**GUIDED READING EXERCISE**

**Chapter 18—Defining the Gilded Age in Business and Politics, 1865–1900**

* **What were the most important political and business developments of the Gilded Age?**

***Download and save this document so you can return to it to take notes and later use it for studying.*** *As you read the chapter, fill in the chart below to help yourself identify the important developments of the Gilded Age. If you copy and paste from the text, make sure you place quotation marks around the copied material; if you are able to describe the developments in your own words, however, you should do so.*

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|  | **Important political and business developments** |
| **How did the railroads stimulate big business?** |  |
| Railroads: America’s First Big Business |  |
| Andrew Carnegie, Steel, and Vertical Integration |  |
| John D. Rockefeller, Standard Oil, and the Trust |  |
| New Inventions: The Telephone and the Telegraph |  |
| **Why did the ideas of social Darwinism appeal to many Americans in the late nineteenth century?** |  |
| J. P. Morgan and Finance Capitalism |  |
| Social Darwinism, Laissez-Faire, and the Supreme Court |  |
| **What factors influenced political life in the late nineteenth century?** |  |
| Political Participation and Party Loyalty |  |
| Sectionalism and the New South |  |
| Gender, Race, and Politics |  |
| Women's Activism |  |
| **What issues shaped party politics in the late nineteenth century?** |  |
| Corruption and Party Strife |  |
| Garfield's Assassination and Civil Service Reform |  |
| Reform and Scandal: The Campaign of 1884 |  |
| **What role did economic issues play in party realignment?** |  |
| The Tariff and the Politics of Protection |  |
| Railroads, Trusts, and the Federal Government |  |
| The Fight for Free Silver |  |
| Panic and Depression |  |

*After you have read the chapter, use your notes to compose an essay that answers the following question:*

* **What were the most important political and business developments of the Gilded Age?**

*Be sure to include an opening, introductory paragraph in which you state your thesis. Then use the body of your essay to provide evidence from the chapter to support that thesis. When thinking about how to organize this essay, you might want to consider how business and politics changed during the Gilded Age. End by writing a clear conclusion to your essay.*