The Spirit of Reform

1828–1845

SECTION 1 Jacksonian America
SECTION 2 A Changing Culture
SECTION 3 Reforming Society
SECTION 4 The Abolitionist Movement

Town members listen to a local politician in the early 1800s.

1825
1826
1828
1830
1832
1833
1835
1837

U.S. EVENTS

• First railway tunnel built in England
• North-South rift develops over tariff
• Mormon religion officially organizes
• Democrats hold their first presidential nominating convention
• American Anti-slavery Society is founded by William Lloyd Garrison
• Fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen are published
• Queen Victoria ascends to English throne

WORLD EVENTS

1829
1829
1830
1830
1832
1832
1835
1835

• Mexico abolishes slavery

U.S. PRESIDENTS

1829–1837
1837–1841

Jackson
Van Buren
MAKING CONNECTIONS

Can Average Citizens Change Society?

In the 1830s and 1840s, reformers tried to change American society. Some worked to end slavery, others to give women the vote or to give all Americans access to public education. Some sought to reform prisons, while others tried to reduce alcohol abuse. The issues of the era still shape the concerns of reformers today as they try to improve education, reduce social problems and end discrimination toward minorities and women.

• How did reforms of this era increase the tensions between North and South?
• What do you think is the best way to get a society to accept reform?

Identifying Reform Movements

Create a Four-Tab Book Foldable in order to identify the major reform movements in American society in the early nineteenth century. For each reform movement, list when it began, its causes, its leadership, and its accomplishments.
Andrew Jackson was elected with wide popular support. As president, he stood up for federal authority, tried to move Native Americans to the West, and fatally undermined the Bank of the United States. A new party, the Whigs, emerged to oppose him.

**A New Era in Politics**

**MAIN Idea** States expanded voting rights in the late 1820s, making the nation more democratic, which in turn helped Andrew Jackson win election. As president, Jackson opposed South Carolina’s nullification vote, supported the Indian Removal Act, and closed the Bank of the United States.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Have you ever felt that someone “played favorites”? Read how Andrew Jackson used the “spoils system” to reward his political supporters.

Margaret Bayard Smith was one of the thousands of Americans who attended the presidential inauguration of Andrew Jackson in 1829. She later wrote to a friend about how much the atmosphere in Washington, D.C., impressed her. “Thousands and thousands of people, without distinction of rank, collected in an immense mass around the Capitol, silent, orderly and tranquil,” she explained.

On that day, President Jackson broke a long tradition by inviting the public to his reception. When Smith later attended the White House gala, however, she quickly formed a different opinion about the crowd she had so admired just hours before.

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

"The Majesty of the People had disappeared, and a rabble, a mob, of boys, ... women, children—[were] scrambling, fighting romping. ... The President, after having been literally nearly pressed to death and almost suffocated and torn to pieces by the people in their eagerness to shake hands with Old Hickory, had retreated through the back way. ... Cut glass and china to the amount of several thousand dollars had been broken in the struggle to get refreshments. ... Ladies and gentlemen, only had been expected at this Levee [reception], not the people en masse. But it was the People’s day, and the People’s President, and the People would rule."

—from *The First Forty Years of Washington Society*

The citizens who had turned the normally dignified inauguration reception into a boisterous affair represented a new class of American voters and a new era in American politics. Beginning in the early 1800s and continuing through the presidency of Andrew Jackson, the nation’s political system became more democratic, and ordinary citizens became a greater political force.
States Expand Voting Rights

In the early 1800s, hundreds of thousands of Americans, mostly white men, gained the right to vote. This happened because many states lowered or eliminated property ownership as a voting qualification. 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 political affairs—and they too wanted a greater voice in electing those who represented them.

The expansion of suffrage—the right to vote—was evident in the turnout for the presidential election of 1828. In 1824 about 355,000 Americans had voted for president. Four years later, more than 1.1 million citizens cast a ballot in the presidential election. Eventually every state made its voting qualifications more democratic, and by 1840, over 2 million Americans voted in the presidential election.
In 1828 Andrew Jackson benefited from the large number of new voters, many of whom lived on the frontier. Many of the citizens who voted for the first time in 1828 saw in Jackson a man whose origins were little different from their own, and whose achievements they greatly admired.

The Spoils System

Andrew Jackson had great confidence in the capability and intelligence of average Americans. He believed that the majority should rule in a democracy and that ordinary citizens should play a role in government.

These beliefs led Jackson to support the spoils system—the practice of giving people government jobs on the basis of party loyalty. Rewarding supporters with jobs had long been part of American politics, but Jackson was the first president to fire a large number of federal employees so as to appoint his own followers. A shocked John Quincy Adams warned that the policy would make government “a perpetual ... scramble for office.”

Jackson considered the spoils system to be democratic because it put an end to a permanent, nonelected office-holding class. Because government jobs were “so plain and simple,” in his opinion, they could easily be rotated at will and given to supporters.

From Caucus to Convention

Jackson’s supporters also changed the way presidential candidates were chosen. At that time, political parties used the caucus system to select presidential candidates. Members of the party who served in Congress, known as the party caucus, would meet to choose the nominee for president. Jackson’s supporters believed that the caucus system restricted nominations to the elite and well-connected.

The Jacksonians replaced the caucus with a national nominating convention. At nominating conventions, delegates from the states gathered to decide on the party’s presidential nominee. Supporters believed that conventions allowed the people, not the elite, to decide on party nominees. In 1832 the Democrats held a convention and renominated Andrew Jackson for president.

Examining

In what ways did the United States become more democratic in the early 1800s?

Choosing a President

Today, nearly all American citizens age 18 and older are eligible to vote. This was not the case in the early 1800s. Under the state constitutions adopted at the time of the American Revolution, the right to vote was usually limited to white males who owned property. Over the next few decades, however, states began lowering or eliminating property requirements for voters. Women could not vote, nor could the overwhelming majority of African American men, even those living in the North who met other requirements for voting. Still, changes in the Jacksonian era meant many more Americans could participate in presidential elections.

The rise of national nominating conventions also changed the process of choosing a president. Rather than congressional party leaders deciding on the party's candidate, delegates from the states could participate in the decision at a nominating convention.

Today, parties still hold national conventions in presidential election years, but voting to choose the party’s nominee for president has become largely symbolic. The party’s nominee has generally been decided in advance, through state primaries and state caucuses.
**The Nullification Crisis**

**MAIN Idea** Resentment about high tariffs led Southern states to claim that states could declare a federal law null or void.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Have you ever felt so strongly about an issue that you wrote a letter of complaint? Read how Southern states were outraged about tariff rates.

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

**The Debate Over Nullification**

In the early 1800s, South Carolina’s economy began to decline. Many of the state’s residents blamed this situation on the nation’s tariffs. Because it had few industries, South Carolina purchased many of its manufactured goods, such as cooking utensils and tools, from England, but tariffs made them extremely expensive. When Congress levied yet another 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 troubled one politician in particular: John C. Calhoun, the nation’s vice president and a resident of South Carolina. Calhoun felt torn between upholding the country’s policies and helping his fellow South Carolinians. Rather than support secession, Calhoun put forth the idea of nullification to defuse the situation. He explained this idea in an anonymously published work, *The South Carolina Exposition and Protest*, which argued that states had the right to declare a federal law null, or not valid. Calhoun theorized that the states had this right because they had created the federal Union.

