

Name _____



Gangland Growth

Directions: Read the narrative below about organized crime during Prohibition. Then answer the questions that follow using complete sentences.

Al Capone's Empire

When the United States banned the sale and production of alcohol in 1920, a new kind of business exploded in cities like Chicago. Criminal groups discovered that people still wanted to drink, and they were willing to pay secretly for it. Al Capone became one of the most powerful figures in this illegal world. His gang controlled breweries, smuggled alcohol across borders, and delivered it to hidden speakeasies throughout the city.

Capone used violence and threats to protect his business from rival gangs and police interference. By bribing law enforcement and local officials, his organization operated almost as if it were legal. The money made from selling illegal alcohol allowed Capone to expand into gambling, nightclubs, and other underground operations. Prohibition, instead of reducing crime, helped turn criminals into wealthy, dangerous empire-builders.

1. What law created the business opportunity that allowed Al Capone to rise in power?
2. Describe one way Capone's gang made money from Prohibition.
3. What strategies did Capone use to protect his illegal operations?
4. How did Prohibition unintentionally increase organized crime?
5. In your own words, explain why the government struggled to enforce Prohibition laws.