

# The Spirit of Reform 1828–1845

## Why It Matters

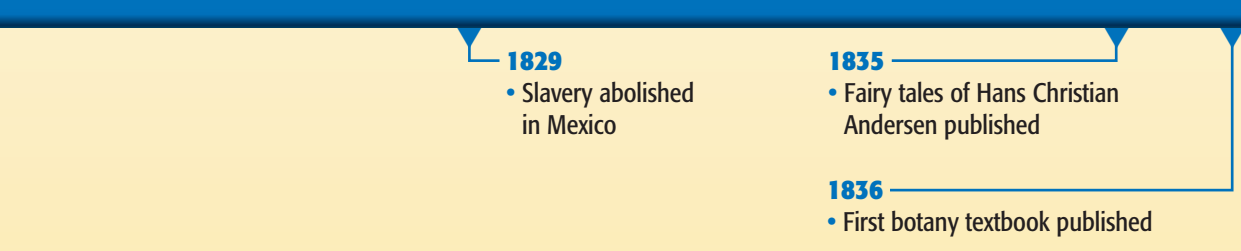
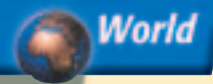
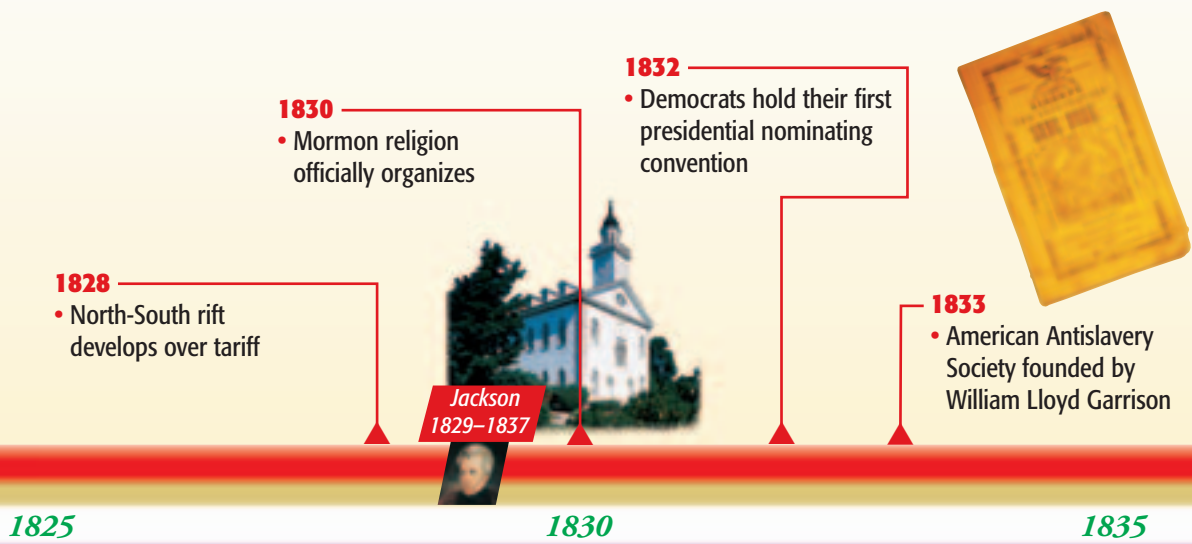
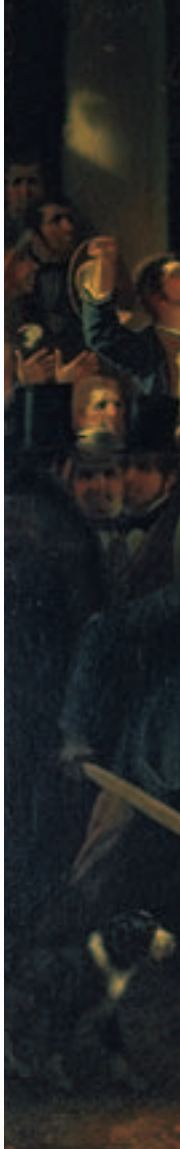
Reform was a key theme of the 1830s and 1840s. Political reform came with the growth of popular democracy. President Jackson's election symbolized the new power of common citizens. For many Americans, social or religious reform was a goal. Some wanted to end slavery. Others wanted to expand education or women's rights. Throughout this period, sectional rivalries grew more bitter.

## The Impact Today

- Social and political ideals born in this period became important American values.
- Many Americans value education highly and believe that anyone, regardless of background, might rise to a high political office if they have a good education.
  - The desire to help others inspires many Americans.