The issue continued to simmer beneath the surface until January 1830, when Robert Hayne of South Carolina and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts confronted each other on the floor of the Senate. The debate consisted of several speeches delivered for over a week. Webster, perhaps the greatest orator of his day, was a ferocious defender of the Union. Hayne was an eloquent champion of the right of states to chart their own course.

**Making Connections**

1. **Contrasting** How is the electorate different today than it was in the early 1800s?
2. **Synthesizing** How have national party conventions changed since the early 1800s?
Hayne asserted that the Union was no more than a voluntary association of states and advocated the motto, “Liberty first and Union afterward.” Webster countered that liberty depended on the strength of the Union:

**Primary Source**

“I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below. . . . Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!”

—from *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster*

### Jackson Defends the Union

Several months after the Webster-Hayne debate, President Jackson let everyone know his position on the issue. During a political dinner, Jackson stood to make a toast. Looking directly at John Calhoun, he said, “Our federal Union—it must be preserved.” Calhoun’s hand shook, but he rose to counter with, “The Union—next to our liberty, most dear.”

The war of words erupted into a full confrontation in 1832, when Congress passed yet another tariff law. At President Jackson’s request, the new law cut tariffs significantly, but South Carolinians were not satisfied. The state legislature asked South Carolina voters to elect a special state convention. In November 1832 the convention adopted an ordinance of nullification declaring the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 to be unconstitutional.

Jackson considered the nullification ordinance an act of treason, and he sent a warship to Charleston. In 1833 Congress passed the **Force Bill**, authorizing the president to use the military to enforce acts of Congress. As tensions rose, Senator Henry Clay pushed through Congress a bill that would lower the nation’s tariffs gradually until 1842. In response, South Carolina repealed its nullification of the tariff law. Both sides claimed victory, and the issue was laid to rest—at least temporarily.

### Policies Toward Native Americans

**Main Idea** During Andrew Jackson’s administration Native American groups were forced to relocate onto western reservations.

**History and You** Do you know a family that was forced to move from their home by the government? Read on to learn how Native Americans reacted to the Indian Removal Act.

Andrew Jackson’s commitment to extending democracy did not benefit everyone. His attitude toward Native Americans reflected the views of many westerners at that time. Jackson had fought the Creek and Seminole people in Georgia and Florida, and in his inaugural address he declared his intention to move all Native Americans to the Great Plains.

This idea had been gaining support in the United States since the Louisiana Purchase. John C. Calhoun had formally proposed it in 1823, when he was secretary of war. Many Americans believed that the Great Plains was a wasteland that would never be settled. They thought that if they moved Native Americans to that region, the nation’s conflict with them would be over. In 1830 Jackson pushed through Congress the **Indian Removal Act**, which provided money for relocating Native Americans.

Most Native Americans eventually gave in and resettled on the Great Plains, but not the Cherokee of Georgia. Over the years, this Native American group had adopted many aspects of white culture. The Cherokee had adopted a written language, drawn up a written constitution modeled on the United States Constitution, and sent many of their children to schools established by white missionaries.

The Cherokee hired lawyers to sue the state of Georgia in order to challenge the state’s attempt to extend its authority over Cherokee lands. Their case, *Worcester v. Georgia,* eventually reached the Supreme Court. In 1832 Chief Justice John Marshall ordered state officials to honor Cherokee property rights. Jackson refused to support the decision. “Marshall has made his opinion,” the president reportedly said, “now let him enforce it.”

Most Cherokee resisted the government’s offers of western land. Jackson’s successor, Martin Van Buren, sent in the army to end the
conflict in 1838. The army forced the remaining people from their homes and marched them to what is now Oklahoma. About 2,000 Cherokee died in camps while waiting for the relocation to begin. Roughly 2,000 more died of starvation, disease, and exposure on the journey, which became known as the **Trail of Tears**.

By 1838, most Native Americans living east of the Mississippi had been moved to reservations. Most Americans supported the removal policies. Only a few denounced the harsh treatment of Native Americans. Non-supporters included some National Republicans and a few religious denominations, especially the Quakers and Methodists.

**Interpreting** What was the Trail of Tears?

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**Effects of the Indian Removal Act, 1831–1842**

In 1832 Sauk and Fox warriors led by Chief Black Hawk fought to reclaim territory east of the Mississippi River, but were defeated.

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**Analyzing** GEOGRAPHY

1. **Interpreting** Name two Native American groups in the northern half of the United States that were forced to relocate.

2. **Locating** Where did the Trail of Tears end?

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**Jackson Battles the National Bank**

**MAIN Idea** Jackson deliberately destroyed the national bank; his opponents formed a new political party.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Do you know of any political parties other than the Democratic and Republican parties? Read how the Whigs fared in the 1836 presidential election.

One of the biggest controversies of Jackson’s presidency was his campaign against the Second Bank of the United States. Like most Westerners, and many working people in the East, Jackson regarded the Bank as a monopoly that benefited the wealthy elite.
Despite its reputation, the Bank played an important role in keeping the money supply of the United States stable. At the time, most paper money consisted of bank notes issued by private state banks. State banks promised that the notes could always be turned in for “hard” money—gold or silver coins. The state banks, however, would often issue more paper money than they could redeem in gold or silver. This allowed them to make more loans at lower interest rates, but it created the danger of inflation—that money might lose its value.

To prevent the state banks from lending too much money, the Bank of the United States regularly collected bank notes and asked state banks to redeem them for gold and silver. This allowed them to make more loans at lower interest rates, but it created the danger of inflation—that money might lose its value.

To prevent the state banks from lending too much money, the Bank of the United States regularly collected bank notes and asked state banks to redeem them for gold and silver. This action forced state banks to be careful about how much money they loaned, and it also limited inflation.

Many western settlers, who needed easy credit to run their farms, were unhappy with the Bank’s policies. President Jackson also believed the Bank to be unconstitutional, despite the Supreme Court’s ruling in McCulloch v. Maryland.

To make the Bank an issue in the 1832 election, Jackson’s opponents in Congress introduced a bill extending the Bank’s charter for another 20 years. Congress passed the bill, but Jackson vetoed it. It quickly became clear that most Americans supported Jackson as he easily went on to win a second term.

Jackson took his reelection as a directive from the people to destroy the Bank at once, even though its charter did not run out until 1836. He removed the government’s deposits from the Bank and placed them in state banks. The removal of the deposits greatly weakened the bank, leading to a slow death. Jackson had won a major political victory by attacking the Bank. Later, however, critics would charge that destroying the Bank contributed significantly to the financial woes that plagued the country in the years ahead.

Andrew Jackson’s forceful style earned him plenty of detractors, and by the mid-1830s a new party had emerged to oppose him. The group named itself the Whigs after the party in England that had worked to limit the king’s power. The Whigs advocated a stronger federal...
government and support for industrial and commercial development. Jackson’s Democrats, on the other hand, continued to favor a limited federal government.

**Martin Van Buren**

The Whigs were united in opposing Jackson, but they were unable to settle on a leader. During the 1836 presidential election, Jackson’s popularity and the nation’s continuing prosperity helped Democrat Martin Van Buren defeat the Whigs, who ran three candidates for president.

