FLASHFEED STUDY GUIDE

United States History

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United States History: study guide

From colonial Chesapeake and Puritan New England to the Constitutional Convention, the Civil War, and Reconstruction: the Gilded Age's robber barons and strikes, the New Deal, World War II, and the Civil Rights Movement that reshaped modern America.

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Contents	13 lessons · 698 cards in the app · 130 self-test questions · 62 pictures
In the app	flashfeedlearningapp.com/packs/us-history

How to use this guide

Take one lesson at a time: read the study guide, then go over any key facts. Where a lesson has a self-test, try it from memory before you check the answer key at the back. Follow the Go deeper links when you want more.

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LESSON 1 OF 13

Pre-Contact America, Encounter, and Colonial Foundations (Pre-1607–1754)

Indigenous Civilizations, Cahokia, and the Columbian Exchange · Chesapeake Tobacco, Puritan New England, and Colonial Governance · Indentured Labor, the Rise of Chattel Slavery, and Mercantilism

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Describe Cahokia and other Indigenous societies, and explain how the Columbian Exchange and epidemic disease transformed the Americas.
- Describe the Chesapeake and New England colonies: tobacco and servant labor, Puritan towns and dissent, and early self-government.

Lesson 1: Pre-Contact America, Encounter, and Colonial Foundations (Pre-1607–1754)

Indigenous Civilizations, Cahokia, and the Columbian Exchange

Prior to Columbus's arrival in 1492, North America was home to diverse and sophisticated Indigenous civilizations adapted to varied ecologies. In the Mississippi River Valley, the **Mississippian culture** constructed massive earthen mounds, culminating in the urban center of **Cahokia** near modern-day St. Louis. At its peak around 1100 CE, Cahokia supported a population commonly estimated at roughly 10,000 to 30,000 residents (estimates vary widely), comparable to London of the time. Its political and religious authority radiated through intensive **maize agriculture** and regional tribute networks. In the arid Southwest, Ancestral Puebloan peoples engineered multi-story sandstone masonry settlements at **Chaco Canyon** and **Mesa Verde**, managing scarce water with check dams, reservoirs, and diversion ditches. In the Northeast, the Haudenosaunee formed the **Iroquois Great League of Peace**, establishing a confederation governed by a representative council of fifty chiefs chosen by clan mothers.

The arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Caribbean initiated the **Columbian Exchange**, the reciprocal transfer of plants, animals, cultures, populations, and communicable diseases between the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. European flora and fauna transformed American landscapes: the introduction of the **horse** revolutionized Plains Indigenous mobility and bison hunting, while European pigs and cattle altered native foraging grounds. In return, American cultivars—principally **maize**, **potatoes**, **cassava**, and **tomatoes**—enriched Old World diets, triggering substantial population growth across Europe, Africa, and Asia.

The demographic consequence for Indigenous populations was catastrophic. Native Americans possessed no immunological resistance to Afro-Eurasian pathogens such as **smallpox**, **measles**, **influenza**, and **typhus**. Virgin-soil epidemics decimated Indigenous communities, with regional mortality commonly estimated at 50 to 90 percent within the first century or so of contact (estimates vary

widely). This demographic collapse shattered kinship networks, disrupted political hierarchies, and severely weakened Indigenous resistance to European territorial conquest.

Chesapeake Tobacco, Puritan New England, and Colonial Governance

English colonization in North America followed distinct regional models driven by divergent economic motives, demographics, and religious ideologies. In the Chesapeake region, the **Virginia Company of London** founded **Jamestown** in 1607 as a joint-stock commercial venture. Following the devastating "starving time" winter of 1609–1610, the colony found economic stability through the cultivation of Caribbean tobacco, introduced by **John Rolfe** in 1612. Tobacco monoculture shaped Virginia's dispersed plantation settlement pattern, demanding intensive labor and continuous territorial expansion into Powhatan tribal lands. To attract settlers and capital, the company established the **headright system** in 1618, granting 50 acres of land to any colonist who paid their own passage or financed the transportation of another laborer. In July 1619, the **Virginia House of Burgesses** convened as the first representative legislative assembly in English America, establishing local elite political representation.

In contrast, English settlement in New England was motivated by Calvinist religious reform. The **Pilgrims**, religious Separatists seeking total withdrawal from the Church of England, established **Plymouth Colony** in 1620 aboard the *Mayflower*. Prior to disembarking, they drafted the **Mayflower Compact**, a civil covenant pledging mutual submission to self-determined laws, establishing an early precedent for consensual government. A decade later, the **Puritans** launched the Great Migration of the 1630s, founding the **Massachusetts Bay Colony** under Governor **John Winthrop**. In his 1630 sermon *"A Model of Christian Charity"*, Winthrop warned that the colony would be as a **"City upon a Hill"**, with the eyes of all people upon it, so any failure to keep its covenant with God would be seen by all; later generations read the image as a model for others.

Puritan society was organized around nuclear family units, tight-knit agricultural towns, and congregational churches. Political participation in the General Court was restricted to "visible saints"—male church members who had undergone a documented conversion experience. The New England town meeting emerged as a vital institution of local direct democracy, where property-holding men debated municipal policies, school taxes, and defense. Despite their devotion to religious liberty for themselves, Puritans enforced strict theological orthodoxy, expelling religious dissidents such as **Roger Williams**—who advocated separation of church and state, argued that colonists had to purchase land from Native peoples rather than claim it by royal charter, and founded Rhode Island—and **Anne Hutchinson**, who challenged ministerial authority through her teachings on the covenant of grace.

Indentured Labor, the Rise of Chattel Slavery, and Mercantilism

During the early seventeenth century, the plantation labor force of the Chesapeake was dominated by European **indentured servants**. Impoverished English laborers signed contracts (indentures) binding them to four to seven years of agricultural labor in exchange for transatlantic passage, subsistence, and "freedom dues" upon completion. Conditions were grueling, and high mortality rates meant many servants died before completing their terms. However, as life expectancy rose in the late seventeenth century, surviving servants demanded promised lands, clashing with established planter elites and neighboring Indigenous nations.

This social friction culminated in **Bacon's Rebellion** in Virginia in 1676. Led by **Nathaniel Bacon**, an alliance of landless former indentured servants, smallholders, and enslaved Africans rebelled against the autocratic royal governor, Sir **William Berkeley**, burning Jamestown. Although the rebellion collapsed after Bacon's death, Virginia's planter oligarchy recognized the perpetual political danger of a growing class of free, armed, landless white laborers. Many historians argue that planters increasingly turned to African **chattel slavery**, already recognized in Virginia law by the 1660s, as a permanent, hereditary, and more controllable labor force. Over the subsequent decades, Virginia passed comprehensive **slave codes** (notably in 1705), legally defining enslaved Black people as real property, stripping them of civil rights, and anchoring racial hierarchy in colonial law.

The British imperial economy operated under the doctrine of **mercantilism**, which held that national power depended upon maximizing bullion reserves by maintaining a favorable balance of trade. Colonies existed to supply raw commodities—such as tobacco, sugar, rice, and indigo—to the mother country and consume British manufactured goods. Parliament codified this system through the **Navigation Acts** (beginning in 1651), mandating that colonial goods be transported exclusively on English or colonial vessels. The Act of 1660 required that high-value "enumerated commodities," such as tobacco and sugar, be shipped only to England or other English colonies. Although mercantilist regulations restricted direct foreign commerce, Britain's policy of **salutary neglect** during the early eighteenth century allowed colonial merchants substantial operational autonomy and fostered commercial self-reliance across the Atlantic triangular trade.

Key terms

Columbian Exchange

The reciprocal hemispheric transmission of flora, fauna, human populations, and infectious pathogens between Afro-Eurasia and the Americas after 1492.

Headright System

A colonial land grant policy offering fifty acres of surveyed property to any sponsor who financed the transatlantic passage of a settler or laborer.

Chattel Slavery

A legal system of unfree labor wherein human beings are legally classified as absolute personal property that can be bought, sold, and inherited across generations.

Mercantilism

An early modern economic doctrine asserting that national power depends on maximizing gold bullion reserves through a favorable balance of trade and monopolistic colonial exploitation.

Key concepts

Cahokia

- Pre-Columbian urban center located near modern-day St. Louis in the Mississippi River Valley
- Featured Monks Mound, a monumental 100-foot-tall earthen structure covering fourteen acres
- Peaked around 1100 CE with a population commonly estimated at 10,000 to 30,000 residents (estimates vary widely)

Columbian Exchange

- Hemispheric biological transfer of flora, fauna, pathogens, and human populations after 1492
- Introduced devastating Old World infectious diseases including smallpox and measles to the Americas
- Transferred high-calorie American crops like maize and potatoes to Eurasia, fueling global population growth

Mayflower Compact

- Governing agreement signed in 1620 by Separatist Pilgrims anchored off Cape Cod
- Established a civil covenant binding signers to enact and obey just and equal laws
- Served as an early colonial model of political self-government grounded in mutual consent

John Winthrop

- First governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony who led the Great Puritan Migration in 1630
- Authored the famous sermon 'A Model of Christian Charity'
- Articulated the vision of the Puritan commonwealth as a righteous 'City upon a Hill'

Roger Williams

- Puritan theologian banished from Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635 for radical beliefs
- Advocated strict separation of church and state to protect religion from political corruption
- Founded Providence Plantation (Rhode Island) on land purchased fairly from the Narragansett

Bacon's Rebellion

- Armed insurrection in Virginia in 1676 led by an ambitious backcountry planter
- United landless ex-indentured servants and enslaved laborers who torched the capital of Jamestown
- Widely seen as speeding planters' shift from European indentured servants to African chattel slavery

Navigation Acts

- Series of parliamentary statutes enacted beginning in 1651 to enforce mercantilist trade control
- Mandated that all trade between Britain and its colonies be conducted on English or colonial ships
- Required valuable enumerated colonial commodities like tobacco and sugar to pass solely through English ports

Key facts

Cahokia and Mississippian Urbanism

Cahokia was the largest pre-Columbian settlement north of Mexico, supporting an estimated 10,000 to 30,000 residents (estimates vary widely) around 1100 CE through intensive maize agriculture and monumental earthen mound architecture.

Biological Impact of the Columbian Exchange

The Columbian Exchange introduced Old World infectious pathogens including smallpox, measles, and influenza to Native American populations, causing demographic collapse, with regional mortality commonly estimated at 50 to 90 percent within about a century of contact (estimates vary widely).



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Agricultural Exchange Across Hemispheres

American domestic cultivars including maize, potatoes, and cassava enriched Eurasian and African diets after 1492, triggering substantial global population growth and transforming Old World agricultural systems.



Mother of Ser Amantio di Nicolao at English Wikipedia · CC BY-SA 3.0

Jamestown and Tobacco Monoculture

Founded in 1607 by the Virginia Company as a joint-stock commercial venture, Jamestown achieved economic viability only after John Rolfe introduced high-yield West Indian tobacco seeds in 1612, establishing plantation cash-crop agriculture.



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The Mayflower Compact and Self-Governance

Drafted in 1620 by Separatist Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower, the Mayflower Compact established a consensual civil government bound by majority rule, creating an enduring precedent for colonial constitutional self-determination.

Bacon's Rebellion and Labor Realignment

In 1676, Nathaniel Bacon led landless former indentured servants and enslaved laborers in an armed rebellion that torched Jamestown; many historians argue it pushed Virginia's planter oligarchy to turn increasingly from European indentured servitude to racialized African chattel slavery.

The Virginia Slave Codes of 1705

Enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1705, comprehensive slave codes legally defined all imported non-Christian servants as real estate property, prohibited enslaved persons from bearing arms, and codified hereditary racial chattel slavery.



Cleveland Museum of Art · CC0

British Mercantilism and the Navigation Acts

Parliament enacted the Navigation Acts beginning in 1651 to enforce mercantilist economic control, requiring colonial goods to be carried exclusively on English ships and forcing high-value enumerated commodities to pass solely through English ports.

By the numbers

How many tribal nations originally formed the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, according to tradition?

5 nations

In what calendar year did the Virginia House of Burgesses first convene in Jamestown?

1619 year

How many acres of land were awarded per imported laborer under the 1618 Virginia headright system?

50 acres

In what calendar year did Nathaniel Bacon lead his armed rebellion that burned Jamestown, Virginia?
1676 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Cahokia → Largest pre-Columbian Mississippian earthen mound urban center

House of Burgesses
→ First representative legislative assembly established in English North America in 1619

City upon a Hill → John Winthrop's warning that the Puritan colony would be watched by all people

Navigation Acts
→ Parliamentary mercantilist trade statutes restricting colonial shipping to English vessels

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What agricultural foundation enabled the Mississippian culture at Cahokia to sustain dense urban populations?

- A Cultivation of beans and sunflowers alone, with maize unknown in the region
- B Slash-and-burn cultivation of cassava and sweet potatoes in forest clearings
- C Intensive cultivation of maize alongside squash and beans in river floodplains
- D Irrigated terrace cultivation of highland potatoes and root vegetables

2. Which Old World biological introduction most dramatically altered the transport and hunting capabilities of Great Plains Indigenous nations?

- A The domesticated horse introduced into the Southwest by Spanish expeditions
- B The domesticated pig introduced into the Southeast by Spanish expeditions
- C Domesticated sheep introduced into the Southwest by Spanish missions
- D Domesticated cattle herded onto the Plains by Spanish ranchers

3. Why did Afro-Eurasian pathogens cause such devastating mortality rates among Western Hemisphere Indigenous populations?

- A Subtropical climates accelerated the virulence and transmission of bacteria
- B Indigenous populations lacked acquired immunological antibodies to virgin-soil diseases
- C Native diets lacked essential caloric minerals to maintain cellular vitality
- D Traditional medicine completely prohibited physical quarantine of sick individuals

4. How was decision-making structured within the representative council of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois League)?

A. Hereditary chiefs chosen through the paternal line, deciding by majority vote

B. Delegates elected by majority vote of all adult men in each village

C. A single paramount chief inherited authority over all member nations

D. Fifty male civil chiefs nominated by matrilineal clan mothers governed by consensus

5. Cahokia's peak population around 1100 CE has been compared in scale to which contemporary European city?

A. London

B. Rome

C. Venice

D. Paris

6. What qualifications were required for a man to become a 'freeman' able to vote in Massachusetts Bay Colony's General Court elections during the early seventeenth century?

A. Ownership of at least one hundred cleared acres of arable farmland

B. Adult male status and formal church membership based on documented spiritual conversion

C. A royal license from the Privy Council to settle in the colony

D. Seven years' residence in the colony and a record of service in the militia

7. Why did Puritan authorities banish Roger Williams from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635?

A. He urged Massachusetts to rejoin the Church of England under its bishops

B. He denied the Trinity and the divinity of Christ

C. He taught that salvation could be earned through good works rather than grace

D. He demanded complete separation of church and state and defended Native land rights

8. What contractual mechanism defined European indentured servitude in the seventeenth-century Chesapeake?

A. Lifelong hereditary enslavement enforceable against all descendants regardless of race

B. Annual voluntary wage contracts with guaranteed municipal medical care and housing

C. Four to seven years of unfree agricultural labor in exchange for ocean passage and freedom dues

D. A headright grant of fifty acres to any colonist who paid their own passage

9. How is Bacon's Rebellion (1676) widely thought to have accelerated the institutionalization of racial chattel slavery in Virginia?

- (A) The Assembly outlawed the enslavement of Africans to win back the support of former servants
- (B) Planters ended headrights and stopped importing laborers of any kind
- (C) Royal officials banned any further importation of European indentured servants into Virginia
- (D) Planter elites recognized the political danger of free white laborers and turned to enslaved Africans

10. Which colonial institution, convened in July 1619, became the first elected representative legislative assembly in English America?

- (A) Pennsylvania Assembly
- (B) Massachusetts General Court
- (C) Virginia House of Burgesses
- (D) Maryland General Assembly

Go deeper

WATCH Cahokia, the City of Mounds 0:28 · YouTube
Before Europeans arrived, a city of giant earthen mounds stood near modern St. Louis. Its name was Cahokia.

WATCH Bacon's Rebellion 0:32 · YouTube
Landless former servants, small farmers and enslaved Africans joined forces and burned Jamestown.

WATCH The Exchange Ran Both Ways 0:31
Plains hunters chased bison on horseback. Yet the horse came from Europe, in the Columbian Exchange after Columbus.

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LESSON 2 OF 13

Imperial Crisis, the American Revolution, and Independence (1754–1783)

The French and Indian War, Imperial Taxes, and the Ideology of Liberty · The Continental Congress, Common Sense, and the Declaration of Independence · Revolutionary War Military Strategy, French Alliance, and the Peace of Paris

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Trace how the French and Indian War's debts led to imperial taxes and the colonial case against taxation without representation.
- Trace the path to independence through the Continental Congresses, Paine's Common Sense, and the Declaration of Independence.

Lesson 2: Imperial Crisis, the American Revolution, and Independence (1754–1783)

The French and Indian War, Imperial Taxes, and the Ideology of Liberty

The geopolitical architecture of North America was fundamentally restructured by the **French and Indian War** (1754–1763), the North American theater of the global Seven Years' War. Sparked by competing Virginian land claims and French fortifications in the Ohio River Valley, the conflict concluded with the **Treaty of Paris (1763)**, which expelled France from continental North America and ceded French Canada and lands east of the Mississippi River to Great Britain. During **Pontiac's War**—a pan-Indigenous uprising against British post-war policies—King George III issued the **Proclamation of 1763**, prohibiting colonial settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains to prevent costly frontier warfare. This imperial edict deeply alienated colonial land speculators and settlers who viewed western lands as their hard-won prize.

The war doubled Britain's national debt, prompting Prime Minister George Grenville to terminate the longstanding policy of **salutary neglect**. Believing American colonists should contribute to imperial defense costs, Parliament enacted the **Sugar Act of 1764** and the **Stamp Act of 1765**. The Stamp Act imposed a direct internal tax on legal documents, newspapers, pamphlets, and playing cards. Colonists reacted with unified outrage, asserting the fundamental constitutional principle of **"no taxation without representation"**. Because colonists elected no members to Parliament, they rejected the British argument of **"virtual representation"**, insisting that only their own colonial assemblies possessed the constitutional authority to levy internal taxes.

Resistance mobilized across social classes. Urban artisans and merchants organized as the **Sons of Liberty**, enforcing non-importation boycott agreements through public demonstrations and intimidation of stamp distributors. In October 1765, delegates from nine colonies assembled at the **Stamp Act Congress** in New York, drafting the Declaration of Rights and Grievances. While commercial boycotts compelled Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act in 1766, it simultaneously passed the **Declaratory Act**, asserting supreme parliamentary authority to bind the colonies "in all cases whatsoever."

Subsequent revenue measures reignited resistance. The **Townshend Acts of 1767** taxed imported glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea. Colonial protests and boycotts prompted the dispatch of British troops to Boston, culminating on March 5, 1770, in the **Boston Massacre**, where British soldiers fired into a crowd, killing five colonists including **Crispus Attucks**. Although Parliament repealed all Townshend duties except the tea tax, persistent tensions erupted when Parliament passed the **Tea Act of 1773** to rescue the British East India Company. On December 16, 1773, the Sons of Liberty staged the **Boston Tea Party**, dumping 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor.

The Continental Congress, Common Sense, and the Declaration of Independence

Britain responded to the Boston Tea Party with punitive severity, enacting the **Coercive Acts of 1774** (termed the **"Intolerable Acts"** in America). These statutes closed the port of Boston, replaced Massachusetts's elected council with one appointed by the Crown and curbed town meetings under the new royal governor and army commander, General **Thomas Gage**, authorized the quartering of troops in other buildings such as barns and empty houses, and protected royal officials from local trials. Coupled with the **Quebec Act**, which extended Quebec's boundaries south to the Ohio River and granted religious toleration to Roman Catholics, these measures convinced colonial leaders of a systemic imperial conspiracy against English liberties.

In response, twelve colonies sent fifty-six delegates to Philadelphia in September 1774 to form the **First Continental Congress**. The Congress established the **Continental Association**, a sweeping system of local committees enforcing a total non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation boycott against Britain. Local committees of safety effectively assumed de facto administrative governance throughout the countryside, marginalizing royal authorities.

Armed hostilities began on April 19, 1775, when British troops marching to seize militia munitions clashed with colonial minutemen at **Lexington and Concord**, Massachusetts. The **Second Continental Congress** convened in May 1775, establishing the **Continental Army** and appointing **George Washington** of Virginia as commander-in-chief to unify northern and southern colonies. Even as bloody combat unfolded at the Battle of **Bunker Hill** (June 1775), Congress issued the **Olive Branch Petition** in July 1775, professing loyalty to George III and begging for a ceasefire. The King rejected the petition outright, issuing the Proclamation of Rebellion and hiring thousands of **Hessian** mercenaries to crush the insurrection.

Colonial public opinion shifted decisively toward independence following the January 1776 publication of **Thomas Paine's** revolutionary pamphlet, ***Common Sense***. Writing in direct, accessible prose, Paine dismantled monarchical legitimacy, attacked hereditary privilege, and argued that an island could not reasonably rule a continent. By June 1776, Congress appointed a committee of five—with **Thomas**

Jefferson as principal drafter—to prepare a formal declaration. Adopted on **July 4, 1776**, the **Declaration of Independence** drew heavily on John Locke's **Enlightenment social contract theory**, proclaiming the universal natural rights to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" and articulating the right of a people to alter or abolish any government that becomes destructive of these ends.

Revolutionary War Military Strategy, French Alliance, and the Peace of Paris

The American War of Independence presented profound asymmetric challenges. Great Britain possessed the world's preeminent navy, a disciplined professional army, and substantial financial wealth, but faced long supply lines across the Atlantic, ambiguous strategic objectives, and an expansive territory hostile to foreign occupation. The Continental Army faced chronic shortages of munitions, food, and pay, operating under a decentralized Congress incapable of levying taxes. George Washington adopted a **Fabian strategy** of defensive attrition, avoiding catastrophic open-field engagements, preserving his army as the living symbol of the rebellion, and striking vulnerable outposts, as demonstrated by the surprise winter victories at **Trenton** (December 1776) and **Princeton** (January 1777).

The decisive military and diplomatic turning point occurred in upstate New York in October 1777 at the **Battle of Saratoga**. American forces commanded by General Horatio Gates surrounded and captured the British army of General John Burgoyne. This stunning victory convinced King Louis XVI of France to enter the war openly. Negotiated in Paris by **Benjamin Franklin**, the **Franco-American Alliance of 1778** provided vital French naval power, professional infantry under the Comte de Rochambeau, gunpowder, and financial subsidies, transforming a colonial rebellion into an expansive global war.

Following the brutal winter encampment at **Valley Forge** (1777–1778)—where the Prussian officer **Baron von Steuben** drilled the Continental Army into a standardized European-style fighting force—the British military shifted its focus southward. The British **Southern Strategy** sought to exploit loyalist support in Georgia and the Carolinas. However, brutal partisan warfare and tactical defeats under American General **Nathanael Greene** depleted British resources. In August 1781, British General Lord **Cornwallis** withdrew his army to the Virginia peninsula at **Yorktown**. Combined American and French armies besieged Yorktown on land while the French fleet under Admiral **de Grasse** blockaded the Chesapeake Bay, preventing naval evacuation. Cornwallis surrendered on October 19, 1781.

In the **Treaty of Paris (1783)**, negotiated by Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay, Great Britain formally recognized the unconditional sovereignty and independence of the United States. The treaty established generous territorial boundaries: extending from the Atlantic Ocean west to the Mississippi River, and from the Great Lakes south to Spanish Florida (31st parallel), setting the stage for the precarious experiment in republican governance.

Key terms

Virtual Representation

The British constitutional doctrine that members of Parliament represented the interests of the entire empire rather than specific geographical constituencies.

Natural Rights

Fundamental moral entitlements to life, liberty, and property inherent to all human beings by birth, which governments are instituted to secure and cannot justly violate.

Fabian Strategy

A military doctrine characterized by avoiding decisive pitched battles, relying on strategic retreats, and wearing down an occupying enemy through prolonged attrition.

Treaty of Paris (1783)

The diplomatic agreement between Great Britain and the United States that formally recognized American sovereignty and established territorial boundaries westward to the Mississippi River.

Key concepts

Stamp Act of 1765

- First direct internal tax levied by British Parliament on American colonists
- Required official embossed tax stamps on legal documents, newspapers, and playing cards
- Provoked widespread colonial boycotts and the constitutional cry of 'no taxation without representation'

Boston Massacre

- Deadly clash between British soldiers and a colonial crowd on March 5, 1770
- Resulted in five civilian deaths including African-Native sailor Crispus Attucks
- Immortalized in Paul Revere's influential anti-British propaganda engraving

Common Sense

- Revolutionary political pamphlet authored anonymously by Thomas Paine in January 1776
- Sold an estimated 120,000+ copies in its first months, reaching ordinary citizens in plain language
- Attacked hereditary monarchical rule and urged immediate declaration of American independence

Declaration of Independence

- Foundational document adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776
- Drafted primarily by Thomas Jefferson, articulating universal unalienable natural rights
- Asserted that governments derive just powers from the consent of the governed

Battle of Saratoga

- Fought in upstate New York in October 1777, resulting in General John Burgoyne's surrender
- Halted British strategic plans to sever New England from the middle colonies along the Hudson
- Convinced King Louis XVI of France to negotiate a formal military alliance with the United States

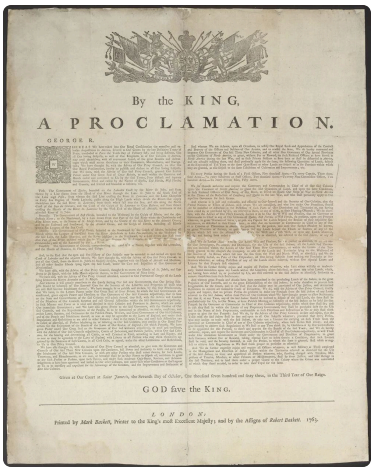
George Washington

- Virginian planter appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental Army in June 1775
- Maintained army cohesion through a Fabian strategy of tactical attrition and preserved the revolution
- Forced the final British surrender at Yorktown before voluntarily relinquishing military power

Siege of Yorktown

- Final major military engagement of the American Revolutionary War in October 1781
- Trapped General Charles Cornwallis on a Virginia peninsula between allied armies and the French navy
- Concluded with the surrender of over 7,000 British troops, prompting Parliament to end the war

Key facts



King George III · Public domain

The Proclamation Line of 1763

During Pontiac's War, King George III issued the Royal Proclamation of 1763, forbidding Anglo-American settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains to prevent costly frontier warfare, enraging land speculators and colonists.



Paul Revere · Public domain

The Boston Massacre of 1770

On March 5, 1770, British troops occupying Boston fired into a crowd of colonists that had gathered around them and were taunting and pelting them with snow and ice, killing five colonists including Crispus Attucks, an event immortalized and publicized throughout the colonies by Paul Revere's propaganda engraving.

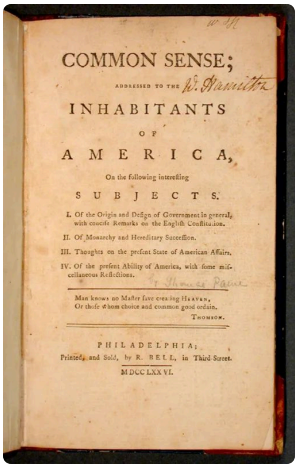
> **The Coercive Acts of 1774**
>
> In retaliation for the Boston Tea Party, Parliament passed the Coercive Acts (Intolerable Acts) of 1774, closing the Port of Boston, replacing Massachusetts's elected council with one appointed by the Crown, curbing town meetings, and allowing troops to be quartered in buildings such as barns and empty houses.



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The Continental Association Boycott

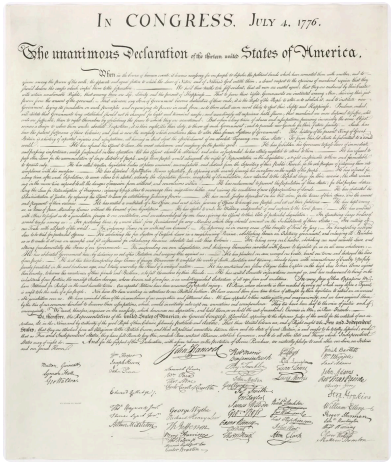
Convening in Philadelphia in September 1774, the First Continental Congress created the Continental Association, a sweeping system of locally elected committees enforcing a total commercial boycott against British imports and exports.



Scanned by uploader, originally by Thomas Paine. · Public domain

Thomas Paine's Common Sense

Published in January 1776, Thomas Paine's radical pamphlet Common Sense sold an estimated 120,000+ copies in its first months (contemporary estimates vary), dismantling monarchical legitimacy and persuading ordinary colonists that total republican independence was an urgent moral and practical necessity.



Wikimedia Commons · Second Continental Congress; reproduction by William Stone · Public domain

The Declaration of Independence

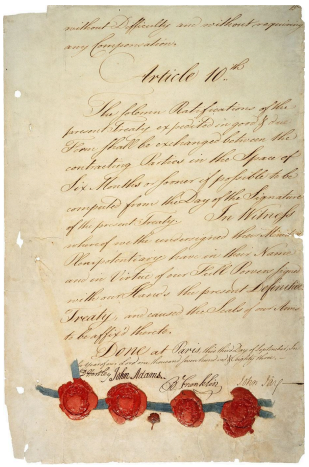
Adopted on July 4, 1776, by the Second Continental Congress, the Declaration of Independence—principally drafted by Thomas Jefferson—proclaimed universal natural rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and declared the colonies free and independent states.



Ken Lund from Reno, Nevada, USA · CC BY-SA 2.0

The Siege of Yorktown

In October 1781, combined American and French forces under George Washington and the Comte de Rochambeau trapped General Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, while the French fleet blockaded the Chesapeake Bay, compelling the decisive British surrender of the war.



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The Treaty of Paris of 1783

Signed in September 1783 by American commissioners Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay, the Treaty of Paris formally recognized the independence of the United States and granted generous territorial boundaries extending west to the Mississippi River.

By the numbers

How many chests of British East India Company tea were dumped during the Boston Tea Party in 1773?

342 chests

In what calendar year was the United States Declaration of Independence formally adopted in Philadelphia?

1776 year

In what calendar year did General George Washington force General Cornwallis to surrender at Yorktown?

