Why It Matters

After the War of 1812, new roads and canals helped connect the nation. Industry prospered in the North, while an agricultural economy dependent on slavery grew strong in the South. Although political, social, and religious reforms were key themes of the period, these reforms could not silence the growing sectionalism that increasingly gripped the nation. The addition of new territories only heightened sectional tensions.

The Impact Today

Many developments of this period shape our lives today.
- Many Americans have a strong sense of national loyalty.
- Federal authority over interstate commerce helped create a truly national economy.
- Americans believe ordinary citizens should be able to qualify for all political offices.

**The American Republic Since 1877 Video** The Chapter 5 video, “Manifest Destiny,” tells the story of the war between Texas and Mexico from the Mexican point of view.

- 1832
  - Democrats hold their first presidential nominating convention

- 1831
  - Nat Turner slave rebellion

- 1829
  - Slavery abolished in Mexico

- 1821
  - Mexican independence proclaimed

- 1820
  - Erie Canal opens

- 1820
  - Missouri Compromise proposed by Henry Clay

- 1825
  - Male voting rights expanded in England

- 1760
  - Exploration of Australia’s interior begins
A Revolution in Transportation

Over the next few years, thousands of workers dug their way through dirt, rock and swamp. They built 83 locks and 18 aqueducts. When completed in October 1825, the Erie Canal cut the travel time from New York to Buffalo from 20 days to 6 days. The canal helped settle the Midwest and greatly increased the flow of goods. Using roads, four horses could pull a ton of goods 12 miles per day. Using the canal, two horses could pull a 100-ton barge 24 miles per day. The Erie Canal’s success marked the beginning of a transportation revolution that swept through the Northern states in the early 1800s.
Roads and Turnpikes  In 1806 the nation took the first steps toward a transportation revolution when Congress funded the building of a major east-west highway, the National Road. In 1811 laborers started cutting the roadbed westward from Cumberland, Maryland. Paved with crushed stones, the National Road stretched to Vandalia, Illinois, by 1838. Pioneers in Conestoga wagons headed west on this road, while farmers from the interior drove their livestock and produce the opposite way, toward Eastern markets.

The National Road turned out to be the only great U.S.-funded transportation project of its time. Although some members of Congress pushed the federal government to make more internal improvements, American leaders disagreed on whether the Constitution permitted this.

Instead, states, localities, and private businesses took the initiative. Private companies laid down hundreds of miles of toll roads, often called turnpikes because of the spiked poles that forced travelers to stop at intervals and pay a toll. Turnpikes were profitable mainly in the East, where traffic was heavy.

TECHNOLOGY

Steamboats  Rivers offered a faster, more efficient, and cheaper way to move goods than did early roads, which were often little more than wide paths. A single barge could hold many wagonloads of grain or coal. Loaded boats and barges, however, could usually travel only downstream, as trips against the current with heavy cargoes were impractical.

The steamboat changed all that. The first successful such vessel, the Clermont, was developed by Robert Fulton and promoted by Robert R. Livingston. At its debut in 1807, the Clermont stunned the nation by cruising 150 miles up the Hudson River from New York City to Albany in just 32 hours. Steamboats made river travel speedier and more reliable. By 1850 over 700 steamboats, also called riverboats, traveled the Mississippi, the Great Lakes, and other waterways.

The “Iron Horse”  Another mode of transportation, railroads, also appeared in the early 1800s. A wealthy, self-educated industrialist named Peter Cooper built the Tom Thumb, a tiny but powerful locomotive based on engines originally developed in Great Britain. In 1830 the Tom Thumb pulled the nation’s first load of train passengers along 13 miles of track in Maryland, chugging along at the then incredible speed of 10 miles per hour.

Some people complained about the noise and dirt of the new machines. In the 1800s people often regarded cities as noisy, crowded, and unhealthy. Sick people often traveled to the country to rest and recover their health. Some people feared that railroads would bring urban problems to the countryside. People realized, however, that trains traveled much faster than stagecoaches or wagons, and unlike steamboats, they could go nearly anywhere track was laid. Perhaps more than any other kind of transportation, trains helped settle the West and expand trade among the nation’s different regions.

**Reading Check**  Evaluating  What were two advantages of trains over other kinds of transportation in the 1800s?

**Industrialization Sweeps the North**

Along with dramatic changes in transportation, a revolution occurred in business and industry. The **Industrial Revolution**, which began in Britain in the middle 1700s, consisted of several basic developments. Manufacturing shifted from hand tools to large, complex machines. Individual artisans gave way to organized workforces. Factories, some large enough for hundreds of machines and workers, replaced home-based workshops. Manufacturers sold their wares nationwide or abroad instead of just locally.

By the early 1800s, these innovations had reached the United States. They transformed not only the economy but society as well.
A New System of Production The United States industrialized quickly for several reasons. Perhaps the key factor was the American system of free enterprise based on private property rights. People could acquire and use capital without strict governmental controls while competition between companies encouraged them to try new technologies. The era’s low taxes also meant that entrepreneurs had more money to invest.

Beginning in the 1830s, many states encouraged industrialization by passing general incorporation laws. These laws let companies become corporations and raise money by issuing stock without having to get a charter from the state legislature. They also limited liability. If people bought stock in a company and it went bankrupt, they were not responsible for the company’s debts. The new laws thereby encouraged people to invest money, spurring economic growth.

Industrialization began in the Northeast, where many swift-flowing streams provided factories with water-power. The region was also home to many entrepreneurs who were willing to invest in British technology.

Although Britain had passed strict laws to block the export of its technology, an English textile worker named Samuel Slater took the risk. He moved to Rhode Island in 1789 and built a British water frame for spinning cotton into thread. In 1814 Francis Lowell opened mills in Massachusetts that not only spun cotton into thread but also produced cloth. His company even built a town that housed hundreds of workers, mostly women. By 1840 textile mills had sprung up throughout the Northeast.

In the early 1800s, a New Englander named Eli Whitney popularized the use of interchangeable parts, or standard components, in gun-making. Machines turned out identical pieces that workers quickly put together with assembly-line techniques.

Industrialists used these techniques to produce lumber, shoes, leather, wagons, and other products. The sewing machine allowed inexpensive clothes to be mass produced. In the 1820s, William Underwood and Thomas Kensett began sealing foods in airtight tin containers. Canning allowed many foods to be stored and transported without fear of spoilage.

Advances in Communications In 1832 a major improvement in communications took place when Samuel F.B. Morse perfected the telegraph and developed Morse code. In 1844 he sent his first long-distance telegraph message, tapping out in code the words “What hath God wrought?” over a wire from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore.

Journalists began using the telegraph to speedily relay news. In 1848 a group of newspapers in New York created the Associated Press to collect and share news over the wires. By 1860 more than 50,000 miles of telegraph wire connected most parts of the country.
Urban Growth and Immigration  The industrialization of the United States drew thousands of people from farms and villages to towns in search of higher-paying factory jobs. Many city populations doubled or tripled. In 1820 only New York boasted more than 100,000 residents. By 1860 eight other cities had reached that size.

Immigrants hoping for a better life in the United States also contributed to urban growth. Between 1815 and 1860, over 5 million foreigners journeyed to America. While thousands of newcomers, particularly Germans, became farmers in the rural West, many others settled in cities, providing a steady source of cheap labor. A large number of Irish—over 44,000—arrived in 1845, after a devastating potato blight caused widespread famine in their homeland.

While immigrants often found a new sense of freedom and opportunity in America, some encountered prejudice. The presence of people from different cultures, with different languages and different religions, produced feelings of nativism, a preference for native-born people and a desire to limit immigration. Several societies sprang up to keep foreign-born persons and Catholics—the main religion of the Irish and many Germans—from holding public office. In 1854 delegates from some of these groups formed the American Party. This party came to be called the Know-Nothings because its members, when questioned about their activities, were supposed to answer, “I know nothing.”

Women in the Workforce  The growing cities also provided expanded work opportunities for women. Those from the poorer classes typically found jobs in factories or took positions as domestic laborers. Many middle-class women gravitated to publishing, an industry that was growing quickly to meet the rising demand for reading materials. America had always claimed a high literacy rate, and by 1840 over 75 percent of the total population and over 90 percent of the white population could read. Leading editors and writers included Sarah Buell Hale and Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney.

Workers Begin to Organize  Factory workers numbered roughly 1.3 million by 1860. They included many women and children, who would accept lower wages than men. Not even men were well paid, however, and factory workers typically toiled for 12 or more drudgery-filled hours a day.

Hoping to gain higher wages or shorter workdays, some workers began to organize in labor unions—groups of workers who press for better working conditions and member benefits. During the late 1820s and early 1830s, about 300,000 men and women belonged to these organizations. Most of the organizations were local and focused on a single trade, such as printing or shoemaking.

Early labor unions had little power. Most employers refused to bargain with them, and the courts often saw them as unlawful conspiracies that limited free enterprise. Unions did make some gains, however. In 1840 President Martin Van Buren showed his gratitude for labor’s political support by reducing the workday for federal employees to 10 hours. In 1842 in the case of Commonwealth v. Hunt, the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that union strikes, or work stoppages, were legal. Still, decades would pass before organized labor achieved real influence.