The new president had little time to savor his victory. Shortly after Van Buren took office, a crippling economic crisis hit the nation. During this **Panic of 1837**, as the crisis was called, many banks and businesses failed. Thousands of farmers lost their land, and unemployment soared among eastern factory workers. Van Buren, a firm believer in his party’s philosophy of a limited federal government, did little to ease the crisis.

**“Tippecanoe and Tyler Too”**

With the nation experiencing hard times, the Whigs looked forward to ousting the Democrats in the presidential election of 1840. They nominated General William Henry Harrison, who was regarded as a hero for his role in the Battle of Tippecanoe and in the War of 1812. 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. Adopting the campaign slogan “Tippecanoe and Tyler too,” the Whigs blamed Van Buren for the economic depression and presented Harrison, a man born to wealth and privilege, as a simple frontiersman.

The strategy worked. Harrison won a decisive victory—234 electoral votes to 60, although the popular vote was much closer. On March 4, 1841, Harrison delivered his inauguration speech. The weather that day was bitterly cold, but Harrison insisted on delivering his nearly two-hour address without a hat or coat. He came down with pneumonia and died 32 days later, thereby serving the shortest term of any American president. Vice President John Tyler then became president.

Tyler’s rise to the presidency shocked Whig leaders. Tyler actually opposed many Whig policies, and party leaders had placed him on the ticket mainly to attract Southern voters. The Whigs in Congress tried to push through their agenda anyway, including a Third Bank of the United States and a higher tariff, but Tyler sided with the Democrats on these key issues.

Foreign relations occupied the country’s attention during much of Tyler’s administration, especially relations with Great Britain. Disputes over the Maine-Canadian border, and other issues, resulted in the 1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty, which established the border between the United States and Canada from Maine to Minnesota.

**Identifying** What new political party won the presidential election of 1840?
Between 1815 and 1860, over 5 million immigrants arrived in the United States. Most of these newcomers found opportunity and a fresh start, but some also found discrimination and prejudice. At the same time, a new religious movement began to change American society.

The New Wave of Immigrants

**MAIN Idea** In the early 1800s, millions of Irish and Germans immigrated to the United States. The many Catholics among them encountered religious prejudice.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Recall what you may have read about conflicts between Protestants and Catholics in Europe. During the 1800s, many Protestant Americans disliked the large numbers of Catholics coming into the country. Read on to learn about nativism in the early 1800s in the United States.

In June 1850 Daniel Guiney decided to leave his impoverished town in Ireland and move to the United States. Ireland was suffering a devastating famine. Tens of thousands of citizens were dying of starvation, while many more were fleeing the country. By August, Guiney had moved to Buffalo, New York. After settling in, Guiney wrote home about the wondrous land where he now resided:

> "We mean to let you know our situation at present. . . . We arrived here about five o’clock in the afternoon of yesterday, fourteen of us together, where we were received with the greatest kindness of respectability. . . . When we came to the house we could not state to you how we were treated. We had potatoes, meat, butter, bread, and tea for dinner. . . . If you were to see Denis Reen when Daniel Danihy dressed him with clothes suitable for this country, you would think him to be a boss or steward, so that we have scarcely words to state to you how happy we felt at present."

---from *Out of Ireland*

Daniel Guiney was just one of the millions of immigrants who came to the United States in search of a better life in the mid-1800s. Between 1815 and 1860, the United States experienced a massive influx of immigrants, mostly from Europe. Many had fled violence and political turmoil at home, while others sought to escape starvation and poverty. Although immigrants provided a large source of labor for America’s industries, many citizens feared the influence of so many foreigners.
Irish Immigration to the U. S., 1830–1860

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>1830</td>
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Irish Population Decline, 1841–1851

30% & over
25% to 29%
15% to 24%
0% to 14%
Population rise

Analyzing VISUALS

1. Interpreting In what year did Irish immigration to the United States peak? Why might it have declined afterward?
2. Explaining What was the main pull factor that brought Irish immigrants to the United States?

Irish immigrants arrive in New York in 1847. Economic opportunities brought the Irish to America. Irish men worked in factories, helped build railroads, and took part in other construction projects. Irish women took jobs in factories and as domestic servants in the homes of the growing middle and upper classes.

Germans and Irish Arrive

The largest wave of immigrants, almost two million, came from Ireland. The Irish were fleeing a famine that began in 1845, when a fungus destroyed much of the nation’s potato crop—a mainstay of the Irish diet. Most Irish immigrants arrived with no money and few skills. They generally settled in the industrialized cities of the Northeast, where many worked as unskilled laborers and servants.

Germans were the second-largest group of immigrants to arrive. At the time, Germany was divided into many states and, in 1848, revolutionaries across Germany tried and failed to impose reforms. The ensuing violence and repression convinced many Germans to emigrate. By 1860, over 1.5 million had arrived in the United States. Most had enough money to buy land and settle in Ohio and Pennsylvania, where they became farmers or went into business.
Nativism

While immigrants often found a new sense of freedom in the United States, some encountered discrimination. The presence of people from different cultures, with different languages and different religions, produced feelings of **nativism**, or hostility toward foreigners.

In the 1800s, many Americans were anti-Catholic. Many Protestant ministers preached anti-Catholic sermons and, occasionally, anti-Catholic riots erupted. The arrival of millions of **predominantly** Catholic Irish and German immigrants led to the rise of several nativist groups, such as the Supreme Order of the Star-Spangled Banner, founded in 1849. These groups pledged never to vote for a Catholic and pushed for laws banning immigrants and Catholics from holding public office. In July 1854 delegates from these groups formed the American Party. Membership in the party was secret, and those questioned about it were obliged to answer, “I know nothing.” The **Know-Nothings**, as the party was nicknamed, built a large following in the 1850s.

**Analyzing** Why did nativism become so strong in the mid-1800s?

A Religious Revival

**MAIN Idea** During the Second Great Awakening, many revivals were held, and new religious denominations formed.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Have you ever been inspired by a gifted speaker? Read on to learn how ministers used emotional sermons to reach their audiences.

While immigrants added to the diversity of society, Americans were transforming society in their own ways. One important change occurred in religious life, where Protestantism experienced a dramatic revival, and new forms of worship emerged.

**The Second Great Awakening**

By the end of the 1700s, many church leaders had grown concerned that Americans’ commitment to the Christian faith was weakening. In the early 1800s, ministers began an effort to revive people’s commitment to religion. The resulting movement came to be called the **Second Great Awakening**. It began in Kentucky among frontier farmers and spread to the rest of the country. Leaders of various Protestant denominations—most
often Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians—held camp meetings that attracted thousands of followers for several days of song, prayer, and emotional outpourings of faith.

The basic message of the Second Great Awakening was that individuals must re-admit God and Christ into their daily lives. The new revivalism rejected the traditional Calvinist idea that only a chosen few were predestined for salvation. Instead, ministers preached that all people could attain grace through faith.

One of the most prominent advocates of this new message was a Presbyterian minister named Charles Grandison Finney. Finney preached that each person contained within himself or herself the capacity for spiritual rebirth and salvation. Finney helped found modern revivalism. His camp meetings were carefully planned and rehearsed to create as much emotion as possible. He compared his methods to those used by politicians and salespeople, and he used emotion to focus people’s attention on his message.