1781 year

In what calendar year was the Treaty of Paris signed, formally ending the American Revolutionary War?

1783 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Declaratory Act
→ Parliamentary assertion of absolute legislative power to bind colonies in all cases whatsoever

Continental Association
→ Intercolonial boycott pact created in 1774 to halt all British imports and exports

Baron von Steuben
→ Prussian military officer who instituted standardized tactical drill and hygiene at Valley Forge

Admiral de Grasse
→ French naval commander whose victory at the Capes sealed the Chesapeake Bay at Yorktown

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What primary rationale did British Prime Minister George Grenville offer for ending salutary neglect after 1763?

A. The British national debt had doubled during the French and Indian War and colonists should share defense costs
B. Colonial paper currency was destabilizing British merchant credit and Parliament needed to suppress it by decree
C. Colonial assemblies had failed to suppress Pontiac's War, so the crown needed direct administrative control over frontier defense
D. Colonial legislatures had grown too independent and needed closer supervision from royal governors

2. How did American colonists challenge the British theory of 'virtual representation' during the Stamp Act crisis?

A. They argued that only the King personally, not Parliament, could lawfully approve new colonial taxes
B. They proposed that colonial assemblies send non-voting observers to sit in the House of Commons
C. They demanded that colonial assemblies each be granted actual, voting seats in Parliament itself
D. They insisted that only their own elected colonial assemblies could levy internal taxes on them

3. What constitutional declaration did Parliament pass immediately after repealing the Stamp Act in 1766?

A. The Sugar Act of 1764 imposing duties on imported molasses and other goods
B. The Quartering Act requiring every civilian home to shelter royal infantry regiments
C. The Declaratory Act asserting supreme legislative authority over colonies in all cases whatsoever
D. The Townshend Acts taxing imported glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea

4. Why did colonial merchants and Sons of Liberty vehemently oppose the Tea Act of 1773 despite lower tea prices?

A. It imposed a new direct tax on legal documents, newspapers, and pamphlets
B. It granted the British East India Company a monopoly and affirmed Parliament's tax authority
C. It required colonists to house British troops in their private homes
D. It added new duties on glass, lead, paint, and paper alongside the tea duty

5. Which of these imperial crisis events occurred earliest?

A. Boston Massacre (1770)
B. Stamp Act (1765)
C. Townshend Acts (1767)
D. Boston Tea Party (1773)

6. What primary mechanism did the First Continental Congress establish to enforce colonial resistance in 1774?

A. The Continental Association enforcing non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation
B. A Continental Army placed under George Washington as commander-in-chief
C. A common treasury funded by a direct tax on every colony
D. A formal declaration of independence ending colonial allegiance to the Crown

7. What philosophical premise formed the central argument of Thomas Paine's 1776 pamphlet Common Sense?

A. The British constitution was flawless but had been temporarily corrupted by French Catholic spies
B. Colonies should accept parliamentary taxation if guaranteed five permanent seats in the House of Lords
C. Enslaved Africans should be immediately deported to establish an exclusively agrarian white republic
D. Hereditary monarchy is inherently tyrannical and an island cannot reasonably govern a continent

8. Which Enlightenment philosopher's social contract theory directly influenced Thomas Jefferson in drafting the Declaration of Independence?

A. Baron de Montesquieu's treatise on separation of executive powers
B. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's arguments on small-scale direct city democracies
C. John Locke's Two Treatises of Government on natural rights and popular consent
D. Thomas Hobbes's defense of absolute sovereign monarchy in Leviathan

9. According to the Declaration of Independence, what natural rights are governments instituted to secure?

A. Life, Liberty, and Property
B. Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity
C. Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness
D. Life, Liberty, and freedom from taxation without representation

10. What did the Second Continental Congress establish when it convened in May 1775?

A The Franco-American Alliance
B The Declaration of Independence
C The Declaration of Rights and Grievances
D The Continental Army, under Washington

Go deeper

WATCH How the Revolution Was Won 0:30 · YouTube
Britain had the world's top navy. The Continental Army lacked food, pay and ammunition.

WATCH No Taxation Without Representation 0:33 · YouTube
Newspapers, legal papers, even playing cards. In 1765, Britain's Stamp Act taxed them all.

WATCH From Olive Branch to Independence 0:28
After Lexington, Congress still professed loyalty to the King. That July, its Olive Branch Petition begged for a ceasefire.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/imperial-crisis-the-american-revolution-and-independence-1754-1783

STUDY United States History in the FlashFeed app flashfeedlearningapp.com/packs/us-history

LESSON 3 OF 13

Creating the Republic: Constitutional Design and the Federalists (1781–1800)

Articles of Confederation, Shays' Rebellion, and the 1787 Convention · Federalism, Separation of Powers, and the Great & Three-Fifths Compromises · Hamilton's Financial Plan, Emergence of Parties, and the Bill of Rights

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Describe the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, the impact of Shays' Rebellion, and the work of the 1787 Convention.
- Explain federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, and the Great and Three-Fifths Compromises.

Lesson 3: Creating the Republic: Constitutional Design and the Federalists (1781–1800)

Articles of Confederation, Shays' Rebellion, and the 1787 Convention

The first national constitution of the United States was the **Articles of Confederation**, drafted in 1777 and ratified in 1781. Reflecting intense revolutionary fears of centralized tyranny, the Articles established a weak "firm league of friendship" among thirteen sovereign states. The unicameral Confederation Congress possessed no power to levy taxes directly, regulate interstate or foreign commerce, or compel state compliance. It lacked an independent executive branch to enforce statutes and a national judiciary to resolve legal disputes. Furthermore, major legislation required the approval of nine of the thirteen states, while constitutional amendments required unanimous consent. Despite these structural limits, the Confederation Congress achieved lasting success through the **Northwest Ordinance of 1787**, which established an orderly mechanism for admitting new states on equal terms with original states, encouraged public education (building on the land-grant framework already set by the 1785 Land Ordinance), and permanently prohibited slavery in the Northwest Territory.

The Confederation's structural paralysis caused widespread economic instability and diplomatic weakness. In western Massachusetts, indebted rural farmers faced foreclosures and debtors' prison due to high state taxes payable only in hard specie. Led by Continental Army veteran **Daniel Shays**, armed farmers shut down county courthouses in 1786–1787 during **Shays' Rebellion**. When the national government proved powerless to dispatch federal troops to quell the insurrection, elite leaders like George Washington and Alexander Hamilton were galvanized to seek urgent constitutional revision.

In May 1787, fifty-five delegates assembled at the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia for the **Constitutional Convention**. Overturning their initial mandate to merely amend the Articles of Confederation, the delegates resolved to draft an entirely new framework of national government.

Presided over by George Washington, the convention operated under strict secrecy to encourage candid debate and compromise.

Federalism, Separation of Powers, and the Great & Three-Fifths Compromises

The core architectural debate at Philadelphia centered on national representation and legislative power. **James Madison** drafted the **Virginia Plan**, which Edmund Randolph presented to the convention; it advocated a strong bicameral national legislature with proportional representation based on population, empowering populous states. In response, William Paterson presented the **New Jersey Plan**, calling for a unicameral legislature where each state received equal voting power, protecting small states. Roger Sherman resolved the deadlock through the **Connecticut Compromise** (or **Great Compromise**), creating a bicameral Congress: a House of Representatives apportioned by population and directly elected by the people, and a Senate granting equal representation (two senators per state), originally chosen by state legislatures.

The convention also grappled with the contentious issue of enslavement. Southern delegates demanded that enslaved persons be counted for congressional representation but excluded for direct tax assessments; Northern delegates objected that property could not claim political representation. The resulting **Three-Fifths Compromise** stipulated that three-fifths of all "other persons" (enslaved individuals) would be added to the free population count for both congressional apportionment and direct taxation. The Constitution also included the **Fugitive Slave Clause** (Article IV, Section 2) and prohibited Congress from banning the transatlantic slave trade until 1808.

The resulting Constitution established a system of **federalism**—the constitutional division of sovereign powers between the national government and state governments. To prevent tyranny, the Framers incorporated **separation of powers** across three distinct branches: legislative (Article I), executive (Article II), and judicial (Article III). Through **checks and balances**, each branch was granted mechanisms to restrain the others: the presidential veto over legislation, congressional power of the purse and impeachment, and Senate advice and consent for treaties and appointments.

Hamilton's Financial Plan, Emergence of Parties, and the Bill of Rights

Ratification of the Constitution required approval by nine of the thirteen state ratifying conventions. Supporters, calling themselves **Federalists**, campaigned aggressively for ratification. In New York, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay authored **The Federalist Papers** (85 essays). In *Federalist No. 10*, Madison famously argued that an extended republic would control the violence of factions better than a small democracy. **Anti-Federalists**, including Patrick Henry and George Mason, argued that the Constitution created a consolidated aristocratic tyranny and demanded a written **Bill of Rights** to protect individual liberties. To secure ratification in key states like Virginia and New York, Federalists pledged to add amendments immediately. Drafted primarily by Madison in the First Congress, the first ten amendments—the **Bill of Rights**—were ratified in 1791, safeguarding freedoms of speech, religion, the press, assembly, trial by jury, and reserving powers not delegated to the federal government to the states or the people (Tenth Amendment).

As the first Secretary of the Treasury under President George Washington, **Alexander Hamilton** enacted a bold financial program designed to establish national public credit and tie wealthy commercial elites to

the federal government. Hamilton's plan contained four key components:

1. **Funding the national debt at par** (full face value).
2. **Federal assumption of state Revolutionary War debts**, secured in the Compromise of 1790 by agreeing to locate the permanent national capital on the Potomac River (**Washington, D.C.**).
3. The creation of the **Bank of the United States (BUS)** (1791) to hold government funds and issue stable currency, defended by Hamilton under the **"implied powers"** of the Necessary and Proper Clause (loose construction).
4. An **excise tax on distilled whiskey**, which provoked the **Whiskey Rebellion** in western Pennsylvania in 1794, crushed when Washington led a federal militia of 13,000 to assert national sovereignty.

Hamilton's commercial program and pro-British foreign policy clashed with the vision of **Thomas Jefferson** and James Madison, who favored an agrarian republic of independent yeoman farmers, strict constitutional construction, and sympathy with the French Revolution. This philosophical rift produced the **First Party System**: Hamilton's **Federalist Party** (pro-commerce, strong federal government, Anglophile) versus Jefferson's **Democratic-Republican Party** (pro-agrarian, states' rights, Francophile). In his **Farewell Address (1796)**, Washington warned the young nation against the dangers of permanent foreign alliances and partisan factionalism. Tensions peaked during John Adams's presidency following the **XYZ Affair** and amid the undeclared naval **Quasi-War** with France (1798–1800), prompting the Federalists to pass the repressive **Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798**; the Sedition Act made it a crime to write or publish false, scandalous, and malicious statements against the government, Congress, or the president. Jefferson and Madison responded with the **Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions (1798)**, introducing the **compact theory** of the Union and the radical doctrine of state **nullification**.

Key terms

Federalism
A constitutional system dividing sovereign political authority between a central national government and constituent regional state governments.

Separation of Powers
The constitutional division of governmental responsibilities into distinct legislative, executive, and judicial branches to prevent the concentration of tyrannical power.

Implied Powers
Constitutional powers of the federal government not explicitly enumerated in text but reasonably deduced from the Necessary and Proper Clause to execute delegated duties.

Nullification
A legal theory asserting that sovereign states possess the constitutional authority to declare void and refuse enforcement of unconstitutional federal statutes within their borders.

Key concepts

Northwest Ordinance of 1787

- Enacted by the Confederation Congress to govern territories north of the Ohio River
- Established a three-stage protocol for admitting new western territories as equal states
- Permanently prohibited the introduction of slavery in the Northwest Territory

Shays' Rebellion

- Armed uprising of indebted farmers in western Massachusetts during 1786–1787
- Led by Continental Army veteran Daniel Shays, shutting down county debtor courts
- Galvanized nationalist political leaders to convene the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia

Great Compromise

- Constitutional agreement proposed by Roger Sherman of Connecticut in 1787
- Created a bicameral legislative branch balancing large and small state interests
- Apportioned House representation by population while granting each state two Senators

Federalist Papers

- Series of 85 political essays written in 1787–1788 to promote ratification in New York
- Authored collaboratively under the pseudonym 'Publius' by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay
- Articulated foundational arguments on the extended republic, factions, and checks and balances

Bill of Rights

- First ten amendments to the United States Constitution ratified in 1791
- Drafted primarily by James Madison to fulfill commitments made to Anti-Federalists
- Guaranteed fundamental liberties including speech, press, religion, assembly, and trial by jury

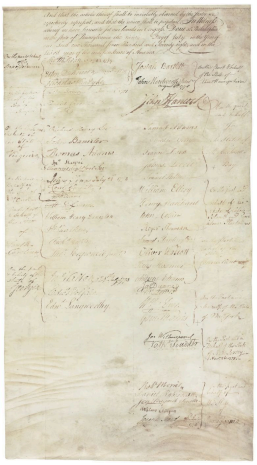
Alexander Hamilton

- First Secretary of the Treasury under George Washington who authored reports on public credit
- Created the Bank of the United States and defended loose constitutional construction
- Served as the intellectual leader and architect of the Federalist Party

Whiskey Rebellion

- Tax revolt in western Pennsylvania in 1794 protesting a federal excise tax on distilled spirits
- Saw grain farmers attack federal revenue collectors and threaten municipal garrisons
- Suppressed when President Washington personally led a 13,000-man federal militia army

Key facts



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Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation

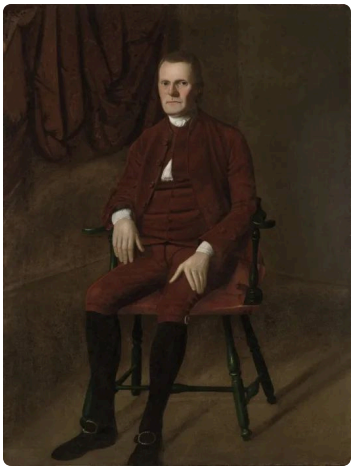
Ratified in 1781, the Articles of Confederation established a decentralized national government that lacked the constitutional power to levy direct taxes, regulate interstate or foreign commerce, or enforce federal requisitions against sovereign states.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787

The Confederation Congress enacted the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, establishing an orderly protocol for admitting new western territories as equal states, encouraging public education (building on the land-grant framework already set by the 1785 Land Ordinance), and permanently prohibiting slavery north of the Ohio River.

Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts

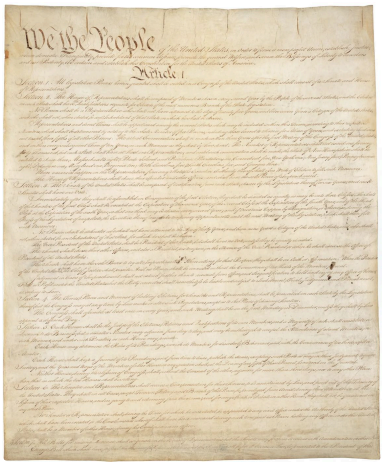
In 1786–1787, Continental Army veteran Daniel Shays led an armed uprising of indebted Massachusetts farmers who shut down county debtor courts to prevent farm foreclosures, convincing nationalist elites of the urgent necessity for a stronger federal government.



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The Connecticut (Great) Compromise

Authored by Roger Sherman, the Great Compromise resolved the fierce convention debate between the Virginia and New Jersey Plans by creating a bicameral Congress: a House of Representatives apportioned by population and a Senate granting equal representation to each state.



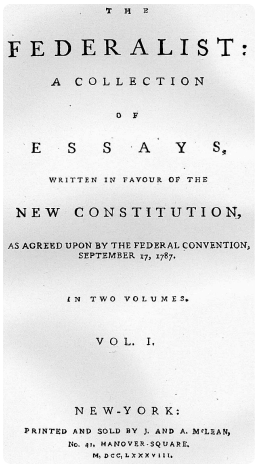
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The Three-Fifths Compromise

Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution established the Three-Fifths Compromise, stipulating that three-fifths of the enslaved population would be counted for both congressional representation and direct federal taxation, granting Southern states disproportionate national political power.

Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances

The Framers embedded Montesquieu's doctrine of separation of powers across three co-equal branches (legislative, executive, and judicial), equipping each branch with constitutional checks—such as the presidential veto and congressional impeachment—to prevent tyranny.


THE
FEDERALIST:
A COLLECTION
OF
ESSAYS,
WRITTEN IN FAVOUR OF THE
NEW CONSTITUTION,
AS AGREED UPON BY THE FEDERAL CONVENTION, SEPTEMBER 17, 1787.
IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.
NEW-YORK:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. AND A. M'LEAN,
No. 41. HANOVER-SQUARE.
M, DCC, LXXXVIII.

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Madison's Theory of Factions in Federalist No. 10

In Federalist No. 10, James Madison argued that a large extended republic was superior to small direct democracies at controlling the dangerous effects of political factions, because a multiplicity of competing interests would prevent any single majority from oppressing the minority.



Carol M. Highsmith · Public domain

Hamilton's Creation of the National Bank

In 1791, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton secured the creation of the First Bank of the United States, defending its constitutionality under the Necessary and Proper Clause ('implied powers') to manage government deposits, collect taxes, and issue a stable currency.



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The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions

Drafted secretly by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison in 1798 to protest the Federalist Alien and Sedition Acts, the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions introduced the compact theory of the Constitution, arguing that states had the right to nullify unconstitutional federal laws.

By the numbers

How many state delegates attended the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia?

55 delegates

How many total essays were published in The Federalist Papers defending the Constitution?

85 essays

How many constitutional amendments were ratified together in 1791 as the Bill of Rights?

10 amendments

In what calendar year did President George Washington lead federal militia to quell the Whiskey Rebellion?

1794 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Virginia Plan → Proposal for a strong bicameral legislature apportioned purely by population

New Jersey Plan → Proposal for a unicameral legislature granting each sovereign state one equal vote

Tenth Amendment
→ Constitutional clause reserving all non-delegated sovereign powers to states or people

Sedition Act of 1798
→ Statute criminalizing false, scandalous, and malicious writing against the government

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What major legislative achievement was successfully enacted by the national government under the Articles of Confederation?

- A A comprehensive federal tariff statute funding a standing army of twenty thousand regulars
- B A national executive office with power to enforce the acts of Congress
- C A permanent federal court system with power to overturn state laws
- D The Northwest Ordinance establishing procedures for statehood and banning slavery in the territory

2. How did Shays' Rebellion (1786–1787) influence elite political opinion across the United States?

- A It convinced elite leaders that the Articles needed only minor repairs, not replacement
- B It exposed the national government's weakness in suppressing civil unrest and protecting property
- C It led Congress to raise a federal army that quickly crushed the rebels
- D It persuaded Congress to cancel farm debts and end hard-money taxes

3. What structural conflict did the Connecticut (Great) Compromise resolve at the 1787 Constitutional Convention?

- A The balance between large states favoring proportional representation and small states demanding equal representation
- B The dispute over whether the president should be chosen by Congress or by direct popular vote
- C The dispute over whether federal supreme court justices should be elected by direct popular ballot
- D The debate over whether Congress could ban the transatlantic slave trade

4. How did the Three-Fifths Compromise shape the distribution of political power in the young republic?

- A It fixed each state's Senate representation at two seats regardless of population
- B It counted enslaved people toward direct taxes only, with no effect on House representation
- C It gave Southern slave states bonus congressional seats and electoral votes based on enslaved populations
- D It required Congress to end the transatlantic slave trade immediately after ratification

5. Under the Articles of Confederation, what vote share was required to pass major legislation in the Confederation Congress?

- A Nine of the thirteen states
- B Unanimous consent of all states
- C A simple majority of delegates
- D Two-thirds of the states

6. Why did Anti-Federalists like Patrick Henry and George Mason oppose ratification of the 1787 Constitution?

- (A) They objected that the Constitution gave ordinary citizens too much direct power over the government
- (B) They objected that neither house of Congress gave the small states an equal vote
- (C) They wanted a far stronger central government with more power over the states
- (D) They feared a consolidated central government would destroy state sovereignty and lacked a Bill of Rights

7. What core constitutional mechanism did the Framers implement to prevent any single branch from dominating government?

- (A) Annual elections for every federal officeholder, including Supreme Court judges
- (B) Checks and balances granting each branch specific powers to restrain the actions of the others
- (C) A national veto held by the state legislatures over any act of Congress
- (D) A national executive council chosen by Congress to serve at its pleasure

8. How did the Tenth Amendment define the constitutional boundary between federal and state powers?

- (A) It protected individual rights not listed in the Constitution from any government interference
- (B) It gave Congress unlimited power to act on any matter affecting the general welfare
- (C) It reserved to the states or the people all powers the Constitution did not delegate to the federal government
- (D) It barred states from exercising any power that overlaps with a federal power

9. Which 1787 convention proposal called for a bicameral legislature with representation based purely on state population?

- (A) Three-Fifths Compromise
- (B) Connecticut Compromise
- (C) Virginia Plan
- (D) New Jersey Plan

10. Under the Three-Fifths Compromise, enslaved persons were partially counted for which two purposes?

- (A) Militia quotas and land grants
- (B) Elections and court appointments
- (C) Treaties and tariff revenue
- (D) Representation and taxation

Go deeper

WATCH Shays' Rebellion 0:29 · YouTube
Armed farmers shut down courthouses in western Massachusetts. They faced debtors' prison and losing their farms.

WATCH The Three-Fifths Compromise 0:30 · YouTube
Should enslaved people count toward a state's seats in Congress? Delegates in Philadelphia split over it.

WATCH A Capital for a Debt 0:27
The United States capital sits on the Potomac River because of a deal over debt.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/creating-the-republic-constitutional-design-and-the-federalists-1781-1800

STUDY United States History in the FlashFeed app flashfeedlearningapp.com/packs/us-history

LESSON 4 OF 13

The Early Republic, Jeffersonian Democracy, and the Marshall Court (1800–1824)

The Revolution of 1800, Louisiana Purchase, and Embargo Politics · Marbury v. Madison and the Marshall Court's Constitutional Jurisprudence · The War of 1812, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Missouri Compromise

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Analyze Jefferson's presidency: the election of 1800, the Louisiana Purchase, and the failed Embargo of 1807.
- Explain how Marbury v. Madison and later Marshall Court rulings built judicial review and federal supremacy.

Lesson 4: The Early Republic, Jeffersonian Democracy, and the Marshall Court (1800–1824)

The Revolution of 1800, Louisiana Purchase, and Embargo Politics

The presidential election of 1800 marked a historic watershed in American constitutional governance. Dubbed by Thomas Jefferson as the **"Revolution of 1800"**, it achieved the first peaceful transfer of executive power from one political party to another in American history, as the incumbent Federalist administration of John Adams yielded to the Democratic-Republicans. Because Jefferson and his vice-presidential running mate Aaron Burr received an identical number of electoral votes, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives, where Alexander Hamilton urged Federalist congressmen to prefer Jefferson as the lesser evil, and on the 36th ballot enough Federalists abstained to elect him, prompting the subsequent ratification of the **Twelfth Amendment (1804)** to separate presidential and vice-presidential ballots.

In office, Jefferson sought to implement his vision of **agrarian republicanism**, shrinking the federal bureaucracy, cutting military expenditures, and repealing the hated whiskey tax. Yet practical governance forced significant compromises with his strict constructionist principles. In 1803, Napoleon Bonaparte offered to sell the entire French territory of Louisiana for $15 million. Recognizing that the **Louisiana Purchase** would double the geographic size of the United States, secure navigation of the Mississippi River, and guarantee agricultural land for generations of yeoman farmers, Jefferson set aside his constitutional qualms about whether the federal government had the power to acquire foreign territory. The subsequent **Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804–1806)** explored the Pacific Northwest, mapping waterways and cataloging flora, fauna, and Indigenous nations.

Foreign policy crises dominated Jefferson's second term during the Napoleonic Wars. Both Great Britain and France seized neutral American commercial vessels. The British Royal Navy aggressively practiced **impressment**—the forced conscription of American sailors into British naval service. Following the Chesapeake-Leopard affair in 1807, Jefferson enacted the **Embargo Act of 1807**, cutting off all American foreign commerce to force European respect for American neutrality. The embargo failed disastrously: it devastated the American export economy, particularly in New England, and revitalized the moribund Federalist opposition.

Marbury v. Madison and the Marshall Court's Constitutional Jurisprudence

While the Federalists lost control of the executive and legislative branches in 1800, their judicial philosophy was entrenched by Chief Justice **John Marshall**, who presided over the Supreme Court from 1801 to 1835. In the landmark case of ***Marbury v. Madison* (1803)**, Marshall established the foundational doctrine of **judicial review**—the authority of the Supreme Court to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional. Marshall ruled that while William Marbury was entitled to his commission as justice of the peace, Section 13 of the Judiciary Act of 1789, which granted the Court original jurisdiction to issue writs of mandamus, conflicted directly with Article III of the Constitution. By declaring a federal statute void, Marshall elevated the judiciary to a co-equal status with Congress and the President.

Over three decades, the Marshall Court issued a sequence of rulings establishing federal supremacy over state laws and protecting private property contracts:

- ***McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)**: Marshall upheld the constitutional validity of the Second Bank of the United States under the **Necessary and Proper Clause** ("implied powers"), rejecting Maryland's attempt to tax the bank by declaring that "the power to tax involves the power to destroy" and confirming the **Supremacy Clause**.
- ***Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819)**: The Court ruled that corporate charters are protected contracts that state legislatures cannot unilaterally alter under the **Contract Clause**.
- ***Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824)**: Marshall struck down a New York steamboat monopoly, ruling that Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce under the **Commerce Clause** is broad and includes navigation, and holding that the monopoly conflicted with a federal licensing act.

The War of 1812, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Missouri Compromise

Tensions with Great Britain culminated in the **War of 1812** under President James Madison. Instigated by congressional **"War Hawks"** such as Henry Clay of Kentucky and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, the war was fought over British impressment, violations of neutral trade, and British arming of Native American confederacies led by Shawnee leader **Tecumseh** in the Old Northwest. Although the war witnessed humiliating setbacks—including the British burning of the White House and Capitol in August 1814—it also featured iconic defensive triumphs, including the defense of Fort McHenry in Baltimore (inspiring Francis Scott Key's "Star-Spangled Banner") and General **Andrew Jackson's** decisive victory at the **Battle of New Orleans** in January 1815, fought two weeks after the signing of the **Treaty of Ghent (1814)**.

The war had major domestic political consequences. Federalist opposition to the war culminated in the **Hartford Convention (1814–1815)**, where New England delegates discussed radical constitutional amendments and secession. When news of Jackson's victory arrived simultaneously, the Federalists were branded as unpatriotic traitors, leading to the party's permanent demise and inaugurating the one-party **"Era of Good Feelings"** under President James Monroe. Henry Clay championed the **American System**, an economic platform consisting of:

1. High **protective tariffs** to foster domestic manufacturing.
2. A strong national currency backed by the **Second Bank of the United States (1816)**.
3. Federal funding for **internal improvements** (canals and roads) to bind national markets.

In foreign affairs, Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams issued the **Monroe Doctrine (1823)**, declaring that the American continents were no longer open to European colonization and that European interference in newly independent Latin American republics would be viewed as acts of aggression.

Simultaneously, sectional crisis erupted over the expansion of slavery into western territories. When Missouri petitioned for statehood as a slave state in 1819, Northern congressmen led by James Tallmadge proposed restricting slavery, threatening the delicate 11-to-11 state balance in the Senate. Henry Clay brokered the **Missouri Compromise of 1820**: Missouri entered as a slave state, Maine entered as a free state, and slavery was permanently prohibited in the remaining Louisiana Territory north of the **36°30' parallel**. Thomas Jefferson famously described this sectional truce as a "fire bell in the night," warning that it was merely a temporary reprieve in the conflict over slavery.

Key terms

Agrarian Republicanism
A political philosophy championed by Thomas Jefferson emphasizing a virtuous republic anchored by self-sufficient, property-owning yeoman farmers rather than urban manufacturing.

Judicial Review
The doctrine under which legislative and executive actions are subject to review and potential invalidation by the judiciary for non-compliance with the Constitution.

Monroe Doctrine
A foreign policy declaration asserting that the Western Hemisphere is closed to European imperial colonization and that European intervention constitutes hostility toward the United States.

Sectional Balance
The deliberate legislative parity in the United States Senate between equal numbers of slave states and free states to prevent either region from dominating national policy.

Key concepts

Louisiana Purchase

- Territorial acquisition from France in 1803 negotiated for $15 million under President Jefferson
- Doubled the land area of the United States, adding 828,000 square miles west of the Mississippi
- Secured vital commercial navigation rights to the port of New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico

Embargo Act of 1807

- Federal statute that halted all American commercial shipping to foreign ports
- Enacted by President Jefferson to pressure Britain and France into respecting neutral trade
- Devastated New England port economies and stimulated widespread regional smuggling

John Marshall

- Fourth Chief Justice of the Supreme Court who presided over the Court from 1801 to 1835
- Established the doctrine of judicial review in the landmark case of Marbury v. Madison
- Consistently strengthened federal supremacy and protected private property contracts

Judicial Review

- Constitutional power of courts to evaluate the legality of legislative acts and executive orders
- Established as an explicit Supreme Court authority by Chief Justice Marshall in 1803
- Authorizes the judiciary to strike down laws that conflict with the United States Constitution

American System

- Economic nationalist platform championed by Kentucky statesman Henry Clay after 1815
- Composed of high protective tariffs, a national bank, and federally funded internal improvements
- Sought to create a self-sufficient domestic market integrating eastern industry and western agriculture

Monroe Doctrine

- Foundational foreign policy statement delivered to Congress by President James Monroe in 1823
- Declared the Western Hemisphere permanently closed to future European imperial colonization
- Warned that European interference in independent American nations would be treated as hostile acts

Missouri Compromise

- Congressional sectional truce brokered by Speaker Henry Clay in 1820
- Admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state to preserve Senate balance
- Prohibited slavery in the remaining Louisiana Territory north of latitude 36°30'

Key facts

The Revolution of 1800

The presidential election of 1800 marked the first peaceful transfer of executive power between opposing political parties in American history, as John Adams's Federalists yielded control of the presidency to Thomas Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans.

