challenged on their job. In order to keep up with the demand for the car, **shift work** was introduced. People began to work in shifts around the clock. Shift work changed the way families lived and played.

On Sunday's, a family with a car could visit relatives 15 to 20 km away and still be home in time for supper. Young people began to 'drive' around with their friends instead of staying home with their families. Farm families could now drive to nearby towns and cities for a day's shopping instead of shopping by mail-order catalogue. Cars also became a **status symbol**. Cars represented freedom and glamour and gave people a new sense of individualism – cars were much more private than riding a train or streetcar.

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The automobile also caused the spin-off of other industries. Spin-off industries sprang up across the country; gasoline, rubber, glass, and oil, just to name a few, provided the materials needed to build and maintain cars. The car has made a significant change to the world.

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### The Automobile Changes the Way We Work and Live - Questions

Answer in complete sentences or paragraphs on lined paper. These questions are based on the reading “The Automobile changes the Way We Work and Live”, handout 4.

1. Explain how an assembly line works. (2 marks)
2. Explain, in your own words, two (2) ways the automobile has changed the way we work. (2 marks)
3. Explain, in your own words, two (2) ways the automobile has changed the way we live. (2 marks)
4. When the automobile was first invented, people believed it was beneficial to society. It took some time before people realized the problems that could be associated with the car. Explain 3 problems that the automobile has created for society. (3 marks)

5. Paragraph

Compare assembly line work in the 1920's to assembly line work today. Do you think there are any major changes to the way assembly line work is done? Give examples to support your viewpoint.

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| Title     | 1 mark  |
| Content   | 3 marks |
| Structure | 2 marks |

Total 15