Finney began preaching in upstate New York, where he launched a series of revivals in towns along the Erie Canal. He then took his message to the cities of the Northeast. Finney warned against using politics to change society. He believed that if Christian ideas reformed people from within, society would become better, but if people remained selfish and immoral, political reforms would not make any difference.

New Religious Groups

A number of new religious groups also emerged during the Second Great Awakening. Many Americans were looking for spiritual answers to the problems in their lives but chose to look to new religious ideas rather than return to traditional Protestant beliefs.

Unitarians and Universalists Two groups that grew rapidly in the 1830s were the Unitarians and Universalists. Unitarians reject the idea that Jesus was the son of God, arguing instead that he was a great teacher. Their name comes from the belief that God is a unity, rather than a trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Universalists believe in the universal salvation of souls. They reject the idea of hell and believe that God intends to save everyone.

The Mormons Another group that began during this period was the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, whose followers are commonly known as Mormons. Joseph Smith, a New Englander living in western New York, began preaching Mormon ideas in 1830 after claiming to have been called to restore the Christian church to its original form. Smith published The Book of Mormon in that year, saying it was a translation of words inscribed on golden plates he had received from an angel. The text told of the coming of God and the need to build a kingdom on Earth. Smith made hundreds of converts across New England and the Midwest.

After enduring harassment in Ohio, Missouri, and elsewhere, Mormons moved to Commerce, Illinois, in 1839. They bought the town and renamed it Nauvoo. The group prospered in the Midwest, and Nauvoo grew to about 15,000 by 1844. Persecution continued, however, and that same year local residents murdered Smith. Brigham Young then became the leader of the Church. The Mormons left Illinois and headed west to Utah Territory, where they established permanent roots.
Utopian Communities

Some Americans in the 1830s concluded that society had corrupted human nature. They decided that the solution was to separate from society and form a utopia, or ideal society. Cooperative living and the absence of private property characterized these communities. Perhaps the best known were Brook Farm, a cooperative community in Massachusetts, and the Oneida Community, a religious society in upstate New York.

The Shakers were a religious group that established utopian communities. The group got its name from a ritual “shaking” dance its members performed. The society believed in social and spiritual equality for all of its members. The first Shaker communities had been founded in the 1780s. They peaked with some 6,000 members before their numbers began to decline. Since they did not believe in marrying or having children, the group could only expand by making converts.

Reading Check Summarizing What was the basic message of the Second Great Awakening?

Cultural Renaissance

MAIN Idea Nationalism and sectionalism gave rise to a creative period for American writers and artists.

HISTORY AND YOU Do you read a newspaper regularly? Read on to learn how the “penny press” made newspapers affordable for average people.

The optimism of the Second Great Awakening also influenced philosophers and writers. Many leading thinkers of the day adopted the tenets of romanticism, a movement that began in Europe in the late 1700s. Romanticism advocated feeling over reason, inner spirituality over external rules, the individual above society, and nature over environments created by humans.

One notable expression of American romanticism came from New England writers and philosophers, who were known as the transcendentalists. Transcendentalism urged people to transcend, or overcome, the limits of their minds and let their souls reach out to embrace the beauty of the universe.

Henry David Thoreau
1817–1862

One of America’s most admired thinkers, Henry David Thoreau lived in Concord, Massachusetts, and became a protégé of transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson. Thoreau is particularly famous for his experiment in living the transcendentalist life. In one of his most popular works, Walden, he recounts his feelings and experiences during a two-year period in which he lived in a shack by Walden Pond outside Concord.

He said of his stay there, “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.”

In 1849 Thoreau published “Civil Disobedience.” In this influential essay, he discussed issues of personal conscience versus the demands of the government. Thoreau was inspired to write the essay after he spent a night in jail for refusing to pay a tax. He felt the tax supported an immoral government that condoned slavery and was fighting what he believed was an imperialist war with Mexico. The ideas in “Civil Disobedience” would influence future civil rights leaders, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

How did Thoreau’s purpose for living on Walden Pond reflect transcendentalist ideas?

Margaret Fuller
1810–1850

As a young woman, Margaret Fuller was another member of the prominent group of New England writers and philosophers who developed transcendentalism. In 1840, with the help of Ralph Waldo Emerson, she founded the magazine The Dial, in which she published writings of the transcendentalist movement.

Fuller also organized groups of Boston women to promote their educational and intellectual development. These meetings convinced her to write the book Women in the Nineteenth Century, in which she argued that women deserve equal political rights.

Fuller’s success in editing The Dial caught the eye of Horace Greeley, the famous editor of the New York Tribune, and in 1844 he hired Fuller to be the Tribune’s literary critic. In 1846 Greeley sent Fuller to Europe to cover reform efforts there. While in Italy, Fuller married Giovanni Angelo Ossoli, a revolutionary fighting to unite Italy. Fuller sent home reports about the Italian revolution of 1848, becoming the first American woman foreign-war correspondent. Tragically, in 1850, on a trip to the United States, Fuller, Ossoli, and their young son were drowned when their ship sank as it approached New York.

How was Fuller unusual among the women of her time?
American Writers Emerge

The most influential transcendentalist was Ralph Waldo Emerson. In his 1836 essay “Nature,” Emerson wrote that those who wanted fulfillment should try to commune with nature. Emerson influenced other writers, including Margaret Fuller and Henry David Thoreau. Thoreau believed that individuals must fight the pressure to conform. “If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer,” he wrote. “Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.”

Emerson and Thoreau were only two of many writers who set out to create uniquely American works. Washington Irving, famous for writing “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” (1819), became the first internationally prominent American writer. James Fenimore Cooper romanticized Native Americans and frontier explorers in his Leatherstocking Tales, the most famous being The Last of the Mohicans (1826). Nathaniel Hawthorne, a New England customs official and resident of Brook Farm, wrote more than 100 short stories and novels. His novel The Scarlet Letter (1850), with its Puritan setting, explored the persecution and psychological suffering that may result from sin. Herman Melville, another New Englander, wrote the great Moby Dick (1851). Edgar Allan Poe, a poet and short story writer, achieved fame as a writer of terror and mystery. Perhaps the era’s most important poet was Walt Whitman, who published Leaves of Grass in 1855. Whitman loved nature, the common people, and American democracy, and his famous work reflects these passions. Another major poet of the era, Emily Dickinson, wrote unconventional, mystical, and deeply personal works.

The Penny Press

Another important development of the early 1800s was the rise of the mass distribution newspaper. Before the 1800s, most newspapers catered to well-educated readers. They were typically published once a week and cost around six cents—too much for the average worker.

As more Americans learned to read and gained the right to vote, publishers began producing inexpensive newspapers, known as penny papers, which provided the kind of content most people wanted. Reports of fires, crimes, marriages, gossip, politics, and other local news made the papers an instant success with a mass audience.

General interest magazines that catered to a more specialized readership also emerged around this time. In 1830 Louis A. Godey founded Godey’s Lady’s Book, the first American magazine for women. The poet James Russell Lowell launched Atlantic Monthly, another magazine for the well educated, in 1857, while Harper’s Weekly covered everything from book reviews to news reports.