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson purchased 828,000 square miles of French territory from Napoleon Bonaparte for $15 million, doubling the geographic size of the United States and securing unrestricted commercial navigation of the Mississippi River.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition

Commissioned by President Jefferson in 1803, the Corps of Discovery led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark departed in 1804 and journeyed across the northern plains to the Pacific Ocean, mapping river routes and establishing trade relations with Indigenous nations.



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McCulloch v. Maryland and Implied Powers

In McCulloch v. Maryland (1819), the Marshall Court upheld the constitutional validity of the Second Bank of the United States under the Necessary and Proper Clause, striking down a state tax on the bank by affirming that 'the power to tax involves the power to destroy'.

Dartmouth College v. Woodward and Contracts

In Dartmouth College v. Woodward (1819), Chief Justice Marshall ruled that corporate charters are protected contracts that state legislatures cannot unilaterally alter or invalidate under the Contract Clause of Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution.



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Gibbons v. Ogden and Interstate Commerce

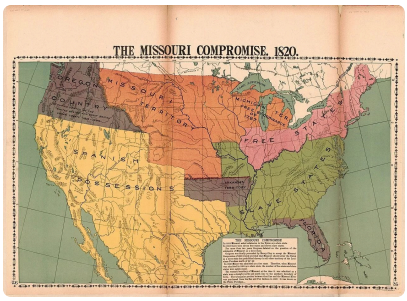
In Gibbons v. Ogden (1824), the Supreme Court struck down a New York state monopoly on steamboat navigation, establishing that the federal government possesses broad and exclusive authority to regulate interstate commerce under the Commerce Clause.



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The Monroe Doctrine of 1823

Drafted primarily by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams and announced by President James Monroe in 1823, the Monroe Doctrine declared the Western Hemisphere closed to future European colonization and warned that European intervention would be viewed as an act of hostility.



McConnell Map Co. · Public domain

The Missouri Compromise of 1820

Brokered by Henry Clay in 1820, the Missouri Compromise admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, maintaining the Senate sectional balance while permanently prohibiting slavery in the remainder of the Louisiana Territory north of 36°30' latitude.

By the numbers

How many millions of dollars did the United States pay to purchase the Louisiana Territory in 1803?

15 million dollars

In what calendar year did Chief Justice John Marshall issue the landmark Marbury v. Madison ruling?

1803 year

In what calendar year was the Missouri Compromise enacted by the United States Congress?

1820 year

In what calendar year did President James Monroe announce the Monroe Doctrine in his annual message?

1823 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Twelfth Amendment

→ Constitutional reform separating electoral votes for president and vice president

Contract Clause
→ Constitutional provision preventing state legislatures from impairing corporate charters

Era of Good Feelings → Period of apparent national political consensus under President James Monroe

War Hawks → Young nationalist congressmen who aggressively advocated military conflict in 1812

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What constitutional challenge did President Thomas Jefferson confront regarding the 1803 Louisiana Purchase?

- A The Supreme Court had already declared private land transactions with France unconstitutional
- B The Constitution contained no explicit clause authorizing the president to acquire foreign territory
- C The Bill of Rights barred federal spending exceeding two million dollars per fiscal calendar
- D The Twelfth Amendment prohibited territorial expansion without approval from all state governors

2. Why was the electoral deadlock of 1800 between Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr referred to the House of Representatives?

- A Both candidates received an identical number of electoral votes under the original ballot rules
- B The Senate, controlled by Federalists, refused to certify the electoral results from the southern states
- C Congress had never fixed a date for the electors to meet, so no result could be certified
- D The Federalist Party refused to allow popular ballots in New York and Pennsylvania

3. How did the Embargo Act of 1807 impact the domestic American economy during Jefferson's second term?

- A It won New England's merchants over to Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans
- B It forced Britain and France to lift their restrictions on neutral shipping within a year
- C It devastated New England maritime shipping, resulting in widespread bankruptcies and smuggling
- D It sharply increased cotton and tobacco exports to European markets

4. Which constitutional amendment resulted from the 1800 electoral tie between Jefferson and Burr?

- A Thirteenth Amendment
- B Eleventh Amendment
- C Fourteenth Amendment
- D Twelfth Amendment

5. Which policy was NOT part of Jefferson's agrarian republicanism agenda in office?

A Cutting military expenditures
B Repealing the whiskey tax
C Shrinking the federal bureaucracy
D Chartering a national bank

6. What foundational legal doctrine did Chief Justice John Marshall establish in Marbury v. Madison (1803)?

A The authority of the Supreme Court to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional through judicial review
B The constitutional prohibition on federal regulatory oversight of state chartered corporations
C The absolute sovereign right of individual states to nullify federal tax assessments at will
D The principle that Congress may charter a national bank under the Necessary and Proper Clause

7. In McCulloch v. Maryland (1819), how did the Supreme Court interpret the Necessary and Proper Clause?

A Federal statutes must be approved by unanimous consent of all state supreme courts to take effect
B Congress possesses broad implied powers to enact laws appropriate for executing enumerated powers
C State governments have supreme constitutional authority over all federal military installations
D The federal legislature is strictly prohibited from creating any commercial banking institution

8. What constitutional protection for private enterprise was established in Dartmouth College v. Woodward (1819)?

A Private corporations may not be taxed by any state government
B Every business enterprise has a constitutional right to a federal charter
C Corporate charters are protected legal contracts that state legislatures cannot unilaterally alter
D Private corporations are immune from federal regulation of interstate commerce

9. How did the Marshall Court define the Commerce Clause in Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)?

A Federal commercial regulation is restricted strictly to international trade with European powers
B Only the President, not Congress, holds constitutional authority to regulate interstate trade
C Congress has broad authority to regulate interstate navigation and commercial transport, overriding conflicting state monopolies
D Individual states maintain absolute monopoly authority over all rivers within their territorial borders

10. Maryland taxes a federally chartered bank, arguing states retain full sovereignty over economic institutions inside their borders. Which ruling rejects that claim?

A Marbury v. Madison
B Gibbons v. Ogden
C Dartmouth College v. Woodward
D McCulloch v. Maryland

Go deeper

WATCH The Louisiana Purchase 0:28 · YouTube
One deal doubled the size of the United States. The price was $15 million.

WATCH Marbury v. Madison 0:29 · YouTube
A fight over one man's job gave the Supreme Court a key power. The case was Marbury versus Madison, in 1803.

WATCH A Battle After the Peace 0:27
The Treaty of Ghent was signed two weeks before Andrew Jackson won at New Orleans in January 1815.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/the-early-republic-jeffersonian-democracy-and-the-marshall-court-1800-1824

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LESSON 5 OF 13

Jacksonian Democracy, Market Revolution, and Manifest Destiny (1824–1850)

Universal White Male Suffrage, Nullification Crisis, and the Bank War · The Market Revolution, Transportation, and Second Great Awakening Reforms · Indian Removal, Manifest Destiny, Texas Annexation, and the Mexican War

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Analyze Jacksonian Democracy: expanded white male suffrage, the Nullification Crisis, and the Bank War.
- Describe how canals, factories, and the reform crusades of the Second Great Awakening reshaped antebellum society.

Lesson 5: Jacksonian Democracy, Market Revolution, and Manifest Destiny (1824–1850)

Universal White Male Suffrage, Nullification Crisis, and the Bank War

The 1820s and 1830s witnessed a profound transformation in American political culture with the rise of **Jacksonian Democracy**. State constitutional conventions abolished property requirements for voting, instituting near-universal suffrage for adult white males. Mass voter turnout, popular campaigning, and professional party machines emerged as core features of the **Second Party System**, pitting **Andrew Jackson's Democrats** (champions of the "common man", states' rights, and strict construction) against **Henry Clay's Whigs** (advocates of federal economic intervention, the American System, and legislative supremacy). Jackson popularized the **"spoils system"** (rotation in office), rewarding partisan loyalists with federal appointments.

Jackson's presidency (1829–1837) was defined by fierce constitutional conflicts over federal power:

- **The Nullification Crisis (1832–1833)**: In response to high protective tariffs (the "Tariff of Abominations" of 1828), Vice President **John C. Calhoun** authored the *South Carolina Exposition and Protest*, arguing that sovereign states had the constitutional authority to nullify unconstitutional federal laws within their borders. When South Carolina declared the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 null and void and threatened secession, Jackson responded aggressively. He issued a Proclamation on Nullification declaring disunion treason and secured the **Force Bill (1833)** authorizing military intervention, while Henry Clay defused the crisis with the Compromise Tariff of 1833.
- **The Bank War**: Jackson viewed the **Second Bank of the United States**, directed by Nicholas Biddle, as an unconstitutional monopoly that enriched wealthy elites at the expense of working people. In

1832, Jackson vetoed the bill to recharter the Bank. Following his re-election, he dismantled the institution by withdrawing federal deposits and placing them in state-chartered **"pet banks."** This decentralized credit expansion led to rampant land speculation, prompting Jackson to issue the **Specie Circular (1836)**, requiring gold or silver for public land purchases. The contraction contributed to the catastrophic **Panic of 1837** and a severe five-year economic depression.

The Market Revolution, Transportation, and Second Great Awakening Reforms

Simultaneously, the United States underwent the **Market Revolution**, transitioning from local subsistence farming to an integrated national market economy driven by technological innovation and capitalist enterprise. The **transportation revolution** dramatically slashed shipping costs and transit times:

- The completion of the **Erie Canal in 1825** connected the Hudson River with Lake Erie, making New York City the nation's premier commercial metropolis and binding the agricultural Midwest to northeastern markets.
- **Steamboats** enabled two-way upstream navigation on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers.
- **Railroads** expanded rapidly in the 1830s and 1840s, while **Samuel Morse's telegraph (1844)** allowed instant nationwide communication.

Industrial manufacturing surged in the Northeast. The **Lowell mill system** in Massachusetts established textile manufacturing under single roofs, initially employing young rural farm women ("Lowell Mill Girls") under strict moral chaperonage before transitioning to cheaper immigrant labor. In agriculture, **Eli Whitney's cotton gin (1793)**, **Cyrus McCormick's mechanical reaper (1831)**, and **John Deere's steel plow (1837)** vastly expanded productive capacity.

Social disruption from market transformation sparked religious and moral reform during the **Second Great Awakening**. Evangelical revivals led by **Charles Grandison Finney** along the "burned-over district" of western New York preached individual free will and moral perfectionism. This religious fervor fueled major antebellum reform crusades:

- **Temperance**: The American Temperance Society campaigned to curb alcohol consumption.
- **Asylum and Prison Reform**: **Dorothea Dix** exposed the inhumane treatment of the mentally ill, leading to state-funded mental hospitals.
- **Public Education**: **Horace Mann** pioneered universal, tax-funded public common schools in Massachusetts.
- **Women's Rights**: In July 1848, **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** and **Lucretia Mott** convened the **Seneca Falls Convention**, issuing the **Declaration of Sentiments**, which modeled its grievances on the Declaration of Independence and demanded equal civil rights, including women's suffrage.

Indian Removal, Manifest Destiny, Texas Annexation, and the Mexican War

The territorial expansion of white settlement involved aggressive state and federal dispossession of Indigenous peoples. In 1830, Jackson signed the **Indian Removal Act**, coercing southeastern nations (Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole) to exchange ancestral homelands for lands west

of the Mississippi River in Indian Territory (modern Oklahoma). When the Cherokee Nation resisted legally, Chief Justice John Marshall ruled in ***Worcester v. Georgia* (1832)** that the Cherokee constituted a distinct political community over which Georgia state laws had no force. Jackson flouted the ruling, and in 1838–1839, the federal military forcibly marched over 15,000 Cherokees westward on the **Trail of Tears**, resulting in the deaths of an estimated 4,000 to 8,000 individuals (historians debate the exact toll) due to exposure, starvation, and disease.

In 1845, journalist John L. O'Sullivan coined the term **"Manifest Destiny"**, articulating the popular belief that the United States possessed a divinely ordained mission to expand democracy and self-government across the entire North American continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Manifest Destiny drove rapid territorial expansion under President **James K. Polk**:

- **Texas Annexation (1845)**: Following the 1836 Texas Revolution against Mexico, Texas operated as an independent republic until admitted as a slave state by joint congressional resolution.
- **Oregon Treaty (1846)**: Polk settled the Oregon boundary dispute with Great Britain, establishing the 49th parallel as the international border to the Pacific.
- **The Mexican-American War (1846–1848)**: Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor into disputed territory between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande, a move critics at the time (including Representative Abraham Lincoln) charged had provoked the war. Following American military victories in Mexico and California, Mexico signed the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)**. In exchange for $15 million, Mexico ceded over 500,000 square miles—the **Mexican Cession**—including modern California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming.

The acquisition of this vast territory immediately reopened the explosive sectional conflict over slavery. In 1846, Pennsylvania Representative David Wilmot proposed the **Wilmot Proviso**, seeking to ban slavery in all territory acquired from Mexico. Though repeatedly defeated in the Senate, the Wilmot Proviso signaled the collapse of national party unity and set the nation on a course toward civil war.

Key terms

Spoils System

A political practice wherein a victorious party awards public civil service jobs and government contracts to its partisan supporters as a reward for electoral victory.

Market Revolution

The nineteenth-century transformation of the American economy from local household subsistence to a specialized, commercial national market integrated by canals, railroads, and factories.

Moral Perfectionism

The evangelical religious doctrine that individuals can choose spiritual salvation and are divinely obligated to eradicate moral and social evils from their communities.

Manifest Destiny

The nineteenth-century cultural belief that the United States possessed a providential, divinely ordained mandate to expand democratic institutions and territory across North America.

Key concepts

Andrew Jackson

- Seventh President of the United States who championed the 'common man' and mass democracy
- Waged the Bank War against Nicholas Biddle and crushed South Carolina's nullification ordinance
- Enforced the Indian Removal Act resulting in the forced migration along the Trail of Tears

Second Party System

- National political framework spanning the late 1820s through the early 1850s
- Pitted Andrew Jackson's Democrats against Henry Clay's Whig coalition
- Driven by mass voter turnout, organized national party conventions, and the spoils system

Erie Canal

- 363-mile artificial waterway completed across New York State in 1825
- Connected the Hudson River with Lake Erie, slashing shipping costs by over 90 percent
- Transformed New York City into the premier commercial seaport of North America

Seneca Falls Convention

- Historic women's rights assembly organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott in 1848
- Issued the famous Declaration of Sentiments declaring that all men and women are created equal
- Inaugurated the organized national crusade for women's legal equality and voting rights

Trail of Tears

- Forced military eviction of the Cherokee Nation from ancestral lands in 1838–1839
- Conducted under the Indian Removal Act in defiance of the Supreme Court's Worcester ruling
- Resulted in an estimated 4,000 to 8,000 Cherokee deaths on the march to Oklahoma (historians debate the exact toll)

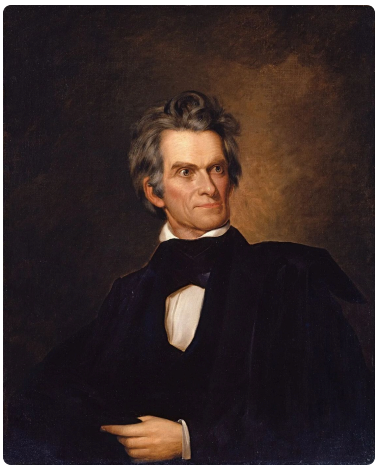
Manifest Destiny

- Nineteenth-century nationalist ideology coined by editor John L. O'Sullivan in 1845
- Asserted a divinely ordained mission for the United States to expand across the continent
- Served as the ideological rationale for the annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

- Peace treaty signed in 1848 concluding the Mexican-American War
- Ceded California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming to the US
- Paid Mexico $15 million and established the Rio Grande as the southern border of Texas

Key facts



George Peter Alexander Healy · Public domain

The Nullification Crisis of 1832–1833

Led by Vice President John C. Calhoun, South Carolina declared the federal protective tariffs of 1828 and 1832 null and void within its borders, prompting President Andrew Jackson to issue his Proclamation on Nullification and secure the Force Bill.



Henry Dacre (1820-?) · Public domain

The Panic of 1837

Triggered by Jackson's Specie Circular of 1836 (mandating gold or silver for public land purchases), runaway credit from pet banks, and British financial contractions, the Panic of 1837 caused a catastrophic five-year economic depression with rampant bank failures.



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The Erie Canal and Transportation Revolution

Completed in 1825 across 363 miles of New York, the Erie Canal linked the Hudson River to Lake Erie, reducing freight transport costs by over 90 percent, transforming New York City into the nation's premier metropolis, and integrating western agriculture.



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The Lowell Mill System

In Lowell, Massachusetts, the Boston Manufacturing Company established the Lowell system, integrating mechanized textile spinning and weaving in modern water-powered factories staffed predominantly by young, unmarried rural New England women.



Dubourg, M., engraver Milbert, Jacques Gérard, 1766-1840 , artist · Public domain

The Second Great Awakening

The Second Great Awakening swept across the nation in the 1820s and 1830s through evangelical revivals led by Charles Grandison Finney along New York's 'burned-over district', preaching human free will and moral perfectionism that catalyzed antebellum social reform movements.



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The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848

Organized in July 1848 by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, the Seneca Falls Convention in New York issued the Declaration of Sentiments, modeling its grievances on the Declaration of Independence to demand full civil rights and women's suffrage.

The Trail of Tears and Indian Removal

Enacted in 1830 under Andrew Jackson, the Indian Removal Act culminated in the 1838–1839 forced military eviction of over 15,000 Cherokees along the Trail of Tears to Indian Territory (Oklahoma), causing an estimated 4,000 to 8,000 deaths (historians debate the exact toll) from exposure, starvation, and disease.

The Mexican-American War and Mexican Cession

Provoked by President James K. Polk over disputed Texas boundaries in 1846, the Mexican-American War concluded with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), which ceded over 500,000 square miles—including California and New Mexico—to the United States for $15 million.

By the numbers

In what calendar year did South Carolina pass its Ordinance of Nullification against federal tariffs?
1832 year

In what calendar year was the historic Seneca Falls Convention held in upstate New York?
1848 year

How many total miles in length was the original Erie Canal when completed across New York in 1825?
363 miles

In what calendar year was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed, concluding the Mexican-American War?
1848 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Force Bill → Statute authorizing federal military force to collect customs duties in rebellious states

Spoils System
→ Practice of rewarding partisan political loyalists with government bureaucratic appointments

Dorothea Dix → Antebellum reformer who led campaigns to create state-funded mental asylums

Mexican Cession → Over 500,000 square miles of southwestern territory ceded to the US in 1848

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What democratic reform characterized the emergence of Jacksonian political culture in the 1820s and 1830s?

(A) Abolition of property ownership requirements to establish near-universal white male voting

(B) Granting universal voting franchise to all enslaved persons working in western territories

(C) Expanding voting rights equally to free Black men alongside white men lacking property

(D) Requiring United States Supreme Court justices to face direct popular election every five years

2. How did President Andrew Jackson respond to South Carolina's nullification of federal protective tariffs in 1832?

A. He rejected any use of force and urged South Carolina to secede peacefully
B. He withdrew the tariff outright and left South Carolina to settle the dispute on its own
C. He accepted South Carolina's claim that a state could nullify federal laws it judged unconstitutional
D. He declared nullification treason and secured congressional authority to use military force

3. What political rationale did Andrew Jackson articulate when vetoing the recharter of the Second Bank of the United States in 1832?

A. Each state had the sovereign right to nullify the bank's federal charter within its borders
B. The bank was an unconstitutional, monopolistic institution that enriched wealthy and foreign elites
C. The Bank was too weak to regulate state banknotes, so a stronger federal bank was needed
D. The Bank had lent too much money to western farmers and needed to be restrained

4. What was the direct consequence of Andrew Jackson's 1836 Specie Circular order?

A. It required state banks to redeem all outstanding paper notes in federal Treasury bonds
B. It caused a sudden nationwide expansion of paper currency and easy bank credit
C. It triggered a deflationary credit contraction by requiring gold or silver for federal land purchases
D. It authorized the Second Bank of the United States to resume issuing the nation's paper currency

5. Which 1833 measure did Henry Clay engineer to defuse the Nullification Crisis?

A. Missouri Compromise of 1820
B. Tariff of Abominations
C. Force Bill of 1833
D. Compromise Tariff of 1833

6. How did the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 transform the economic geography of the United States?

A. It connected Lake Erie to the Ohio River, opening a water route to the Gulf of Mexico
B. It linked the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River, so western grain flowed south to New Orleans
C. It bound the agricultural Midwest to northeastern urban markets and sharply cut freight costs
D. It raised freight costs on western grain because canal tolls exceeded wagon rates

7. What labor arrangement characterized the early Lowell textile manufacturing system in Massachusetts?

A. Unmarried young rural women worked in centralized water-powered mills under strict moral boarding
B. Whole farm families were hired as units and lived in a mill village under the owner's supervision
C. Irish and German immigrant families did piece-rate work in their own homes
D. Artisan master craftsmen hand-wove cloth in dispersed independent home workshops

8. What core theological concept preached during the Second Great Awakening energized antebellum reform movements?

A. Transcendentalism, finding the divine in nature while rejecting organized churches
B. Moral perfectionism and individual free will, holding that Christians must actively reform society
C. Strict Calvinist predestination asserting that human moral reform cannot alter divine damnation
D. Deism, the belief that reason alone reveals a creator who does not intervene in human affairs

9. Which demand appeared in the Declaration of Sentiments issued at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848?

A. Equal civil rights and the constitutional franchise of voting for women
B. The admission of women as full voting members of political party conventions
C. Equal pay for women performing the same factory labor as men
D. A demand that husbands surrender all personal property to their wives

10. Which reformer pioneered tax-funded public common schools in Massachusetts during the antebellum era?

A. Dorothea Dix
B. Charles Grandison Finney
C. Horace Mann
D. Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Go deeper

WATCH The Canal That Built a Market 0:30
One canal made New York City the top trading city in the nation. The Erie Canal was finished in 1825.

WATCH The Trail of Tears 0:32
The Supreme Court sided with the Cherokee Nation. In 1832, it ruled that Georgia's laws had no force over the Cherokee.

WATCH The Bank War 0:29
Andrew Jackson went to war with the nation's bank. He saw the Second Bank of the United States as a monopoly for wealthy elites.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/jacksonian-democracy-market-revolution-and-manifest-destiny-1824-1850

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LESSON 6 OF 13

The Sectional Crisis, Economics of Slavery, and Road to Disunion (1850–1861)

King Cotton, Plantation Economics, and the Domestic Slave Trade · Abolitionism, the Fugitive Slave Act, and Bleeding Kansas · Dred Scott, Lincoln-Douglas Debates, Harpers Ferry, and 1860 Election

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Explain how cotton, the domestic slave trade, and the 'positive good' defense bound the South to slavery.
- Trace how abolitionism, the Fugitive Slave Act, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act deepened the sectional crisis.

Lesson 6: The Sectional Crisis, Economics of Slavery, and Road to Disunion (1850–1861)

King Cotton, Plantation Economics, and the Domestic Slave Trade

By 1850, the Southern economy was entirely dominated by **chattel slavery** and the production of short-staple cotton. Following Eli Whitney's cotton gin (1793), the Southern cotton crop expanded exponentially, providing roughly 60 percent of total United States export value and supplying the textile mills of Great Britain and New England. Southern planters embraced the political concept of **"King Cotton"**, believing that Britain's reliance on American cotton gave the South invincible economic leverage.

Because the federal government abolished the transatlantic slave trade in **1808**, Southern planters met their insatiable demand for labor through the **domestic slave trade** (the "Second Middle Passage"). Over one million enslaved African Americans were forcibly relocated from the Upper South (Virginia, Maryland) to the booming plantations of the Deep South ("Black Belt" regions of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas). Enslaved people were capitalized assets; by some economic historians' estimates, the total monetary value of enslaved human beings exceeded the combined value of all American railroads, factories, and commercial banks, though the precise methodology behind such comparisons remains debated. Enslaved people resisted their bondage through daily sabotage, feigning illness, running away (sometimes aided by **Underground Railroad** conductors such as **Harriet Tubman**), and organizing armed uprisings like **Nat Turner's Rebellion (1831)** in Virginia, which prompted draconian restrictions across the South.

Southern intellectuals moved from defending slavery as a "necessary evil" to championing it as a **"positive good"**. Ideologues like **George Fitzhugh** and John C. Calhoun argued that Southern chattel

slavery was morally superior to Northern industrial "wage slavery", claiming it provided lifelong paternalistic security for laborers while insulating society from class warfare.

Abolitionism, the Fugitive Slave Act, and Bleeding Kansas

In the North, the radical **abolitionist movement** gained momentum. In 1831, **William Lloyd Garrison** founded *The Liberator*, demanding the immediate, uncompensated emancipation of all enslaved people; by the 1840s he was denouncing the Constitution as a "covenant with death." Escaped enslaved leaders like **Frederick Douglass** and **Sojourner Truth** provided firsthand eloquence on the brutality of the slave system.

The admission of California as a free state following the 1848 Gold Rush threatened to permanently shatter the Senate sectional balance. Henry Clay and Stephen A. Douglas forged the **Compromise of 1850**:

1. California was admitted as a **free state**.
2. The territories of New Mexico and Utah were organized under **popular sovereignty** (territorial voters would decide slavery).
3. The domestic slave trade (though not slavery itself) was abolished in **Washington, D.C.**
4. A stringent new **Fugitive Slave Act of 1850** was enacted, empowering federal commissioners to rule on alleged runaways without jury trials, obliging federal marshals to arrest them, commanding citizens to assist when summoned, and punishing anyone who hid a fugitive or obstructed an arrest with a fine of up to $1,000 and up to six months in jail.

The Fugitive Slave Act brought the violence of slavery directly into Northern communities, sparking fierce resistance, rescue riots, and state **personal liberty laws**. Public outrage intensified with the 1852 publication of **Harriet Beecher Stowe's** novel, ***Uncle Tom's Cabin***, which humanized enslaved people and personalized the moral cruelty of family separation.

In 1854, Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas introduced the **Kansas-Nebraska Act** to facilitate a transcontinental railroad route through Chicago. The act repealed the Missouri Compromise's 36°30' prohibition on slavery, opening Kansas and Nebraska territories to **popular sovereignty**. This legislative betrayal ignited **"Bleeding Kansas"**, a localized civil war between pro-slavery "Border Ruffians" from Missouri and anti-slavery "Free-Soilers" armed by Northern abolitionists. In May 1856, radical abolitionist **John Brown** led the Pottawatomie Massacre, executing five pro-slavery settlers. Days earlier on the Senate floor, South Carolina Representative Preston Brooks brutally caned Massachusetts Senator **Charles Sumner** unconscious following Sumner's "Crime Against Kansas" speech.

Dred Scott, Lincoln-Douglas Debates, Harpers Ferry, and 1860 Election

The Kansas-Nebraska Act shattered the Whig Party, giving birth to the **Republican Party (1854)**, a Northern coalition united around the **"Free Soil"** doctrine—preventing any further territorial expansion of slavery to preserve western lands for free white labor.

In March 1857, the Supreme Court delivered the catastrophic ruling in ***Dred Scott v. Sandford***. Chief Justice **Roger B. Taney** declared:

1. African Americans (free or enslaved) were not and could never be citizens under the Constitution and therefore had no standing to sue in federal courts.
2. Enslaved persons were private property protected by the **Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause**.
3. Congress possessed no constitutional authority to prohibit slavery in federal territories, rendering the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional.

The ruling infuriated Northerners who perceived a vast **"Slave Power"** conspiracy to nationalize slavery. In 1858, the Illinois Senate campaign pitted Stephen Douglas against Republican **Abraham Lincoln**. Accepting the Republican nomination that June, Lincoln delivered his famous **"House Divided"** speech, predicting that the Union could not permanently endure half slave and half free. When Lincoln challenged Douglas to reconcile popular sovereignty with the *Dred Scott* decision, Douglas articulated the **Freeport Doctrine**, arguing that territories could exclude slavery by refusing to pass local protective police regulations. This alienated Southern Democrats, shattering the national Democratic Party.

In October 1859, John Brown led a raid on the federal arsenal at **Harpers Ferry, Virginia**, intending to arm an insurrectionary slave army in the Appalachian Mountains. Captured by Colonel Robert E. Lee and executed for treason, Brown became an abolitionist martyr in the North and confirmed Southern fears of Northern-sponsored race war.

The **Presidential Election of 1860** marked the point of no return. The Democratic Party fractured: Northern Democrats nominated Stephen Douglas, while Southern Democrats nominated John C. Breckinridge on a federal slave code platform. Constitutional Unionists nominated John Bell. Abraham Lincoln won the presidency carrying every Northern free state except New Jersey, where he took four of seven electoral votes, without receiving a single electoral vote from the South. Viewing a Republican presidency as an existential threat to slavery, South Carolina unanimously voted to secede on **December 20, 1860**, followed by Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas, establishing the Confederate States of America.

Key terms

Positive Good Theory

The pro-slavery ideology claiming that racial chattel slavery was a beneficial institution that civilized African laborers and maintained social stability superior to free labor capitalism.

Popular Sovereignty

The political doctrine that the resident electorate of a federal territory should determine by popular vote whether to permit or prohibit chattel slavery within their borders.

Free Soil

An anti-slavery political movement dedicated to halting the geographic expansion of slavery into western territories to preserve public lands for independent free white laborers.

Secession

The formal political act by which a sovereign state withdraws its membership from a federal union or nation, as executed by eleven Southern states in 1860–1861.