Reading Check  Describing  How did industrialization affect cities?
The Continuing Importance of Agriculture

Despite the trend toward urban and industrial growth, agriculture remained the country’s leading economic activity. Until the late 1800s, farming employed more people and produced more wealth than any other kind of work.

In the first half of the 1800s, the North had more than a million farms devoted mostly to growing corn, wheat, and other grains and to raising livestock. Farming was even more important in the South, which had few cities and less industry.

The South thrived on the production of several major cash crops. In the upper Southern states—Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee—farmers grew tobacco. Rice paddies dominated the coastal regions of South Carolina and Georgia. In Louisiana and parts of eastern Texas, fields of sugarcane stretched for miles. No crop, however, played a greater role in the South’s fortunes during this period than cotton, which was grown in a wide belt stretching from inland South Carolina west into Texas.

The Land of Cotton

During a visit to the South in 1793, Eli Whitney, an inventive young New Yorker, noticed how laborious it was to remove cotton seeds from the fluffy bolls by hand. In a mere 10 days, Whitney built a simple cotton gin—“gin” being short for engine—that quickly and efficiently did the task. Whitney’s invention coincided with the expansion of Europe’s textile industry. Mills in England and France were clamoring for all the cotton they could get.

In 1792, the year before Whitney invented his cotton gin, the South produced about 6,000 bales of cotton. By 1801 annual production had soared to 100,000 bales. Cotton soon dominated the region. In 1860 production reached almost 4 million bales. That year, Southern cotton accounted for nearly two-thirds of the total export trade of the United States. Southerners began saying, rightly, “Cotton is King.”

The boom in cotton production allowed some smaller-scale planters to rapidly ascend the social ladder. As they expanded their property, they joined the ranks of the wealthy plantation owners who wielded enormous political power. This group, however,
represented less than half of 1 percent of white Southern families in 1850. Ordinary farmers, often called yeoman farmers, and their families still made up the vast majority of the white population. Mark Twain gives his impressions of a small Southern farm in his novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*:

“A rail fence around a two-acre yard . . . big double log house for the white folks—hewed logs, with the chinks stopped up with mud or mortar . . . outside of the fence a garden and a water-melon patch; then the cotton fields begin. . . .”

While agriculture brought prosperity to Southern states, they lagged behind the North in industrialization. The region had scattered iron works, textile mills, and coal, iron, salt, and copper mines, but it accounted for only 16 percent of the nation’s manufacturing total. For the most part, the South remained rural, with only three large cities: Baltimore, Charleston, and New Orleans. Agriculture’s influence was so great that even many city dwellers in the South invested in or owned farms.

**History Through Art**

*Plantation Life* *The Wedding* by E.L. Henry depicts Southern gentry’s lavish lifestyle. They purchased enslaved labor at auctions advertised in local newspapers (right). What invention made cotton production so profitable?

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**Enslaved and Free African Americans**

While the spread of cotton plantations boosted the Southern economy, it also made the demand for slave labor skyrocket. Congress had outlawed the foreign slave trade in 1808, but a high birthrate among enslaved women—encouraged by slaveholders—kept the population growing. Between 1820 and 1850, the number of slaves in the South rose from about 1.5 million to nearly 3.2 million, to account for almost 37 percent of the total Southern population.

In a Southern white population of just over 6.1 million, a total of 347,725 families—about 30 percent—were slaveholders. Of this number, around 37,000 were plantation owners with 20 or more slaves. Fewer than 8,000 of these planters held 50 or more people in slavery, and only 11 held 500 or more. Thus wealthy slaveholders who exploited large workforces were somewhat rare.

The overwhelming majority of enslaved African Americans toiled in the fields on small farms. Some, however, became house servants. Others worked in the South’s few industrial plants or in skilled trades such as blacksmithing, carpentry, and barrel making.
Field Workers  Enslaved African Americans who worked in the fields were organized along two basic labor systems. In the 1700s and early 1800s, a task system prevailed. Workers were given a specific set of jobs to accomplish every day. They worked until these were complete, and then they were allowed to spend the remainder of the day on their own. They could earn money through their artisanship, cultivate personal gardens, or hunt for extra food.

In the 1800s, as cotton production became more common and slavery became more widespread, many slaveholders adopted the gang system of labor. Under this more rigid system, enslaved persons were organized into work gangs that labored from sunup to sundown—plowing, planting, cultivating, or picking, depending on the season. A driver directed the gang, ensuring that the workers kept laboring throughout the day. The drivers were often slaves themselves, chosen for their intelligence or leadership abilities.

Coping with Enslavement  All enslaved persons, no matter how well treated, suffered indignities. State slave codes forbade enslaved men and women from owning property, leaving a slaveholder’s premises without permission, or testifying in court against a white person. Laws even banned them from learning to read and write. Laws even banned them from learning to read and write. Frederick Douglass, who rose from slavery to become a prominent opponent of the institution, recalled how life as an enslaved person affected him:

> My natural elasticity was crushed; my intellect languished; the disposition to read departed; the

> cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died out; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me, and behold a man transformed to a brute.

—from Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Music helped many African Americans endure the horrors of slavery. Field workers often sang to pass the long workday and to communicate with one another. Some songs were more provocative than most plantation owners knew, using subtle language and secret meanings to lament the singers’ bondage and express a continuing hope for freedom.

Songs also played a key role in one of the most important parts of African American culture: religion. By the early 1800s, large numbers of African Americans were Christians, though their Christianity sometimes incorporated religious traditions from Africa. During their worship services, enslaved persons often sang spirituals—religious songs—and prayed for freedom or a better life in the next world.

Many enslaved men and women found ways to actively resist the dreadful lifestyle forced on them. Some quietly staged work slowdowns. Others broke tools or set fire to houses and barns. Still others risked beatings or mutilations by running away.

Some enslaved persons turned to violence, killing their owners or plotting revolts. In 1822 Denmark Vesey, a free African American in Charleston, South Carolina, was accused of planning a large armed uprising. After someone betrayed the group, the authorities arrested and hung Vesey and dozens of his followers before they could act.

The deadliest rebellion occurred in Virginia on August 22, 1831. Leading the attack was Nat Turner, an enslaved minister who believed God had chosen him to bring his people out of bondage. Turner and a small band of accomplices went from house to house, killing more than 50 white men, women, and children and recruiting followers until they numbered about 60. State and local troops put down the uprising, but it took them until October 30 to find Turner. They quickly tried and hung him along with 15 of his supporters.

Free African Americans  Not all African Americans of the time lived in bondage. By 1850
over 225,000 free African Americans resided in the South, mostly in the towns and cities of Maryland and Virginia. A few had descended from Africans brought to the United States as indentured servants in the 1700s before the slave system became universal. Some had earned their freedom fighting in the American Revolution, and still others were the half-white children of slaveholders, who had granted them freedom. There were also some former enslaved persons who had managed to purchase their freedom or whose owners had freed them.

Free African Americans occupied an ambiguous position in Southern society. In cities like Charleston and New Orleans, some were successful enough to become slaveholders themselves. Cecee McCarty, for example, a wealthy dry goods retailer in New Orleans, had a sales force of 32 slaves.

Another 197,700 free African Americans lived in the North, where slavery had been outlawed, but they were not embraced there either. Racial prejudice, lamented one, was “ever at my elbow.” Still, free African Americans could organize their own churches and voluntary associations, plus earn money from the jobs they held. James Forten of Philadelphia was one success story.

Forten worked aboard ships as a teenager and later became a maker of sails. By the age of 32, he owned a thriving sail factory employing 40 African American and white workers. Forten devoted much of his wealth to the cause of abolishing slavery.

**Profiles in History**

**Nat Turner 1800–1831**

The man who led perhaps the nation’s best-known slave revolt believed from an early age—through his mother’s encouragement—that he was divinely inspired. “I was intended for some great purpose,” he once declared.

Although many considered Nat Turner a religious fanatic—he claimed to take his directions from mysterious voices and the movements of heavenly bodies—others knew him to have a sharp mind. “He certainly never had the advantages of education,” said the man later appointed to be his lawyer, “but he can read and write . . . and for natural intelligence and quickness of apprehension is surpassed by few men I have ever seen.”

As he awaited execution, Turner reportedly showed little remorse for his deeds, certain that he had acted in the name of God to free his people. “I am here loaded with chains and willing to suffer the fate that awaits me,” he said.

Turner’s lack of remorse chilled those around him, including his lawyer, who described the calm, deliberate composure with which Turner spoke of what he had done. “I looked on him,” the lawyer wrote, “and my blood curdled in my veins.”

Turner’s revolt sent a wave of terror through the South and heightened fears of future uprisings. As a result, many states adopted even harsher restrictions on both enslaved and free African Americans.

**Reading Check**

**Describing** What was life like for enslaved African Americans in the South?
Why Learn This Skill?

Line graphs are a way of showing numbers visually, making them easier to read and understand. Learning to read line graphs will help you compare changes over time or differences between places, groups of people, or related events.

Learning the Skill

Line graphs are often used to show changes in number or quantity over time. They show information in two dimensions. The horizontal axis (or x-axis) is the line along the bottom of the graph. If the graph shows information over time, this axis usually shows the time period. The vertical axis (or y-axis) is the line that runs up the side of the graph. This axis usually displays the quantity, or amount, of whatever is being measured in the graph.