Vocabulary

1. Explain the significance of: nativism, Know-Nothings, Second Great Awakening, Charles Grandison Finney, Joseph Smith, utopia, romanticism, transcendentalism.

Main Ideas

2. Explaining What pushed Irish and German people to immigrate to the United States in the mid-1800s?

3. Specifying What new religious group formed in the 1830s?

4. Identifying What was the penny press?

Critical Thinking

5. Big Ideas Which religious denominations increased their influence in the Second Great Awakening?

6. Organizing Use a graphic organizer, similar to the one below, to list American cultural movements in the mid-1800s.

7. Analyzing Visuals Study the map on page 231. What level of population decrease did most of Ireland experience?

Writing About History

8. Expository Writing Suppose you are an Irish or German immigrant to the United States in the mid-1800s. Write an article to be published in your home country that contrasts your new life in the United States with how your life was in your home country.
The Second Great Awakening created an environment for social change. Spurred on by this revival of religion, as well as a heightened belief in the power of individuals to improve society and themselves, Americans engaged in reform movements.

The Reform Spirit

**MAIN Idea** Inspired by the Second Great Awakening, reformers tried to tackle many problems in society.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Identify a local, national, or world issue that you believe citizens and lawmakers need to address. Why is this issue important to you? Read on to learn about reformers during the mid-1800s.

In 1841 a clergyman asked schoolteacher Dorothea Dix 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 conditions for the mentally ill and to provide them with the facilities and treatment they needed.

In 1843 Dix composed a letter to the Massachusetts legislature, calling for a new approach to mental illness. She gave the history of a local woman as evidence that more humane treatment might help many of the mentally ill: “Some may say these things cannot be remedied . . . 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.”

Largely through the efforts of Dorothea Dix, more than a dozen states enacted sweeping prison reforms that created special institutions, often referred to as asylums, 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 movements of the mid-1800s stemmed in large part from the revival of religious fervor. Revivalists preached the power of individuals to improve themselves and the world. Lyman Beecher, a prominent minister, insisted that it was the nation’s citizenry, more than its government, that should take charge of building a better society. True reform, he said, could take place only through “the voluntary energies of the nation itself.”
Under the guidance of Beecher and other religious leaders, 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 striking feature 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 also joined religious-based reform groups. These reform groups targeted aspects of American society they considered in dire need of change. Among these issues were excessive consumption of alcohol, prisons, and education.

### The Temperance Movement

Many reformers argued that no behavior caused more crime, disorder, and poverty than the abuse of alcohol. Men who drank too much, they argued, spent their money on liquor rather than necessities for their families, and they sometimes abused their wives and children. While not everyone agreed, no one doubted that alcoholism was widespread in the early 1800s. In small towns throughout the West, citizens drank to ease the isolation and loneliness of rural life, while in the pubs and saloons in Eastern cities, drinking was the main leisure activity for many workers.

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**Analyzing VISUALS**

1. **Describing** How did the Beecher family reflect the historical developments and social concerns of the 1800s?
2. **Specifying** What causes did the Beecher daughters support?
Although advocates of temperance, or moderation in the consumption of alcohol, had been active since the late 1700s, the new reformers energized the campaign. Across the country, temperance groups began preaching the evils of alcohol and persuading heavy drinkers to give up liquor. In 1833 several of the groups united to form the American Temperance Union.

Temperance societies also pushed for laws prohibiting the sale of liquor. In 1851 Maine passed the first state prohibition law, an example followed by a dozen other states by 1855. Other states passed “local option” laws, which allowed towns and villages to prohibit liquor sales within their boundaries.

Prison Reform

The spirit of reform also prompted some people to try to improve the prison system. Inmates of all kinds, from violent offenders to debtors and the mentally ill, were often indiscriminately crowded together in jails and prisons, which were literally holes in the ground in some cases. One jail in Connecticut, for example, was an abandoned mineshaft. Beginning around 1816, many states began building new facilities to provide a better environment for inmates.

Underlying the prison reform movement was a belief in rehabilitating prisoners rather than merely locking them up. Officials imposed rigid discipline to rid criminals of the “laxness” they believed had led them astray. Solitary confinement and the imposition of silence on work crews were meant to give prisoners the chance to meditate and think about their wrongdoing. The name of these new prisons, penitentiaries, expressed the idea that they were places where prisoners would work to achieve penitence, or remorse.

Educational Reform

In the early 1800s, many reformers sought to establish a system of public education—government-funded schools open to all citizens. The increase in the number of voters in the 1820s and 1830s and the arrival of millions of new immigrants convinced many people of the need for public education. Most American leaders and social reformers believed that a democratic republic could only survive if the electorate was well educated.

Massachusetts legislator Horace Mann was a leader of the movement for public education. As president of the Massachusetts Senate, Mann pressed for more public education and helped create a state board of education in 1837. He then left the state senate to serve as secretary of the new board. During his 12 years in that post, he doubled teachers’ salaries, opened 50 new high schools, and established training schools for teachers. Massachusetts quickly became a model for other states. As he wrote in one report, Mann was convinced the nation needed public education to survive:

Primary Source

“The establishment of a republican government, without well-appointed and efficient means for the universal education of the people, is the most rash and foolhardy experiment ever tried by man. . . . It may be an easy thing to make a republic, but it is a very laborious thing to make republicans; and woe to the republic that rests upon no better foundations than ignorance, selfishness and passion!”

—from “Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education,” 1848
In 1852 Massachusetts passed the first mandatory school attendance law; New York passed a similar measure the next year. Reformers focused on creating elementary schools to teach all children the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and to instill a work ethic. These schools were open to all and supported by local and state taxes and tuition.

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 were needed to help with planting and harvesting for large portions of the year.

In the South, reformer Calvin Wiley played a similar role in North Carolina to that of Horace Mann in Massachusetts. In 1839 North Carolina began providing aid to local communities that established taxpayer-funded schools. Wiley traveled throughout the state, building support for public education. By 1860, about two-thirds of North Carolina’s white children attended school for part of the year. The South as a whole responded less quickly, and only about one-third of white children were enrolled by 1860. African American children were excluded almost entirely.

Women’s Education

When officials talked about educating voters, they had men in mind, as women were still not allowed to vote in the early 1800s. Nonetheless, women reformers, such as Catharine Beecher, seized the opportunity to push for more educational opportunities for girls and women.

Emma Willard, who founded a girls’ school in Vermont in 1814, was another educational pioneer. Her school covered the usual subjects, for young women, such as cooking and etiquette, but it also taught academic subjects, such as history, math, and literature, which were rarely taught to women. In 1837 another educator, Mary Lyon, opened Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in Massachusetts, the first institution of higher education for women only.

In 1849 new opportunities for higher education enabled Elizabeth Blackwell to become the first woman to earn a medical degree. In 1857 she founded the New York Infirmary for Women and Children—a hospital staffed entirely by women.

Identifying What three areas of social reform did reformers target?
The Early Women’s Movement

MAIN Idea Women were generally expected to be homemakers and models for their children, but some began demanding greater rights.

HISTORY AND YOU How did you think the lives of women changed from the colonial period to the mid-1800s? Read on to learn about the early 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 Americans lived and worked in a rural farm setting. Although husbands and wives had distinct chores, maintaining the farm was the focus of their efforts. By the mid-1800s, these circumstances had started to change, especially in the northeastern states. The development of factories and other work centers separated the home from the workplace. Men now often left home to go to work, while women tended the house and children. In time, this development led to the emergence of the first women’s movement.