Key concepts

King Cotton

- Economic reality and political doctrine of the antebellum Southern plantation oligarchy
- Dominated American exports, providing over 60 percent of total national export value by 1850
- Led Southern leaders to believe Britain and France would intervene militarily in any civil war

Underground Railroad

- Clandestine network of safe houses, escape routes, and secret conductors in antebellum America
- Assisted thousands of enslaved African Americans in escaping to Northern free states and Canada
- Led by courageous conductors including Harriet Tubman, William Still, and Thomas Garrett

Fugitive Slave Act of 1850

- Highly contentious component of the Compromise of 1850 enacted by the federal government
- Denied accused fugitives jury trials and habeas corpus, relying on special federal commissioners
- Compelled Northern citizens to assist slave catchers under penalty of fine and imprisonment

Uncle Tom's Cabin

- Blockbuster anti-slavery novel published by Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1852
- Humanized enslaved families and exposed the emotional and physical brutality of chattel slavery
- Sold over 300,000 copies in its first year, mobilizing widespread Northern anti-slavery sentiment

Bleeding Kansas

- Violent localized civil conflict in Kansas Territory between 1854 and 1859
- Triggered by the Kansas-Nebraska Act's establishment of popular sovereignty over slavery
- Featured armed clashes between pro-slavery Border Ruffians and anti-slavery Free-Soilers like John Brown

Dred Scott v. Sandford

- Infamous 1857 Supreme Court decision authored by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney
- Ruled that Black people were not citizens and had no constitutional standing in federal courts
- Declared that Congress had no power to ban slavery in federal territories, voiding the Missouri Compromise

John Brown

- Radical Calvinist abolitionist who led the 1856 Pottawatomie Creek killings in Kansas
- Led an armed raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in October 1859
- Executed for treason, becoming a martyr in the North and igniting Southern fears of slave revolt

Key facts

King Cotton and the Plantation Economy

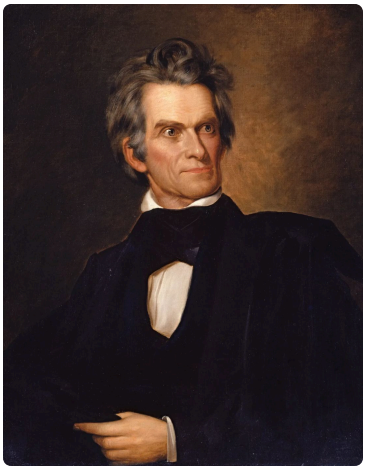
By 1850, Southern short-staple cotton production accounted for over 60 percent of total United States export value, fueling the British textile industry and embedding Southern planter elites in global capitalist credit and commodity networks.



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The Domestic Slave Trade

Following the 1808 federal ban on transatlantic slave importation, the domestic slave trade forcibly relocated over one million enslaved African Americans from the Upper South to the booming cotton frontiers of the Deep South, shattering families through commercial sales.



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The Positive Good Ideology

In the 1830s and 1840s, Southern theorists like John C. Calhoun and George Fitzhugh abandoned the defense of slavery as a 'necessary evil', aggressively arguing it was a 'positive good' that provided paternalistic security superior to Northern wage labor.



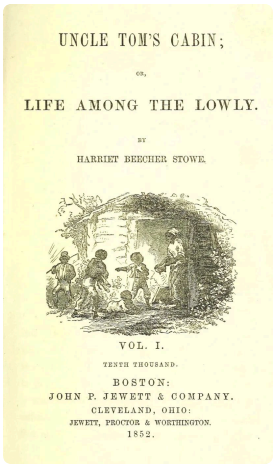
Drawn by Peter F. Rothermel / engraved by Robert Whitechurch (1814-ca. 1880) · Public domain

The Compromise of 1850

Brokered by Henry Clay and Stephen Douglas, the Compromise of 1850 admitted California as a free state, organized Utah and New Mexico under popular sovereignty, banned the slave trade in Washington D.C., and enacted a draconian new Fugitive Slave Act.

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 let federal commissioners rule on alleged runaway slaves without jury trials, barred the accused from testifying, ordered citizens to help when summoned, and set fines and jail terms for anyone who hid a fugitive or blocked an arrest.



Wikimedia Commons · Harriet Beecher Stowe · Public domain

Harriet Beecher Stowe and Uncle Tom's Cabin

Published in 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel Uncle Tom's Cabin sold over 300,000 copies in its first year, emotionalizing the cruelty of chattel slavery and family separation, and profoundly shifting Northern public opinion against the institution.



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The Kansas-Nebraska Act and Bleeding Kansas

Introduced in 1854 by Stephen Douglas, the Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the Missouri Compromise's 36°30' restriction on slavery to organize western territories under popular sovereignty, igniting a violent proxy civil war known as 'Bleeding Kansas'.



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John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry

In October 1859, radical abolitionist John Brown led an armed raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, attempting to spark an Appalachian slave insurrection; his capture and execution made him a Northern martyr and stoked Southern fears of armed race war.

By the numbers

In what calendar year did the constitutional ban on the international importation of slaves take effect?
1808 year

In what calendar year did Congress enact the Kansas-Nebraska Act, repealing the Missouri Compromise line?
1854 year

In what calendar year did the Supreme Court issue the Dred Scott v. Sandford ruling?
1857 year

In what calendar year did Abraham Lincoln win the four-way presidential election on the Republican ticket?
1860 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Second Middle Passage
→ Internal forced migration of over one million enslaved people to the Deep South cotton belt

Popular Sovereignty → Territorial policy allowing local residents to vote on the legalization of slavery

Free Soil → Political platform prohibiting any further territorial expansion of chattel slavery

House Divided Speech
→ Famous 1858 address declaring that a nation cannot permanently endure half slave and half free

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. Which federal action drove Southern planters to rely on the domestic slave trade after 1808?

(A) Passage of the Fugitive Slave Act
(B) Congressional passage of the Compromise of 1850
(C) Abolition of the transatlantic slave trade
(D) Enactment of the Missouri Compromise

2. Why did Southern planters believe 'King Cotton' gave the South unbeatable leverage?

(A) Cotton plantations out-produced Northern factories
(B) British textile mills depended on Southern cotton
(C) The U.S. Treasury backed currency with cotton reserves
(D) Congress required Europe to buy cotton at fixed prices

3. Which of these was NOT a way enslaved people resisted bondage in the antebellum South?

A. Escaping north via the Underground Railroad
B. Feigning illness to slow plantation work
C. Organizing armed uprisings like Nat Turner's Rebellion
D. Petitioning Congress for compensated emancipation

4. How did pro-slavery ideologues like George Fitzhugh defend slavery by the 1850s?

A. A 'positive good' superior to wage labor
B. A 'necessary evil' to be phased out
C. A private matter beyond federal law
D. A moral sin requiring immediate emancipation

5. By 1850, roughly what share of total United States export value came from cotton?

A. Over 60 percent
B. Over 90 percent
C. About 40 percent
D. About 25 percent

6. What effect did Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 novel Uncle Tom's Cabin have in the North?

A. Directly launched the Free Soil Party
B. Persuaded Congress to repeal the Fugitive Slave Act
C. Convinced planters to voluntarily free enslaved people
D. Intensified Northern opposition to slavery

7. Why did the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 provoke such fierce Northern resistance?

A. Gave slaveholders extra seats in the Senate
B. Denied accused runaways a jury trial
C. Required Northern states to legalize slavery
D. Banned abolitionist newspapers

8. How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 lead directly to 'Bleeding Kansas'?

A. Replaced popular sovereignty with a slave code
B. Admitted Kansas as a slave state by decree
C. Repealed the Missouri Compromise line
D. Transferred Kansas to British administration

9. Which political party formed directly out of Northern opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act?

A. The Know-Nothing Party
B. The Whig Party
C. The Republican Party
D. The Free-Soil Party

10. What key concession did Northern free states secure in the Compromise of 1850?

A. The permanent prohibition of all federal fugitive slave extradition proceedings
B. The admission of California as a free state and the abolition of the slave trade in Washington D.C.
C. Adoption of the Wilmot Proviso banning slavery in all lands acquired from Mexico
D. A federal ban on slavery in the New Mexico and Utah territories

Go deeper

WATCH The Second Middle Passage 0:30
The United States banned the Atlantic slave trade in 1808. Yet slavery in the South kept growing.

WATCH The Dred Scott Ruling 0:29
The Supreme Court ruled that no Black American could ever be a citizen. The case was Dred Scott versus Sandford, in 1857.

WATCH The Law That Reached North 0:30
Northerners could be fined or jailed for not helping slave catchers. That was the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/the-sectional-crisis-economics-of-slavery-and-road-to-disunion-1850-1861

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LESSON 7 OF 13

The Civil War: Total War, Emancipation, and Union Victory (1861–1865)

Secession, Fort Sumter, and Military Strategies (Anaconda vs. King Cotton) · Emancipation Proclamation, Black Regiments, and Strategic Turning Points · Civil War Homefront Legislation, Total War, and Appomattox Surrender

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Describe secession, the outbreak of war at Fort Sumter, and the rival Anaconda and King Cotton strategies.
- Explain how emancipation, Black soldiers, and the 1863 victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg turned the war.

Lesson 7: The Civil War: Total War, Emancipation, and Union Victory (1861–1865)

Secession, Fort Sumter, and Military Strategies (Anaconda vs. King Cotton)

In February 1861, seven seceding states formed the **Confederate States of America** in Montgomery, Alabama, electing Jefferson Davis as president. In an improvised speech delivered in Savannah, Georgia, on March 21, 1861, Confederate Vice President **Alexander Stephens** delivered the **"Cornerstone Speech"**, explicitly proclaiming that the Confederacy's "foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition."

War commenced on **April 12, 1861**, when Confederate batteries under General P.G.T. Beauregard fired upon federal troops at **Fort Sumter** in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. In response, President Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteer troops to suppress the rebellion, prompting four Upper South states (Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas) to secede. Lincoln took extraordinary measures—including suspending the writ of *habeas corpus* in Maryland—to secure the vital **Border States** (Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri), whose industry, population, and strategic river corridors were essential for Union survival.

The Union possessed overwhelming material advantages: 71 percent of the population, 85 percent of national manufacturing, 70 percent of railroad mileage, and an established navy and financial system. The Confederacy possessed interior defensive lines, experienced military commanders (such as **Robert E. Lee** and **Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson**), and ideological commitment to protecting their homeland.

Union General Winfield Scott devised the **Anaconda Plan**, a long-term strategy designed to constrict the Confederacy through two components while deliberately avoiding a costly direct invasion of Richmond:

1. A total naval blockade of Southern Atlantic and Gulf coastlines.
2. Securing control of the **Mississippi River**, culminating in the capture of New Orleans, to split the Confederacy in two.

The Confederacy pursued an offensive-defense strategy paired with **"King Cotton diplomacy"**, withholding cotton exports in a failed attempt to force British and French diplomatic recognition.

Emancipation Proclamation, Black Regiments, and Strategic Turning Points

Early fighting in the Eastern Theater favored the Confederacy, as Union offensives were repulsed at the **First Battle of Bull Run (Manassas)** in July 1861 and the Seven Days Battles in 1862. However, Confederate General Robert E. Lee's first invasion of the North was halted on **September 17, 1862**, at the **Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg)** in Maryland, the single bloodiest day in American military history (with over 22,000 casualties).

Antietam provided Lincoln with the critical victory he required to issue the preliminary **Emancipation Proclamation**. Taking effect on **January 1, 1863**, the Proclamation declared that all enslaved persons in areas "in rebellion against the United States" were "then, thenceforward, and forever free." Framed as a constitutional war measure under the president's commander-in-chief powers, the proclamation transformed the Union war effort from a conservative struggle to restore the Union into a revolutionary crusade to destroy chattel slavery, while making European recognition of the Confederacy politically harder.

Crucially, the Emancipation Proclamation authorized the enlistment of African American soldiers into the Union armed forces. About 180,000 Black men served in the Union Army, roughly 10 percent of its soldiers: most in the **United States Colored Troops (USCT)**, others in state regiments such as the famed **54th Massachusetts Infantry**, led by Colonel Robert Gould Shaw at Fort Wagner. Their service provided indispensable manpower for victory.

In July 1863, twin Union victories marked the decisive turning point of the war:

- **Battle of Gettysburg (July 1–3, 1863)**: General George Meade's Army of the Potomac defeated Lee's second invasion of the North, repelling Pickett's Charge and leaving Lee largely on the defensive for the rest of the war. In November 1863, Lincoln delivered the **Gettysburg Address**, rededicating the nation to a "new birth of freedom."
- **Siege of Vicksburg (concluded July 4, 1863)**: General **Ulysses S. Grant** captured the Confederate fortress at Vicksburg, Mississippi. With the surrender of Port Hudson, Louisiana, five days later, the Union controlled the entire Mississippi River, severing Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana from the rest of the Confederacy.

Civil War Homefront Legislation, Total War, and Appomattox Surrender

With Southern Democrats absent from Congress, the Republican wartime majority enacted a sweeping legislative program that transformed the American national economy:

- **Homestead Act of 1862**: Granted 160 acres of surveyed public land in the West to settlers for a nominal fee after five years of residence and cultivation.

- **Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862**: Donated public lands to states to fund state agricultural and technical colleges.
- **Pacific Railway Act of 1862**: Authorized federal land grants and loans to construct the first transcontinental railroad.
- **Legal Tender Act (1862) and National Banking Acts (1863–1864)**: Created a national fiat currency (**"Greenbacks"**) and a unified federal banking system.

In March 1864, Lincoln appointed Ulysses S. Grant as General-in-Chief of all Union armies. Grant launched the relentless **Overland Campaign** in Virginia, engaging Lee in brutal wars of attrition at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor before pinning Lee in the ten-month Siege of Petersburg.

In the West, General **William Tecumseh Sherman** waged what has often been called **total war**, aiming to dismantle not only the enemy's military forces but also its economic infrastructure and civilian psychological will to resist. Following the capture of Atlanta in September 1864—which greatly improved Lincoln's chances of re-election against Democratic nominee George McClellan, whose party platform called for a negotiated peace—Sherman conducted his devastating **March to the Sea** across Georgia to Savannah, systematically destroying railroads, cotton gins, bridges, and supply depots.

In April 1865, Union forces shattered Confederate defenses at Petersburg, forcing the evacuation and fall of Richmond. On **April 9, 1865**, General Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Ulysses S. Grant at **Appomattox Court House, Virginia**, effectively ending the war. Five days later, on April 14, 1865, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's Theatre in Washington by Confederate sympathizer **John Wilkes Booth**, plunging the triumphant nation into political grief and uncertainty on the eve of Reconstruction.

Key terms

Border States

The four slaveholding states—Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri—that remained loyal to the Union during the American Civil War.

Emancipation Proclamation

A presidential war order issued by Abraham Lincoln freeing all enslaved people residing in Confederate territory in rebellion against the United States.

Total War

A modern military doctrine in which a belligerent mobilizes all societal resources and deliberately destroys an enemy's economic infrastructure and civilian morale.

Greenbacks

Federal fiat paper currency issued by the United States Treasury under the Legal Tender Act of 1862, not backed by gold or silver, to finance the Union war effort.

Key concepts

Anaconda Plan

- Grand strategic blueprint devised by Union General Winfield Scott in 1861
- Combined a total naval blockade of Southern ports with an offensive to control the Mississippi River
- Aimed to encircle and constrict the economic and military life of the Confederacy

Emancipation Proclamation

- Executive decree issued by Abraham Lincoln taking effect on January 1, 1863
- Declared forever free all enslaved people in Confederate areas in rebellion against the Union
- Transformed the Union war effort into a moral crusade to destroy chattel slavery

Battle of Gettysburg

- Fierce three-day engagement fought in Pennsylvania on July 1–3, 1863
- Halted Robert E. Lee's second invasion of the North and culminated in Pickett's Charge
- Resulted in over 50,000 combined casualties, permanently breaking Confederate offensive capability

Siege of Vicksburg

- Brilliant riverine campaign conducted by Ulysses S. Grant culminating on July 4, 1863
- Starved the Confederate bastion on the Mississippi River bluffs into surrender, with its garrison paroled
- With Port Hudson's surrender five days later, gave the Union the entire Mississippi River and split the Confederacy in two

Homestead Act of 1862

- Landmark federal statute enacted by the Republican-controlled wartime Congress in 1862
- Offered 160 acres of surveyed public land for a nominal fee to settlers who improved it for five years
- Accelerated western settlement and promoted the Free Soil vision of independent family farms

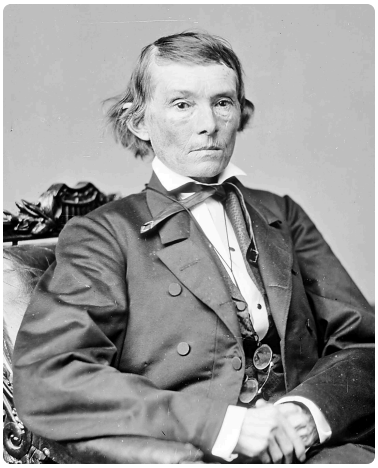
Ulysses S. Grant

- Union general who captured Fort Donelson and Vicksburg before being appointed General-in-Chief in 1864
- Waged the relentless Overland Campaign of attrition against Robert E. Lee in Virginia
- Accepted the final Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House on generous terms

Appomattox Court House

- Small Virginia village where Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant met on April 9, 1865
- Site of the formal surrender of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia
- Marked the practical military conclusion of the American Civil War

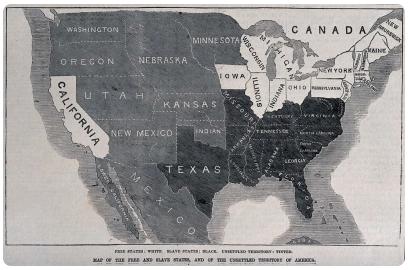
Key facts



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The Cornerstone Speech

In March 1861, Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens delivered the Cornerstone Speech in Savannah, explicitly declaring that the Confederacy's foundations rested upon the great truth that the Negro is not equal to the white man and that racial slavery is his natural condition.



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Strategic Importance of the Border States

President Lincoln prioritized securing the four slaveholding Border States—Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri—whose industrial capacity, railroad corridors, and population were vital to prevent the encirclement of Washington D.C. and preserve Union victory.



Library of Congress · Dunker Church, battlefield of Antietam · No known restrictions (verify at source)

The Battle of Antietam and the Preliminary Proclamation

Fought on September 17, 1862, in Maryland, the Battle of Antietam halted General Robert E. Lee's first northern invasion in the bloodiest single day in American military history (over 22,000 casualties), providing Lincoln the victory needed to issue the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.



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The Emancipation Proclamation of 1863

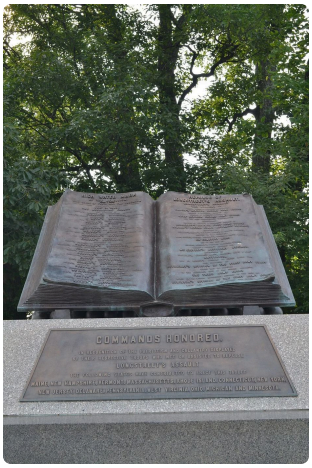
Taking effect on January 1, 1863, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declared all enslaved people in Confederate-held territory 'thenceforward, and forever free', transformed the war into a crusade to abolish slavery, and authorized Black military enlistment.



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United States Colored Troops and the 54th Massachusetts

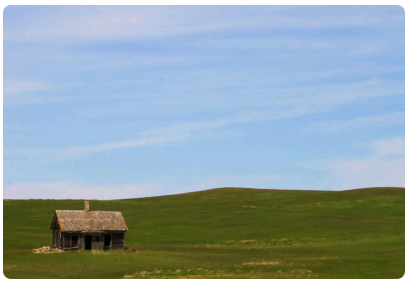
About 180,000 Black men served in the Union Army, roughly 10 percent of its soldiers, most in the United States Colored Troops (USCT); the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, a state regiment, showed their courage in the July 1863 assault on Fort Wagner, helping erode Northern skepticism about Black soldiers.



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The Twin Turning Points: Gettysburg and Vicksburg

In July 1863, the Union secured decisive twin victories: repelling Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania at Gettysburg (July 1–3) and capturing the Confederate fortress at Vicksburg (July 4) under Ulysses S. Grant, severing the Confederacy along the Mississippi River.



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Republican Wartime Legislation of 1862

During the war, the Republican-led Congress enacted a transformative domestic economic program, passing the Homestead Act (160 acres of public land), the Morrill Land-Grant Act (funding state agricultural colleges), and the Pacific Railway Act (transcontinental railroad).



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Sherman's March to the Sea and Total War

In late 1864, Union General William Tecumseh Sherman captured Atlanta and executed his devastating March to the Sea across Georgia, destroying railroads, bridges, and supply depots to crush the Confederacy's material infrastructure and psychological will to fight.

> **Surrender at Appomattox Court House**
>
> On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, effectively bringing the Civil War to an end under generous terms of surrender.

By the numbers

In what calendar year did Confederate forces bombard Fort Sumter, starting the Civil War?

1861 year

In what calendar year did the twin Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg occur?

1863 year

How many acres of surveyed public land were granted to settlers under the Homestead Act of 1862?

160 acres

In what calendar year did General Robert E. Lee surrender to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox?

1865 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

King Cotton Diplomacy

→ Confederate strategy of withholding cotton exports to force European diplomatic recognition

Gettysburg Address
→ Iconic 1863 speech dedicating a national cemetery and proclaiming a new birth of freedom

Morrill Land-Grant Act
→ Federal legislation allocating public lands to fund state agricultural and technical colleges

Total War
→ Military doctrine targeting not only opposing armies but also economic infrastructure and civilian will

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What did Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens identify as the 'cornerstone' of the Confederacy in 1861?

- A The absolute separation of church and state across all municipal counties
- B The foundational truth that the Negro is not equal to the white man and racial slavery is normal
- C The preservation of states' rights against an overreaching federal government
- D The protection of Southern free trade against high Northern manufacturing tariffs

2. What material advantage did the Union possess over the Confederacy at the outbreak of the Civil War?

- A Familiarity with interior defensive battlegrounds across Virginia and Georgia
- B A formal military treaty securing British Royal Navy intervention in the Atlantic
- C A far greater population combined with much larger industrial and rail capacity than the Confederacy possessed
- D Complete monopoly over global short-staple cotton agricultural production

3. What were the core components of General Winfield Scott's 'Anaconda Plan'?

- A A rapid strike on Richmond and capture of the government
- B Border-state emancipation and the arming of freed slaves
- C Defensive attrition and avoiding large open-field battles
- D A coastal blockade and Union control of the Mississippi

4. Which event triggered the outbreak of military hostilities in the Civil War?

- A Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter
- B Lincoln's call for volunteers
- C South Carolina's secession
- D Union naval blockade of Southern Atlantic ports

5. What did the Confederacy hope King Cotton diplomacy would achieve in Europe?

- A Recognition of Confederate independence
- B Ironclad warships for the Confederacy
- C Loans of gold from British banks
- D A European naval alliance against the blockade

6. Why was the Battle of Antietam (September 1862) politically vital for President Abraham Lincoln?

A. It persuaded the British Parliament to officially recognize Confederate independence
B. It prompted the state of Maryland to formally secede and join the Confederacy
C. The outcome was the unconditional capture of General Robert E. Lee and his staff
D. It provided the necessary military victory to issue the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation

7. Which enslaved people were specifically declared free by the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863?

A. Enslaved workers employed exclusively on federal military shipyard construction
B. Every enslaved person in the loyal Border States of Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri
C. Only enslaved people residing in Confederate territories in active rebellion against the United States
D. Enslaved people already living in Union-occupied areas of the South, such as New Orleans

8. How did African American soldiers contribute to the Union war effort?

A. About 20,000 men; most joined in the war's last month
B. About a tenth of the army; many fought in major battles
C. A few thousand men; they stayed behind in Northern camps
D. About half the Union army; they worked mainly as laborers

9. Why was the Battle of Gettysburg (July 1–3, 1863) a major strategic turning point?

A. It allowed General Meade to trap and destroy Lee's entire retreating army before it reached Virginia
B. It forced the Union Army to withdraw entirely from the state of Pennsylvania
C. It convinced General Grant to resign his command and seek political office in Illinois
D. It repelled Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania and ended his last major offensive into the North

10. What strategic outcome was achieved by General Ulysses S. Grant's capture of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863?

A. The Union ended the fighting in the Western Theater
B. The Union split the Confederacy along the Mississippi River
C. The Union forced Lee to abandon his invasion of the North
D. The Union sealed off the Confederacy's Atlantic seaports

Go deeper

WATCH The Anaconda Plan 0:29
One Union war plan was named after a giant snake. General Winfield Scott designed the Anaconda Plan.

WATCH The Emancipation Proclamation 0:28
The Emancipation Proclamation had a limit. It declared enslaved people free in areas in rebellion against the United States.

WATCH 160 Acres in Wartime 0:28
Congress offered settlers 160 acres in the West, during the Civil War. The Homestead Act asked a nominal fee and 5 years of farming.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/the-civil-war-total-war-emancipation-and-union-victory-1861-1865

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LESSON 8 OF 13

Reconstruction and the Jim Crow Legal Settlement (1865–1896)

Presidential vs. Radical Reconstruction and the Reconstruction Amendments · Black Political Mobilization, Freedmen's Bureau, and White Reaction · The Compromise of 1877, Sharecropping, Disenfranchisement, and Plessy

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Compare Presidential and Radical Reconstruction and explain what the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments did.
- Describe Black political gains during Reconstruction, the Freedmen's Bureau's work, and the violent white reaction.

Lesson 8: Reconstruction and the Jim Crow Legal Settlement (1865–1896)

Presidential vs. Radical Reconstruction and the Reconstruction Amendments

Following the Civil War, the nation faced the monumental challenge of reintegrating eleven former Confederate states, rebuilding the shattered Southern economy, and defining the legal status of four million formerly enslaved people. President **Andrew Johnson**, a Southern Unionist Democrat who succeeded Lincoln, implemented a lenient **Presidential Reconstruction** plan, granting rapid pardons to Confederate leaders and allowing reconstructed Southern legislatures to pass oppressive **Black Codes** in 1865–1866. These laws restricted African Americans' freedom of movement, prohibited them from purchasing land or carrying firearms, and subjected unemployed Black laborers to arrest for "vagrancy" and forced contract labor.

Outraged by the re-imposition of virtual slavery, **Radical Republicans** in Congress—led by Representative **Thaddeus Stevens** and Senator **Charles Sumner**—seized control of Reconstruction. Overriding Johnson's vetoes, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and enacted the **Reconstruction Acts of 1867**, which divided ten Southern states into five **Military Districts** governed by federal army commanders, requiring states to draft new constitutions guaranteeing Black suffrage before readmission. When Johnson attempted to obstruct military governance by firing Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, the House of Representatives impeached Johnson in 1868 for violating the Tenure of Office Act; he escaped Senate conviction by a single vote.

The constitutional foundation of American democracy was fundamentally rewritten through three **Reconstruction Amendments**:

- **Thirteenth Amendment (1865)**: Permanently abolished slavery and involuntary servitude throughout the United States, "except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted."

- **Fourteenth Amendment (1868)**: Established **birthright citizenship** (overturning *Dred Scott*), prohibited states from denying any person **due process of law** or **equal protection of the laws**, and penalized states that restricted male suffrage.
- **Fifteenth Amendment (1870)**: Prohibited the federal and state governments from denying or abridging a citizen's right to vote based on "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Black Political Mobilization, Freedmen's Bureau, and White Reaction

During Congressional Reconstruction, African Americans engaged in extraordinary political mobilization. Aided by the **Freedmen's Bureau** (established in 1865 to provide food, medical aid, labor contract arbitration, and establish thousands of schools and universities such as Howard and Fisk), formerly enslaved people registered to vote in vast numbers. Working within the Southern Republican Party alongside Northern migrants (**"carpetbaggers"**) and Southern white Unionists (**"scalawags"**), Black voters established the South's first universal public school systems and civil rights laws.

Approximately 2,000 African Americans held public office during Reconstruction. In 1870, **Hiram Revels** of Mississippi became the first Black United States Senator, representing the state that Jefferson Davis had served in the Senate before secession; **Blanche K. Bruce** of Mississippi followed. In South Carolina, African Americans comprised a majority of the state legislature's lower house.

This democratic revolution incited violent resistance from white supremacists seeking to restore white elite rule ("Redemption"). Secret vigilante organizations, notably the **Ku Klux Klan (KKK)** founded in Tennessee in 1865, waged campaigns of political terror, assassinating Republican leaders, burning Black churches and schools, and intimidating voters. President Ulysses S. Grant acted forcefully, using the **Enforcement Acts of 1870–1871**, including the **Ku Klux Klan Act** of 1871, to suspend *habeas corpus* in nine South Carolina counties in October 1871 and deploy federal troops to crush the first Klan.

The Compromise of 1877, Sharecropping, Disenfranchisement, and Plessy

Despite legal advances, economic autonomy was denied to formerly enslaved people when federal promises of land redistribution ("forty acres and a mule") were abandoned. Lacking capital and land, most freedpeople were forced into **sharecropping** and the **crop-lien system**, farming plots owned by white planters in exchange for a share of the harvest (typically half). High interest rates charged by local merchants for seeds and tools trapped generations of Black farmers in perpetual debt peonage.

Northern commitment to Reconstruction waned in the 1870s due to the Panic of 1873, economic depression, federal corruption scandals, and rising racism. The Supreme Court systematically eviscerated the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments:

- In the ***Slaughterhouse Cases*** **(1873)**, the Court narrowly construed Fourteenth Amendment privileges and immunities as applying only to national, not state, citizenship.
- In ***United States v. Cruikshank*** **(1876)**, the Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibited only state-sponsored violations of civil rights, not private violence by individuals like the Colfax Massacre perpetrators.

- In the ***Civil Rights Cases*** **(1883)**, the Court struck down the Civil Rights Act of 1875, declaring Congress lacked authority to outlaw racial segregation in privately owned public accommodations.

Reconstruction ended definitively with the **Compromise of 1877**, resolving the disputed 1876 presidential election between Republican Rutherford B. Hayes and Democrat Samuel J. Tilden. By the traditional account, Democrats conceded the presidency to Hayes in exchange for a Republican promise to withdraw remaining federal troops from the South; historians debate whether a formal bargain was struck, but federal troops were withdrawn and Reconstruction governments fell.

Southern "Redeemer" governments and their successors built the **Jim Crow system** of comprehensive racial apartheid over the following decades, above all from the 1890s:

1. **Disenfranchisement**: States instituted **poll taxes**, **literacy tests** (with subjective scoring), and **grandfather clauses** to eliminate Black voters without explicitly mentioning race.
2. **Racial Terror**: White mobs deployed extrajudicial **lynching** to enforce racial caste hierarchies, thoroughly documented by pioneering Black journalist **Ida B. Wells**.
3. **Legal Segregation**: In ***Plessy v. Ferguson*** **(1896)**, the Supreme Court upheld state racial segregation laws in public facilities under the **"separate but equal" doctrine**, with only Justice **John Marshall Harlan** dissenting that "our Constitution is color-blind."

Key terms

Birthright Citizenship

The constitutional principle codified in the Fourteenth Amendment granting automatic citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to its jurisdiction.

Black Codes

Restrictive state statutes enacted by Southern legislatures in 1865–1866 to limit the freedom of African Americans and ensure their availability as a cheap, unfree agricultural labor force.