A double-line graph shows more than one line, recording two related quantities. For instance, you and a friend might both record your running speeds for footraces over a period of time on one graph, using a line of a different color for each of you. Before trying to understand any graph, be sure to read the labels on both axes and the key for each line.

Practicing the Skill

Study the line graph and answer the following questions.

1. What kind of information does the graph compare?
2. What are the time intervals on the horizontal axis?
3. What quantity is measured on the vertical axis?
4. What trend does the graph seem to show?
5. What two phenomena from the chapter explain the changes in the population?

Skills Assessment

Complete the Practicing Skills questions on page 213 and the Chapter 5 Skill Reinforcement Activity to assess your mastery of this skill.

Applying the Skill

Reading a Line Graph

Create a line graph comparing the urban and rural population figures from 1910 to 1970. Compare your graph with the one on this page and write a summary of the differences you notice between the two.

Glencoe's Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook CD-ROM, Level 2, provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.
As May approached in 1820, Thomas Jefferson should have been enjoying his retirement from public life. Instead, a bitter political controversy had him feeling deeply troubled. After more than a year of debate, Congress finally had crafted a plan to allow the Missouri Territory to enter the Union as a slave state while Maine came in as a free state. This arrangement preserved the delicate balance in the number of free and slave states. The arrangement, known as the Missouri Compromise, highlighted the growing dispute over slavery’s expansion into the Western territories—a dispute that Jefferson feared could tear the nation apart:

“This momentous question, like a firebell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell [funeral bell] of the Union. It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence.”

—quoted in The Annals of America

The Missouri Compromise

In 1819 the Union consisted of 11 free and 11 slave states. While Northerners already dominated the House of Representatives, admitting any new state, either slave or free, would upset the balance of political power in the Senate.
Many Northerners opposed extending slavery into the western territories because they believed that human bondage was morally wrong. The South feared that if slavery could not expand, new free states would eventually give the North enough votes in the Senate to outlaw slaveholding.

Missouri’s territorial government requested admission into the Union as a slave state in 1819. Acting for slavery’s opponents, Congressman James Tallmadge, Jr., of New York proposed a resolution that prohibited slaveholders from bringing new slaves into Missouri. He also called for all enslaved children in Missouri to be freed at age 25. The House accepted the proposal, but the Senate rejected it.

A solution emerged later that year when Maine, then a part of Massachusetts, sought statehood. The Senate decided to combine its request with Missouri’s and voted to admit Maine as a free state and Missouri as a slave state. The Senate added an amendment to prohibit slavery in the rest of the Louisiana Territory north of Missouri’s southern boundary. Southerners agreed, viewing this Northern region as unsuitable for farming anyway.

Henry Clay carefully steered the amended bill through the House of Representatives, which passed it by a close vote in March 1820. In July, however, the Missouri Compromise became threatened by a proposed clause in the Missouri constitution that would infringe on the rights of free African Americans. Clay again engineered a solution, and Missouri became the twenty-fourth state in 1821.

The Missouri Compromise temporarily settled the dispute over the westward expansion of slavery. Like Jefferson, however, many leaders feared more trouble ahead. “I take it for granted,” wrote John Quincy Adams, President Monroe’s secretary of state, “that the present question is a mere preamble—a title page to a great tragic volume.”

A Disputed Election Politics reflected the regional divisions of the day. Although the Republicans remained the only official political party, sectionalism was strong in the election campaign of 1824. Four Republicans ran for president that year. All were “favorite sons,” men who enjoyed popularity and political support in their home state and region. Two candidates, Henry Clay of Kentucky and Andrew Jackson of Tennessee, were rivals from the West. John Quincy Adams hailed from Massachusetts and was New England’s favorite son. William Crawford of Georgia had the support of the South.

On Election Day, Jackson led in the popular vote and in the Electoral College, but he did not win the necessary majority of electoral votes. In accordance with constitutional procedure, the decision went to the House of Representatives, whose members would select the president from the top three vote-getters. Clay, who had placed fourth, was eliminated.

As the Speaker of the House, Henry Clay enjoyed tremendous influence, and he threw his support to Adams. Clay hoped Adams would champion his American System, a plan to promote domestic production by means of protective tariffs, a strong national bank, and new roads and canals. On February 9, 1825, Adams won the House election easily, with 13 votes to Jackson’s 7 and Crawford’s 4.
**A Return to Two Parties**  Upon taking office, the new president named Clay as his secretary of state. Jackson’s supporters immediately accused the pair of striking a “corrupt bargain,” whereby Clay had secured votes for Adams in return for a cabinet post. Adams and Clay denied any wrongdoing, and no evidence of a deal ever emerged. Still, Jackson’s outraged supporters decided to break with the faction of the party allied with Adams. The Jacksonians called themselves Democratic Republicans, later shortened to Democrats. Adams and his followers became known as National Republicans.

**A New Era in Politics**

John Quincy Adams, son of the second president, was highly intelligent and hardworking. He proposed ambitious internal improvements and funding for a national university, astronomical observatories, and scientific research. Congress, however, rejected most of Adams’s ideas as too extravagant. When he ran for re-election in 1828, Adams could cite few accomplishments as president. Furthermore, his chilly manner cost him popular support at a time when more and more Americans were voting.

**States Expand Voting Rights** Throughout the first decades of the 1800s, hundreds of thousands of white males gained the right to vote. This was largely because many states lowered or eliminated property ownership as a voting qualification. They did so partly to reflect the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the social equality of frontier life. In addition, as cities and towns grew, the percentage of working people who did not own property increased. These people paid taxes and had an interest in the political affairs of their communities, and so they wanted a say in electing those who represented them.

The expansion of voting rights was very much in evidence by 1828. That year, more than 1.13 million citizens voted for president, compared with about 355,000 in 1824.

**Jackson Becomes “the People’s President”** The campaign of 1828 pitted John Quincy Adams against Andrew Jackson, who believed that the presidency had been unjustly denied him four years earlier. The candidates quickly resorted to mudslinging, attacking each other’s personalities and morals. Adams called his opponent “incompetent both by his ignorance and by the fury of his passions.” Jackson portrayed himself as the candidate of the common man and criticized Adams as an out-of-touch, untrustworthy aristocrat.

When the results came in, Jackson had 56 percent of the popular vote and 178 of the 261 electoral votes, a clear victory. Much of his support came from the West and South, where rural and small-town residents, many voting for the first time, saw Jackson as the candidate most likely to represent their interests.

Orphaned at the age of 14, Andrew Jackson had received little formal education and had been a fighter all his life. When he entered the White House at age 61, he was newly widowed and plagued by various ailments. Jackson had an inner toughness, however. He was nicknamed “Old Hickory” after a hardwood found on the frontier, and he performed the duties of his office with a firm and steady hand.

As president, Jackson actively tried to make the government more inclusive. At his inauguration, he took the unprecedented step of inviting the masses to his White House reception. In an effort to
strengthen democracy, he vigorously utilized the **spoils system**, the practice of appointing people to government jobs based on party loyalty and support. In his view, he was getting rid of a permanent office-holding class and opening up the government to more ordinary citizens.

Jackson’s supporters also moved to make the political system—specifically, the way in which presidential candidates were chosen—more democratic. At that time, political parties used the caucus system to select presidential candidates. The members of the party who served in Congress would hold a closed meeting, or **caucus**, to choose the party’s nominee. Jackson’s supporters believed that such a method restricted access to office to mainly the elite and well connected. The Jacksonians replaced the caucus with the national nominating convention, where delegates from the states gathered to decide on the party’s presidential nominee.

**Reading Check**

**Examining** Why was there a large increase in the number of voters in the United States in 1828?

### The Nullification Crisis

Jackson had not been in office long before he had to focus on a national crisis. It centered on South Carolina but highlighted the growing rift between the nation’s northern and southern regions.

During the early 1800s, South Carolina’s economy had been growing increasingly weak. Many residents blamed their troubles on the nation’s tariffs. With little state industry, South Carolina purchased many of its tools, cooking utensils, and other manufactured goods from England. Tariffs made them extremely expensive, however. When Congress levied a new tariff in 1828—which critics called the Tariff of Abominations—many South Carolinians threatened to **secede**, or withdraw, from the union.

The growing turmoil particularly troubled Vice President **John C. Calhoun**, who was from South Carolina. To pave the way for his home state to legally resist the tariff, Calhoun had put forth the idea of nullification in 1828. He anonymously published *The South Carolina Exposition and Protest*, which argued that because the states had created the federal union, they had the right to declare a federal law null, or not valid.

The issue of nullification intensified in January 1830, when Robert Hayne of South Carolina and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts met for a Senate debate. Hayne, asserting that the Union was no more than a voluntary association of states, advocated “liberty first and Union afterward.” Webster, perhaps the greatest orator of his day, countered that neither liberty nor the Union could survive without binding federal laws. He ended his speech with a stirring call: “Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!”