“True Womanhood”

As the nature of work changed, many Americans began to divide life into two spheres of activity—the home and the workplace. Many believed the home to be the proper sphere for women, partly because the outside world was seen as corrupt and dangerous, and partly because of popular ideas about the family.

The Christian revivalism of the 1820s and 1830s greatly influenced the American family. For many parents, raising children was treated as a solemn responsibility because it prepared young people for a disciplined Christian life.

For the text of the Seneca Falls Declaration, see page R48 in Documents in American History.

PRIMARY SOURCE

The Seneca Falls Declaration

Primary Source

Declaration of Sentiments

“. . . We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. . . .

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. . . .

Resolved, That all laws which prevent woman from occupying such a station in society as her conscience shall dictate, or which place her in a position inferior to that of man, are contrary to the great precept of nature, and therefore of no force or authority.

Resolved, That woman is man’s equal—was intended to be so by the Creator, and the highest good of the race demands that she should be recognized as such.

. . . Resolved, That it is the duty of women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.

. . . Resolved, therefore, That, being invested by the Creator with the same capabilities, and the same consciousness of responsibility for their exercise, it is demonstrably the right and duty of woman, equally with man, to promote every righteous cause by every righteous means . . . both in private and in public, by writing and by speaking, by any instrumentalities proper to be used, and in any assemblies proper to be held. . . .”

—from The Seneca Falls Declaration

▲ Susan B. Anthony (left) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (right) were two of the most prominent women’s suffrage advocates. Stanton attended the Seneca Falls Convention that issued the Declaration of Sentiments.

DBQ Document-Based Questions

1. Identifying According to the third resolution, what is the duty of American women?

2. Paraphrasing What does the Declaration ask all women to do?
Women often were viewed as more moral and charitable than men, and they were expected to be models of piety and virtue to their children and husbands. The idea that women should be homemakers and should take responsibility for developing their children’s characters evolved into a set of ideas known as “true womanhood.” Magazine articles and novels aimed at women reinforced the value of their role at home. In 1841 Catharine Beecher, a daughter of minister and reformer Lyman Beecher, wrote a book called *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.

**Women Seek Greater Rights**

Many women did not believe the ideas of true womanhood were limiting. Instead, the new ideas implied that wives were now partners with their husbands and in some ways were morally superior to them. Women were held up as the conscience of the home and society.

The idea that women had an important role to play in building a virtuous home was soon extended to making society more virtuous. As women became involved in the great moral crusades of the era, some began to argue that they needed greater political rights to promote their ideas.

An advocate of this idea was Margaret Fuller. Fuller argued that every woman had her own relationship with God and needed “as a soul to live freely and unimpeded.” She declared, “We would have every arbitrary barrier thrown down and every path laid open to women as freely as to men.” Fuller believed that if men and women, whom she called the “two sides” of human nature, were treated equally, it would end injustice in society.

In 1848 Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, two women active in the antislavery movement, organized the Seneca Falls Convention. This gathering of women reformers marked the beginning of an organized women’s movement. The convention issued a “Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions” that began with words expanding the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal. . . .” Stanton shocked many of the women present by proposing that they focus on gaining the right to vote. Nevertheless, the Seneca Falls Convention is considered by many to be the unofficial beginning of the struggle for women’s voting rights.

Throughout the 1850s, women continued to organize conventions to gain greater rights for themselves. The conventions did meet with some success. By 1860, for example, reformers had convinced 15 states to pass laws permitting married women to retain their property if their husbands died. Above all, these conventions drew attention to their cause and paved the way for a stronger women’s movement to emerge after the Civil War.

**Vocabulary**

1. Explain the significance of: Dorothea Dix, Lyman Beecher, benevolent society, temperance, penitentiary, Horace Mann, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Seneca Falls Convention.

**Main Ideas**

2. Explaining What principle was the basis for the drive for public education?

3. Specifying On what document did the Seneca Falls Convention base the “Declaration of Sentiments”?

**Critical Thinking**

4. Big Ideas How did the Second Great Awakening affect the reform movements of the mid-1800s?

5. Organizing Use a graphic organizer, similar to the one below, to list the major areas of reform in the mid-1800s.

6. Analyzing Visuals Study the photograph of the classroom on page 238. How is your classroom similar to or different from this one?

**Writing About History**

7. Persuasive Writing Think of one social reform that you believe is needed today. Write a letter to a legislator explaining why you believe the reform is needed and how it might be achieved. Give examples of specific problems in your community or state to support your argument.
Section 4

The Abolitionist Movement

In the early and mid-1800s, some Americans, mainly in the North, embarked on a crusade to abolish slavery in the United States. As the country became more polarized about the issue, the work of abolitionists created controversy and sometimes led to violence.

The New Abolitionists

In the early years of the United States, some religious groups proposed ending slavery gradually, but by the 1830s, a new generation of abolitionists demanded an immediate end to slavery.

HISTORY AND YOU Have you ever tried to do something slowly to make it less difficult? Is it better to do something difficult quickly to get it over with? What is the best approach when the choice affects human lives? Read to learn about the different proposals for ending slavery.

In the 1830s a growing number of Americans had begun to demand an immediate end to slavery in the South. Of all the reform movements that began in the early 1800s, the movement to end 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

From the earliest days of the Republic, many Americans had opposed slavery. Many of the country’s founders knew that a nation based on the principles of liberty and equality would have difficulty remaining true to its ideals if it continued to enslave human beings. Quakers and Baptists in both the North and South had long argued that slavery was a sin. After the Revolution, Baptists in Virginia called for “every legal measure to [wipe out] this horrid evil from the land.”

Gradualism Early antislavery societies generally supported an approach known as gradualism, or the belief that slavery had to be ended gradually. First they would stop slave traders from bringing new slaves into the country. Then they would phase out slavery in the North and the Upper South before finally ending slavery in the Lower South. Slaveholders would also be compensated for their loss. Supporters of gradualism believed it would give the South’s economy time to adjust to the loss of enslaved labor.

Colonization The first antislavery societies also believed that ending slavery would not end racism in the United States. Many thought that the best solution was to send African Americans back to their ancestral homelands in Africa. In December 1816, antislavery reformers founded...
Chapter 6 The Spirit of Reform

The American Colonization Society (ACS) to move African Americans to Africa. The society had the support of many prominent Americans, including James Madison, James Monroe, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John Marshall.

By 1821 the ACS had acquired land in West Africa. The following year, free African Americans began boarding ships chartered by the society to take them to Africa. There they established a colony that eventually became the country of Liberia. It declared its independence as a republic in 1847 and adopted a constitution based on the U.S. Constitution. The capital, Monrovia, was named for President Monroe.

Colonization was never a realistic solution to racism. The cost of transportation to Africa was high, and the ACS had to depend on donations. Moving roughly 1.5 million African Americans from the United States to Africa was nearly impossible. Furthermore, most African Americans regarded the United States as their home and did not want to move to another continent. Only an estimated 12,000 African Americans moved to Africa between 1821 and 1860.