Crop-Lien System

A credit arrangement in which tenant farmers and sharecroppers pledged their unharvested crops to local merchants as collateral for food, clothing, seed, and farming supplies.

Jim Crow

The comprehensive legal and social system of racial segregation, disenfranchisement, and white supremacy enforced across the American South from the late nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century.

Key concepts

Fourteenth Amendment

- Constitutional amendment ratified in 1868 establishing birthright citizenship
- Prohibited states from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law
- Guaranteed equal protection of the laws, transforming federal civil rights jurisprudence

Fifteenth Amendment

- Constitutional amendment ratified in 1870 guaranteeing the right to vote
- Prohibited denial of suffrage based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude
- Empowered hundreds of thousands of African American men to vote and hold public office

Freedmen's Bureau

- Federal agency created in March 1865 to assist formerly enslaved people during Reconstruction
- Distributed emergency food rations, negotiated labor contracts, and settled legal disputes
- Built thousands of public schools and established foundational historically Black universities

Hiram Revels

- African Methodist Episcopal minister and educator from Mississippi
- Elected to the United States Senate in 1870 as the first African American senator in history
- Occupied the Senate seat formerly held by Confederate President Jefferson Davis

Sharecropping

- Dominant agricultural labor system in the post-Civil War American South
- Tenant farmers worked a plot of land in exchange for a share of the harvested crop
- Coupled with the crop-lien system, trapped generations of Black farmers in perpetual debt

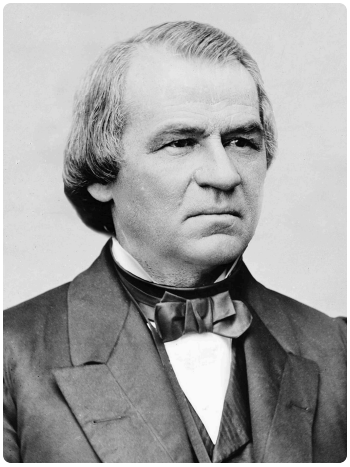
Compromise of 1877

- By the traditional account, an informal political agreement that resolved the disputed 1876 presidential election (historians debate whether a formal bargain was struck)
- Awarded the presidency to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes over Democrat Samuel Tilden
- Followed by the withdrawal of remaining federal troops from the South, ending Reconstruction

Plessy v. Ferguson

- 1896 Supreme Court ruling originating from a challenge to Louisiana's segregated train cars
- Established the 'separate but equal' legal doctrine under the Fourteenth Amendment
- Provided constitutional legitimacy for state-enforced Jim Crow segregation laws

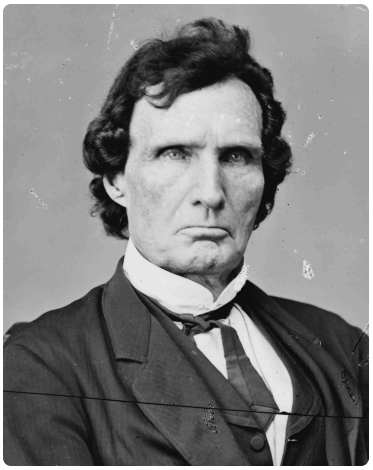
Key facts



Mathew Brady (Library of Congress) · public domain

Presidential Reconstruction and the Black Codes

Under President Andrew Johnson's lenient Presidential Reconstruction (1865–1866), reconstructed Southern state legislatures enacted repressive Black Codes that restricted African Americans' freedom of movement, prohibited land purchases, and forced freedpeople into labor contracts.



Mathew Brady (Library of Congress, Brady-Handy collection) · public domain

Radical Reconstruction and the Reconstruction Acts

Led by Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, Radical Republicans took control of Congress, overriding Johnson's vetoes to pass the Reconstruction Acts of 1867, which divided ten Southern states into five military districts governed by federal generals and mandated Black suffrage.

The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments

The Thirteenth Amendment (1865) permanently abolished slavery throughout the nation, while the Fourteenth Amendment (1868) established birthright citizenship, due process, and equal protection of the laws, fundamentally rewriting the constitutional relationship between states and the federal government.

The Fifteenth Amendment of 1870

Ratified in 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment prohibited the federal and state governments from denying or abridging a citizen's right to vote based on 'race, color, or previous condition of servitude', sparking an unprecedented era of Black political officeholding across the South.

The Freedmen's Bureau

Established by Congress in March 1865, the Freedmen's Bureau provided emergency food, medical assistance, labor contract arbitration, and built thousands of schools and historically Black universities (HBCUs) across the South for formerly enslaved people.

Black Political Mobilization and Officeholders

During Reconstruction, approximately 2,000 African Americans held elective office across the South, including Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce of Mississippi in the U.S. Senate, sixteen members of the House of Representatives, and a majority in South Carolina's state house of representatives.

White Terror and the Ku Klux Klan

Founded in Tennessee in 1865, the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist paramilitary groups waged campaigns of political assassination, arson, and violent voter intimidation to overthrow Republican state governments and restore white elite dominance.

Sharecropping and Debt Peonage

Lacking land and capital following the abandonment of land redistribution ('forty acres and a mule'), most freedpeople became sharecroppers, trapped in perpetual debt peonage under the crop-lien system where merchants charged high interest rates for seeds and tools.

The Compromise of 1877

The disputed 1876 presidential election ended in the Compromise of 1877: by the traditional account, Democrats conceded the presidency to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes in exchange for a promise to withdraw remaining federal troops from the South, ending Reconstruction (historians debate whether a formal bargain was struck).

By the numbers

In what calendar year was the Fourteenth Amendment officially ratified into the Constitution?

1868 year

How many military districts were established across the ten Southern states under the 1867 Reconstruction Acts?

5 districts

In what calendar year did the Compromise of 1877 end federal military Reconstruction in the South?

1877 year

In what calendar year did the Supreme Court deliver the Plessy v. Ferguson 'separate but equal' ruling?

1896 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Equal Protection Clause
→ Constitutional requirement barring states from denying equal legal protection to any person

Carpetbaggers
→ Derisive Southern term for Northern migrants who moved South during Reconstruction

Grandfather Clause
→ Voting exemption allowing men to vote whose ancestors could vote prior to 1867

Ida B. Wells
→ Investigative journalist who documented and campaigned internationally against racial lynching

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What was the primary purpose of the Black Codes passed by Southern legislatures in 1865-1866?

- A Restrict Black civil rights, force labor contracts
- B Grant freedpeople land and voting rights
- C Establish integrated public schools across the South
- D Confiscate Confederate plantations for freedpeople

2. Which of the following was NOT required of former Confederate states under the Reconstruction Acts of 1867?

- A Submit to governance under one of five military districts
- B Draft a constitution guaranteeing Black male suffrage
- C Pay war reparations to the federal treasury
- D Ratify the Fourteenth Amendment

3. Which rights did Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment (1868) establish?

- A Prohibition of the manufacture, sale, and transport of alcohol
- B Direct election of United States Senators
- C Universal suffrage for all adult women
- D Birthright citizenship, due process, and equal protection

4. A law denying the vote solely because of a citizen's race would violate which constitutional amendment?

- A Nineteenth Amendment
- B Fifteenth Amendment
- C Thirteenth Amendment
- D Fourteenth Amendment

5. Why did the House of Representatives impeach President Andrew Johnson in 1868?

- A Vetoing the Civil Rights Act
- B Pardoning Confederate leaders
- C Violating the Tenure of Office Act
- D Vetoing the Reconstruction Acts of 1867

6. Which of the following was NOT a service provided by the Freedmen's Bureau?

A Establishing thousands of schools and colleges like Fisk
B Distributing forty acres of land to freedmen
C Providing emergency food and medical aid
D Arbitrating freedpeople's labor contracts

7. Who made history in 1870 by becoming the first African American to serve in the United States Senate?

A Thurgood Marshall of Maryland
B Frederick Douglass of Maryland
C Booker T. Washington of Virginia
D Hiram Revels of Mississippi

8. How did President Grant respond to Ku Klux Klan violence in the early 1870s?

A Suspended habeas corpus and deployed troops
B Transferred enforcement to state militias
C Negotiated a truce granting Klan leaders amnesty
D Called for a constitutional ban on secret societies

9. What term described Southern white Unionists who joined the Republican Party during Reconstruction?

A Carpetbaggers
B Redeemers
C Scalawags
D Copperheads

10. About how many African Americans held elective office during Reconstruction?

A 500
B 6,000
C 15,000
D 2,000

Go deeper

WATCH Three Amendments 0:31
4 million people were no longer enslaved. But what did their freedom mean? Congress answered with three amendments.

WATCH One Dissent 0:30
Justice John Marshall Harlan wrote, "Our Constitution is color-blind." He stood alone on the Supreme Court.

WATCH A Seat in the Senate 0:26
A Black minister from Mississippi took the Senate seat once held by Jefferson Davis. Davis had been president of the Confederacy.

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LESSON 9 OF 13

The Gilded Age: Industrial Titans, Labor, and Western Transformation (1870–1900)

Railroads, Robber Barons, Corporate Trust Integration, and Monopoly Power · Industrial Labor, Great Strikes (Haymarket, Homestead, Pullman), and Populism · Plains Indian Wars, the Dawes Act, and the Closing of the Frontier

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Explain how industrialists built monopolies through vertical and horizontal integration, and how they justified their wealth.
- Analyze Gilded Age labor unions, the great strikes, and the Populist revolt of the 1890s.

Lesson 9: The Gilded Age: Industrial Titans, Labor, and Western Transformation (1870–1900)

Railroads, Robber Barons, Corporate Trust Integration, and Monopoly Power

The late nineteenth century, named the **"Gilded Age"** after the 1873 novel by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, witnessed the **Second Industrial Revolution**, propelling the United States into the world's foremost industrial manufacturing power. The catalyst of this growth was the expansion of the railroad network, which gained its first **transcontinental railroad** with the golden spike at **Promontory Summit, Utah, in 1869**. Railroads created integrated national commodity markets, standardized time zones in 1883, and pioneered modern corporate bureaucratic management.

Industrial titans—lauded as **"Captains of Industry"** by admirers and denounced as **"Robber Barons"** by critics—revolutionized corporate organizational architecture to eliminate ruinous price competition:

- **Vertical Integration**: Pioneered by **Andrew Carnegie** in the steel industry (**Carnegie Steel**). Carnegie controlled every stage of production—from raw iron ore extraction and coal mines to rail transport, blast furnaces, and Bessemer steel converters—eliminating middleman profits.
- **Horizontal Integration**: Perfected by **John D. Rockefeller** in petroleum (**Standard Oil**). Rockefeller acquired or crushed competing refineries to dominate market share, controlling over 90 percent of U.S. oil refining by 1880 through predatory pricing, secret railroad rebates, and the corporate **trust** legal mechanism (and later holding companies).
- **Finance Capitalism**: Exemplified by investment banker **J.P. Morgan**, who orchestrated the consolidation of competing railroads and merged Carnegie Steel into **United States Steel (1901)**, the nation's first billion-dollar corporation.

These corporate barons legitimized extreme wealth disparities through **Social Darwinism**, popularized by sociologist William Graham Sumner, which misapplied biological evolutionary theory to human society, claiming that wealth rewarded biological fitness while poverty signaled personal inadequacy. Carnegie, who also defended competition as ensuring the survival of the fittest, authored ***The Gospel of Wealth* (1889)**, arguing that wealthy elites had a moral responsibility to distribute their fortunes through civic philanthropy (libraries, universities) rather than direct handouts.

In response to public outcry over monopolistic abuses, Congress enacted early regulatory statutes: the **Interstate Commerce Act (1887)**, establishing the nation's first federal regulatory commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), to oversee railroads, and the **Sherman Antitrust Act (1890)**, prohibiting contracts and combinations in restraint of trade. However, conservative courts severely weakened these statutes, using the Sherman Act against labor unions and ruling in ***United States v. E.C. Knight Co.* (1895)** that manufacturing was distinct from interstate commerce.

Industrial Labor, Great Strikes (Haymarket, Homestead, Pullman), and Populism

Industrialization transformed the American working class. Millions of wage laborers often worked 60-hour weeks under dangerous conditions without workers' compensation or job security. Labor organizing split into competing philosophies:

- **Knights of Labor**: Led by **Terence V. Powderly**, the Knights organized all workers—skilled and unskilled, women, and Black workers (excluding Chinese immigrants)—into a single national organization, advocating an eight-hour workday, abolition of child labor, and worker cooperatives.
- **American Federation of Labor (AFL)**: Founded in 1886 by **Samuel Gompers**, the AFL restricted membership to skilled craft unions, practicing **"bread-and-butter unionism"** focused strictly on concrete workplace gains (higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions) through collective bargaining and strikes.

Violent labor confrontations shook the nation:

- **Great Railroad Strike of 1877**: A spontaneous nationwide strike over wage cuts paralyzed rail traffic until President Hayes deployed federal troops.
- **Haymarket Affair (1886)**: A peaceful labor rally in Chicago's Haymarket Square turned deadly when a bomb was thrown at advancing police; the blast and the gunfire that followed killed seven police officers and several civilians. Eight anarchists were convicted although no evidence linked them to the bomb-thrower, and the backlash shattered public support for the Knights of Labor.
- **Homestead Strike (1892)**: Carnegie's manager Henry Clay Frick locked out union steelworkers and hired Pinkerton armed detectives, leading to a pitched gun battle and the crushing of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers.
- **Pullman Strike (1894)**: **Eugene V. Debs's** American Railway Union boycotted Pullman luxury sleeping cars after George Pullman slashed wages while refusing to lower company-town rents. President Grover Cleveland dispatched federal troops to break the strike, and Debs was imprisoned under a federal injunction, converting him to socialism.

In rural America, plunging crop prices, high railroad freight rates, and deflationary monetary policies spurred agrarian revolt. Farmers organized the **Farmers' Alliance**, which birthed the **Populist Party (People's Party)** in 1892. Meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, the Populists adopted the radical **Omaha Platform**, demanding:

1. **Free and unlimited coinage of silver (bimetallism)** to expand the money supply and cause inflation.
2. Direct election of U.S. Senators and the secret ballot.
3. A graduated federal income tax.
4. Government ownership of railroads, telegraphs, and telephones.

In the pivotal **Presidential Election of 1896**, Democrats co-opted the Populist platform, nominating 36-year-old orator **William Jennings Bryan**, who delivered the electrifying **"Cross of Gold" speech** ("You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns; you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold"). However, Republican **William McKinley**, financed by industrialist Mark Hanna, won the presidency, solidifying the industrial corporate-capitalist order.

Plains Indian Wars, the Dawes Act, and the Closing of the Frontier

The post-Civil War era saw the final subjugation of the nomadic Plains Indigenous nations. The construction of transcontinental railroads, the commercial extermination of the American bison (buffalo herds numbering in the tens of millions were reduced to fewer than a thousand by the late 1880s), and the influx of white miners, ranchers, and homesteaders destroyed Indigenous subsistence ecologies.

Decades of armed conflict—the **Plains Indian Wars**—included:

- **Sand Creek Massacre (1864)**: Colorado militia slaughtered over 150 peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho villagers, mostly women and children.
- **Battle of the Little Bighorn (1876)**: Lakota Sioux and Northern Cheyenne warriors, led by **Sitting Bull** and **Crazy Horse**, wiped out the five companies of the Seventh Cavalry under Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer in Montana.

Federal policy shifted from military subjugation to forced cultural assimilation. In 1887, Congress passed the **Dawes Severalty Act (General Allotment Act)**, dismantling communal tribal landholdings and allocating 160-acre individual parcels to Native household heads. "Surplus" tribal lands were sold to white settlers and railroads; between 1887 and 1934, Indigenous nations lost over 90 million acres (two-thirds of their total land base). Concurrently, federal off-reservation boarding schools, such as the **Carlisle Indian Industrial School** in Pennsylvania, forcibly stripped Native children of their languages, clothing, and cultural identities under a philosophy Carlisle founder Richard Henry Pratt summed up in an 1892 speech as "Kill the Indian in him, and save the man."

Desperate resistance found spiritual expression in the **Ghost Dance**, a religious movement promising the restoration of ancestors, the return of the buffalo, and the disappearance of white colonizers. Federal authorities panicked, culminating on **December 29, 1890**, in the **Wounded Knee Massacre** in South Dakota, where U.S. troops slaughtered an estimated 150 to 300 Lakota men, women, and children with rapid-fire Hotchkiss guns, marking the tragic end of armed Indigenous resistance.

In 1893, historian **Frederick Jackson Turner** presented his influential **Frontier Thesis**, declaring that the 1890 Census confirmed the closing of the American frontier. Turner argued that the continuous availability of free western land had forged American democracy, individualism, and egalitarianism, sparking national debates over where the United States would direct its expanding energies next.

Key terms

Vertical Integration

A corporate management strategy wherein a single company owns and controls every successive stage of production and distribution, from raw materials to final retail.

Horizontal Integration

A business consolidation practice wherein a corporation acquires, merges with, or eliminates competing firms operating at the same stage of production to monopolize market share.

Bimetallism

A monetary standard backing currency with both gold and silver at a fixed ratio, championed by Populists to expand the money supply and cause inflation.

Allotment

The federal policy of dividing communal tribal lands into individually owned parcels under the Dawes Act to undermine tribal sovereignty and compel cultural assimilation.

Key concepts

Standard Oil

- Corporate petroleum giant founded by John D. Rockefeller in Cleveland in 1870
- Pioneered horizontal integration and the trust legal structure to monopolize refining
- Controlled over 90 percent of U.S. oil refining before being broken up in 1911

Sherman Antitrust Act

- Federal statute enacted in 1890 to prohibit monopolies and restraint of trade
- Authored by Senator John Sherman to protect competitive market pricing
- Initially weakened by conservative courts and turned against labor unions

Knights of Labor

- Major labor federation that peaked in the mid-1880s under Terence V. Powderly
- Organized all workers (skilled and unskilled, women, and Black workers) into a single national organization
- Collapsed rapidly in the wake of anti-radical hysteria following the Haymarket Affair

Eugene V. Debs

- Labor organizer who founded the industrial American Railway Union in 1893
- Led the nationwide Pullman Strike of 1894, resulting in his imprisonment under federal injunction
- Became the charismatic five-time presidential candidate for the Socialist Party of America

Populist Party

- Third-party political movement founded by distressed agrarian farmers in 1892
- Adopted the radical Omaha Platform demanding free silver, direct election of senators, and income tax
- Endorsed William Jennings Bryan in the pivotal 1896 presidential campaign

Dawes Severalty Act

- Federal allotment law enacted in 1887 to dismantle communal tribal reservations
- Distributed 160-acre parcels to individual Native heads of households
- Resulted in the loss of over 90 million acres of Indigenous land to white settlers

Frontier Thesis

- Influential historical paper presented by Frederick Jackson Turner at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair
- Argued that the continuous availability of open western land shaped American democracy
- Proclaimed that the 1890 Census confirmed the closing of the frontier

Key facts



Wjenning (William E. Jennings) · CC BY-SA 3.0

The First Transcontinental Railroad

Completed at Promontory Summit, Utah, on May 10, 1869, the First Transcontinental Railroad connected the Union Pacific and Central Pacific lines, linking the nation's coasts, slashing cross-country travel time from months to six days, and creating an integrated national market.

> ### Andrew Carnegie and Vertical Integration
>
> Industrialist Andrew Carnegie revolutionized American steel manufacturing through vertical integration, controlling every stage of production—from raw iron ore extraction and coal mines to rail transport and Bessemer converter mills—slashing costs and dominating output.

Rockefeller and Horizontal Trust Consolidation

John D. Rockefeller established the Standard Oil Company in 1870, utilizing horizontal integration and the corporate trust mechanism to absorb or bankrupt competing refineries, controlling over 90 percent of United States petroleum refining capacity by 1880.

The Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890

Enacted by Congress in 1890 to curb monopolistic business abuses, the Sherman Antitrust Act prohibited contracts, combinations, and conspiracies in restraint of trade, though conservative federal courts initially blunted its effectiveness and deployed it against labor unions.

The Pullman Strike of 1894

In 1894, Eugene V. Debs's American Railway Union launched a nationwide boycott of Pullman palace sleeping cars after George Pullman slashed wages while refusing to lower company-town rents, paralyzed national rail traffic until broken by federal troops under Grover Cleveland.

The Omaha Platform of the Populist Party

Adopted in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1892 by the People's Party (Populists), the radical Omaha Platform demanded the free and unlimited coinage of silver (bimetallism), government ownership of railroads and telegraphs, a graduated income tax, and direct election of Senators.

The Battle of the Little Bighorn

On June 25–26, 1876, in Montana Territory, allied Lakota Sioux and Northern Cheyenne warriors led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse annihilated Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's Seventh Cavalry, marking the most famous Indigenous military victory of the Plains Indian Wars.

The Dawes Severalty Act of 1887

Enacted in 1887 to force cultural assimilation, the Dawes Act dissolved communal tribal landholdings and allotted 160-acre parcels to individual Native household heads, selling 'surplus' lands to white settlers and reducing total Indigenous landholdings by over 90 million acres.

The Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890

On December 29, 1890, at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota, the U.S. Seventh Cavalry slaughtered an estimated 150 to 300 Lakota men, women, and children performing the Ghost Dance religious ritual, marking the tragic and definitive conclusion of armed Indigenous resistance on the Great Plains.

By the numbers

In what calendar year was the First Transcontinental Railroad completed at Promontory Summit?

1869 year

In what calendar year did Congress enact the Sherman Antitrust Act?

1890 year

In what calendar year did the Haymarket Square bombing occur in Chicago?
1886 year

In what calendar year did the Wounded Knee Massacre take place in South Dakota?
1890 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Bessemer Process
→ Industrial manufacturing technique blasting air through molten pig iron to mass-produce steel

Social Darwinism
→ Theory asserting that socioeconomic inequality is the natural result of biological competition

Bread and Butter Unionism
→ Pragmatic labor strategy focused strictly on higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions

Ghost Dance
→ Indigenous spiritual ceremony promising the return of ancestors, buffalo, and traditional lands

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. How did Andrew Carnegie execute vertical integration in the American steel industry?

A. By licensing the Bessemer process to rival steelmakers in exchange for royalties
B. By buying out and merging every rival steelmaker into a single unified trust
C. By controlling all stages of production from raw iron ore extraction to rail transportation
D. By forming a pool with rival steelmakers to fix prices and divide the market

2. What business mechanism enabled John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil to dominate the petroleum market?

A. Converting all petroleum refining operations into state-owned public utilities
B. Vertical integration owning iron mines, steel mills and railroads, as Carnegie did
C. Operating exclusively as an overseas export merchant fleet in European ports
D. Horizontal integration absorbing competing refineries into a centralized corporate trust

3. How did Social Darwinists like William Graham Sumner justify extreme Gilded Age wealth inequality?

A. Wealth was a reward for loyal service to a government planning board that allocated resources by merit
B. Wealth was a biological reward for superior fitness while poverty reflected personal incompetence
C. Great fortunes were justified because government subsidies rewarded the most talented
D. Inherited aristocratic rank, not competition, determined who deserved wealth

4. What moral obligation for the wealthy was articulated in Andrew Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth (1889)?

A. The rich must administer their surplus fortunes during life for permanent public civic good
B. Industrialists must surrender all business ownership directly to municipal trade unions
C. The wealthy owe no duty to the poor, whose poverty signals personal inadequacy
D. The rich should give their surplus wealth directly to the poor as personal handouts

5. What was the significance of the Supreme Court's ruling in United States v. E.C. Knight Co. (1895)?

A. It banned all corporate mergers across state boundaries nationwide
B. It established maximum eight-hour workday limits in all industrial manufacturing plants
C. It ordered the immediate dissolution of the Standard Oil refining trust monopoly
D. It severely weakened the Sherman Antitrust Act by ruling that manufacturing was distinct from interstate commerce

6. How did the American Federation of Labor (AFL) differ organizationally from the Knights of Labor?

A. The AFL organized all workers, skilled and unskilled, into one big union
B. The AFL merged with the Knights of Labor in 1886 to form a single unified national union of all trades
C. The AFL organized skilled craft unions focusing on bread-and-butter wage and hour gains
D. The AFL relied on political lobbying and rejected the strike as a weapon

7. What was the tragic consequence of the 1886 Haymarket Affair for the American labor movement?

A. It triggered anti-union and anti-immigrant hysteria that discredited the Knights of Labor
B. This produced the immediate passage of a federal mandatory six-hour workday law
C. It forced Samuel Gompers to dissolve the American Federation of Labor permanently
D. It led to a well-documented trial that fully exonerated the accused anarchists

8. How did the federal government intervene to crush the nationwide Pullman Strike of 1894?

A. The Supreme Court ruled the boycott lawful and ordered the troops withdrawn
B. President Grover Cleveland sent federal troops and secured a federal court strike injunction
C. The Illinois legislature forced George Pullman to cut rents in his company town
D. Congress ordered the army to seize and operate the railroads for the duration of the strike

9. What monetary reform was demanded in the 1892 Omaha Platform of the Populist (People's) Party?

- (A) The free and unlimited coinage of silver (bimetallism) to inflate the money supply
- (B) A return to the gold standard to stabilize the value of the dollar
- (C) The complete abolition of all federal banking institutions across western states
- (D) Retiring paper currency so that only gold coin circulated

10. What did Carnegie's manager Frick do to break the 1892 Homestead Strike?

- (A) Called in federal troops
- (B) Secured a court injunction
- (C) Granted an eight-hour day
- (D) Hired armed Pinkertons

Go deeper

WATCH Two Ways to Grow 0:30
One company controlled over 90% of American oil refining. That was Standard Oil, by 1880.

WATCH Ninety Million Acres 0:30
Over 90 million acres. Native nations lost that much land in the years after one law.

WATCH Pay Cut, No Rent Cut 0:30
George Pullman slashed wages. But he refused to lower the rents in his company town.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/the-gilded-age-industrial-titans-labor-and-western-transformation-1870-1900

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LESSON 10 OF 13

Progressivism, Imperial Expansion, and World War I (1890–1920)

Muckrakers, Social Reform, and the Progressive Regulatory State · Mass Immigration, Urbanization, and the Settlement House Movement · Spanish-American War, Imperialism Debate, and WWI Mobilization

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Explain how muckrakers and Progressive presidents built a regulatory state and won four constitutional amendments.
- Describe the New Immigration and urban growth, and the reformers who responded, from Hull House to the NAACP.

Lesson 10: Progressivism, Imperial Expansion, and World War I (1890–1920)

Muckrakers, Social Reform, and the Progressive Regulatory State

The **Progressive Era (1890–1920)** arose as a broad, heterogeneous reform movement driven primarily by middle-class professionals seeking to address the economic inequities, political corruption, and social degradation wrought by rapid industrialization and urbanization. Like the agrarian Populists before them, Progressives rejected laissez-faire orthodoxy; drawing on an urban, middle-class base, they argued that modern democratic capitalism required an active, expert-led regulatory state.

Investigative journalists, labeled **"muckrakers"** by President Theodore Roosevelt, exposed systemic corporate and political abuse through mass-circulation magazines:

- **Upton Sinclair**: Published ***The Jungle*** **(1906)**, exposing unsanitary horrors in Chicago meatpacking plants, directly spurring passage of the **Meat Inspection Act of 1906** and the **Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906**.
- **Ida Tarbell**: Authored *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904), documenting John D. Rockefeller's ruthless monopolistic practices, facilitating the Supreme Court's 1911 breakup of Standard Oil.
- **Lincoln Steffens**: Published *The Shame of the Cities* (1904), exposing corrupt alliances between big business and urban political machines.

Progressives also sought **direct democracy** in the states. The **initiative** let voters enact legislation by petitioning to place a proposal on the ballot; South Dakota adopted it first in 1898, and twenty states had it by 1920. The **referendum** let voters affirm or reject an existing law at the ballot box, and the **recall** let citizens remove a public official through a petition and a vote.

At the federal level, **Theodore Roosevelt** (1901–1909) transformed the presidency with his **"Square Deal"**, balancing the interests of capital, labor, and the public. Roosevelt earned the moniker "Trustbuster" by directing the Justice Department to dismantle J.P. Morgan's railroad monopoly in ***Northern Securities Co. v. United States* (1904)** and distinguished between "good trusts" that served public efficiency and "bad trusts" that abused market power. Roosevelt also established the **United States Forest Service** under Gifford Pinchot, setting aside over 230 million acres of public lands for environmental conservation.

Under President **Woodrow Wilson** (1913–1921), the Progressive regulatory framework expanded under the **"New Freedom"**:

- **Federal Reserve Act of 1913**: Created the **Federal Reserve System**, establishing a decentralized national central banking network with 12 regional banks, capable of issuing Federal Reserve Notes and regulating credit and interest rates.
- **Federal Trade Commission (FTC) (1914)**: Created an independent regulatory body to investigate unfair trade practices.
- **Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914**: Strengthened the Sherman Act by prohibiting price discrimination and interlocking directorates, while explicitly exempting labor unions from antitrust prosecution.

The era concluded with four transformative **Progressive Constitutional Amendments**:

- **Sixteenth Amendment (1913)**: Authorized a direct federal graduated income tax.
- **Seventeenth Amendment (1913)**: Mandated the direct popular election of U.S. Senators (replacing selection by state legislatures).
- **Eighteenth Amendment (1919)**: Prohibited the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors.
- **Nineteenth Amendment (1920)**: Prohibited denial of voting rights on the basis of sex, culminating decades of activism by leaders like **Susan B. Anthony**, **Carrie Chapman Catt**, and **Alice Paul**.

Mass Immigration, Urbanization, and the Settlement House Movement

Between 1890 and 1920, roughly eighteen million immigrants, most of them **"New Immigrants"**, arrived in the United States, originating primarily from Southern and Eastern Europe (Italy, Poland, Russia, Greece, Austria-Hungary), differing in language and culture, and in their largely Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Orthodox faiths, from earlier immigrants who came mostly from Northern and Western Europe. Arriving through federal processing centers like **Ellis Island** in New York Harbor (and **Angel Island** in San Francisco Bay for Asian immigrants), immigrants settled heavily in expanding industrial cities, forming vibrant ethnic enclaves.

Rapid urban growth outpaced municipal infrastructure, producing overcrowded tenement slums, high infant mortality, and political dominance by Tammany Hall machine bosses such as Richard Croker and Charles Francis Murphy, who exchanged municipal services and jobs for immigrant votes.