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**History Through Art**

**Jackson’s Inaugural** Hundreds of ordinary citizens celebrated Andrew Jackson’s election at the White House. Jackson’s portrait (left) by painter Asher Durand shows the president’s determined character. How was Jackson different from previous presidents?
Several months later, during a political dinner, President Jackson made his position clear. Looking directly at Calhoun, he offered this toast: “Our federal Union—It must be preserved.”

The war of words erupted into an explosive situation in 1832 when Congress passed yet another tariff law. South Carolinians stepped up their call for secession, while a special session of the state legislature voted to nullify the law. Jackson considered nullification an act of treason and sent a warship to Charleston. As tensions rose, Senator Henry Clay managed to defuse the crisis. At Clay’s insistence, Congress passed a bill that would lower tariffs gradually until 1842. South Carolina then repealed its nullification of the tariff law.

Other Domestic Matters

Of the other issues of the day, slavery remained a divisive question. However, President Jackson, a slaveholder himself, largely ignored the rising voices of anti-slavery activists. He focused instead on two other matters—Native Americans and the national bank.

Policies Toward Native Americans

Although Jackson wanted to ensure the survival of Native American peoples, he accelerated an effort that had been going on for years—moving them out of the way of white settlers. In 1830 Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act, which helped the states relocate Native Americans to largely uninhabited regions west of the Mississippi River.

The Cherokee in Georgia fought back by appealing to the Supreme Court, hoping that their territorial rights would be legally recognized. In Cherokee Nation v. Georgia (1831), Chief Justice Marshall supported the Cherokees’ right to control their land. In Worcester v. Georgia (1832), the Court again ordered state officials to honor the Native Americans’ property rights. Jackson refused to carry out this decision. “Marshall
has made his opinion,” the president reportedly said, “now let him enforce it.” *(See page 965 for more information on *Worcester v. Georgia.* )

In 1838 Jackson’s successor, Martin Van Buren sent in the army to forcibly move the Cherokee. Roughly 2,000 Cherokee died in camps while waiting for the westward march to begin. On the journey, known to the Cherokee as the **Trail of Tears**, about 2,000 others died of starvation, disease, and exposure.

Missionary-minded religious groups and a few members of Congress, like Henry Clay, declared that Jackson’s policies toward Native Americans stained the nation’s honor. Most citizens, however, supported them. By 1838 the majority of Native Americans still living east of the Mississippi had been forced onto government reservations. The Seminole of Florida were among the few holdouts. Even after the death of their leader, Chief **Osceola**, the Seminole in the Everglades resisted resettlement until the 1840s.

**ECONOMICS**

**Jackson Battles the National Bank** One of the most contentious developments of Jackson’s presidency was his campaign against the national bank. Along with most Westerners and working people, the president distrusted the Second Bank of the United States. The Bank had done a good job of stabilizing the economy, but Jackson resented the power that its wealthy stockholders exercised. He disliked the Bank’s aristocratic president, **Nicholas Biddle**. Jackson also believed the bank to be unconstitutional, despite the Supreme Court’s ruling in *McCulloch v. Maryland*. He further believed in the equality of the different branches of the federal government and did not believe that, as president, he had to accept the Court’s ruling.

The Bank’s charter was scheduled to run out in 1836. In 1832, however, while Jackson was running for re-election, his foes in Congress passed a bill to extend the charter for another 20 years. Jackson vetoed the bill, and many Americans supported him.

When Jackson easily won a second term, he saw his victory as a mandate to destroy the Bank at once. He withdrew the government’s deposits from the Bank, prompting Biddle to call in outstanding loans and stop new lending. By putting an end to the Bank of the United States, Jackson had won a considerable political victory. Later, however, critics would charge that the end of the Bank helped cause the financial woes that plagued the country in the years ahead.

**A New Party Emerges**

By the mid-1830s, Jackson’s critics had formed a new political party, the **Whigs**. Led by former National Republicans like Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, and Daniel Webster, the Whigs wanted to expand the federal government, encourage industrial and commercial development, and create a centralized economy. Such policies differed from those of the Democrats, who favored a limited federal government.

The Whigs ran three candidates for president in the election of 1836. Jackson’s continuing popularity, however, helped assure victory for his handpicked successor, Democrat Martin Van Buren.

**Van Buren’s Troubled Presidency** Shortly after Van Buren took office, a crippling economic crisis hit the nation. The roots of the crisis stretched back
to the end of Jackson’s term, a period in which investment in roads, canals, and railroads boomed and prompted a wave of land speculation and bank lending. This heavy spending pushed up inflation, which Jackson feared eventually would render the nation’s paper currency worthless. Just before leaving office, therefore, Jackson issued the Specie Circular, which ordered that all payments for public lands must be made in the form of silver or gold.

Jackson’s directive set off the Panic of 1837. With easy paper credit no longer available, land sales plummeted and economic growth slowed. As a result, many banks and businesses failed and thousands of farmers lost their land through foreclosures. Van Buren, a firm believer in his party’s philosophy of limited federal government, did little to ease the crisis.

“Tippecanoe and Tyler Too” With Van Buren clearly vulnerable, the Whigs looked forward to winning the White House in 1840. They nominated General William Henry Harrison, a hero of the battle against Native Americans at Tippecanoe in 1811. John Tyler, a Southerner and former Democrat who had left his party in protest over the nullification issue, joined the ticket as the vice presidential candidate. Campaigning with the slogan “Tippecanoe and Tyler too,” the Whigs won a decisive victory.

On March 4, 1841, Harrison delivered his inauguration speech, speaking for nearly two hours in the bitter cold with no coat or hat. He came down with pneumonia and died one month after taking office. Vice President John Tyler then took over.

Tyler’s ascendancy to the presidency dismayed Whig leaders. Tyler sided with the Democrats on numerous key issues, refusing to support a higher tariff or a new national bank. The new president did win praise, however, for the 1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty, which established a firm boundary between the United States and Canada.

Reading Check

2. Identify: Missouri Compromise, Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears, Nicholas Biddle, Whig, Specie Circular.

Reviewing Themes

3. Government and Democracy How did President Jackson try to make government more inclusive and democratic?
By 1841 Dorothea Dix had been a schoolteacher in Massachusetts for many years. That year, a clergymember asked her to lead a Sunday school class at a local prison. What Dix saw there appalled her. Mentally ill persons lay neglected in dirty, unheated rooms. Putting aside her teaching career, she began a crusade to improve prison conditions for the mentally ill and to provide them with the treatment they needed.

In 1843 Dix composed a letter to the Massachusetts legislature calling for such reforms. She pointed to the example of one local woman as evidence that more humane treatment might help many of the mentally ill. “Some may say these things cannot be remedied,” she wrote. “I know they can. . . . A young woman, a pauper. . . . was for years a raging maniac. A cage, chains, and the whip were the agents for controlling her, united with harsh tones and profane language.” Dix explained that a local couple took the woman in and treated her with care and respect. “They are careful of her diet. They keep her very clean. She calls them ‘father’ and ‘mother.’ Go there now, and you will find her ‘clothed,’ and though not perfectly in her ‘right mind,’ so far restored as to be a safe and comfortable inmate.”

—adapted from *Old South Leaflets*

**A Religious Revival**

Largely through the efforts of Dorothea Dix, more than a dozen states enacted sweeping prison reforms and created special institutions for the mentally ill. As influential as she was, Dix was just one of many citizens who worked to reform various aspects of American society in the mid-1800s.
The reform movement stemmed in large part from a revival of religion that began at the turn of the century. Many church leaders sensed that the growth of scientific knowledge and rationalism were challenging the doctrine of faith. In the early 1800s, religious leaders organized to revive Americans’ commitment to religion. The resulting movement came to be called the Second Great Awakening. Various Protestant denominations—most often the Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians—held camp meetings where thousands of followers sang, prayed, and participated in emotional outpourings of faith. One of the most successful ministers was Charles G. Finney. He pioneered many methods of revivalism still used by evangelists today.

New Religious Groups Emerge As membership in many Protestant churches swelled, other religious groups also flourished. Among them were Unitarianism, Universalism, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, whose followers are commonly known as Mormons. Joseph Smith began preaching the Mormon faith in New York in the 1820s. After enduring much harassment in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and elsewhere, Mormons across the Midwest moved to Illinois. There the group prospered, and their settlement of Nauvoo grew to about 15,000 in 1844. Persecution continued, however, and following the murder of Joseph Smith the Mormons headed west, finally putting down permanent roots in the Utah Territory.

The Reform Spirit Revivalists preached the power of individuals to improve themselves and the world. Lyman Beecher, one of the nation’s most prominent Presbyterian ministers, insisted that the nation’s citizenry, more than its government, was responsible for building a better society. Associations known as benevolent societies sprang up in cities and towns across the country. At first, they focused on spreading the word of God and attempting to convert nonbelievers. Soon, however, they sought to combat a number of social problems. One of the most striking features of the reform effort was the overwhelming presence of women. Young women in particular had joined the revivalist movement in much larger numbers than men. One reason was that many unmarried women with uncertain futures discovered in religion a foundation on which to build their lives. As more women turned to the church, many of them also joined religious-based reform groups.

A Literary Renaissance The spirit of reform and the revival of religious feeling in the early 1800s coincided with a flowering of American literature. American essayists, poets, and novelists who were previously overshadowed by European writers now became widely admired.

