

# The survey says . . .

Are things better or worse than they used to be? Take this survey to learn more about the differences in living standards over time.



July 4, 1893, Medford, Massachusetts. Courtesy of Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

**This survey can help you figure out if you believe things are better or worse than they used to be.**

## Part 1. What do you think?

Part 1 has no right or wrong answers.

1. American life is physically easier than it was in 1900.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree somewhat
- ☐ Disagree somewhat
- ☐ Strongly disagree

2. Americans are happier now than they were in 1900.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree somewhat
- ☐ Disagree somewhat
- ☐ Strongly disagree

3. Americans are happier now than they were in 1960.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree somewhat
- ☐ Disagree somewhat
- ☐ Strongly disagree

4. The next generation of Americans will live better than we do.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree somewhat
- ☐ Disagree somewhat
- ☐ Strongly disagree

5. On the whole, how satisfied are you with the life you lead?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Fairly satisfied
- ☐ Not very satisfied
- ☐ Not at all satisfied

## Part 2. Just the facts

The next 12 questions highlight some of the ways in which everyday life has changed over the years. (The answers are on page 24.)

1. In 2000, more than 99 percent of all U.S. households had electricity. In 1900, the number was approximately \_\_\_ percent.

- A. 3
- B. 13
- C. 23
- D. 33

2. In 1900, approximately \_\_\_ percent of all births in the U.S. took place in hospitals.

- A. 5
- B. 25
- C. 45
- D. 65

3. In 1900, fewer than 6 percent of married American women worked outside the home. By the year 2000, the number had risen to just over \_\_\_ percent.

- A. 30
- B. 40
- C. 50
- D. 60

4. Without running water, housewives in the late 1800s had to haul \_\_\_ gallons a year into the kitchen, laundry, and bath.

- A. 1,000
- B. 5,000
- C. 10,000
- D. 20,000

5. In 1900 the average American workweek was \_\_\_ hours.

- A. 69
- B. 59
- C. 49
- D. 39

6. Today, it takes approximately 4 hours to drive from Boston to New York. In 1800, the trip took just over \_\_\_ by stagecoach.

- A. one day
- B. two days
- C. three days
- D. four days

7. In 1929, Americans spent 23.5 percent of their disposable household income on food (groceries and meals eaten away from home). In 2002, we spent approximately \_\_\_ percent.

- A. 5
- B. 10
- C. 20
- D. 30

8. In 1920, Americans slept an average of 8.8 hours per night. In 2000, we averaged \_\_\_ hours per night.

- A. 5.9
- B. 6.9
- C. 7.9
- D. 8.9

9. In 1990, there were approximately 5.3 million cell phone subscribers in the U.S. By the end of 2004, there were approximately \_\_\_ million.

- A. 8.5
- B. 18.5
- C. 80.5
- D. 180.5

10. Almost 20 million American kids attended high school proms in 2003. They spent an average of \$638 each — or more than \$1200 per couple. Question: In how many of the world's 208 countries did people have an average annual income of \$1200 or less in 2003?

- A. 20
- B. 40
- C. 60
- D. 80

11. The percentage of America's grade-school children that walked or pedaled a bike to class went from 60 percent in the 1960s to \_\_\_ percent in 2003.

- A. 13
- B. 23
- C. 33
- D. 43

12. According to the web site [toiletpaperworld.com](http://toiletpaperworld.com), which one of the following items was NOT used as "toilet paper" in early America?

- A. leaves
- B. corncobs
- C. mussel shells
- D. the frayed end of an old anchor cable



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