Progressive reformers pioneered private and municipal solutions:

- **Jacob Riis**: Documented squalid urban conditions in ***How the Other Half Lives*** **(1890)** using pioneering flash photography.
- **Settlement House Movement**: In 1889, **Jane Addams** and Ellen Gates Starr founded **Hull House** in Chicago. Staffed by educated, middle-class women who lived in the immigrant neighborhood, Hull House provided kindergarten daycare, English classes, vocational training, public baths, and cultural programs, while lobbying for child labor laws and mandatory school attendance.
- **Civil Rights Movements**: In 1905, **W.E.B. Du Bois** led Black intellectuals in founding the **Niagara Movement**, rejecting Booker T. Washington's accommodationist "Atlanta Compromise" and demanding immediate civil and political equality. In 1909, this evolved into the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**, which launched a systematic legal campaign against lynching and disenfranchisement.

Spanish-American War, Imperialism Debate, and WWI Mobilization

In 1898, the United States emerged as a global imperial power through the **Spanish-American War** ("a splendid little war"). Fueled by sensationalist **"yellow journalism"** from William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, the mysterious explosion of the battleship **USS *Maine*** in Havana Harbor prompted President William McKinley to intervene in the Cuban War of Independence. Commodore George Dewey's naval victory at Manila Bay, the land assault on the San Juan Heights (where Theodore Roosevelt's **Rough Riders** charged Kettle Hill), and the destruction of Spain's Caribbean squadron off Santiago de Cuba led to Spanish capitulation.

The **Treaty of Paris (1898)** ceded **Guam**, **Puerto Rico**, and the **Philippines** (for $20 million) to the United States, while Cuba gained conditional independence subject to the **Platt Amendment (1901)**, granting the U.S. unilateral intervention rights and a naval base at Guantanamo Bay. Annexation of the Philippines ignited the bloody **Philippine-American War (1899–1902)**, where U.S. forces suppressed Emilio Aguinaldo's nationalist movement, sparking fierce domestic opposition from the **Anti-Imperialist League** (including Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie).

Theodore Roosevelt expanded American hegemony through his **"Big Stick" diplomacy**, orchestrating Panamanian independence from Colombia in 1903 to build the **Panama Canal**, and issuing the **Roosevelt Corollary (1904)** to the Monroe Doctrine, claiming "international police power" in the Western Hemisphere to forestall European intervention over unpaid Latin American debts.

When **World War I** erupted in Europe in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed strict American neutrality. However, German unrestricted submarine warfare—highlighted by the sinking of the British passenger liner **RMS *Lusitania*** in 1915 killing 128 Americans—and the interception of the **Zimmermann Telegram** (promising Mexico the return of the American Southwest in exchange for an anti-U.S. alliance) prompted Congress to declare war on Germany in **April 1917**, a war Wilson cast as a fight to make the world safe for democracy.

Mobilization transformed the domestic economy under the **War Industries Board** (Bernard Baruch) and the Food Administration (Herbert Hoover). Over four million Americans served in the armed forces, and about two million reached France as the **American Expeditionary Forces (AEF)** under General **John J. Pershing**, whose troops, arriving in large numbers by 1918, helped turn the tide on the Western Front. On

the homefront, the federal government enacted the **Espionage Act of 1917** and **Sedition Act of 1918**, criminalizing anti-war speech. In ***Schenck v. United States*** **(1919)**, the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of socialist Charles Schenck, with Justice **Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.** establishing the **"clear and present danger"** test for restricting free speech during wartime.

In January 1918, Wilson outlined his idealistic peace vision in the **Fourteen Points**, advocating freedom of the seas, free trade, national self-determination, and a general association of nations—the **League of Nations**. At the Paris Peace Conference (1919), European allies imposed punitive reparations and territorial losses on Germany in the **Treaty of Versailles**. Back home, Republican Senator **Henry Cabot Lodge** led the **"Reservationists"** in demanding reservations to the treaty, chief among them one limiting U.S. obligations under Article X of the League Covenant, to protect congressional war powers. Refusing to compromise, Wilson suffered a debilitating stroke; the Senate twice rejected the treaty, and the United States never joined the League of Nations, retreating into postwar isolationism.

Key terms

Square Deal
President Theodore Roosevelt's progressive domestic reform program aimed at balancing corporate regulation, consumer protection, and environmental conservation.

Settlement House
An urban community institution located in poor immigrant neighborhoods where middle-class reformers lived to provide social, educational, and medical services.

Yellow Journalism
A sensationalist style of newspaper reporting featuring exaggerated headlines and fabricated stories to inflame public opinion and drive mass circulation.

Clear and Present Danger
The free-speech test that Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. articulated in Schenck v. United States (1919), holding that speech creating an imminent danger could be restricted; the Supreme Court later replaced it with the stricter 'imminent lawless action' standard in Brandenburg v. Ohio (1969).

Key concepts

Muckrakers

- Investigative journalists and novelists who exposed corporate monopolies and municipal political corruption
- Coined by Theodore Roosevelt from John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress
- Included Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, Lincoln Steffens, and Ray Stannard Baker

Federal Reserve System

- Central banking framework of the United States established by Congress in 1913
- Divided the nation into twelve regional districts governed by a presidential Federal Reserve Board
- Regulates interest rates, supervises commercial banks, and issues Federal Reserve Notes

Jane Addams

- Pioneering social worker and activist who co-founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889
- Led national campaigns for child labor laws, protective women's labor legislation, and world peace
- Became the first American woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931

Ellis Island

- Federal immigration processing station located in New York Harbor from 1892 to 1954
- Processed over twelve million immigrant arrivals, many from Southern and Eastern Europe
- Subjected arriving passengers to medical inspections and legal registry examinations

Spanish-American War

- Brief 1898 conflict fought between the United States and Spain in the Caribbean and Pacific
- Sparked by sensationalist yellow journalism and the explosion of the battleship USS Maine
- Resulted in the American acquisition of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines

Fourteen Points

- Idealistic post-WWI peace blueprint outlined by Woodrow Wilson to Congress in January 1918
- Advocated freedom of the seas, free trade, arms reductions, and national self-determination
- Proposed a general association of nations—the League of Nations—to ensure collective security

League of Nations

- International diplomatic organization created at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference
- Featured Article X, committing member nations to defend each other's territorial integrity
- Rejected by the United States Senate following a fierce constitutional battle with Henry Cabot Lodge

Key facts

> **Upton Sinclair and The Jungle**
> Published in 1906, Upton Sinclair's muckraking novel The Jungle exposed nauseating unsanitary conditions and worker exploitation in Chicago's meatpacking stockyards, directly compelling Congress to pass the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act.



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Theodore Roosevelt's Square Deal

President Theodore Roosevelt used executive authority to advance his 'Square Deal', balancing consumer protection, natural resource conservation, and corporate regulation, famously directing the Justice Department to break up J.P. Morgan's railroad monopoly in Northern Securities (1904).

The Federal Reserve Act of 1913

Enacted under President Woodrow Wilson in 1913, the Federal Reserve Act created a decentralized national central banking network with twelve regional Federal Reserve Banks, granting public control over the national money supply and interest rates.

The Nineteenth Amendment and Women's Suffrage

Ratified in August 1920 following decades of grassroots organizing by Carrie Chapman Catt's National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) and Alice Paul's militant National Woman's Party, the Nineteenth Amendment prohibited federal and state denial of voting rights on the basis of sex.

The Settlement House Movement and Hull House

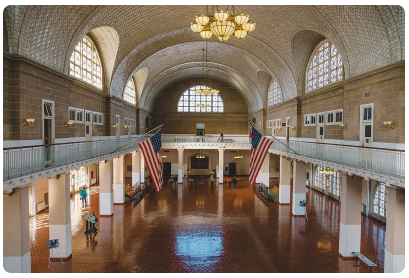
Founded in Chicago in 1889 by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, Hull House pioneered the settlement house movement, offering educational classes, day care, and vocational training in immigrant working-class neighborhoods while lobbying for child labor legislation.



Jacob Riis (Museum of Modern Art print; restored by Adam Cuerden) · public domain

Jacob Riis and Urban Tenement Reform

Pioneering photojournalist Jacob Riis published How the Other Half Lives in 1890, using early magnesium flash photography to expose squalid tenement living conditions, disease, and poverty in New York City's Lower East Side, prompting passage of the New York State Tenement House Act of 1901.



NPS Photo (National Park Service) · public domain

Ellis Island and the New Immigration

Opening in 1892 in New York Harbor, the Ellis Island immigration station processed over twelve million immigrants before closing in 1954, many from Southern and Eastern Europe (Italy, Poland, Russia, Greece), and subjected arrivals to medical and legal inspections.



Unknown photographer (U.S. Department of Defense archive) · public domain

The Spanish-American War of 1898

Triggered by the sinking of the battleship USS Maine in Havana and sensationalist 'yellow journalism', the Spanish-American War resulted in swift American victory, ending Spanish colonial rule and ceding Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States.

By the numbers

In what calendar year was the Federal Reserve Act signed into law by Woodrow Wilson?

1913 year

In what calendar year was the Nineteenth Amendment granting women's suffrage officially ratified?

1920 year

In what calendar year did the Spanish-American War take place?

1898 year

In what calendar year did the United States formally declare war on Germany in World War I?

1917 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Sixteenth Amendment

→ Constitutional reform authorizing the federal government to levy a direct graduated income tax

Seventeenth Amendment

→ Constitutional mandate establishing direct popular election of United States Senators

Platt Amendment

→ 1901 rider to the U.S. Army Appropriations Act (later written into Cuba's constitution and the 1903 Cuban-American treaty) granting the United States unilateral intervention rights in Cuban affairs

Committee on Public Information

→ Federal wartime agency directed by George Creel to distribute pro-war propaganda and mobilize opinion

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What major legislative outcome resulted from Upton Sinclair's 1906 novel The Jungle?

- A Passage of the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act
- B Ratification of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Amendments
- C Creation of the United States Forest Service and the national forest system
- D Passage of the Clayton Antitrust Act and creation of the Federal Trade Commission

2. How did President Theodore Roosevelt approach corporate monopolies during his presidency?

- A Opposing antitrust enforcement as interference with free-market competition
- B Breaking up every large corporation regardless of how it treated consumers and competitors
- C Leaving all oversight of big business to state governments and avoiding federal lawsuits
- D Distinguishing between good trusts serving efficiency and bad trusts abusing monopoly power

3. What structural reform was established by the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 under Woodrow Wilson?

- A Mandatory backing of all federal paper notes with fifty percent silver coin reserves
- B Free and unlimited coinage of silver at a fixed ratio to gold
- C A decentralized national central banking network with twelve regional Federal Reserve Banks
- D The complete privatization of all national currency issuance into private corporate hands

4. What democratic right was secured nationwide by the Nineteenth Amendment in August 1920?

- A Universal male voting rights for non-citizen immigrant residents in port cities
- B Prohibiting federal and state governments from denying the right to vote on the basis of sex
- C Direct election of state supreme court justices by municipal popular plebiscite
- D Mandatory annual referendums on all federal foreign treaty declarations

5. Which constitutional amendment was NOT one of the four ratified during the Progressive Era (1913-1920)?

- A Fifteenth Amendment
- B Eighteenth Amendment
- C Seventeenth Amendment
- D Sixteenth Amendment

6. What was the operational philosophy of Jane Addams's settlement house movement at Hull House?

A. Employers built company towns that housed immigrant workers beside their factories
B. Reformers ran charities from distant offices, giving relief only to families judged morally deserving
C. Educated middle-class reformers lived directly within working-class immigrant communities to provide aid
D. Political bosses exchanged jobs and municipal services for immigrants' votes

7. How did Jacob Riis stimulate urban housing reform in New York City with How the Other Half Lives (1890)?

A. By drafting state legislation requiring all immigrants to live in rural farming communes
B. Through pioneering flash photojournalism exposing squalid, disease-ridden tenement living conditions
C. By funding the construction of fifty private luxury apartment towers on Manhattan Island
D. By lobbying to demolish all municipal harbor wharves in favor of botanical parks

8. How did 'New Immigrants' arriving between 1890 and 1920 differ from earlier European immigrant waves?

A. They originated predominantly from Northern and Western Europe, practicing Protestant faiths
B. They originated predominantly from East Asia, arriving through Angel Island, practicing Buddhist and Confucian faiths
C. They originated predominantly from Latin America, practicing Catholic faith and crossing the southern border
D. They originated predominantly from Southern and Eastern Europe, practicing Catholic, Jewish, and Orthodox faiths

9. What core philosophical difference separated W.E.B. Du Bois from Booker T. Washington?

A. Du Bois demanded immediate civil and political equality, rejecting Washington's economic accommodationism
B. Washington demanded immediate civil and political equality, rejecting Du Bois's economic accommodationism
C. Du Bois urged Black Americans to emigrate to Africa, while Washington urged them to stay in the South
D. Washington refused all contact with white philanthropists and politicians, while Du Bois courted them

10. Which country was NOT among the primary origins of the 'New Immigrants' arriving in the U.S. between 1890 and 1920?

A. Poland
B. Ireland
C. Italy
D. Austria-Hungary

Go deeper

WATCH The Book and the Meat 0:31
One book about Chicago meatpacking plants led to two new federal laws.

WATCH The Road to War 0:32
The Zimmermann Telegram promised Mexico the return of the American Southwest. The price: an alliance against the United States.

WATCH Reformers as Neighbors 0:28
The reformers were also the neighbors. The middle-class women of Hull House lived in its immigrant neighborhood.

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LESSON 11 OF 13

The Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the New Deal (1920–1939)

Mass Consumerism, Prohibition, Harlem Renaissance, and Nativism · The 1929 Wall Street Crash, Systemic Banking Collapse, and the Depression · First & Second New Deals, the Social Security Act, and the Welfare State

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Analyze 1920s consumer culture and the decade's clashes over Prohibition, immigration, evolution, and race.
- Explain the 1929 crash, how the 1933 Bank Holiday answered the bank failures, and the deepening Depression, from Smoot-Hawley to the Dust Bowl.

Lesson 11: The Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the New Deal (1920–1939)

Mass Consumerism, Prohibition, Harlem Renaissance, and Nativism

The 1920s—the **"Roaring Twenties"** or the **"Jazz Age"**—witnessed explosive economic growth driven by mass production, consumer credit, and technological innovation. Republican administrations under Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover pursued pro-business policies characterized by low corporate taxes, deregulation, and high protective tariffs. **Henry Ford's** moving assembly line slashed the manufacturing time of the **Model T**, making automobiles affordable to ordinary Americans and stimulating secondary industries like oil, steel, rubber, and highway construction. In January 1914 Ford had announced the **Five-Dollar Day**, doubling daily pay for eligible workers, largely through a profit-sharing bonus, at a time when monotonous assembly-line work had pushed labor turnover to 370 percent; the higher wage steadied the workforce and made his workers new customers for the Model T. Mass consumer culture was reinforced by national advertising, **commercial radio broadcasting** (KDKA in Pittsburgh went on the air in 1920), and Hollywood cinema.

However, the decade was characterized by fierce cultural battles between modern urban values and traditional rural fundamentalism:

- **Nativism and Red Scare**: The **First Red Scare (1919–1920)**, led by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, arrested thousands of suspected radicals without warrants (**Palmer Raids**), with the same fears resurfacing in the controversial 1927 execution of Italian anarchist immigrants Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. In 1924, Congress passed the **National Origins Act (Immigration Act of 1924)**, establishing strict national quotas (2 percent of each nationality based on the 1890 Census) to

drastically curtail immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe while completely banning Asian immigration.

- **Resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)**: The second KKK expanded nationwide into the Midwest and West, broadening its targets beyond Black Americans to include Roman Catholics, Jews, and immigrants, claiming millions of members before collapsing amid financial and moral scandals.
- **The Scopes Trial (1925)**: In Dayton, Tennessee, biology teacher John T. Scopes was prosecuted for teaching Darwinian evolution in violation of the state's Butler Act. The "Monkey Trial" pitted celebrated defense attorney Clarence Darrow against fundamentalist orator William Jennings Bryan in a nationwide debate over science, modernism, and religious fundamentalism.
- **Prohibition (1920–1933)**: Enforced by the **Volstead Act**, national prohibition stimulated widespread disrespect for law, illegal **speakeasies**, and violent organized crime syndicates led by gangsters like **Al Capone**, until repealed by the **Twenty-First Amendment (1933)**.
- **Harlem Renaissance**: The **Great Migration** of African Americans from the rural South to Northern cities fostered an explosion of Black literary, artistic, and musical creativity centered in Harlem, New York. Writers like **Langston Hughes**, Zora Neale Hurston, and Claude McKay celebrated Black heritage and protested racial injustice, while jazz innovators like **Louis Armstrong** and **Duke Ellington** redefined American music. **Marcus Garvey's** Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which Garvey claimed had millions of followers though historians dispute the true membership size, promoted Black pride and economic self-reliance.

The 1929 Wall Street Crash, Systemic Banking Collapse, and the Depression

The prosperity of the 1920s masked deep structural vulnerabilities: chronic agricultural depression, severe wealth inequality (where top 5% received 30% of income), corporate overproduction, consumer underconsumption, and reckless speculative borrowing (**"buying on margin"**) in the stock market.

On **October 29, 1929 ("Black Tuesday")**, the stock market suffered a catastrophic crash, losing billions in value and triggering a systemic deflationary spiral. Banks that had invested depositor funds in stocks collapsed; between 1929 and 1933, over 9,000 banks failed, wiping out the life savings of millions of depositors. The money supply contracted by nearly one-third, business investment plummeted, and by 1933, national unemployment reached an unprecedented **25 percent** (over 12 million workers).

International trade collapsed following Congress's passage of the protectionist **Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930**, which provoked retaliatory European tariffs. In the Great Plains, severe drought and aggressive over-plowing triggered the catastrophic ecological disaster of the **Dust Bowl**, driving many farm families off the land; with the wider Depression, it fed a westward migration of hundreds of thousands of people ("Okies") to California.

President **Herbert Hoover** initially resisted direct federal relief, believing in "rugged individualism" and voluntary corporate cooperation. When local charities and municipal governments ran out of funds, Hoover created the **Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) in 1932** to provide emergency federal loans to banks, railroads, and insurance companies. However, public outrage peaked in the summer of 1932 when the **"Bonus Army"**—over 15,000 WWI veterans who marched to Washington demanding

early payment of their military service bonuses—were violently evicted by federal troops under General Douglas MacArthur using tanks and tear gas.

First & Second New Deals, the Social Security Act, and the Welfare State

In the 1932 presidential election, Democrat **Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR)** won in a historic landslide, promising a **"New Deal"** for the American people. Guided by a pragmatic "Brain Trust" of academic advisors, Roosevelt launched the legendary **"First Hundred Days"** of legislative action in spring 1933, pursuing the **"3 Rs"**: Relief, Recovery, and Reform:

- **Emergency Banking Act of 1933**: FDR declared a national four-day "Bank Holiday," restoring public confidence through his first radio **"Fireside Chat"**.
- **Glass-Steagall Banking Act of 1933**: Separated commercial from investment banking and created the **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)** to insure individual bank deposits.
- **Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) (1934)**: Created after the Hundred Days by the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, building on the Securities Act of 1933, to regulate stock exchanges and curb fraud.
- **Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)**: Employed millions of young men in reforestation, flood control, and national park infrastructure.
- **Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA)**: Raised crop prices by paying farmers subsidies to reduce production.
- **Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)**: Built dams across the impoverished Tennessee Valley, providing flood control, regional economic development, and cheap public hydroelectric power.
- **National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA)**: Created the National Recovery Administration (NRA) to establish industry codes for wages and prices, and the Public Works Administration (PWA) for large-scale infrastructure projects.

In 1935, responding to pressure from left-wing populists like Louisiana Senator **Huey Long** ("Share Our Wealth" plan) and Dr. Francis Townsend, FDR launched the **Second New Deal**, focused on permanent institutional security:

- **Works Progress Administration (WPA)**: Headed by Harry Hopkins, employed over 8 million people building roads, bridges, public buildings, and funding arts projects (Federal Art, Music, Theatre, and Writers' Projects).
- **National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (Wagner Act)**: Guaranteed workers the legal right to organize unions, engage in collective bargaining, and created the **National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)**, spurring industrial union growth through the **Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)** led by John L. Lewis.
- **Social Security Act of 1935**: Established the foundation of the modern American **welfare state**, providing old-age pensions funded by payroll taxes, a federal-state unemployment insurance system, and aid for dependent children, the blind, and children with physical disabilities.

In the 1936 election, FDR forged the enduring **New Deal Coalition**, uniting labor unions, big-city political machines, Northern Black voters, white Southerners, and ethnic minorities. When the conservative

Supreme Court struck down key New Deal legislation (including the NRA and AAA), FDR introduced the controversial **Judicial Procedures Reform Bill of 1937 ("Court-Packing Plan")**, seeking to appoint an additional justice for every sitting justice over age 70. Although Congress rejected the plan, the Court shifted in favor of New Deal regulation ("the switch in time that saved nine").

In 1937 Roosevelt cut relief and public works spending in an effort to balance the federal budget, and the economy slid into the **Roosevelt Recession of 1937–1938** as unemployment threatened to return to pre-New Deal levels. Advisers such as Harry Hopkins and Marriner Eccles had accepted the ideas of British economist **John Maynard Keynes**, whose *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936) argued that when business activity falls and unemployment is high, government should raise spending or cut taxes. In 1938 Roosevelt said he would seek large new spending without tax increases, setting a precedent for **deficit spending** as a tool of economic recovery.

The New Deal did not fully end the Great Depression—a task accomplished only by total wartime mobilization in World War II—but it permanently transformed the federal government into an active guarantor of economic security and regulatory arbiter between capital and labor.

Key terms

Speakeasy

An illicit, covert establishment that sold alcoholic beverages during national Prohibition, often requiring a password or membership for customer entry.

Margin Buying

The financial practice of purchasing corporate stocks by paying only a fraction of the share price in cash and borrowing the remainder from a stockbroker.

Welfare State

A governmental framework in which the state accepts statutory responsibility for the basic economic well-being, healthcare, and social security of its citizens.

Collective Bargaining

The formal negotiation process between an organized labor union representing employees and employers to determine wages, hours, and working conditions.

Key concepts

Fordism

- Economic system combining mechanized assembly line mass production with high worker wages
- Pioneered by Henry Ford at Highland Park, Michigan, with the Model T
- Created a consumer base capable of purchasing mass-manufactured durable goods

Harlem Renaissance

- Vibrant African American cultural and literary movement centered in New York during the 1920s
- Featured poets, novelists, and musicians including Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Duke Ellington
- Articulated the concept of the 'New Negro' demanding racial dignity and civil equality

Black Tuesday

- Catastrophic Wall Street stock market collapse that occurred on October 29, 1929
- Wiped out over $30 billion in stock valuation following unsustainable speculative margin buying
- Marked the dramatic beginning of the Great Depression across the United States

Dust Bowl

- Severe ecological disaster spanning the Southern Great Plains during the 1930s
- Caused by severe drought and aggressive over-plowing that pulverized delicate topsoil
- With the wider Depression, helped push hundreds of thousands of 'Okies' to California

Social Security Act

- Landmark New Deal statute signed into law by Franklin D. Roosevelt in August 1935
- Established federal old-age retirement pensions, unemployment compensation, and aid to dependent children
- Formed the permanent structural foundation of the modern American welfare safety net

Wagner Act

- National Labor Relations Act of 1935 authored by Senator Robert F. Wagner
- Guaranteed the legal right of private-sector workers to organize and bargain collectively
- Established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to enforce fair labor practices

New Deal Coalition

- Electoral alignment of voting blocs that supported Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic Party
- Included urban working-class ethnics, organized labor unions, African Americans, and white Southerners
- Dominated national presidential and congressional politics from 1932 until the late 1960s

Key facts

> **Henry Ford and the Moving Assembly Line**
>
> In 1913, Henry Ford introduced the continuous moving assembly line at his Highland Park plant in Michigan, reducing Model T production time from twelve and a half hours to 93 minutes, enabling the $5 workday and inaugurating modern mass consumer capitalism.



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Prohibition and the Volstead Act

Ratified in 1919 and taking effect on January 17, 1920, the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act launched national Prohibition, outlawing the manufacture, sale, and transport of intoxicating liquors, inadvertently giving rise to speakeasies, rampant bootlegging, and violent organized crime syndicates.

The Immigration Act of 1924 (Johnson-Reed)

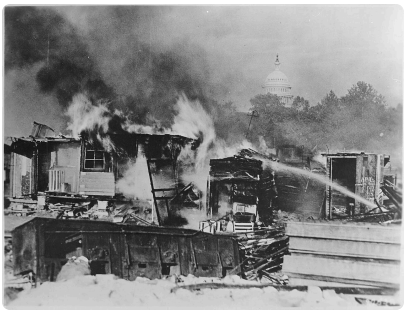
Driven by nativist sentiment and the resurgence of the second Ku Klux Klan, Congress passed the National Origins Act of 1924, setting annual quotas at 2 percent of each nationality's foreign-born population in the 1890 census to drastically curtail Southern and Eastern European immigration and bar Asian entry.

The Stock Market Crash of October 1929

On Black Tuesday, October 29, 1929, the Wall Street stock market collapsed after years of rampant speculative margin buying, erasing tens of billions of dollars in paper wealth within weeks and becoming the most dramatic early shock of the downturn that deepened into the Great Depression.

The Great Contraction and Banking Panics

Between 1929 and 1933, over 9,000 commercial banks failed across the United States as depositors launched runs to withdraw cash, resulting in a devastating 33 percent contraction of the national money supply and plunging unemployment to 25 percent.



Unknown photographer (U.S. Army Signal Corps record, National Archives) · public domain

The Bonus Army March of 1932

In the summer of 1932, over 15,000 unemployed World War I veterans marched on Washington D.C. as the Bonus Expeditionary Force demanding early payment of service certificates, but were violently evicted by federal troops under General Douglas MacArthur using tanks and tear gas.

Franklin D. Roosevelt and the First Hundred Days

Taking office in March 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared a national Bank Holiday and passed fifteen major relief and recovery statutes during his First Hundred Days, including the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) (Glass-Steagall), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

> **The Social Security Act of 1935**
> The cornerstone of the Second New Deal, the Social Security Act of 1935 created a permanent federal safety net providing old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, and aid to dependent children, establishing the modern American welfare state.

By the numbers

In what calendar year did Henry Ford introduce the moving assembly line at Highland Park?
1913 year

In what calendar year did the Wall Street Stock Market crash on Black Tuesday occur?
1929 year

In what calendar year was the historic Social Security Act signed into law by Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR)?
1935 year

How many total justices did Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) propose to add to the Supreme Court in his 1937 Court-Packing plan?
6 justices

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Twenty-First Amendment
→ Constitutional amendment that formally repealed national alcohol Prohibition in 1933

Hoovervilles
→ Makeshift shantytowns constructed from cardboard and tin by homeless families in the Depression

Civilian Conservation Corps
→ New Deal agency employing millions of young men in forestry, soil conservation, and park building

Tennessee Valley Authority
→ Federal regional corporation that constructed hydroelectric dams to electrify rural Appalachia

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. How did Henry Ford's $5 workday introduced in 1914 transform industrial labor economics?

A. It slashed worker turnover and enabled assembly line laborers to afford buying the cars they produced

B. It cut the company's annual net profits by roughly half in its first year

C. It shortened the workday from ten hours to eight with no accompanying pay increase

D. It guaranteed every worker a lifetime job with a company pension

2. What unintended social consequence arose from national Prohibition under the Eighteenth Amendment?

A. A significant increase in federal tax revenue from legal alcohol sales

B. A dramatic, lasting decline in nationwide alcohol consumption

C. A steady decline in organized crime's profits and influence

D. The explosive growth of illegal speakeasies and violent organized crime syndicates

3. How did the National Origins Act of 1924 restrict European immigration to the United States?

A. By setting one overall yearly immigration ceiling with no quotas by nationality

B. By setting quotas at 2% of each nationality's foreign-born population in the 1890 census

C. By requiring immigrants to prove a skilled trade or profession before being admitted

D. By requiring every immigrant to pass a literacy test in their native language

4. What cultural conflict was put on trial in the 1925 Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee?

A. State regulation of child labor in textile mills

B. The constitutionality of requiring a foreign language in public schools

C. Traditional Christian fundamentalism versus modern scientific modernist evolution

D. The legality of mandatory flag-salute ceremonies in public schools

5. What term describes the 1920s flowering of African American literature, art, and music that emerged after the Great Migration to Northern cities?

A. Lost Generation

B. Progressive Movement

C. Harlem Renaissance

D. Gilded Age

6. What practice on Wall Street inflated stock prices prior to the Great Crash of October 1929?

A. Rampant margin buying where speculators purchased shares using mostly borrowed money from brokers

B. Widespread short-selling by brokers used to drive up blue-chip share prices

C. Federal Reserve purchases of corporate shares to prop up prices

D. Government-backed insurance that guaranteed investors against stock losses

7. Why was the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930 disastrous for the global economy during the Depression?

A. It cut tariffs on farm goods, letting cheap foreign grain undersell American farmers

B. It provoked retaliatory tariffs from foreign trading partners, causing international trade to collapse sharply

C. It triggered a sudden, sharp devaluation of the U.S. dollar against European currencies

D. It forced many American manufacturers to shut down rather than pay new import taxes

8. What physical factors caused the ecological disaster of the Dust Bowl across the Southern Plains?

A. Heavy irrigation and salt buildup from the Ogallala aquifer

B. Heavy logging and wildfires that cleared windbreak trees

C. Widespread strip mining and oil drilling on the Plains

D. Severe drought and aggressive over-plowing of native grass

9. What was the primary purpose of Franklin D. Roosevelt's national 'Bank Holiday' in March 1933?

A. To immediately nationalize all commercial banks in the country

B. To temporarily close all banks, inspect their solvency, and restore public depositor confidence

C. To shift responsibility for guaranteeing bank deposits entirely onto individual state governments

D. To suspend all interest payments on savings accounts nationwide

10. Which specific day in October 1929 saw the stock market's most catastrophic single-day collapse, effectively starting the Great Depression?

A. Black Tuesday

B. Black Friday

C. Black Thursday

D. Black Monday

Go deeper

WATCH The Banks Fall 0:29
More than 9,000 American banks failed in four years. Millions of depositors lost their life savings.

WATCH Relief, Recovery, Reform 0:31
To save the failing banks, Franklin Roosevelt closed them for four days. Then he won back public trust in a radio Fireside Chat.