The Transcendentalists One notable group of philosophers and writers in New England were the transcendentalists. Transcendentalism was based on the idea that people can transcend, or overcome, the mind’s limits. The transcendentalists emphasized feeling over reason and sought communion with the natural world. The most influential transcendentalist was Ralph Waldo Emerson, who published his best-known essay, Nature, in 1836. Other leaders of the movement included Margaret Fuller and Henry David Thoreau, the author of Walden.

Distinctively American Voices Many of the nation’s writers set out to create uniquely American works that celebrated the people, history, and natural beauty of the United States. James Fenimore Cooper romanticized Native Americans and frontier life in his Leatherstocking Tales, the most famous being The Last of the Mohicans (1826). Nathaniel Hawthorne, who produced more than 100 tales and novels, explored the Puritan heritage of New Englanders in books like The Scarlet Letter (1850). Herman Melville, another New Englander, wrote the whaling adventure Moby Dick (1851), a masterpiece of American fiction. Edgar Allen Poe achieved fame as a poet and writer of macabre short stories and detective tales. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow drew upon American

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**History Through Art**

Religious Zeal J. Maze Burban’s Religious Camp Meeting shows a charismatic preacher reaching many in the audience. From studying the image, can you suggest other reasons people might want to attend?
history to create poems like “Paul Revere’s Ride” (1863) and the “Song of Hiawatha” (1855) about a legendary Iroquois chief.

Perhaps the most provocative American writer of the day was Walt Whitman, who pioneered a new kind of poetry with *Leaves of Grass* (1855). Rejecting traditional rhyme and meter for free verse, Whitman exalted nature, the common people, democracy, and the human body and spirit.

**The Penny Press** A less literary but greatly influential phenomenon at this time was the rise of the mass newspaper. Before the early 1800s, most newspapers catered to well-educated readers and were too costly for the average worker. As more Americans learned to read and gained the right to vote, however, publishers began creating inexpensive “penny papers” that satisfied the popular craving for local news, crime reports, and gossip.

General-interest magazines that catered to particular groups also emerged around this time. Louis A. Godey founded *Godey’s Lady’s Book* in 1830, the first American magazine for women. In 1857 the poet James Russell Lowell launched the *Atlantic Monthly* for the well-educated. *Harper’s Weekly* appealed to literate readers with its lavish illustrations and articles on everything from books to national news.

**Social Reform** The optimism and the emphasis on the individual that infused much of American literature and religion in the mid-1800s also gave rise to dozens of new communities. The people who formed these communities believed that the way to a better life was to separate themselves from the corrupting influence of the larger society and form their own utopia, or ideal society. They typically practiced cooperative living and rejected the idea of private property. Some utopian settlements, like *Brook Farm* near Boston, were based on social or political ideologies. Others were religious in origin, like the communities founded by Shakers. The Shakers got their name from a ritual shaking dance that members performed. They reached their peak in the mid-1800s with some 6,000 members.

In general, however, only a few Americans chose to live in utopian communities. Many more, inspired by a strong faith in human goodness, attempted not to escape society but to reform it.

**The Temperance Movement** A number of reformers argued that no social vice caused more crime, poverty, or family damage than the excessive use of alcohol. In small towns throughout the West, people drank to ease the loneliness of rural life. In eastern cities, many workers made drinking in the pubs and saloons their main leisure activity.

Although advocates of temperance, or moderation in the consumption of alcohol, had been active since the late 1700s, the new reformers energized the campaign. Temperance groups formed across the country, preaching the evils of alcohol and urging
heavy drinkers to give up liquor. In 1833 a number of groups formed a national organization, the American Temperance Union, to strengthen the movement.

While persuading people not to drink, temperance societies pushed to halt the sale of liquor. In 1851 Maine passed the first state prohibition law, an example a dozen other states followed by 1855. Other states passed “local option” laws, which allowed towns and villages to prohibit liquor sales within their boundaries.

**Prison Reform**

One of society’s most glaring ills, reformers insisted, was its prison system. Inmates of all kinds, ranging from violent offenders to debtors to the mentally ill, often were indiscriminately crowded together in jails and prisons, which in some cases were literally holes in the ground. One jail in Connecticut, for example, was an abandoned mineshaft.

Around 1816 many states began replacing these facilities with new penitentiaries where prisoners were to be rehabilitated rather than merely locked up. Officials developed forms of rigid discipline to rid inmates of the laziness that had led them astray. Solitary confinement was meant to give prisoners the chance to meditate on their wrongdoing.

**Reading Check**

Identifying What were two aspects of American society targeted by reformers?

**Educational Reform**

Although the idea of state-supported schools dated back as far as the Massachusetts General School Act of 1647, there were few public schools in America in the Jacksonian Era. In the early 1800s, reformers began to push states to fund public schools for several reasons. For one thing, new technology created a demand for better-educated workers. It also seemed necessary to educate the increasing number of immigrants coming to the United States. The surging voting rolls in the 1820s and 1830s offered another compelling reason for broader public education. After all, democracy demanded an informed and educated electorate.

**Horace Mann Fights for Public Schooling**

One of the leaders of the education movement was Horace Mann. After helping to create the Massachusetts Board of Education in 1837, he served as its secretary for 12 years. During that time, he doubled teachers’ salaries, opened 50 new high schools, and established schools for teacher training called normal schools.

By the 1850s, tax-supported elementary schools had gained widespread support in the Northeastern states and had begun to spread to the rest of the country. Rural areas responded more slowly, because children there were needed to help with planting and harvesting.

In the South, a reformer named Calvin Wiley played a similar role in North Carolina to that of Horace Mann in Massachusetts. In 1839 North Carolina began providing support to local communities that established taxpayer-funded schools. Wiley traveled throughout the state building support for public education. By
Old-Fashioned School Days

Public schools in the early to mid-1800s were rough-and-ready affairs. Students came in all ages and sizes, teachers often had little training, and books and supplies were hard to obtain.

One-Room Schoolhouse

The painting New England School by Charles Frederick Bosworth tells the tale of teachers' challenges in early public schools. With a mixed-aged class, the teacher had to teach a few students at a time, leaving the others to their own education—or entertainment.

1860 about two-thirds of North Carolina's white children attended school part of the year. The South as a whole responded less quickly, and only about one-third of Southern white children were enrolled in public schools by 1860. African American children were excluded entirely.

Women's Education

When officials talked about educating voters, they had men in mind, since women were still not allowed to cast a ballot in the 1800s. Nonetheless, a number of women took advantage of the reform movement to create more educational opportunities for girls and women.

Emma Willard, who founded a girls' boarding school in Vermont in 1814, was an early women's educational pioneer. Her school went beyond the usual subjects for young women, such as cooking and etiquette, to include academic subjects like history, math, and literature. In 1837 another educator, Mary Lyon, opened the first higher education institution for women, Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, in Massachusetts. Eighty students arrived the first year; the second year, more than 200 applied for enrollment.

The Women's Movement

In the early 1800s, the industrial revolution began to change the economic roles of men and women. In the 1700s, most economic activity took place in or near the home because most people lived on farms. Although husbands and wives had distinct chores, running the farm and raising the family was the focus of their efforts. The rise of factories and other work centers in the 1800s began to separate the home from the workplace. Men now left home to go to work, while women tended the house and children.

Most people believed the home was the proper place for women, partly because the outside world was seen as dangerous and partly because of the era's ideas about the family. For many parents, raising children was treated as a solemn responsibility because it prepared young people for a proper Christian life. Women, in particular, were viewed as more moral and charitable than men, and better able to serve as models of piety and virtue for their families.

Magazine articles and novels reinforced the value of women’s role at home. In 1841 Catherine Beecher, daughter of the minister Lyman Beecher, wrote A Treatise on Domestic Economy. The popular volume argued that women could find fulfillment at home and gave instruction on childcare, cooking, and health matters. At that time, most women did not feel that their role in life was too limited. Instead, the
era’s ideas implied that wives were partners with their husbands, and, in some ways, morally superior. The idea that women had an important role in building a virtuous home was soon expanded to society. As women became involved in reform movements, some argued for the right to promote their ideas.

In 1848 activists Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the Seneca Falls Convention in New York. This gathering of women reformers marked the beginning of an organized woman’s movement. The convention issued the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, better known as the Seneca Falls Declaration. It began with words expanding the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal. . . .” *(See page 952 for more information on the Seneca Falls Declaration.)*

Although Stanton shocked the women present when she proposed that they focus on gaining suffrage, or the right to vote, the convention narrowly passed her proposal. Throughout the 1850s, women organized conventions to promote greater rights for themselves. These conventions drew attention to their cause, paving the way for a stronger movement to emerge after the Civil War.

**The Abolitionist Movement**

Of all the reform movements that began in the early 1800s, the movement calling for *abolition*, or the immediate end to slavery, was the most divisive. By pitting North against South, it polarized the nation and helped bring about the Civil War.

**Early Opposition to Slavery** Opposition to slavery in the United States had actually begun as early as the Revolutionary War era. Quakers and Baptists in the North and South agreed not to enslave people, viewing the practice as a sin that corrupted both slaveholder and slave. In Virginia in 1789, the Baptists recommended “every legal measure to [wipe out] this horrid evil from the land.”

