

# Contextualization ... Populist ("People's) Party

**CONTEXTUALIZE...**  
 Situate historical events, developments, or processes within the broader regional, national, or global context in which they occurred in order to draw conclusions about their relative significance.

**Key Concept 6.1:** Technological advances, large-scale production methods, and the opening of new markets encouraged the rise of industrial capitalism in the United States.

III. New systems of production and transportation enabled consolidation within agriculture, which, along with periods of instability, spurred a variety of responses from farmers.

- A) Improvements in mechanization helped agricultural production increase substantially and contributed to declines in food prices.
- B) Many farmers responded to the increasing consolidation in agricultural markets and their dependence on the evolving railroad system by creating local and regional cooperative organizations.
- C) Economic instability inspired agrarian activists to create the **People's (Populist) Party**, which called for a stronger governmental role in regulating the American economic system.

Directions: Review the local and broad context. Complete the comparative contextualization in the space below. Write in complete sentences and include at least one specific piece of evidence in your answer.

**Local Context**  
 (Who, What, When, Where)  
 The People's Party were popularly called the Populists and were a temporary third party at the end of the Gilded Age that represented liberal ideas and promoted increased government intervention in finance and railroads as well as improving general equity between the common farmer and worker with the elite.

**Broad Context**  
 Why, How *What is the "Big Picture?"* *What is the **theme?***

Due to **economic** expansion, instability of currency, and laissez-faire government **politics** during the Gilded Age, business and banking policies often hurt farmers and workers who struggled with debt and sought relief with the coinage of silver and government regulations. This third party impacted some state and local elections but did not have a serious showing in presidential politics. It had dispersed before the turn of the century and most of its goals were absorbed into the Democratic Party by the election of 1896.

**Comparative (Other) Context**  
 Similar or Different in Kind From an Earlier or Later Time  
 (connect your BROAD context to another era /event)

Extension:  
 In your groups or with a partner, discuss and contextualize for the following terms: conservationist, the election of 1896, and mechanized agriculture..

