Starter

1) Who are these people?
2) What class of people are they?
3) When is this?
4) Where is this?
5) Why are they gathered around?
Intolerance in the 1920s

Ku Klux Klan

Broadside for a Ku Klux Klan lecture held near Poultney in the 1920s
The rise and fall of the Ku Klux Klan

The Ku Klux Klan started in the southern states at the end of the American Civil War in 1865. Its aim was to terrorize black people, newly freed from slavery. In 1865 it was revived. This revived was helped by a film called The Birth of the Nation, produced by D.W. Griffith. The film was set in the south after the American Civil War and portrayed the Klan serving white farmers against the freed black people. The film attracted huge success and increased the popularity. By 1920 the Klan had over 1,000,000 members; by 1925 it claimed a membership of around five million.

The Klan attracted fanatics who believed that the best American citizens were white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs). They were fighting for what they considered to be the ‘native’, white, Protestant supremacy. They were against Catholics, Jews, African Americans, and immigrants. They campaigned violently to prevent mixed marriages and lynchings of blacks involved in fights or crimes. They formed a group to protect white Americans. They believed that the Klan focused more specifically on black people, seeking to terrify them and frighten them from exercising their rights. The Klan represented the prejudices and fears of many Americans, especially those who lived in small towns. It had some powerful members, for instance, the Governor of Alabama and a Senator from Texas were Klan members.

1. Read p.50 of your text book.
The rise and fall of the Ku Klux Klan

- Est. in southern states at end of Civil War.
  - Aim to terrorise black people.
- Revived 1915 – helped by film *The Birth of the Nation*.
  - Film portrayed Klan saving whites from gangs of blacks.
  - Attracted huge audiences, ↑ KKK popularity.
- 1920 – 100 000 members
- 1925 – 5 000 000 members (approx.)
The rise and fall of the Ku Klux Klan

- Klan attracted fanatics who believed in white supremacy – best Americans = WASPs
- KKK was anti-communist, anti-negro, anti-Jew, anti-Catholic and anti-all foreigners
- Believed they were on a moral crusade.
- In south, Klan focused specifically on black people.
- Represented fears and prejudices of many Americans.
The rise and fall of the Ku Klux Klan

• After 1925, membership ↓ dramatically.
  – Partly due to excesses of some leaders.
The lynching of two married African-American couples, known in some circles as the “Lynching At Moore’s Ford Bridge,” took place in Northern Georgia on July 15, 1946. An angry mob of White men attacked the couples, with one of the wives seven months pregnant and a man in the group an Army veteran of World War II.
Moore’s Ford Lynching

2.4 miles east, at Moore’s Ford Bridge on the Apalachee River, four African-Americans - George and May Murray Dorsey and Roger and Dorothy Dorsey Malcom (reportedly 7 months pregnant) - were brutally beaten and shot by an unmasked mob on the afternoon of July 25, 1946. The lynching followed an argument between Roger Malcom and a local white farmer. These unsolved murders played a crucial role in both President Truman’s commitment to civil rights legislation and the ensuing modern civil rights movement. In 1998, a biracial memorial service honoring the victims was held at Moore’s Ford Bridge.

Erected by The Georgia Historical Society and the Moore’s Ford Memorial Committee, Inc.
In the 1920 Duluth lynching (June 15th 1920) thousands of White Americans in Duluth, Minnesota took part in the murder of three black men.
Postcard depicting the lynching of Lige Daniels, Center, Texas, USA, August 3, 1920. The back reads, "This was made in the court yard in Center, Texas. He is a 16 year old Black boy. He killed Earl's grandma. She was Florence's mother. Give this to Bud. From Aunt Myrtle."

As discussed in the article, lynchings were often motivated by economics, or were retaliations for violations of Jim Crow etiquette, with false accusations of murder made in order to justify them.
Lynchings and racially-motivated murders in each decade from 1865 to 1965

- First Klan founded, 1866
- Political massacres, 1868
- Klan Act, 1871
- Jim Crow laws passed
- Second Klan founded, 1915
- Black migration to the North, 1915-1960
August 1919

3,000 will burn Negro

Kaiser under stronger guard following escape of Crown Prince

NEW ORLEANS STATES

Reprinted from the JACKSON DAILY NEWS

John Hartfield will be lynched by Ellisville mob at 5 o'clock this afternoon

Governor Bilbo says he is powerless to prevent it—thousands of people are flocking into Ellisville to attend the event—Sheriff and authorities are powerless to prevent it.

HATTIESBURG, June 26.—John Hartfield, the negro alleged to have assaulted an Ellisville young woman, has been taken to Ellisville and is guarded by officers in the office of Dr. Carter in that city. He is wounded in the shoulder but not seriously. The officers have agreed to turn him over to the people of the city at 4 o'clock this afternoon when it is expected he will be burned. The negro is said to have made a partial confession.

Gov. Bilbo says he is powerless.

When the news was given the above dispatch and asked what action, if any, he intended to take to prevent the affair, he said: “I am powerless to prevent it. We have guns for state militia, but no water. It is impossible to prevent it in the ways for this sort of thing. For the lynching has not been set for five o'clock. A committee of Ellisville citizens has been appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the torch and the sack to be pledged to act in accordance with their arrangements. Roy E. G. Gates, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Laurel, left here at one o'clock for Ellisville to attend the event in the denomination.
Source investigation (p.51-52)

• In your books, answer questions 1-4 in as much detail as possible.

• Worksheet 17 & 18:
  – ‘The Ku Klux Klan’
  – ‘The Rosewood Incident’