One notable antislavery effort in the early 1800s was the formation of the **American Colonization Society** (ACS) in December 1816. This group, supported by such prominent figures as President James Monroe and Chief Justice John Marshall, encouraged African Americans to resettle in Africa. The privately funded ACS chartered ships and helped relocate between 12,000 and 20,000 African Americans along the west coast of Africa in what became the nation of Liberia. Still, there were over 1.5 million enslaved persons in the United States in 1820. Many of them, already two or three generations removed from Africa, strongly objected to the idea of resettlement.

**TURNING POINT**

**The New Abolitionists** The antislavery movement gained new momentum in the 1830s, thanks largely to William Lloyd Garrison. In his twenties, Garrison had worked for an antislavery newspaper in Baltimore. In 1831, at the age of 25, he cofounded his own paper in Boston with fellow abolitionist Isaac Knapp. In the *Liberator*, Garrison wrote caustic attacks on slavery and called for the immediate *emancipation*, or freeing, of enslaved persons. He had no patience with those who were put off by his militant stand:

> "I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write with moderation. No! No! . . . urge me not to use moderation . . . I am in earnest, I will not equivocate, I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD."  

—from the *Liberator*
Garrison soon attracted enough followers to found the New England Antislavery Society in 1832 and the American Antislavery Society in 1833. Both organizations thrived. By 1838 more than 1,350 chapters had formed, with over 250,000 members. Orator Wendell Phillips, poet John Greenleaf Whittier, and many other dedicated people became active in the cause. Theodore Weld was one of the most effective leaders, recruiting and training many abolitionists for the American Antislavery Society. Arthur and Lewis Tappan, two devout and wealthy brothers from New York City, were also influential. Despite the risk of taunts and beatings, abolitionists worked tirelessly to end what they saw as a hideous wrong.

Many women also gave their efforts to the abolitionist cause. Prudence Crandall worked as a teacher and abolitionist in Connecticut. Lucretia Mott, a strong advocate of women’s rights, also spoke out in favor of abolition. Some Southern women also joined the crusade. Among the earliest were Sarah and Angelina Grimké, South Carolina sisters who moved north to work openly against slavery.

Not surprisingly, free African Americans took a prominent role in the abolitionist movement. The most famous was Frederick Douglass, who had escaped from slavery in Maryland. A brilliant thinker and an electrifying speaker, Douglass drew many African Americans to the antislavery moment. He published his own anti-slavery newspaper, the North Star, and wrote an autobiography that quickly sold 4,500 copies after its publication in 1845.

Another important African American abolitionist was Sojourner Truth. She gained freedom in 1827 when New York freed all remaining enslaved persons in the state. In the 1840s her eloquent and deeply religious antislavery speeches attracted huge crowds.

In the North, citizens responded to the abolitionist movement with everything from support to indifference to opposition. While many Northerners disapproved of slavery, some objected to abolitionism even more. They regarded the movement as a dangerous threat to the existing social system. Some whites, including many prominent businesspeople, warned that it would produce a destructive war between the North and the South. Others feared it might bring a great influx of freed African Americans to the North, overwhelming the...
labor and housing markets. Many Northerners also had no desire to see the South’s economy crumble. If that happened, they might lose the huge sums Southern planters owed to Northern banks as well as the Southern cotton that fed Northern textile mills.

Given such attitudes, violence against abolitionists was hardly surprising. William Lloyd Garrison was nearly killed by an angry mob in 1834. Another abolitionist publisher, the Reverend Elijah P. Lovejoy, did indeed die in a mob attack in 1837. Yet Northerners also resented Southern slave-catchers who kidnapped African American runaways in the North and hauled them back to the South. In response, several Northern states passed laws restricting slave recapture.

**Reaction in the South** To most Southerners, slavery was a “peculiar institution,” one that was distinctive and vital to the Southern way of life. While the North was building cities and factories, the South remained mostly agricultural, becoming increasingly tied to cotton and the enslaved people who planted and picked it. Southerners responded to the growing attacks against slavery by vehemently defending the institution. South Carolina’s governor called it a “national benefit,” while Thomas Dew, a leading academic of the South, claimed that most slaves had no desire for freedom, as they enjoyed a close and beneficial relationship with their slaveholders.

In 1831, when the Nat Turner rebellion left more than 50 white Virginians dead, Southerners were outraged. They cracked down on slaves throughout the region and railed against the North. Further, they demanded the suppression of abolitionist material as a condition for remaining in the Union. Southern postal workers refused to deliver abolitionist newspapers. In 1836, under Southern pressure, the House of Representatives passed a “gag rule” providing that all abolitionist petitions be shelved without debate.

Such measures did not deter the foes of slavery. Although the abolitionist movement was still relatively small, it continued to cause an uproar, and the North-South split continued to widen.

**Reading Check**  
**Summarizing** How did Northerners and Southerners view abolitionism?
In July 1821, Stephen F. Austin set off from Louisiana for the Texas territory in the northeastern corner of Mexico. The Spanish government had promised to give his father, Moses, a huge tract of Texas land if the elder Austin settled 300 families there from the United States. Moses, however, died before he could fulfill his end of the deal. On his deathbed, his dying wish was that Stephen take his place in Texas.

Stephen Austin was favorably impressed with the region. As he surveyed the land grant between the Brazos and Colorado Rivers, he noted its natural abundance:

“The Prairie comes bluff to the river . . . and affords a most beautiful situation for a Town or settlement . . . . The country . . . is as good in every respect as man could wish for, Land all first rate, plenty of timber, fine water, beautifully rolling.”

—quoted in Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas

The Western Pioneers

Austin was not alone in seeing possibilities in Texas. Thousands of people would depart the United States to start a new life in this area by 1836. Around the same time, many more Americans began pushing into the Midwest and beyond, journeying all the way to California and the Oregon Territory. Between the late 1830s and early 1860s, more than 250,000 Americans braved great obstacles to venture west along overland trails. The opportunity to farm fertile soil, enter the fur trade, or trade with foreign nations across the Pacific lured farmers, adventurers, and merchants alike. Whatever their reasons, most emigrants, like the majority of Americans, believed in Manifest Destiny. Manifest Destiny was the
idea that the nation was meant to spread to the Pacific. (See page 31 for more information on Manifest Destiny.)

**Farmers in the Midwest** In 1800 only about 400,000 Americans were living west of the Appalachian Mountains. By 1850 over 4 million settlers had advanced across the Appalachian Mountains and into Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Some of the first pioneers were called squatters, because they settled on lands they did not own. In 1841, however, Congress passed the Pre-emption Act. This law allowed squatters to buy up to 160 acres before the land went up for public sale.

**The Push to the Pacific** Latecomers to the Midwest set their sights on California and Oregon, although other nations had already claimed parts of these lands. The United States and Great Britain had agreed in 1818 to occupy the Oregon land jointly. The British dominated the region until about 1840, when the enthusiastic reports of American missionaries began to attract large numbers of would-be farmers to the region.

California was a frontier province of Mexico. Because few Mexicans wanted to make their homes in California, the local government welcomed foreign settlers. By 1845 more than 700 Americans lived in and around the Sacramento Valley. Though the central government in Mexico City relied on these American settlers, it was suspicious about their national loyalties.

**GEOGRAPHY**

**The Trails West** Between the frontier jumping-off points and the Pacific lay a vast expanse of difficult terrain. By the 1840s, several east-to-west routes had been carved out by early adventurers such as Kit

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1. Interpreting Maps Name two Missouri cities that served as starting points for western emigrants.

2. Applying Geography Skills Why did emigrants bypass the open territory of the Great Plains for a grueling journey to the Far West?
Carson and African American Jim Beckwourth. The most popular route was the Oregon Trail. Other trails included the California Trail and the Santa Fe Trail. The typical trip west took five to six months, with the wagon trains progressing about 15 miles (24 km) a day.

Crossing the Great Plains Most Americans assumed that the treeless Great Plains contained poor land for farming. Reports of hostile Plains Indians further discouraged settlement in this “Great American Desert.” Early pioneers heading west through the region, however, often found that the Native Americans there were helpful and would provide food, water, fresh horses, and valuable information.

As the overland traffic increased, the Plains Indians came to resent the threat it posed to their way of life. They relied on the buffalo for food, shelter, warm clothing, and tools. Now they feared that the increasing flow of settlers across their hunting grounds would cause the buffalo herds to die off or migrate elsewhere.

Hoping to ensure peace, the federal government negotiated the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1851. Eight Plains Indian groups agreed to specific geographic boundaries, while the United States promised that the defined territories would belong to the Native Americans forever. White settlers still streamed across the plains, however, provoking Native American hostility.

Americans Settle in Texas

When Stephen Austin arrived in Texas in 1821, most Spanish-speaking inhabitants, called Tejanos, lived in the southern part of the region. To the north lay the territory of the Apache, Comanche, and other Native American groups.

The sparse settlement in Texas posed a problem for the newly independent Mexican government. It worried that the United States might try to take over the region if Mexico left it underpopulated for long. Unable to persuade its own citizens to move closer to the Native American groups, Mexico continued the Spanish policy of inviting foreigners into Texas. Between 1823 and 1825, Mexico passed three colonization laws that offered cheap land to nearly anyone willing to come. The last law granted new immigrants a 10-year exemption from paying taxes but required that they become Mexican citizens, live under Mexican law, and convert to Roman Catholicism.