WATCH The Five-Dollar Day 0:29
Henry Ford's moving assembly line made cars affordable. But his own workers kept leaving.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/the-roaring-twenties-the-great-depression-and-the-new-deal-1920-1939

STUDY United States History in the FlashFeed app flashfeedlearningapp.com/packs/us-history

LESSON 12 OF 13

World War II, the Cold War, and Global Hegemony (1939–1968)

Pearl Harbor, Total War Economy, and the Arsenal of Democracy · Containment Doctrine, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, and Korean War · Postwar Affluence, McCarthyism, Cuban Missile Crisis, and Vietnam Escalation

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Describe the United States as the Arsenal of Democracy, the wartime clashes over civil liberties and race at home, and the D-Day invasion.
- Explain the strategy of containment and its tools: the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Korean War.

Lesson 12: World War II, the Cold War, and Global Hegemony (1939–1968)

Pearl Harbor, Total War Economy, and the Arsenal of Democracy

During the 1930s, the United States maintained strict neutrality through the **Neutrality Acts of 1935–1937**. However, after war broke out in Europe in 1939 and as Nazi Germany overran Western Europe in 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) maneuvered the nation toward support for the Allies, establishing the "Cash and Carry" policy (1939), the Destroyers for Bases agreement (1940), and the **Lend-Lease Act of March 1941**, transforming the United States into the **"Arsenal of Democracy"**. In August 1941, Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill issued the **Atlantic Charter**, outlining postwar democratic goals.

The United States formally entered World War II following the devastating Japanese surprise attack on the U.S. Pacific Fleet at **Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941** ("a date which will live in infamy"). Germany and Italy declared war on the United States four days later.

Total economic mobilization ended the Great Depression. The **War Production Board (WPB)** converted civilian factories into high-speed military output: automobile plants produced B-24 Liberator bombers and tanks, yielding roughly 300,000 aircraft and 86,000 tanks by 1945. Roughly six million women entered the paid workforce during the war, many of them in war industry, symbolized by **"Rosie the Riveter"**. Over one million African Americans served in segregated armed units—exemplified by the famed **Tuskegee Airmen**—while Black leaders championed the **"Double V" campaign** (victory over fascism abroad and racism at home). To meet agricultural labor shortages, the U.S. and Mexico established the **Bracero Program (1942)**.

The war also witnessed profound civil liberties violations. In February 1942, FDR signed **Executive Order 9066**, authorizing the forced removal and internment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans (two-thirds of whom were U.S. citizens) from the West Coast into remote inland concentration camps. In

***Korematsu v. United States* (1944)**, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the exclusion order removing Japanese Americans from the West Coast, based on "military necessity."

Adopting a "Germany First" grand strategy, Allied forces drove Axis armies from North Africa (Operation Torch) and invaded Sicily and mainland Italy before launching the massive amphibious invasion of Normandy, France, on **June 6, 1944 (D-Day / Operation Overlord)** under Supreme Allied Commander General **Dwight D. Eisenhower**, liberating Paris and precipitating Germany's unconditional surrender on **V-E Day (May 8, 1945)**.

In the Pacific Theater, the U.S. Navy under Admiral Chester Nimitz halted Japanese expansion at the **Battle of Midway in June 1942**, initiating an **"island-hopping"** campaign across Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. Under the top-secret **Manhattan Project**, directed by General Leslie Groves with J. Robert Oppenheimer leading the Los Alamos weapons laboratory, the U.S. developed the first atomic weapons. President **Harry S. Truman** ordered the atomic bombings of **Hiroshima (August 6, 1945)** and **Nagasaki (August 9, 1945)**, prompting Japan's announcement of surrender on August 15, 1945 (August 14 in the United States), celebrated as **V-J Day** (Victory over Japan Day); the formal surrender was signed on September 2, 1945, which President Truman proclaimed the official V-J Day.

Containment Doctrine, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, and Korean War

Postwar optimism—embodied in the creation of the **United Nations (1945)** and the Bretton Woods monetary system—quickly dissolved into the **Cold War**, a four-decade geopolitical and ideological confrontation between the democratic-capitalist United States and the authoritarian-communist Soviet Union.

The **Bretton Woods Conference** of July 1944, where delegates from 44 nations met in New Hampshire, created the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, commonly known as the **World Bank**. The IMF oversaw a system of fixed exchange rates centered on the U.S. dollar and gold.

In 1946, diplomat **George F. Kennan** authored the **"Long Telegram"** (and subsequent "X Article"), articulating the strategy of **containment**: preventing the territorial and ideological expansion of Soviet communism through patient, vigilant counter-force. In 1947, President Truman announced the **Truman Doctrine**, pledging American military and economic support to "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures," securing $400 million in aid for Greece and Turkey.

In 1947, Secretary of State George Marshall announced the **Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program)**, which Congress enacted in 1948, delivering over $13 billion in economic assistance to rebuild war-torn Western European economies, helping stabilize democratic governments there. When Soviet leader Joseph Stalin blockaded West Berlin in 1948, the U.S. and Britain executed the **Berlin Airlift**, flying in over two million tons of vital supplies; the Soviets lifted the blockade in May 1949, and the airlift ran on until September 1949.

In April 1949, the United States joined eleven other nations—Canada and ten Western European countries—to create the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, a mutual defense military alliance

declaring that an attack on one member was an attack on all—marking the first peacetime military alliance the United States joined outside the Western Hemisphere.

Cold War tensions escalated rapidly in 1949 with the successful Soviet atomic bomb test and the victory of **Mao Zedong's** Communist forces in the Chinese Civil War. In 1950, the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, led by Paul Nitze, completed **National Security Council Report 68 (NSC-68)**, which called for a massive buildup of conventional and nuclear arms and a substantial rise in military spending. In June 1950, Communist North Korea invaded South Korea. Truman committed U.S. military forces under a United Nations police action commanded by General **Douglas MacArthur**. After MacArthur landed at Incheon and pushed north, Chinese forces intervened, and by mid-1951 the war had settled into a bloody stalemate near the **38th parallel** that lasted until an armistice in July 1953.

Postwar Affluence, McCarthyism, Cuban Missile Crisis, and Vietnam Escalation

The postwar era was characterized by unprecedented domestic economic prosperity. The **Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (GI Bill of Rights)** funded college educations, vocational training, and low-interest home mortgages for millions of returning veterans, propelling working-class families into the expanding middle class. The **Baby Boom (1946–1964)** fueled rapid **suburbanization**, pioneered by William Levitt's mass-produced **Levittowns**, supported by the **Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956**, which authorized and funded the initial 41,000-mile interstate highway network.

Domestic anxieties triggered the **Second Red Scare (McCarthyism)**. The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated Hollywood artists and federal employees. In 1950, Republican Senator **Joseph McCarthy** of Wisconsin launched four years of reckless smear campaigns, alleging extensive communist infiltration in the State Department and U.S. Army, until his censuring by the Senate in 1954.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953–1961) and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles embraced **"Massive Retaliation"** and **"brinkmanship"**, relying on nuclear deterrence rather than costly conventional armies. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) conducted covert coups to overthrow the nationalist government of **Iran (1953)** and the leftist government of **Guatemala (1954)**. In his **1961 Farewell Address**, Eisenhower delivered a prescient warning against the unwarranted influence of the **"military-industrial complex."**

President **John F. Kennedy (1961–1963)** adopted **"Flexible Response"** and faced intense Cold War crises:

- The disastrous CIA-sponsored **Bay of Pigs invasion (1961)** in Cuba.
- The construction of the **Berlin Wall (1961)**.
- **The Cuban Missile Crisis (October 1962)**: The world teetered on the brink of nuclear war for thirteen days after U.S. spy planes discovered Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. Kennedy imposed a naval "quarantine" around Cuba; Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev agreed to withdraw the missiles in exchange for a U.S. pledge not to invade Cuba and a secret agreement to remove U.S. Jupiter missiles from Turkey.

Following Kennedy's assassination in Dallas on **November 22, 1963**, President **Lyndon B. Johnson** escalated American involvement in the **Vietnam War**. Following the controversial **Gulf of Tonkin**

Incident in August 1964, Congress passed the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution**, granting the president virtually blank-check authority to conduct military operations in Southeast Asia without a formal declaration of war. By 1968, over 500,000 U.S. troops were deployed in Vietnam, facing brutal guerrilla warfare and a growing domestic anti-war movement. In January 1968, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese launched the nationwide **Tet Offensive**, shattering administration claims of imminent victory, undermining public credibility, and leading Johnson to announce he would not seek re-election.

Key terms

Arsenal of Democracy

The slogan used by President Franklin D. Roosevelt describing the industrial collective capacity of the United States to supply weapons and munitions to Allied nations.

G.I. Bill

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 providing federal grants for higher education, job training, unemployment benefits, and low-interest home loans to WWII veterans.

Containment

The overarching United States geopolitical strategy during the Cold War aimed at preventing the global expansion of communism through economic, diplomatic, and military pressure.

McCarthyism

The political practice of making unsubstantiated and reckless allegations of treason, subversion, or communist sympathy without proper evidence, prominent in the 1950s.

Key concepts

Lend-Lease Act

- Transformative wartime legislation enacted by Congress in March 1941
- Authorized the president to sell, transfer, or lease weapons to nations fighting Axis powers
- Effectively ended American diplomatic neutrality and provided over $50 billion in war materials

Pearl Harbor

- United States Pacific Fleet naval base located on the island of Oahu, Hawaii
- Target of a surprise devastating carrier air raid by the Imperial Japanese Navy on December 7, 1941
- Brought the United States into World War II following Franklin D. Roosevelt's Infamy Speech

D-Day

- Historic Allied amphibious landing in Normandy, France, launched on June 6, 1944
- Codename Operation Overlord under the supreme command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Opened the decisive Western European second front leading to the defeat of Nazi Germany

Manhattan Project

- Top-secret scientific research initiative that developed the first operational atomic weapons
- Directed scientifically by J. Robert Oppenheimer at Los Alamos, New Mexico
- Culminated in the Trinity test and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945

Containment

- Core United States Cold War geopolitical doctrine formulated by diplomat George F. Kennan
- Advocated patient, vigilant resistance to block the expansion of Soviet communist power
- Served as the strategic framework for the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, and NATO

Marshall Plan

- Postwar aid program announced by the U.S. Secretary of State in a June 1947 Harvard speech
- Distributed over $13 billion in economic assistance to rebuild Western European industries
- Revitalized transatlantic trade and helped stabilize Western Europe's democratic governments

Cuban Missile Crisis

- Thirteen-day geopolitical showdown between the US and USSR in October 1962
- Triggered by Soviet construction of nuclear intermediate-range ballistic missile bases in Cuba
- Resolved when Kennedy imposed a naval quarantine and Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles

Key facts

> **The Lend-Lease Act of 1941**
>
> Enacted in March 1941, the Lend-Lease Act ended official American neutrality by authorizing President Roosevelt to lend or lease arms, munitions, and raw materials to Great Britain, China, and the Soviet Union, establishing the U.S. as the 'Arsenal of Democracy'.



Ansel Adams (Library of Congress) · no known restrictions on publication

Executive Order 9066 and Japanese American Incarceration

Signed by President Roosevelt in February 1942, Executive Order 9066 forcibly removed and incarcerated over 120,000 Japanese Americans—two-thirds of them native-born U.S. citizens—in remote interior concentration camps, a violation upheld in Korematsu v. United States (1944).



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The Double V Campaign

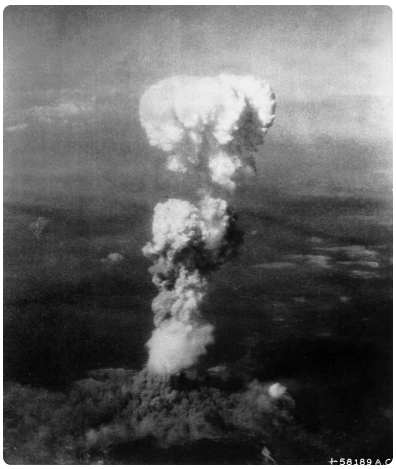
Launched by the Pittsburgh Courier in 1942, the Double V Campaign rallied African Americans to fight for a double victory: victory over fascism abroad and victory over racial segregation and discrimination at home, laying crucial groundwork for the postwar Civil Rights Movement.



Robert F. Sargent (U.S. Coast Guard, National Archives) · public domain

Operation Overlord and the D-Day Landings

On June 6, 1944 (D-Day), Allied forces commanded by General Dwight D. Eisenhower executed Operation Overlord, landing over 150,000 troops along the beaches of Normandy, France, in the largest amphibious invasion in history to liberate Western Europe from Nazi control.



George R. Caron (U.S. Army Air Forces, National Archives) · public domain

The Manhattan Project and Atomic Bombings

Directed by J. Robert Oppenheimer and General Leslie Groves, the top-secret Manhattan Project developed the first atomic weapons; in August 1945, President Harry S. Truman ordered atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9), prompting Japan's unconditional surrender.



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The G.I. Bill of Rights (1944)

Enacted in 1944, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (G.I. Bill) provided returning veterans with free college tuition, vocational training, low-interest mortgage loans, and unemployment benefits, transforming higher education and propelling millions into the postwar middle class.

The Bretton Woods Conference and Global Institutions

Gathered in New Hampshire in 1944, Allied delegates created the Bretton Woods monetary system, pegging international currencies to the U.S. dollar backed by gold, and founding the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to structure the postwar capitalist global economy.



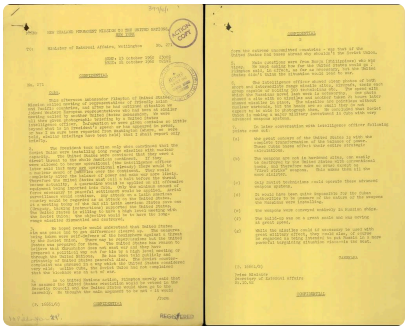
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The Truman Doctrine and Containment

Articulated by President Harry S. Truman in March 1947, the Truman Doctrine pledged American financial and military assistance to free nations resisting communist subjugation, establishing 'containment'—formulated by diplomat George F. Kennan—as foundational Cold War doctrine.

The Marshall Plan and Postwar European Recovery

Announced by Secretary of State George C. Marshall in 1947, the European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan) delivered over $13 billion in economic aid to rebuild war-torn Western Europe, prevent communist electoral victories, and create robust export markets for American goods.



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The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962

In October 1962, U.S. aerial surveillance revealed Soviet nuclear ballistic missiles stationed in Cuba; President John F. Kennedy imposed a naval 'quarantine' around the island, bringing the superpowers to the brink of nuclear war before Premier Nikita Khrushchev agreed to dismantle the sites.

By the numbers

In what calendar year did the Lend-Lease Act pass Congress, providing war supplies to Allies?

1941 year

In what calendar year did Allied forces conduct the D-Day landings in Normandy, France?

1944 year

In what calendar year was the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) formally founded?

1949 year

In what calendar year did the Cuban Missile Crisis occur?

1962 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

War Production Board
→ Federal wartime agency that converted civilian manufacturing factories into military munitions production

Island Hopping
→ Allied Pacific strategy of bypassing heavily fortified Japanese bases to capture strategic airfields

Berlin Airlift
→ Massive 1948–1949 Allied airborne operation delivering food and fuel to bypass a Soviet ground blockade

Military-Industrial Complex
→ The nexus between the nation's immense armed forces establishment and permanent defense contractors

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What did President Franklin D. Roosevelt mean by describing the United States as the 'Arsenal of Democracy' in 1940?

(A) Deploying American army troops immediately to seize German industrial chemical factories
(B) Abolishing the private manufacture of all commercial military aircraft and naval ships
(C) Mandating that all European nations adopt the United States Constitution without alterations
(D) Providing massive military weapons and material production to democratic nations resisting Axis tyranny

2. What constitutional ruling did the Supreme Court issue in Korematsu v. United States (1944)?

(A) It upheld the wartime military exclusion of Japanese Americans from the West Coast as a military necessity
(B) It declared Executive Order 9066 unconstitutional and awarded immediate financial reparations
(C) It ruled that the Bill of Rights applies only during periods of formal peacetime diplomacy
(D) It ordered the immediate dissolution of the United States War Relocation Authority

3. What dual objectives were championed by the African American 'Double V Campaign' during World War II?

A Victory for industrial workers' unions at home and victory for Allied armies abroad

B Victory over Germany in Europe and victory over Japan in the Pacific

C Victory against fascism abroad and victory against racial discrimination and Jim Crow at home

D Victory in the war abroad and victory for Roosevelt in the 1944 election at home

4. What was the strategic objective of the Allied D-Day landings in Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944?

A To establish a permanent military base inside the Soviet borders of Ukraine

B To open a major western front to liberate Western Europe and crush Nazi German forces

C To evacuate British civilian populations to overseas settlements in Canada

D To capture Spanish naval ports along the Mediterranean coastline

5. Which of the following was NOT one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's (FDR) policies moving the U.S. toward the Allies before Pearl Harbor?

A Destroyers for Bases agreement

B Cash and Carry policy

C Lend-Lease Act

D Neutrality Acts of 1935-1937

6. What core foreign policy strategy did George F. Kennan articulate in the 'Long Telegram' (1946) and the later 'X Article' (1947)?

A Total isolationist withdrawal of all American armed forces from the European continent

B Containment—patiently and firmly resisting Soviet geopolitical and ideological expansionism

C Immediate nuclear preemptive warfare against all Soviet continental military bases

D Accepting Soviet control of Eastern Europe in exchange for a permanent Soviet pledge not to expand further

7. What was the purpose of the Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program) enacted in 1948?

A Flying supplies into West Berlin during the Soviet blockade

B A mutual defense pact: an attack on one is an attack on all

C Aid to rebuild war-torn Western Europe and curb communism

D Fixing exchange rates through the Bretton Woods system

8. How did the Korean War (1950–1953) conclude militarily?

A. An armistice establishing a demilitarized zone (DMZ) roughly along the 38th parallel without a formal peace treaty

B. The total military conquest and unification of Korea under the Republic of Korea

C. A formal peace treaty signed at Panmunjom that reunified Korea under a neutral government

D. A decisive Chinese and North Korean victory that unified the peninsula under communist rule

9. Under the 1947 Truman Doctrine, which two countries received the initial $400 million in U.S. aid?

A. France and Italy

B. Greece and Turkey

C. Britain and the Netherlands

D. Poland and Czechoslovakia

10. Which of the following was NOT a U.S. Cold War containment initiative?

A. NATO

B. Truman Doctrine

C. Marshall Plan

D. Warsaw Pact

Go deeper

WATCH Thirteen Days 0:28
For thirteen days, the world stood on the edge of nuclear war. American spy planes had found Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba.

WATCH Order 9066 0:30
Over 120,000 Japanese Americans were forced to leave the West Coast. Two-thirds of them were United States citizens.

WATCH Double V 0:30
Over 1 million African Americans served in World War II. They served in segregated units, like the famous Tuskegee Airmen.

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/world-war-ii-the-cold-war-and-global-hegemony-1939-1968

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LESSON 13 OF 13

The Civil Rights Movement, Political Realignment, and Modern America (1954–Present)

The Black Freedom Movement: Legal Challenges, Direct Action, and Federal Acts · Great Society, Counterculture, Watergate, and the Conservative Ascendancy · Post-Cold War Global Order, 9/11, Digital Revolution, and Contemporary Politics

WHAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO

- Trace how litigation, nonviolent direct action, and federal law dismantled Jim Crow between 1954 and 1968.
- Analyze the Great Society, Watergate, and the conservative rise that brought Reagan to power.

Lesson 13: The Civil Rights Movement, Political Realignment, and Modern America (1954–Present)

The Black Freedom Movement: Legal Challenges, Direct Action, and Federal Acts

The modern African American civil rights movement dismantled the Jim Crow legal apartheid system through a dual strategy of litigation and nonviolent mass civil disobedience. In ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954)**, the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice **Earl Warren**, unanimously overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson*, ruling that racially segregated public schools were "inherently unequal" and violated the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause, litigated by National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chief counsel **Thurgood Marshall** (who later became the first Black Supreme Court Justice in 1967).

Direct action campaigns catalyzed national awareness:

- **Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955–1956)**: Sparked by **Rosa Parks's** refusal to surrender her bus seat, a 381-day community boycott desegregated city buses and elevated 26-year-old Baptist minister **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** to national leadership; in 1957, after the boycott, King co-founded the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)**.
- **Little Rock Nine (1957)**: President Eisenhower deployed the 101st Airborne Division to enforce federal court-ordered integration at Central High School in Arkansas against state resistance.
- **Student Sit-Ins & Freedom Rides (1960–1961)**: Four Black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, launched the sit-in movement, which led student activists to found the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) organized integrated **Freedom Rides** to challenge interstate bus terminal segregation.

- **Birmingham Campaign & March on Washington (1963)**: SCLC organized protests in Birmingham, Alabama, facing police dogs and firehoses under Eugene "Bull" Connor. Imprisoned, King penned the famous **"Letter from Birmingham Jail"**, articulating the moral imperative to disobey unjust laws. In August 1963, an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 demonstrators gathered at the Lincoln Memorial for the March on Washington, where King delivered his visionary **"I Have a Dream"** address.

Protests culminated in landmark federal legislation under President Lyndon B. Johnson:

- **Civil Rights Act of 1964**: **Title II** outlawed discrimination in public accommodations, and **Title VII** outlawed employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, creating the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** to implement the law.
- **Twenty-Fourth Amendment (1964)**: Abolished the poll tax in federal elections.
- **Voting Rights Act of 1965**: Enacted after the state-sponsored violence of "Bloody Sunday" during the **Selma to Montgomery marches**, this act banned literacy tests and established federal preclearance for voting changes in discriminatory jurisdictions.
- **Fair Housing Act of 1968**: Prohibited discrimination in housing sales and rentals, passed in the wake of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

Building on ideas **Malcolm X** had articulated before his 1965 assassination, the **Black Power** movement emerged after 1966, championed by Stokely Carmichael and the **Black Panther Party for Self-Defense** (founded in Oakland by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale), emphasizing self-determination, racial pride, and economic empowerment.

Great Society, Counterculture, Watergate, and the Conservative Ascendancy

President Lyndon B. Johnson launched the **"Great Society"**, the most expansive federal social welfare reform program since the New Deal, aiming to eradicate poverty and racial injustice:

- **War on Poverty**: Created the Office of Economic Opportunity, Job Corps, and Head Start, and the Food Stamp Act of 1964 made the food stamp program permanent.
- **Healthcare**: Created **Medicare** (health insurance for elderly Americans) and **Medicaid** (healthcare for low-income citizens) in 1965.
- **Immigration Reform**: The **Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Hart-Celler Act)** abolished discriminatory national origins quotas, establishing preferences for family reunification and skilled labor, triggering vast immigration from Asia and Latin America.

Other major rights movements surged:

- **Second-Wave Feminism**: Catalyzed by **Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)** and the founding of the **National Organization for Women (NOW)**, securing **Title IX (1972)** prohibiting sex discrimination in education, and ***Roe v. Wade* (1973)** legalizing abortion rights nationwide (overturned in 2022 by *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, returning abortion regulation to the states), while conservative activist **Phyllis Schlafly** successfully organized the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

- **Latino Movement**: **Cesar Chavez** and **Dolores Huerta** organized the **United Farm Workers (UFW)**, utilizing grape boycotts to secure collective bargaining rights for migrant farmworkers.
- **LGBTQ+ Rights**: Sparked by the **Stonewall Riots in New York City in June 1969**, launching the modern gay liberation movement.
- **Environmentalism**: Spurred by **Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962)** and the first Earth Day (1970), leading to the creation of the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** and the Clean Air Act under President Richard Nixon.

President **Richard Nixon (1969–1974)** pursued **détente** with the Soviet Union, including the first round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), and historic diplomatic opening to China in 1972. However, the **Watergate scandal**—the June 1972 break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters and subsequent White House cover-up—led to the Supreme Court ruling in ***United States v. Nixon* (1974)** rejecting absolute executive privilege, forcing Nixon's historic resignation on August 9, 1974.

The late 1970s experienced **stagflation** (high inflation combined with stagnant economic growth), energy crises, and the Iran Hostage Crisis under President Jimmy Carter. This economic distress fueled the **Conservative Ascendancy**, culminating in the election of **Ronald Reagan in 1980**. Reagan enacted **"Reaganomics"** (supply-side economics), slashing top marginal income tax rates, deregulating financial and energy markets, and dramatically escalating defense spending. In foreign affairs, Reagan confronted the Soviet Union, dubbing it the "evil empire," before negotiating the historic **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (1987)** with Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, paving the way for the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the fall of the **Berlin Wall in 1989**.

Post-Cold War Global Order, 9/11, Digital Revolution, and Contemporary Politics

The formal dissolution of the Soviet Union in **December 1991** left the United States as the world's sole superpower. President **George H.W. Bush** forged a broad international coalition (estimates of participating nations range from roughly 30 to nearly 40) in the **Gulf War (1991)** (Operation Desert Storm), liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in a decisive 100-hour ground campaign, proclaiming a **"New World Order."**

The presidency of Democrat **Bill Clinton (1993–2001)** coincided with the **Digital Revolution** and the commercial explosion of the **Internet** and personal computing. Clinton governed as a centrist "New Democrat," signing the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)** and bipartisan welfare reform (1996), achieving the first federal budget surpluses in three decades. In 1998, Clinton became the second president impeached by the House following the Monica Lewinsky investigation, but was acquitted by the Senate.

The contested **2000 Presidential Election** between George W. Bush and Al Gore was decided when the Supreme Court halted the Florida recount in ***Bush v. Gore* (2000)**, granting Bush the presidency.

On **September 11, 2001 (9/11)**, nineteen al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four commercial airliners, destroying the World Trade Center towers in New York City and striking the Pentagon, killing nearly 3,000 people. President **George W. Bush** declared a global **"War on Terror"**, enacting the **USA PATRIOT**

Act (2001), creating the Department of Homeland Security, and launching military operations in **Afghanistan (2001)** and **Iraq (2003)** under the doctrine of preemptive war.

In 2008, the collapse of the subprime mortgage market triggered the **Great Recession**, the deepest financial crisis since 1929. In the midst of this crisis, the United States made history by electing its first African American president, **Barack Obama**. Obama enacted the **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009** and the **Affordable Care Act (ACA) ("Obamacare") in 2010**, extending health insurance to tens of millions. The Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationwide in ***Obergefell v. Hodges*** **(2015)**.

The contemporary era has been shaped by deep political polarization, economic inequality, the COVID-19 pandemic, and intense debates over democratic norms, culminating in the contentious elections and political landscape of modern 21st-century America.

Key terms

Civil Disobedience

The active, professed refusal of a citizen to obey certain laws, demands, orders, or commands of a government using nonviolent tactics to highlight injustice.

Preclearance

The legal requirement under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 mandating that covered jurisdictions obtain federal approval before changing voting laws.

Executive Privilege

The constitutional principle that the President and executive branch officials can withhold certain confidential communications from the legislative and judicial branches.

Supply-Side Economics

A macroeconomic theory arguing that economic growth is most effectively stimulated by lowering taxes on businesses and investment and decreasing governmental regulation.

Key concepts

Brown v. Board of Education

- Unanimous 1954 Supreme Court decision authored by Chief Justice Earl Warren
- Held that state-mandated racial segregation in public schools violates the Equal Protection Clause
- Overruled the 1896 'separate but equal' doctrine of Plessy v. Ferguson

Martin Luther King Jr.

- Baptist minister who emerged as the primary moral and strategic leader of the Civil Rights Movement
- Led the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Birmingham Campaign, and the 1963 March on Washington
- Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 before being assassinated in Memphis in 1968

Civil Rights Act of 1964

- Comprehensive civil rights legislation signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson
- Outlawed segregation in public accommodations and created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Banned employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin

Voting Rights Act of 1965

- Landmark voting legislation passed following the Selma to Montgomery marches
- Banned literacy tests and established federal preclearance for changes to state election laws
- Resulted in dramatic increases in African American voter registration and political representation

Great Society

- Broad domestic reform agenda launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964–1965
- Featured the War on Poverty, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- Represented the largest expansion of the federal social welfare state since the New Deal

Watergate Scandal

- Major political and constitutional scandal originating from the 1972 Democratic National Committee (DNC) break-in
- Involved White House cover-ups, hush money, abuse of power, and secret audio recordings
- Led to the historic resignation of President Richard Nixon on August 9, 1974

Reaganomics

- Supply-side economic policy platform championed by President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s
- Advocated broad tax cuts, industrial deregulation, reduced social spending, and higher military budgets
- Sought to stimulate private capital investment and reduce the economic role of government

Key facts

> **Brown v. Board of Education (1954)**
> In a unanimous landmark 1954 decision authored by Chief Justice Earl Warren, the Supreme Court declared that 'separate educational facilities are inherently unequal', overturning Plessy v. Ferguson and ordering the desegregation of public schools under the Fourteenth Amendment.

> **The Montgomery Bus Boycott**
> Sparked by Rosa Parks's arrest in December 1955, the Black community of Montgomery, Alabama, led by a young Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., sustained a 381-day nonviolent bus boycott, culminating in the Supreme Court ruling Browder v. Gayle striking down segregated municipal transit.



Steve Snodgrass (Openverse) · by 2.0

The Little Rock Central High Crisis (1957)

In 1957, Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus deployed the National Guard to block nine African American students from integrating Little Rock Central High School; President Dwight D. Eisenhower federalized the Guard and sent the 101st Airborne Division to enforce federal court orders.

The Birmingham Campaign and the March on Washington

In spring 1963, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) nonviolent Birmingham Campaign confronted police brutality by Eugene 'Bull' Connor; televised images of police dogs and firehoses shocked the world, culminating in August 1963 with the March on Washington where Dr. King delivered his 'I Have a Dream' speech.



Cecil Stoughton (White House Press Office) · public domain

The Civil Rights Act of 1964

Signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned racial discrimination in public accommodations, outlawed employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin under Title VII, created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and authorized the federal government to withhold funds from segregated institutions.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965

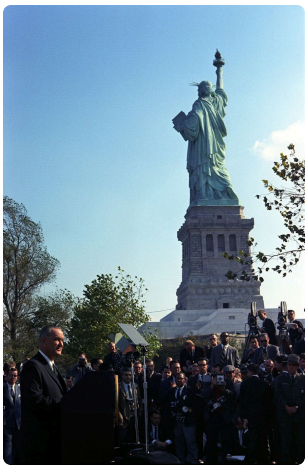
Spurred by the televised state-trooper violence on 'Bloody Sunday' during the Selma to Montgomery marches, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 outlawed literacy tests and established federal preclearance for voting changes in discriminatory jurisdictions, transforming Southern politics.