Abolitionism

Gradualism and colonization remained the main goals of antislavery groups until the 1830s, when a new idea, abolition, began to gain ground. Abolitionists argued that enslaved African Americans should be freed immediately, without gradual measures or compensation to former slaveholders.

Abolitionism began to gain support in the 1830s for several reasons. As with other reform movements of the era, it drew its strength from the Second Great Awakening, with its focus on sin and repentance. In the eyes of abolitionists, slavery was an enormous evil for which the country needed to repent.

The Abolitionist Movement Begins

Since colonial times, many Americans had believed slavery was immoral. The Second Great Awakening and the general spirit of reform in the 1830s, however, created an environment in which abolitionism began to gain widespread support. William Lloyd Garrison sparked the movement by publishing the Liberator, through which he spread his ideas, and by founding the American Anti-Slavery Society. Garrison’s energy, moral certitude, and strong rhetoric attracted fellow activists, as well as new converts, and gave the movement momentum on a national scale.

ANALYZING HISTORY How did William Lloyd Garrison start the abolitionist movement of the 1830s?
Chapter 6  The Spirit of Reform

The first well-known advocate of abolition was a free African American from North Carolina named David Walker, who published *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*. In this pamphlet, Walker advocated violence and rebellion as the only way to end slavery. Although Walker’s ideas were influential, the rapid development of a large national abolitionist movement in the 1830s was largely due to the efforts of *William Lloyd Garrison*.

**William Lloyd Garrison** In 1829 Garrison became an assistant to Benjamin Lundy, the Quaker publisher of the Baltimore antislavery newspaper *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Garrison admired Lundy but grew impatient with his gradualist approach. In 1831 Garrison moved to Boston where he founded the anti-slavery newspaper, the *Liberator*.

In the pages of the *Liberator*, Garrison published caustic attacks on slavery and called for an immediate end to it. He condemned colonization and attacked the Constitution because it did not ban slavery. To those who objected to his fiery language, he responded that the time for moderation was over:

> "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! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually [remove] her babe from the fire into which it has fallen—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. 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*, January 1, 1831

In Garrison’s opinion, the situation was clear: Slavery was immoral and slaveholders were evil. The only option was immediate and complete *emancipation*, or the freeing of all enslaved people. In 1833 Garrison founded the *American Anti-Slavery Society*. Membership grew quickly. By the mid-1830s, there were hundreds of society chapters, and by 1838, there were more than 1,350 chapters and over 250,000 members.
Other Abolitionist Leaders  Garrison was not the only leader of the abolitionist movement. Theodore Weld, a disciple of the evangelist Charles Grandison Finney, was one of the most effective leaders, recruiting and training many abolitionists for the American Anti-Slavery Society. Arthur and Lewis Tappan, two devout and wealthy brothers from New York City, helped to finance the movement. The orator Wendell Phillips, the poet John Greenleaf Whittier, and many others became active in the cause as well.

Many women also gave their efforts to the abolitionist movement. Prudence Crandall worked as a teacher and abolitionist in Connecticut, and Lucretia Mott—the women’s rights advocate—often spoke out in favor of abolitionism as well. 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.

African American Abolitionists  Not surprisingly, free African Americans played a prominent role in the abolitionist movement. African Americans in the North, who numbered over 190,000 by 1850, endured much prejudice, but they cherished their freedom nonetheless. Even before Garrison launched his movement, African Americans had established at least 50 abolitionist societies in the North. When Garrison launched his newspaper, African Americans rushed to his support, not only buying the paper but also helping to sell it. Many began writing and speaking out against slavery and taking part in protests and demonstrations.

Frederick Douglass was one of the most prominent African Americans in the abolitionist movement. In 1838 Douglass had escaped from slavery in Maryland by posing as a free African American sailor. “I appear before the immense assembly this evening as a thief and a robber,” he told one Massachusetts group in 1842. “I stole this head, these limbs, this body from my master, and ran off with them.” Douglass published his own antislavery newspaper, the *North Star*, and wrote an autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, which quickly sold 4,500 copies after its publication in 1845.

In 1852 abolitionist and former slave Frederick Douglass gave a speech at the Fourth of July celebration in Rochester, New York:

**Primary Source**

“What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; . . . a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States, at this very hour.”

—from *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*

1. **Making Inferences**  Why do you think Douglass was invited to speak on the Fourth of July?
2. **Summarizing**  How does Douglass characterize the Fourth of July celebrations from the viewpoint of an enslaved person?
Another important African American abolitionist was Sojourner Truth. She gained freedom in 1827 when New York freed all remaining enslaved people in the state. In the 1840s her antislavery speeches—eloquent, joyous, and deeply religious—drew huge crowds. Though lacking a formal education, Truth enthralled listeners with her folksy wit, engaging stories, contagious singing, and strong message:

**Primary Source**

“I have had five children and never could take one of them up and say, ‘My child’ or ‘My children,’ unless it was when no one could see me. . . . I was forty years a slave but I did not know how dear to me was my posterity.”
—From the *Anti-Slavery Bugle*, 1856

**Reading Check** Summarizing How did William Lloyd Garrison work to end slavery?

**The Response to Abolitionism**

**Main Idea** Many people in both the North and the South opposed abolitionism for economic, political, and cultural reasons.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Would you be willing to go to jail to defend a principle? Read on to learn the risks taken by abolitionists to defend their position.

Abolitionism was a powerful force, and it provoked a powerful public response. In the North, citizens looked upon the abolitionist movement with views ranging from support to indifference to opposition. In the South, many residents feared that their entire way of life was under attack. They rushed to defend the institution of slavery, which they saw as the key to the region’s economy.
**Reaction in the North**

While many Northerners disapproved of slavery, some opposed abolitionism even more. They viewed the movement as a threat to the existing social system. Some whites, including many prominent businesspeople, warned it would lead to war between the North and the South. Others feared it might create an influx of freed African Americans to the North, overwhelming the labor and housing markets. Many in the North also had no desire to see the South’s economy crumble. If that happened, they might lose the money Southern planters owed to Northern banks, as well as the cotton that fed Northern textile mills.

Given such attitudes, it was not surprising that mobs in Northern cities also attacked abolitionists. Garrison was stoned by a mob in Boston, and Weld was frequently attacked following his public speeches. Arthur Tappan’s home was sacked by a New York mob in 1834, and in 1837 abolitionist publisher Reverend Elijah P. Lovejoy was killed trying to protect his printing press. Yet Northerners also resented Southern slave-catchers, who kidnapped African American runaways in the North and hauled them back south. In response, several states in the North passed personal liberty laws restricting slave recapture.

**Reaction in the South**

To most Southerners, slavery was a “peculiar institution” vital to Southern life. While the North was building factories, the South remained agricultural, tied to cotton and the enslaved people who harvested it. Southerners responded to criticisms of slavery by defending the institution. South Carolina’s governor called it a “national benefit,” while Thomas Dew, a leading Southern academic, claimed that most slaves had no desire for freedom because of their close relationship with their slaveholders. “[T]hroughout the whole slaveholding country,” he declared, “the slaves of good [slaveholders] are his warmest, most constant, and most devoted friends.”