Americans began flooding into Texas with the encouragement of empresarios—agents who contracted with the Mexican government to bring in a certain number of residents in exchange for large grants of Texas land. The empresarios advertised for settlers, assigned a plot to each family, and governed the colonies they established. Stephen Austin was the first and most successful empresario. By the mid-1830s, Austin had persuaded some 1,500 American families to immigrate.

The Americans who relocated to Texas initially accepted Mexican citizenship. Few, however, adopted Mexican customs, learned Spanish, or developed a loyalty to Mexico. The Spanish Catholic Church was alien to them, and most had little contact with native Mexicans, who lived farther south.

Many Mexicans, in turn, distrusted the new settlers because of their American lifestyle and dismissal of Mexican ways. The Mexicans’ unease increased in 1826, when empresario Haden Edwards’s brother Benjamin rebelled against Mexican authority and proclaimed that American settlements in Texas were now an independent nation, Fredonia. Edwards gained few followers, however, and Stephen Austin led an American force that helped Mexico crush the revolt.

Reading Check Evaluating: What kind of relationship did the Plains Indians and white settlers have?
Suspicious of Americans’ intentions in Texas, Mexico closed its borders to further American immigration in 1830. This action infuriated American settlers. Without immigration, their settlements could not grow and relatives back home could not join them. Worst of all, the Mexican government was telling them what they could and could not do.

Reading Check
Examining What did Mexico offer people willing to settle in northern Texas, and what did it require of these settlers?

Texas Fights for Independence

With tensions simmering, settlers met at two conventions in San Felipe in 1832 and 1833. The first convention asked Mexico to reopen Texas to American immigrants and to loosen the taxes on imports. The second convention was more aggressive. It recommended separating Texas from Coahuila, the Mexican state it was then part of, and designated Stephen Austin to travel to Mexico City to negotiate with the Mexican government. In the fall of 1833, when the negotiations stalled, an angry Austin wrote back to San Antonio to suggest that Texas should start peacefully organizing its own state government.

After sending his letter, Austin managed to win several concessions from President Antonio López de Santa Anna. Meanwhile, Mexican officials had intercepted Austin’s letter. They arrested him for treason on January 3, 1834, and jailed him without trial in Mexico City.

After Austin was granted amnesty in July 1835, he concluded that negotiation with Santa Anna was impossible. In April 1834, Santa Anna had abruptly made himself a dictator, disavowing the country’s democratic constitution and declaring that his word was law. In September 1835, Austin urged Texans to organize an army, which they quickly did.

The settler army first faced a Mexican force in October 1835. At the military post of Gonzales, about 75 miles east of San Antonio, Mexican soldiers ordered the Texans to surrender their arms. In response, the rebels pointed a cannon at the Mexican troops and held up a sign that read, “Come and Take It.” Having no orders to attack, the Mexicans retreated to San Antonio. The Texans, who numbered only about 300, followed them and drove the much larger Mexican force out of San Antonio in mid-December 1835.
The Alamo  Despite this early success, the Texans faced tremendous difficulties. They had to scramble to organize a government, and few of the men had any military training. In the meantime, Santa Anna was personally leading a Mexican force of about 6,000 to put down the rebellion. When Santa Anna’s troops arrived at San Antonio in February 1836, they found about 150 rebels and 24 noncombatants holed up in a former Spanish mission called the Alamo. The Texan commander, Lieutenant Colonel William B. Travis, quickly sent a plea for help to fellow Texans and U.S. citizens:

“I call on you, in the name of liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch. . . Victory or death!”

—from History of Texas

The call for reinforcements went almost unanswered. Only 32 settlers from Gonzales arrived to join the fight. Still, the small band of Texans held off Santa Anna’s army for 13 days. During the standoff, on March 2, the new Texas government met at Washington-on-the-Brazos and formally declared independence from Mexico.

On March 6, 1836, Santa Anna’s army stormed the mission. The Texans fought off the attackers for several hours, killing or wounding over 600 before the Alamo was finally overrun. Only women, children, and some servants survived; the dead included famed frontiersmen Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie.

Two weeks later, the Mexican army overwhelmed troops led by James W. Fannin at Goliad, a town southeast of San Antonio. The Texans surrendered, hoping for clemency. Santa Anna, however, insisted on the usual punishment for captured foreigners—execution. At dawn on March 27, Fannin and more than 300 others died at the hands of a firing squad.

The losses at the Alamo and Goliad devastated Texans but also united them behind their new country. They regarded the Battle of the Alamo as a heroic struggle for freedom, and the Goliad massacre as evidence of Santa Anna’s cruelty.

TURNING POINT

The Battle of San Jacinto  Back in Washington-on-the-Brazos, the commander in chief of the Texas forces, Sam Houston, desperately needed time to recruit fresh volunteers and to train the soldiers who remained. He retreated east and waited for Santa Anna to make a mistake. His chance came on the afternoon of April 21, when the Texans caught Santa Anna’s soldiers napping in their camp by the San Jacinto River. The Texans’ surprise attack threw the Mexicans into a panic. They were used to acting only on orders, and with no time for officers to direct them, they suffered a quick defeat.

The Battle of San Jacinto lasted less than 20 minutes, but the bloodshed continued for hours. Yelling “Remember the Alamo” and “Remember Goliad,” Houston’s men killed hundreds of the enemy and took over 700 prisoners. Among those captured was Santa Anna. Knowing that the Mexican leader feared for his life, Houston compelled Santa Anna to withdraw his army from Texas and sign a treaty recognizing the
republic’s independence. The Mexican government never accepted the treaty, but it was unwilling and unable to launch another military campaign. Texas had become a new nation.

The Republic of Texas  In September 1836, the citizens of Texas elected Sam Houston president and voted 3,277 to 91 in favor of annexation—absorption—by the United States. Although proud of their republic, the settlers still regarded themselves as Americans.

Given that Americans had enthusiastically supported the war, most Texans assumed the United States would want to annex the republic. However, Texas wished to enter the Union as a slave state, which antislavery leaders opposed. In addition, Mexico continued to claim ownership of Texas. To avoid conflict, President Andrew Jackson made no move toward annexation. The Lone Star Republic, as Texas was nicknamed, would exist for almost a decade before joining the United States.

**The Election of 1844** As the presidential race began in 1844, Texas statehood became a key issue. The Democrats nominated James K. Polk of Tennessee, who promised to annex not only Texas but also the contested Oregon Territory in the Northwest. In addition, he vowed to buy California from Mexico. The platform appealed to both Northerners and Southerners because it furthered Manifest Destiny while promising to maintain the delicate balance between free and slave states.

The Whig nominee, Henry Clay, originally opposed annexing Texas. He later announced his support of annexation if it could be done without causing war with Mexico. Many Whigs opposed to slavery felt so betrayed that they gave their support to James G. Birney of the pro-abolition Liberty Party. With the Whig vote split, Polk won the election.

**Dividing Oregon** High on President Polk’s agenda was resolution of the Oregon question. “Oregon fever” was drawing more and more Americans to the Northwest. Despite Britain’s long-standing claims, Polk maintained that the United States had a right to the entire Oregon country all the way to its northern border, on the line of 54° 40’ north latitude. During the election of 1844, Polk’s supporters chanted “Fifty-four Forty or Fight.” The British believed the boundary should be the Columbia River, which flowed near the 46th parallel.

In June 1846, the two countries agreed to a compromise, dividing the territory along the 49th parallel. The British took what is now the Canadian province of British Columbia, and the Americans received the land that later became the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.
Annexing Texas  The acquisition of Texas had been assured even before Polk took office. In February 1845, at the urging of outgoing president Tyler, Congress passed a joint resolution to annex Texas. The resolution succeeded because it needed only a simple majority of both houses rather than the two-thirds majority in the Senate necessary to ratify a standard treaty. In December 1845, Texas became a state.

Reading Check  Explaining How did the United States gain Oregon and Texas?

War With Mexico  Texas’s entry into the Union outraged the Mexican government, which promptly broke diplomatic relations with the United States. Matters worsened when the two countries disputed Texas’s southwestern border. Mexico insisted it was the Nueces River. The United States argued, as Texans had all along, that it was the Rio Grande—a claim that covered far more territory.

Polk’s designs on California added to the conflict. In November 1845, he sent John Slidell to Mexico City to try to purchase the area and resolve other differences. Mexico’s new president, José Joaquín Herrera, refused even to meet with Slidell.

Herrera’s snub ended any realistic chance of a diplomatic solution. In January 1846, Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor to lead troops across the Nueces River into territory claimed by both the United States and Mexico. Polk wanted Mexican troops to fire the first shot. If he could say Mexico was the aggressor, he could more easily win support for a war. Finally, on May 9, news reached him that a force of Mexicans had attacked Taylor’s men. In an address to Congress, Polk declared that the United States was at war “by the act of Mexico herself.”

Many Whigs opposed the war as yet another plot to extend slavery. Nonetheless, most Washington politicians recognized that however questionable Polk’s actions, the United States now had no choice but to fight. On May 13, 1846, the Senate voted 40 to 2 and the House 174 to 14 in favor of the war.