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Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society

President Lyndon B. Johnson enacted his ambitious 'Great Society' reform program, declaring a War on Poverty and creating Medicare (healthcare for elderly), Medicaid (healthcare for low-income families), Head Start, federal aid to public education, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Yoichi Okamoto · Public domain

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Hart-Celler)

The Hart-Celler Act of 1965 abolished the discriminatory 1924 national origins quota system, establishing a new immigration policy prioritizing family reunification and skilled labor, which fundamentally transformed American demographics through major immigrant arrivals from Asia and Latin America.



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The Watergate Scandal and Nixon's Resignation

Following the 1972 break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters and an elaborate White House cover-up, the Supreme Court ordered the release of the 'smoking gun' audio tapes in United States v. Nixon; Richard Nixon resigned the presidency on August 9, 1974.

The Reagan Revolution and Supply-Side Economics

Elected in 1980, President Ronald Reagan ushered in the conservative ascendancy, cutting top federal marginal tax rates, deregulating financial and energy industries, scaling back domestic social spending, and massively expanding military expenditures to confront the Soviet Union.

September 11 and the Post-9/11 Era

On September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four commercial airliners, destroying the World Trade Center towers and damaging the Pentagon; President George W. Bush launched the global War on Terror, invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, and created the Department of Homeland Security.

By the numbers

In what calendar year did the Supreme Court issue the Brown v. Board of Education decision?

1954 year

In what calendar year did Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) sign the Civil Rights Act that created Title VII and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)?

1964 year

In what calendar year did President Richard Nixon resign the presidency due to Watergate?

1974 year

In what calendar year was Barack Obama elected as the 44th President of the United States?

2008 year

Matched pairs

Each item on the left goes with the one on the right.

Southern Manifesto
→ Declaration signed by Southern congressmen pledging resistance against school desegregation

War on Poverty
→ Initiative under Lyndon B. Johnson creating Head Start, Job Corps, and Community Action agencies

Stagflation
→ Economic dilemma of the 1970s combining stagnant growth with high inflation and unemployment

Affordable Care Act
→ Comprehensive healthcare statute establishing insurance marketplaces and expanding Medicaid

Self-test

Answer each question from memory, then check your work against the answer key.

1. What core legal principle did the Supreme Court establish in Brown v. Board of Education (1954)?

- (A) Segregated schools violate the 14th Amendment
- (B) School segregation is a state matter, not federal
- (C) Segregation is banned in public, not private, schools
- (D) Separate but equal facilities are constitutional

2. How did President Eisenhower respond to Arkansas's defiance during the Little Rock Central High crisis (1957)?

- (A) Left enforcement to Governor Faubus's Guard
- (B) Asked Congress to pass a new school desegregation statute
- (C) Federalized the Guard and sent in the 101st Airborne
- (D) Referred the dispute to the Supreme Court

3. What philosophy of resistance was championed by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the SCLC?

A. Complete economic withdrawal into segregated all-Black agricultural colonies
B. Nonviolent civil disobedience inspired by Christian theology and Mahatma Gandhi
C. Unconditional compliance with local municipal segregation ordinances
D. Armed revolutionary insurrection aimed at seizing municipal police stations

4. What did Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 specifically prohibit?

A. Segregation in public school enrollment
B. Literacy tests for voter registration
C. Discrimination in hotels and restaurants
D. Employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin

5. What specific enforcement mechanism did the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) create against discriminatory voting laws?

A. A nationwide voter ID mandate
B. A one-dollar cap on poll taxes
C. Mandatory bilingual ballots in every U.S. county
D. Federal preclearance for voting-law changes

6. What healthcare programs were created under Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society in 1965?

A. Medicare for elderly citizens and Medicaid for low-income families
B. The Affordable Care Act exchanges and the individual mandate
C. The Veterans Administration and the National Institutes of Health
D. The Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicare Part D

7. How did the Hart-Celler Act of 1965 change U.S. immigration policy?

A. Kept the ban on immigration from Asian countries
B. Replaced quotas with family and job-skill preferences
C. Required immigrants to pass an English test
D. Restored the older national-origins quota limits of 1924

8. What did the Supreme Court hold in United States v. Nixon (1974) regarding executive privilege?

A. Privilege covers only national-security matters
B. Courts cannot review privilege claims at all
C. Executive privilege yields to criminal evidence needs
D. The President has absolute immunity from all subpoenas

9. What economic theory formed the core of President Ronald Reagan's 1981 economic program?

A. Supply-side economics—cutting marginal tax rates and deregulating industry to stimulate investment
B. Mandating federal government wage and price controls on all consumer goods
C. Strict Marxist-Leninist state nationalization of all corporate industrial plants
D. Doubling federal import tariffs while outlawing private commercial banking

10. What foreign-policy breakthrough did President Nixon achieve with China in 1972?

(A) A trade pact granting China permanent most-favored-nation status

(B) A treaty establishing full diplomatic recognition at once

(C) A mutual defense pact requiring US military intervention if China were attacked

(D) A presidential visit to Beijing that began normalizing US-China relations

Go deeper

WATCH Off the Buses 0:25
For 381 days, a community in Montgomery refused to ride the city buses.

WATCH The Break-In 0:27
A break-in started the fall of a president. It happened in June 1972, at the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

WATCH Sent to Central High 0:32
A president sent the 101st Airborne Division to a high school. Why?

ONLINE This lesson on the web flashfeedlearningapp.com/study-guides/us-history/the-civil-rights-movement-political-realignment-and-modern-america-1954-present

STUDY United States History in the FlashFeed app flashfeedlearningapp.com/packs/us-history

Answer key

Lesson 1: Pre-Contact America, Encounter, and Colonial Foundations (Pre-1607–1754)

1. C Intensive cultivation of maize alongside squash and beans in river floodplains

Cahokia's urban density was sustained by intensive floodplain cultivation of Mesoamerican maize, which provided predictable caloric surpluses.

2. A The domesticated horse introduced into the Southwest by Spanish expeditions

The reintroduction of the horse by the Spanish revolutionized Plains Indigenous cultures, vastly expanding mobility and bison-hunting efficiency.

3. B Indigenous populations lacked acquired immunological antibodies to virgin-soil diseases

Because Native Americans had no prior biological exposure to smallpox or measles, virgin-soil epidemics decimated communities lacking antibodies.

4. D Fifty male civil chiefs nominated by matrilineal clan mothers governed by consensus

In the Haudenosaunee confederacy, clan mothers held the authority to nominate and recall the fifty chiefs who made decisions by consensus.

5. A London

Cahokia's estimated 10,000 to 30,000 residents around 1100 CE (estimates vary widely) rivaled the population of London, an unusually large urban center for the era.

6. B Adult male status and formal church membership based on documented spiritual conversion

In early Massachusetts Bay, political franchise was restricted to male 'visible saints' who had demonstrated a credible conversion experience.

7. D He demanded complete separation of church and state and defended Native land rights

Roger Williams was expelled for preaching that civil magistrates had no authority over spiritual conscience and that Native lands must be purchased fairly.

8. C Four to seven years of unfree agricultural labor in exchange for ocean passage and freedom dues

Indentured servants signed legal indentures binding them to 4–7 years of unfree labor in exchange for transatlantic passage, food, and eventual freedom dues.

9. D Planter elites recognized the political danger of free white laborers and turned to enslaved Africans

Many historians argue that planters, fearing alliances between landless armed white ex-servants and Black laborers, turned increasingly to enslaved Africans as a permanent, controllable labor force.

10. C Virginia House of Burgesses

The Virginia House of Burgesses convened in 1619 as the first elected representative legislative body in the English colonies, establishing local self-governance.

Lesson 2: Imperial Crisis, the American Revolution, and Independence (1754–1783)

1. A The British national debt had doubled during the French and Indian War and colonists should share defense costs

Grenville argued that because Britain incurred massive debt protecting the colonies in the Seven Years' War, colonists must contribute revenue.

2. D They insisted that only their own elected colonial assemblies could levy internal taxes on them

Colonists rejected virtual representation, arguing that unrepresented subjects could only be constitutionally taxed by their own elected legislatures.

3. C The Declaratory Act asserting supreme legislative authority over colonies in all cases whatsoever

The Declaratory Act asserted Parliament's absolute authority to bind the colonies 'in all cases whatsoever,' rejecting the colonial constitutional position.

4. B It granted the British East India Company a monopoly and affirmed Parliament's tax authority

Colonists recognized that buying the cheap tea would concede Parliament's right to tax them and undercut independent colonial merchants.

5. B Stamp Act (1765)

The Stamp Act (1765) predated the Townshend Acts (1767), Boston Massacre (1770), and Boston Tea Party (1773) in the escalating imperial crisis.

6. A The Continental Association enforcing non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation

The Continental Association organized local committees in every county to police compliance with comprehensive boycotts of British goods.

7. D Hereditary monarchy is inherently tyrannical and an island cannot reasonably govern a continent

Paine argued that hereditary monarchy violated natural equality, and that it was absurd for an island across the sea to rule a vast continent.

8. C John Locke's Two Treatises of Government on natural rights and popular consent

Jefferson drew directly on John Locke's formulation that governments exist by consent to protect the natural rights of life, liberty, and property.

9. C Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness

The Declaration proclaims unalienable rights to 'Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness,' revising Locke's original 'life, liberty, and property.'

10. D The Continental Army, under Washington

Congress created the Continental Army and named Washington commander-in-chief in May 1775; the others are real actions but from different congresses or later years.

Lesson 3: Creating the Republic: Constitutional Design and the Federalists (1781–1800)

1. D The Northwest Ordinance establishing procedures for statehood and banning slavery in the territory

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 created a democratic process for new states to enter the Union and prohibited slavery in the territory.

2. B It exposed the national government's weakness in suppressing civil unrest and protecting property

Shays' Rebellion demonstrated that the Confederation was powerless to quell domestic insurrection, accelerating calls for constitutional reform.

3. A The balance between large states favoring proportional representation and small states demanding equal representation

The Great Compromise established proportional representation in the House of Representatives and equal state representation in the Senate.

4. C It gave Southern slave states bonus congressional seats and electoral votes based on enslaved populations

By counting three-fifths of enslaved people for apportionment, Southern states secured disproportionate representation in Congress and the Electoral College.

5. A Nine of the thirteen states

Major legislation required approval from nine of the thirteen states, while amending the Articles required unanimous consent.

6. D They feared a consolidated central government would destroy state sovereignty and lacked a Bill of Rights

Anti-Federalists argued that the Constitution created an overly centralized government that threatened states' rights and individual liberties.

7. B Checks and balances granting each branch specific powers to restrain the actions of the others

Checks and balances (such as presidential vetoes and congressional impeachment) divide and balance power across branches.

8. C It reserved to the states or the people all powers the Constitution did not delegate to the federal government

The Tenth Amendment established the principle of reserved powers, affirming that non-delegated powers remain with the states or the people.

9. C Virginia Plan

James Madison's Virginia Plan proposed representation by population; the New Jersey Plan favored equal state votes, reconciled by the Great Compromise.

10. D Representation and taxation

Article I, Section 2 counted three-fifths of the enslaved population toward both congressional representation and direct federal taxation.

Lesson 4: The Early Republic, Jeffersonian Democracy, and the Marshall Court (1800–1824)

1. B The Constitution contained no explicit clause authorizing the president to acquire foreign territory

As a strict constructionist, Jefferson worried the Constitution gave no express power to purchase foreign land, but used his treaty power.

2. A Both candidates received an identical number of electoral votes under the original ballot rules

Before the 12th Amendment, electors did not separate president and vice president votes, producing a tie between Jefferson and Burr.

3. C It devastated New England maritime shipping, resulting in widespread bankruptcies and smuggling

The embargo paralyzed American shipping, plunging port cities into economic depression while failing to stop British or French aggression.

4. D Twelfth Amendment

The tie exposed a flaw in the ballot system, so the Twelfth Amendment (1804) required separate electoral votes for president and vice president.

5. D Chartering a national bank

Jefferson favored small government and yeoman farmers; a national bank was central to Hamilton's and Clay's programs, not Jefferson's agrarian agenda.

6. A The authority of the Supreme Court to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional through judicial review

Marshall established judicial review by striking down Section 13 of the Judiciary Act of 1789 as conflicting with Article III.

7. B Congress possesses broad implied powers to enact laws appropriate for executing enumerated powers

Marshall ruled that 'necessary' meant convenient and useful, confirming Congress's broad implied powers to create the national bank.

8. C Corporate charters are protected legal contracts that state legislatures cannot unilaterally alter

The Court held that the Contract Clause prevented states from altering private corporate charters without mutual consent.

9. C Congress has broad authority to regulate interstate navigation and commercial transport, overriding conflicting state monopolies

Marshall defined commerce broadly to include navigation, invalidating state monopolies that obstructed interstate trade.

10. D McCulloch v. Maryland

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819) upheld the bank under the Necessary and Proper Clause and the Supremacy Clause, holding 'the power to tax involves the power to destroy.'

Lesson 5: Jacksonian Democracy, Market Revolution, and Manifest Destiny (1824–1850)

1. A Abolition of property ownership requirements to establish near-universal white male voting
States eliminated taxpaying and property requirements, expanding the voting franchise to ordinary adult white working men.

2. D He declared nullification treason and secured congressional authority to use military force
Jackson issued his Proclamation on Nullification declaring disunion treason and secured the Force Bill to enforce federal law.

3. B The bank was an unconstitutional, monopolistic institution that enriched wealthy and foreign elites
Jackson's veto message framed the Bank as an elitist monopoly that oppressed farmers and mechanics for the benefit of financiers.

4. C It triggered a deflationary credit contraction by requiring gold or silver for federal land purchases
The Specie Circular curbed land speculation by demanding hard specie, draining gold from banks and contributing to the Panic of 1837.

5. D Compromise Tariff of 1833
Clay's Compromise Tariff gradually lowered rates to satisfy South Carolina, while the Force Bill was Jackson's separate measure authorizing military enforcement.

6. C It bound the agricultural Midwest to northeastern urban markets and sharply cut freight costs
The Erie Canal dramatically reduced shipping costs, connecting Great Lakes agriculture directly with New York City.

7. A Unmarried young rural women worked in centralized water-powered mills under strict moral boarding
The Lowell system employed young farm women ('mill girls') who lived in company-owned boarding houses with strict rules.

8. B Moral perfectionism and individual free will, holding that Christians must actively reform society
Evangelicals preached that individuals could choose salvation and were obligated to eradicate social sins like drunkenness and slavery.

9. A Equal civil rights and the constitutional franchise of voting for women
Drafted by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the Declaration of Sentiments demanded legal equality, property rights, and women's suffrage.

10. C Horace Mann
Horace Mann championed universal, state-funded common schools in Massachusetts, distinct from Dix's asylum reform, Finney's revivalism, and Stanton's women's rights advocacy.

Lesson 6: The Sectional Crisis, Economics of Slavery, and Road to Disunion (1850–1861)

1. C Abolition of the transatlantic slave trade
The 1808 ban on importing enslaved people from Africa forced planters to meet labor demand through the internal 'Second Middle Passage' instead; the other measures did not cut off the supply of enslaved labor.

2. B British textile mills depended on Southern cotton

Planters assumed Britain's textile industry could not survive without Southern cotton, guaranteeing diplomatic support; the other claims describe things that never happened.

3. D Petitioning Congress for compensated emancipation

Resistance took the form of sabotage, feigned illness, flight via the Underground Railroad, and revolts like Turner's; there was no congressional petition campaign for compensated emancipation.

4. A A 'positive good' superior to wage labor

Fitzhugh and Calhoun shifted from the older 'necessary evil' defense to calling slavery a 'positive good'; calling it a sin requiring immediate emancipation is the opposing abolitionist position, not their own.

5. A Over 60 percent

Cotton dominated antebellum trade: by 1850 the Southern crop supplied over 60 percent of total U.S. export value and fed the textile mills of Britain and New England.

6. D Intensified Northern opposition to slavery

Stowe's novel personalized the cruelty of family separation under slavery and shifted Northern public opinion; it did not change federal law or Southern behavior by itself.

7. B Denied accused runaways a jury trial

The law let commissioners remand accused fugitives without a jury trial and ordered citizens to help when summoned; anyone who hid a fugitive or blocked an arrest faced fines and jail.

8. C Repealed the Missouri Compromise line

By repealing the 36°30' ban and opening Kansas to popular sovereignty, the act drew pro- and anti-slavery settlers into violent conflict over the territory's fate.

9. C The Republican Party

The Kansas-Nebraska Act shattered the Whig Party and gave birth to the Republican Party in 1854, uniting Free Soil opponents of slavery's expansion.

10. B The admission of California as a free state and the abolition of the slave trade in Washington D.C.

California entered as a free state, giving free states a Senate majority, and the slave trade was abolished in the capital.

Lesson 7: The Civil War: Total War, Emancipation, and Union Victory (1861–1865)

1. B The foundational truth that the Negro is not equal to the white man and racial slavery is normal

Stephens explicitly stated that racial inequality and African chattel slavery were the foundational cornerstone of the Confederacy.

2. C A far greater population combined with much larger industrial and rail capacity than the Confederacy possessed

The Union possessed 71% of the population, 85% of manufacturing plants, and 70% of railroad mileage, providing overwhelming logistics.

3. D A coastal blockade and Union control of the Mississippi

The Anaconda Plan sought to suffocate the rebellion via a naval blockade and control of the Mississippi River (aimed at capturing New Orleans); Scott specifically opposed a costly direct invasion of Richmond, favoring economic strangulation instead.

4. A Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter

Confederate batteries fired on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, starting the war; secession, Lincoln's troop call, and the blockade came before or after but did not start the fighting.

5. A Recognition of Confederate independence

King Cotton diplomacy withheld cotton exports to pressure Britain and France into recognizing Confederate independence, but both nations ultimately declined to intervene.

6. D It provided the necessary military victory to issue the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation

Lincoln had written the proclamation but waited for a Union victory so it would not appear as an act of desperation; Antietam provided that.

7. C Only enslaved people residing in Confederate territories in active rebellion against the United States

Operating under his commander-in-chief war powers, Lincoln freed enslaved people in rebellious areas while exempting loyal Border States.

8. B About a tenth of the army; many fought in major battles

About 180,000 Black men served in the Union Army, most in the United States Colored Troops (USCT), which fought in major engagements like the Siege of Petersburg.

9. D It repelled Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania and ended his last major offensive into the North

Lee's defeat at Gettysburg (estimates of Confederate casualties range from about 23,000 to 28,000) ended the South's major offensive threat in the North for the remainder of the war.

10. B The Union split the Confederacy along the Mississippi River

Vicksburg's fall, with Port Hudson's surrender five days later, gave the Union the entire Mississippi River and severed Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana from the eastern Confederacy.

Lesson 8: Reconstruction and the Jim Crow Legal Settlement (1865–1896)

1. A Restrict Black civil rights, force labor contracts

Black Codes restricted freedpeople's movement and land ownership and arrested the unemployed for 'vagrancy' to force them into labor contracts.

2. C Pay war reparations to the federal treasury

States had to draft constitutions with Black suffrage, ratify the 14th Amendment, and accept military district rule; war reparations were never required.

3. D Birthright citizenship, due process, and equal protection

The 14th Amendment granted birthright citizenship and due process/equal protection, overturning Dred Scott; the other options describe the 19th, 17th, and 18th Amendments.

4. B Fifteenth Amendment

The 15th Amendment (1870) bars denying the vote based on race, color, or previous servitude; the 13th ended slavery, the 14th covers citizenship, the 19th covers sex.

5. C Violating the Tenure of Office Act

Johnson was impeached for violating the Tenure of Office Act after firing Secretary of War Edwin Stanton; he survived Senate conviction by one vote.

6. B Distributing forty acres of land to freedmen

The Bureau gave food, medical aid, contract arbitration, and built schools and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), but it never carried out the promised 'forty acres' land redistribution on any broad scale; the promise was abandoned.

7. D Hiram Revels of Mississippi

Hiram Revels was elected to the U.S. Senate from Mississippi in 1870, taking the seat once held by Jefferson Davis.

8. A Suspended habeas corpus and deployed troops

Grant enforced the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871, suspending habeas corpus in nine South Carolina counties and deploying federal troops to crush the Klan.

9. C Scalawags

Scalawags were Southern white Unionists who backed Reconstruction; carpetbaggers were Northern migrants who did the same.

10. D 2,000

Roughly 2,000 African Americans won elective office during Reconstruction, including Senators Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce.

Lesson 9: The Gilded Age: Industrial Titans, Labor, and Western Transformation (1870–1900)

1. C By controlling all stages of production from raw iron ore extraction to rail transportation

Vertical integration meant owning iron mines, coal fields, transport ships, railroads, and mills to eliminate middlemen.

2. D Horizontal integration absorbing competing refineries into a centralized corporate trust

Rockefeller used horizontal integration to buy up or crush rival refiners, placing their stock in Standard Oil trusts.

3. B Wealth was a biological reward for superior fitness while poverty reflected personal incompetence

Social Darwinism misapplied evolutionary theory to justify laissez-faire capitalism and oppose government aid for the poor.

4. A The rich must administer their surplus fortunes during life for permanent public civic good

Carnegie argued the wealthy had a duty to distribute their wealth for civic institutions (libraries, universities, concert halls).

5. D It severely weakened the Sherman Antitrust Act by ruling that manufacturing was distinct from interstate commerce

The Court ruled the sugar trust could not be broken up under the Sherman Act because manufacturing was distinct from interstate commerce.

6. C The AFL organized skilled craft unions focusing on bread-and-butter wage and hour gains

Led by Samuel Gompers, the AFL focused on practical economic goals ('bread and butter') for skilled craft unionists.

7. A It triggered anti-union and anti-immigrant hysteria that discredited the Knights of Labor

The bombing associated labor organizing with violent foreign anarchism, shattering public support for the Knights of Labor and hastening their decline.

8. B President Grover Cleveland sent federal troops and secured a federal court strike injunction

Cleveland sent troops citing the need to keep the federal mail moving, and Eugene Debs was jailed for defying a federal injunction.

9. A The free and unlimited coinage of silver (bimetallism) to inflate the money supply

Populists demanded free coinage of silver at 16:1 with gold to inflate the currency, raise farm prices, and ease debts.

10. D Hired armed Pinkertons

Frick hired armed Pinkerton detectives to break the steelworkers' lockout at Homestead; troops and injunctions were the tools used against the Pullman strikers instead.

Lesson 10: Progressivism, Imperial Expansion, and World War I (1890–1920)

1. A Passage of the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act

Sinclair's exposé of filthy meatpacking conditions prompted Theodore Roosevelt and Congress to pass consumer protection laws.

2. D Distinguishing between good trusts serving efficiency and bad trusts abusing monopoly power

Roosevelt used antitrust lawsuits against predatory monopolies like Northern Securities while regulating beneficial large firms.

3. C A decentralized national central banking network with twelve regional Federal Reserve Banks

The Federal Reserve created an elastic national currency, regulated credit, and established regional federal reserve banks.

4. B Prohibiting federal and state governments from denying the right to vote on the basis of sex

The Nineteenth Amendment enfranchised women across the United States, concluding a 72-year movement begun at Seneca Falls.

5. A Fifteenth Amendment

The Fifteenth Amendment (1870) secured voting rights regardless of race during Reconstruction, decades before the Progressive Era. The four Progressive Era amendments were the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth (1913-1920).

6. C Educated middle-class reformers lived directly within working-class immigrant communities to provide aid

Settlement house workers lived in poor neighborhoods, providing childcare, English classes, clinics, and advocating for labor reform.

7. B Through pioneering flash photojournalism exposing squalid, disease-ridden tenement living conditions

Riis's vivid photographs of crowded tenements shocked the public, prompting passage of New York's Tenement House Law of 1901.

8. D They originated predominantly from Southern and Eastern Europe, practicing Catholic, Jewish, and Orthodox faiths

New Immigrants from Italy, Poland, Russia, and the Balkans faced nativist discrimination due to religious and linguistic differences.

9. A Du Bois demanded immediate civil and political equality, rejecting Washington's economic accommodationism

Du Bois rejected Washington's 'Atlanta Compromise', insisting that Black Americans must demand full constitutional rights immediately.

10. B Ireland

New Immigrants came mainly from Southern and Eastern Europe: Italy, Poland, Russia, Greece, and Austria-Hungary. Irish immigration peaked earlier, in the mid-nineteenth century, and belonged to the older wave the lesson contrasts with the New Immigrants.

Lesson 11: The Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the New Deal (1920–1939)

1. A It slashed worker turnover and enabled assembly line laborers to afford buying the cars they produced

High wages stabilized Ford's workforce and created a consumer class with purchasing power for manufactured goods.

2. D The explosive growth of illegal speakeasies and violent organized crime syndicates

Prohibition failed to curb demand, transferring alcohol profits to violent gangsters like Al Capone in Chicago.

3. B By setting quotas at 2% of each nationality's foreign-born population in the 1890 census

Using the 1890 census explicitly favored Northern and Western Europeans while severely limiting Southern and Eastern Europeans.

4. C Traditional Christian fundamentalism versus modern scientific modernist evolution

The Scopes 'Monkey Trial' pitted Clarence Darrow against William Jennings Bryan over teaching human evolution.

5. C Harlem Renaissance

Centered in Harlem, this movement featured writers like Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston and jazz artists like Duke Ellington.

6. A Rampant margin buying where speculators purchased shares using mostly borrowed money from brokers

Investors bought stocks on 10% margin; when prices dropped, margin calls forced panic selling, crashing the market.

7. B It provoked retaliatory tariffs from foreign trading partners, causing international trade to collapse sharply

Smoot-Hawley raised tariffs to among the highest levels in U.S. history, triggering foreign retaliatory tariffs that paralyzed world trade.

8. D Severe drought and aggressive over-plowing of native grass

Over-farming and drought destroyed the topsoil, allowing high winds to generate massive 'black blizzards'.

9. B To temporarily close all banks, inspect their solvency, and restore public depositor confidence

The Emergency Banking Act reopened sound banks under federal supervision, ending depositor bank runs.

10. A Black Tuesday

Panicked selling on Black Tuesday, October 29, 1929, wiped out billions in paper wealth and triggered the Depression's onset.

Lesson 12: World War II, the Cold War, and Global Hegemony (1939–1968)

1. D Providing massive military weapons and material production to democratic nations resisting Axis tyranny

Roosevelt mobilized American industrial capacity to supply Allied nations with weapons through programs like Lend-Lease.

2. A It upheld the wartime military exclusion of Japanese Americans from the West Coast as a military necessity

In a 6–3 ruling, the Court upheld the exclusion of Japanese Americans from the West Coast on grounds of wartime military necessity; the decision has since been widely repudiated.

3. C Victory against fascism abroad and victory against racial discrimination and Jim Crow at home

The Double V Campaign linked the international fight for democracy directly with the domestic struggle for Black civil rights.

4. B To open a major western front to liberate Western Europe and crush Nazi German forces

Operation Overlord established an Allied lodgment in France, enabling the liberation of Paris and the invasion of Germany.

5. D Neutrality Acts of 1935-1937

The Neutrality Acts of 1935-1937 enforced U.S. isolationism. Cash and Carry, Lend-Lease, and Destroyers for Bases actively moved the U.S. toward aiding the Allies before Pearl Harbor.

6. B Containment—patiently and firmly resisting Soviet geopolitical and ideological expansionism

Kennan argued the USSR was inherently expansionist and advocated long-term, patient containment of Soviet influence.

7. C Aid to rebuild war-torn Western Europe and curb communism

The Marshall Plan aimed to rebuild Western Europe's economies and curb communism's appeal there; its aid helped stabilize democratic governments in the region.

8. A An armistice establishing a demilitarized zone (DMZ) roughly along the 38th parallel without a formal peace treaty

The war ended in a stalemate with an armistice in July 1953, leaving Korea divided near the original 38th parallel.

9. B Greece and Turkey

The Truman Doctrine's first application committed $400 million to Greece and Turkey to resist communist-backed pressure, launching the containment policy.

10. D Warsaw Pact

NATO, the Marshall Plan, and the Truman Doctrine were U.S. tools to contain Soviet expansion; the Warsaw Pact was the Soviet Union's own rival alliance.

Lesson 13: The Civil Rights Movement, Political Realignment, and Modern America (1954–Present)

1. A Segregated schools violate the 14th Amendment

Chief Justice Warren's opinion held segregated schools 'inherently unequal,' violating the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause and rejecting Plessy's 'separate but equal' standard.

2. C Federalized the Guard and sent in the 101st Airborne

Eisenhower federalized the Arkansas National Guard and deployed the 101st Airborne Division to protect the Little Rock Nine and enforce the federal desegregation order.

3. B Nonviolent civil disobedience inspired by Christian theology and Mahatma Gandhi

Dr. King emphasized nonviolent direct action, sit-ins, and peaceful marches to expose the moral evil of racism.

4. D Employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin

Title VII banned employment discrimination and created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); public accommodations were covered by Title II, and literacy tests were later banned by the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

5. D Federal preclearance for voting-law changes

The VRA's Section 5 required covered jurisdictions to get federal preclearance before changing voting laws; poll taxes in federal elections were separately banned by the 24th Amendment (1964).

6. A Medicare for elderly citizens and Medicaid for low-income families

The 1965 Social Security Amendments established Medicare (Title XVIII) and Medicaid (Title XIX) under Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ).

7. B Replaced quotas with family and job-skill preferences

Hart-Celler abolished the 1924 national-origins quota system and ended earlier restrictions, prioritizing family reunification and skilled labor instead.

8. C Executive privilege yields to criminal evidence needs

The unanimous Court rejected Nixon's claim of absolute immunity, ruling executive privilege must yield to the judiciary's need for evidence in a criminal trial.

9. A Supply-side economics—cutting marginal tax rates and deregulating industry to stimulate investment

Reaganomics held that lowering taxes on businesses and high earners would increase savings, investment, and economic growth.

10. D A presidential visit to Beijing that began normalizing US-China relations

Nixon's 1972 visit to China began a historic diplomatic opening and normalization process, part of his broader détente strategy alongside the first round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) with the Soviet Union.

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