

Primary Source Reading 20-1 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

What Is a Flapper?

▣ About the Selection

The flapper was the 1920s version of the liberated woman. She was free from long skirts, long hair, and long-held ideas about a woman's place in society. In the following selection from a 1925 article in *Collier's* magazine, Samuel Crowther concludes that "the flapper is today our most important national institution."

Reader's Dictionary



standardized: made the same

GUIDED READING

As you read, take note of the outstanding characteristics of a flapper. Then answer the questions that follow.

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The real flapper is what used to be known as the "poor working girl"—who, if the accounts are true, dragged herself off day by day to work until someone came along and married her. Sometimes she was a Cinderella, but more often she graduated a household drudge.

The flapper of to-day is a very different person. In dress she is as standardized as a chain hotel—and incidentally hotel bedrooms are becoming so alike that you can remember what city you are in only by tacking a local newspaper on the wall.

Barring size, flappers at a hundred feet are as standardized as Ford cars. As far as dress goes, they are a simplified national product. . . . There is no distinction between the town flapper and the farm flapper—the automobile has wiped them out. There is no distinction in the cut of clothing between the rich flapper and the poor flapper—national advertising has attended to that. The rich flapper has better clothing than the poor one, but a block away they are all flappers.

The outstanding characteristic of the flapper is not her uniform but her independence and her will to be prosperous.

She is no clinging vine. I was in the office of the president of a good-sized bank on the Pacific Coast when his daughter and several of her high-school friends burst in—flappers all. We got to talking and I found that these girls, not one of whom had any need to work, all intended to find jobs during the summer, and they thought that most of the girls in school would do the same. They all wanted to know how to make a living—and to have a good time doing it. That seems to be common everywhere.

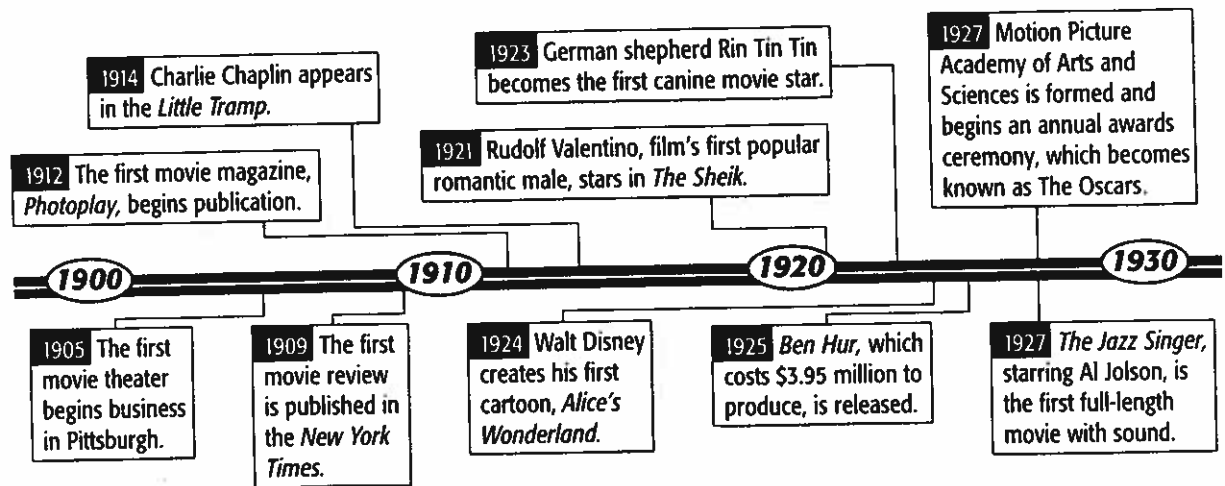
Girls will no longer marry men who can merely support them—they can support themselves better than can many of the men of their own age. They have awakened to the fact that the "superior sex" stuff is all bunk. They will not meekly bow their heads to the valiant man who roars, "Where is that dress I bought you three years ago?" . . .

(continued)

★ **Time Line Activity 20**

Motion Picture History

DIRECTIONS: Use the information on the time line to determine whether the sentences below are true or false. Change each false statement to make it true.



1. True or False? In 1921 Rudolf Valentino starred in the film *The Sheik*.

2. True or False? The first movie fan magazine, *Photofilm*, began publication in 1912.

3. True or False? The Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences was formed in 1927 and began an annual awards ceremony.

4. True or False? The first movie theater opened for business in Pittsburgh in 1915.

5. True or False? In 1914 Charlie Chaplin appeared in his most famous film, *Little Champ*.

6. True or False? The first full-length movie with sound, *The Jazz Singer*, was released in 1926.

7. True or False? Walt Disney created his first full-length movie, *Alice's Wonderland*, in 1924.

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