**What were the ‘Roaring Twenties’ like? Highlight sections from the extract that you feel capture the spirit and mood of 1920s America and make a note of your ideas alongside the highlighted sections.**

**The Roaring Twenties / the Jazz Age:**

* For many people in America (especially the cities such as New York and Chicago) the 1920s are years of considerable prosperity. American goods are protected from competition with imports by high tariffs (customs duties) and Americans are encouraged to buy American produced consumer products such as cars, washing machines, refrigerators and radios. Henry Ford pioneers the use of the ‘production line’ in his car factories and by 1928 him ‘Model T’ Ford costs only $295, down from $1200 in 1909, and he has sold over 15 million of them. The increase in car ownership leads to an increase in road building, bringing with it an increase in the number of trucks and buses.
* It becomes much easier to borrow money to purchase goods, for example through the new ‘hire-purchase’ schemes– getting the goods immediately but paying for them by installments. People also borrow money to buy shares in American companies. By 1929 it is possible to borrow 90% of the money needed to buy shares: the idea is that the share price goes up, the owner then sells and pays back the money borrowed to buy the shares out of the money he gets on sale. This only works if the share price continues to rise. However, the ‘consumer boom’ meant that the profits of American companies rise dramatically and therefore so do the value of their shares. Share prices also go up because more and more people want to buy them.
* This is also the decade when the entertainment industry really takes off, particularly the movies, but also music (especially jazz). Hollywood becomes the centre of the movie production industry and the ‘movie star’ is born, their fame spread by the increasing numbers of tabloid newspapers and magazines. Stars such as Rudolph Valentino and Clara Bow (the first ‘It’ girl) become household names. By 1930 100 million tickets to the movies are sold in America every week. As jazz and swing become the rage dances become more energetic: this is the era of the Charleston and the Black Bottom Stomp.