Eight months after Garrison first printed the *Liberator* in 1831, Nat Turner, an enslaved preacher, led a revolt that killed over 50 Virginians. Many Southerners thought papers like the *Liberator* sparked the rebellion. Garrison’s paper did not even circulate in the South, but furious Southerners 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.

For all the uproar it caused, the abolitionist movement remained small. Few people accepted the idea that slavery should be immediately eliminated. The crusade that William Lloyd Garrison started, however, and that thousands of men and women struggled to keep alive, became a powerful reminder that the institution of slavery fundamentally divided the nation.

**Evaluating** How did Northerners and Southerners view abolitionism differently?
Causes of Social Change and Reform in the 1830s and 1840s

Political Change
- States expand voting rights for white males by lowering or eliminating property qualifications.
- Andrew Jackson wins the presidency in the 1828 election.

Social Change
- Large numbers of Irish and German immigrants enter the United States.
- A religious revival—the Second Great Awakening—sweeps the country.
- New religious ideas and philosophies, such as romanticism, transcendentalism, and utopianism, gain support.
- Newspapers become cheap and are widely read, helping create a common popular culture.

Effects of Social Change and Reform in the 1830s and 1840s

Political Effects
- Andrew Jackson wins the presidency and supports the spoils system.
- Political parties begin using the convention to nominate candidates instead of the caucus system.
- Government becomes more responsive to public opinion.
- Jackson blocks South Carolina’s attempts at nullification, pulls funds from the unpopular Bank of the United States, and supports the Indian Removal Act.
- Women begin demanding more political rights. Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and others organize the woman suffrage movement and issue the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions.

Social Effects
- Nativism gains support, leading to the creation of the anti-immigrant American Party—the “Know-Nothings.”
- New American literature is written, including works by Emerson, Thoreau, Irving, Hawthorne, Melville, Poe, Whitman, and Dickinson.
- Religious enthusiasm helps trigger a series of new reform movements, including efforts to reform prisons, mental institutions, and schools, and to reduce the consumption of alcohol.
- Efforts to end slavery gradually and through colonization give way to a rising abolition movement led by William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and others.
TEST-TAKING TIP

Unless you are sure you know the answer, always try to narrow down answer choices to at least two before making a final selection.

Reviewing Vocabulary

Directions: Choose the word or words that best complete the sentence.

1. As president, Andrew Jackson used which method of giving out government jobs?
   A the caucus system
   B the spoils system
   C the nullification system
   D the American system

2. The philosophy of ________ encouraged people to let their souls reach out to embrace the beauty in the universe.
   A romanticism
   B revivalism
   C nativism
   D transcendentalism

3. Under the guidance of religious leaders, associations known as ________ began to address social problems.
   A benevolent societies
   B penitentiaries
   C asylums
   D seminaries

4. In his newspaper, the Liberator, William Lloyd Garrison called for the immediate ________ of enslaved people.
   A colonization
   B abolition
   C emancipation
   D incarceration

Reviewing Main Ideas

Directions: Choose the best answer for each of the following questions.

Section 1 (pp. 222–229)

5. In 1828 passage of which piece of legislation caused South Carolinians to threaten to secede from the Union?
   A the charter for the Second Bank of the United States
   B the Tariff of Abominations
   C the Force Bill
   D the Indian Removal Act

6. Which Whig candidate won the presidential election in 1840?
   A William Henry Harrison
   B John Tyler
   C Andrew Jackson
   D John C. Calhoun

Section 2 (pp. 230–235)

7. In the early 1800s, the Know-Nothings developed in reaction to
   A Andrew Jackson’s push for expanded democracy.
   B the Second Great Awakening.
   C the transcendentalists.
   D a huge influx of immigrants.

8. The teachings of the Second Great Awakening differed from earlier Protestant teachings in which way?
   A Its ministers preached that all people could attain salvation.
   B Its ministers preached that God was a trinity.
   C Its ministers preached that women could belong to the church.
   D Its ministers preached the idea of nativism.

Need Extra Help?

If You Missed Questions . . . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Go to Page . . . 224 234 237 244 225–226 229 232 232–234
Section 3 (pp. 236–241)

9. In the 1840s, Dorothea Dix became the foremost reformer in the area of
   A  woman suffrage.
   B  temperance.
   C  mental illness.
   D  education.

10. At the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, attendees were shocked when Elizabeth Cady Stanton
    A  wore pants to all the meetings.
    B  proposed that women seek the right to vote.
    C  insisted that African Americans be admitted.
    D  announced that she would run for Congress.

Section 4 (pp. 242–247)

11. The goal of the American Colonization Society was to move
    A  all enslaved people to the West.
    B  free African Americans to West Africa.
    C  free Africans to Canada.
    D  formerly enslaved and free African Americans to the North.

12. Which of the following people were former slaves who fought hard for abolition in the mid-1800s?
    A  David Walker and Frederick Douglass
    B  Angelina Grimké and Sarah Grimké
    C  Sojourner Truth and Benjamin Lundy
    D  Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth

Critical Thinking

Directions: Choose the best answers to the following questions.

13. One reason many Americans were in favor of the Indian Removal Act was that they
    A  thought the East had become too crowded.
    B  wanted remaining Native American lands in the Southeast.
    C  felt guilty about earlier treatment of Native Americans.
    D  wanted to expand democracy to include Native Americans.

Base your answers to questions 14 and 15 on the chart below and your knowledge of Chapter 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major American Political Parties Since 1789</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Government by Consent.

14. Which party shown had the shortest life span?
    A  Federalist
    B  Democratic-Republican
    C  Whig
    D  National Republican

15. Which party emerged to oppose Andrew Jackson and his policies?
    A  Democratic
    B  Federalist
    C  Whig
    D  Republican
16. American education reformers believed that free public education was
   A important to create a skilled workforce.
   B a risky experiment that could fail.
   C the only way to prevent civil unrest.
   D necessary to maintain a democratic republic.

17. What does Jackson appear to be trampling underfoot?
   A Presidential veto orders
   B Declaration of Independence
   C Articles of Confederation
   D United States Constitution

18. What reasons does the author give for opposing free public education?
19. Do you think that the author’s arguments are valid? Explain your answer.

Document-Based Questions
Directions: Analyze the document and answer the short-answer questions that follow the document.

Some people did not support free public education in the early 1800s. In the Raleigh Register of November 9, 1829, the following editorial appeared, addressed to members of the North Carolina legislature:

“Common schools indeed! Money is very scarce, and the times are unusually hard. . . . Gentlemen, it appears to me that schools are sufficiently plenty, and that the people have no desire they should be increased. Those now in operation are not filled, and it is very doubtful if they are productive or of much real benefit. Would it not redound as much to the advantage of young persons, and to the honour of the State, if they should pass their days in the cotton patch, or at the plow, or in the cornfield, instead of being [confined] in a school house, where they are earning nothing?”
   —from the Raleigh Register, November 9, 1829

20. In the 1800s several important themes developed among America’s writers and philosophers. Do you think that their writings influenced the reform movements in the United States during the early to mid-1800s? Write an essay in which you discuss the possible influences of romanticism and transcendentalism on reforms of the time. In your essay include an introduction, at least three paragraphs, and supporting details from the chapter.

Need Extra Help?
If You Missed Questions . . . 16 17 18 19 20
Go to Page . . . 238–239 227–229 251 251 230–241