The Battle Plan  Polk and his advisers developed a three-pronged strategy. Taylor’s troops would cross the Rio Grande near the Gulf of Mexico. A separate force would capture Santa Fe, an important trading center in what is now New Mexico, and then march west to take control of California with the help of the
American navy. Finally, U.S. troops would advance to Mexico City and force Mexico to surrender.

To implement the ambitious plan, Congress authorized the president to call for 50,000 volunteers. Men from every part of the country rushed to enlist.

**The Fighting Begins** In early May, several days before Polk signed the declaration of war, Taylor’s troops twice defeated Mexican forces at Palo Alto and at Resaca de la Palma. Taylor then moved south, overcoming more enemy forces at Matamoros. By late September he had marched inland and captured Monterrey.

In the meantime, Colonel Stephen W. Kearny led troops from Fort Leavenworth, near Missouri’s western boundary, toward Santa Fe. The long march through the dry countryside was brutal, but when Kearny’s men reached the city in August, the Mexican force there had already fled. With Santa Fe secured, a small U.S. force headed on to California.

Before Kearny’s troops arrived—and even before war with Mexico was officially declared—settlers in northern California, led by American general John C. Frémont, had begun an uprising. The official Mexican presence in the territory had never been strong, and the settlers had little trouble overcoming it. On June 14, 1846, they declared California independent and renamed the region the Bear Flag Republic. Within a month, American navy forces arrived to occupy the ports of San Francisco and San Diego and claim the republic for the United States.

Although Mexico had lost vast amounts of territory, its leaders refused to surrender. Polk decided to press on with the third phase of his battle plan and put General Winfield Scott in charge of seizing Mexico City. Scott’s forces and his soldiers traveled by ship to the Gulf Coast town of Veracruz, landing in March 1847. From there they headed west toward the capital, battling the enemy along the way. In September, they finally captured Mexico City.

**The Peace Treaty** Defeated, Mexico’s leaders signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848. Mexico gave the United States more than 500,000 square miles (1,295,000 sq. km) of territory—what are now the states of California, Nevada, and Utah, as well as most of Arizona and New Mexico and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. Mexico also accepted the Rio Grande as the southern border of Texas. In return, the United States paid Mexico $15 million and took over $3.25 million in debts the Mexican government owed to American citizens.

With Oregon and the former Mexican territories now under the U.S. flag, the dream of Manifest Destiny was realized, but this expansion had cost more than 12,000 American lives. Furthermore, the question of whether the new lands should allow slavery would soon lead the country into another bloody conflict.

**Summarizing** What was President Polk’s three-pronged strategy in the War with Mexico?
CHIEF JOSEPH (above), a leader of the Nez Perce of the Wallowa Valley in eastern Oregon, remembers his father, Old Joseph. The Nez Perce were forced to leave the Wallowa Valley less than a decade after Old Joseph's death.

My father sent for me. I saw he was dying. I took his hand in mine. He said, “My son, my body is returning to my mother earth, and my spirit is going very soon to see the Great Spirit Chief. When I am gone, think of your country. You are the chief of these people. They look to you to guide them. Always remember that your father never sold his country. You must stop your ears whenever you are asked to sign a treaty selling your home. A few years more, and white men will be all around you. They have their eyes on this land. My son, never forget my dying words. This country holds your father’s body. Never sell the bones of your father and your mother.”

I pressed my father’s hand and told him I would protect his grave with my life. My father smiled and passed to the spirit land.

I buried him in that beautiful valley of winding rivers. I love that land more than all the rest of the world. A man who would not love his father’s grave is worse than a wild animal.

Baseball for Beginners

Thinking of taking up the new game of baseball? Watch out! The rules keep changing!

1845
- Canvas bases will be set 90 feet apart in a diamond shape.
- Only nine men will play on each side.
- Pitches are to be thrown underhanded.
- A ball caught on the first bounce is an out.

1846
- At first base, a fielder can tag the bag before the runner reaches it and so make an out.

1847
- Players may no longer throw the ball at a runner to put him out.

These changes may be coming:
- A poor pitch is a ball; nine balls gives the runner first base, a walk.
- A ball caught on the first bounce is no longer an out.

The New York baseball team
**Milestones**

**SETTLED, 1847.** THE VALLEY OF THE GREAT SALT LAKE, by Brigham Young, leader of the Mormons, and a party of 143, to escape hostility toward their group in Illinois. Young plans to return to Council Bluffs, Iowa, and lead the rest of the members of his faith to a permanent home in Utah.

**MOVED, 1845.** HENRY DAVID THOREAU, writer, to Walden Pond, Concord, Massachusetts. Thoreau intends to build his own house on the shore of the pond and earn his living by the labor of his hands only. “Many of the so-called comforts of life,” writes Thoreau, “are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind.”

**AILING, 1847.** EDGAR ALLAN POE, in Baltimore, following the death of his wife, Virginia. Other than a poem on death, Poe has written little this year, devoting his dwindling energies to plagiarism suits against other authors.

**EMIGRATED, 1845.** FREDERICK DOUGLASS, former slave, author, and abolitionist leader, to England to escape the danger of re-enslavement in reaction to his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. On his 1845 trip across the Atlantic, Douglass was not permitted cabin accommodations. After a lecture during the crossing, some passengers threatened to throw him overboard.

**DISCOVERED, 1846.** THE PLANET NEPTUNE, by German astronomer Johann Galle.

**Numbers**

- **18,000** Miles from New York to California by sea route around Cape Horn
- **90,000** People arriving in California in 1849, half by sea, half by overland route
- **$20** Average earned per day by California gold miners in 1849
- **$18** Average expenses per day for California gold miners in 1849
- **$390** Value of miners’ average daily earnings in 2001 dollars
- **50** Number of years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence that Thomas Jefferson and John Adams die—within hours of each other.
- **17,069,453** U.S. population in 1840
- **55,000** Number of emigrants moving west along the Oregon Trail in 1850

**Western Word Play**

**Word Watch**

*Can you talk Western? Match the word to its meaning.*

1. maverick  
2. Hangtown fry  
3. grubstake  
4. bonanza  
5. palo alto  
6. pard or rawwheel  

a. gold rush favorite, made of eggs, bacon, and oysters  
b. inexperienced ‘49er, Eastern type not used to wearing boots  
c. a lucky discovery of gold; a source of sudden wealth  
d. a style of hat worn by gold rush miners  
e. a lone dissenter who takes an independent stand, from the name of a Texas cattleman who left his herd unbranded  
f. food provided by an investor to a gold prospector in exchange for a share of whatever gold he finds  

**Answers:** 1.e; 2.a; 3.f; 4.c; 5.d; 6.b
Reviewing Key Facts


25. What helped cotton become king in the South?

26. What issue did the Missouri Compromise temporarily settle?

27. In what two ways did President Andrew Jackson expand democracy?

28. Who supported the Indian Removal Act, and who opposed it? What were their reasons for opposing it?

29. What were the main beliefs of transcendentalists?

30. How did Horace Mann improve public education in Massachusetts?

31. What were the results of the Seneca Falls Convention?

32. What was the goal of the American Colonization Society, an early antislavery group?

33. How did African Americans like Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth combat slavery?

34. Why did settlers in Texas declare war against Mexico?

35. What did the United States gain from the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo?

Critical Thinking

36. Analyzing Themes: Groups and Institutions How did music and religion help African Americans cope with slavery?

37. Forming an Opinion Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793. Do you think the cotton gin had a positive or a negative effect on the nation? Explain your answer.

38. Interpreting Primary Sources In April of 1847, Charles Sumner of Massachusetts presented his views on the causes of the Mexican War in his “Report on the War with Mexico” to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

"It can no longer be doubted that this is a war of conquest. . . . In a letter to Commodore Sloat, . . . the Secretary [of War] says, ‘You will take such measures as will render that vast region [California] a desirable place of residence for emigrants from our soil.’ In a letter to
Colonel Kearny, . . . he says: ‘Should you conquer and take possession of New Mexico and Upper California, you will establish civil governments therein. You may assure the people of these provinces that it is the wish and design of the United States to provide for them a free government with the least possible delay. . . .”

quoted in Readings in American History

a. According to Charles Sumner, why did the United States become involved in the war with Mexico?

b. What evidence does Sumner provide to show that this was the U.S. government’s intention?

39. Organizing Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the effects of the Industrial Revolution.

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Practicing Skills

40. Multimedia Plan Develop a plan for a multimedia presentation on the social and cultural changes in the United States discussed in Section 3. Consider the following points to help guide you.

a. What specific examples would you use to show the different social and cultural changes taking place in the country?

b. What form of media would you use for each example?

Chapter Activity

41. Research Project Conduct research to learn more about one of the reformers discussed in the chapter. Then role-play the person by introducing yourself to the class and describing your background and your reform goals.

Writing Activity

42. Informative Writing On the American History Primary Source Document Library CD-ROM, read “Women’s Rights” by Sojourner Truth. Imagine you are a newspaper reporter, and write an article reviewing Truth’s speech. Explain her arguments for women’s rights and describe how members of the convention reacted to her words.