**The American Vision Video** The Chapter 8 video, "The Spirit of Reform," chronicles important reform campaigns of this era.





*The Verdict of the People* by George Caleb Bingham, 1855



**Van Buren**  
1837–1841



**1838**

- Cherokee are driven from Georgia and embark on the Trail of Tears

**W. Harrison**  
1841

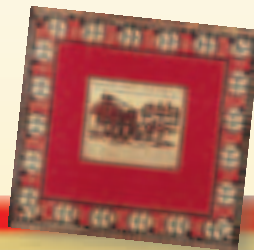


**Tyler**  
1841–1845



**1848**

- Women's rights convention held at Seneca Falls, New York



**1840**

**1845**

**1837**

- Queen Victoria ascends to English throne

**1842**

- China opened by force to foreign trade

**1845**

- Irish potato famine begins

**HISTORY**  
*Online*

**Chapter Overview**

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## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

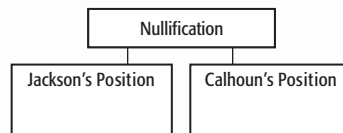
The election of Andrew Jackson ushered in a new era of American politics.

### Key Terms and Names

spoils system, caucus system, Tariff of Abominations, secede, John C. Calhoun, nullification, Daniel Webster, Force Bill, Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears, Panic of 1837

### Reading Strategy

**Organizing** As you read about Andrew Jackson's administration, complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by listing the positions of Jackson and Calhoun during the nullification crisis.



### Reading Objectives

- **Explain** how Jackson's background influenced his ideas of democratic government.
- **Describe** how the nullification crisis sparked debate over states' rights.

### Section Theme

**Groups and Institutions** The American political system became more democratic during the Jacksonian era.

### Preview of Events



## ★ An American Story ★



*Hair comb worn at Jackson's Inaugural*

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

On that day, President Jackson broke a long tradition by inviting the public to his reception. When Smith later attended the White House gala, however, she quickly formed a different opinion about the crowd she had so admired just hours before. "The majesty of the people had disappeared, and a rabble, a mob, of boys, . . . women, children—[were] scrambling, fighting romping," she wrote. "The President, after having been *literally* nearly pressed to death and almost suffocated and torn to pieces by the people in their eagerness to shake hands with Old Hickory, had retreated through the back way. . . . Cut glass and china to the amount of several thousand dollars had been broken in the struggle to get refreshments. . . . Ladies and gentlemen only had been expected at this levee, not the people *en masse*. But it was the people's day, and the people's President, and the people would rule."

—adapted from *First Forty Years of Washington Society*

## A New Era in Politics

The citizens who had turned the normally dignified inauguration reception into a boisterous affair represented a new class of American voters and a new era in American politics. Beginning in the early 1800s and continuing through the presidency of

Andrew Jackson, the nation's political system became more democratic. During this time, government became more inclusive and ordinary citizens became a greater political force.

**States Expand Voting Rights** In the early 1800s, hundreds of thousands of Americans, mostly white men, gained the right to vote. This was largely because many states lowered or eliminated property ownership as a voting qualification. In addition, as cities and towns grew, the percentage of working people who did not own property increased. These people paid taxes and had an interest in the political affairs of their communities—and they too wanted a greater voice in electing those who represented them.

The expansion of voting rights was very much in evidence in the presidential election of 1828. In 1824 about 355,000 Americans had voted for president. Four years later, more than 1.1 million citizens cast a ballot in the presidential election. The expansion of suffrage continued, and by 1840, more than 2.4 million Americans voted in the presidential election.

**The People's President** In 1828, it was Andrew Jackson who won the support of these new voters, many of whom resided on the frontiers of the West and South. Many of the citizens who voted for the first time in 1828 saw in Jackson a man they truly could admire. Orphaned at the age of 14, Jackson received little formal education. His achievements were due to his diligence, hard work, and innate intelligence. Jackson was elected Tennessee's first representative to Congress before the age of 30. In the War of 1812, he won fame leading his troops to victory at the Battle of New Orleans. In 1818, forces under his command invaded and captured Spanish Florida. Jackson's most obvious trait was his force of will, a characteristic that became evident when someone tried to defy him.

Jackson's early life was notable for violent personal quarrels. He took part in five

duels, once killing his opponent. As Jackson grew older, his temper and actions became milder. By the time he entered the White House, he had become a person of dignity and courtesy.

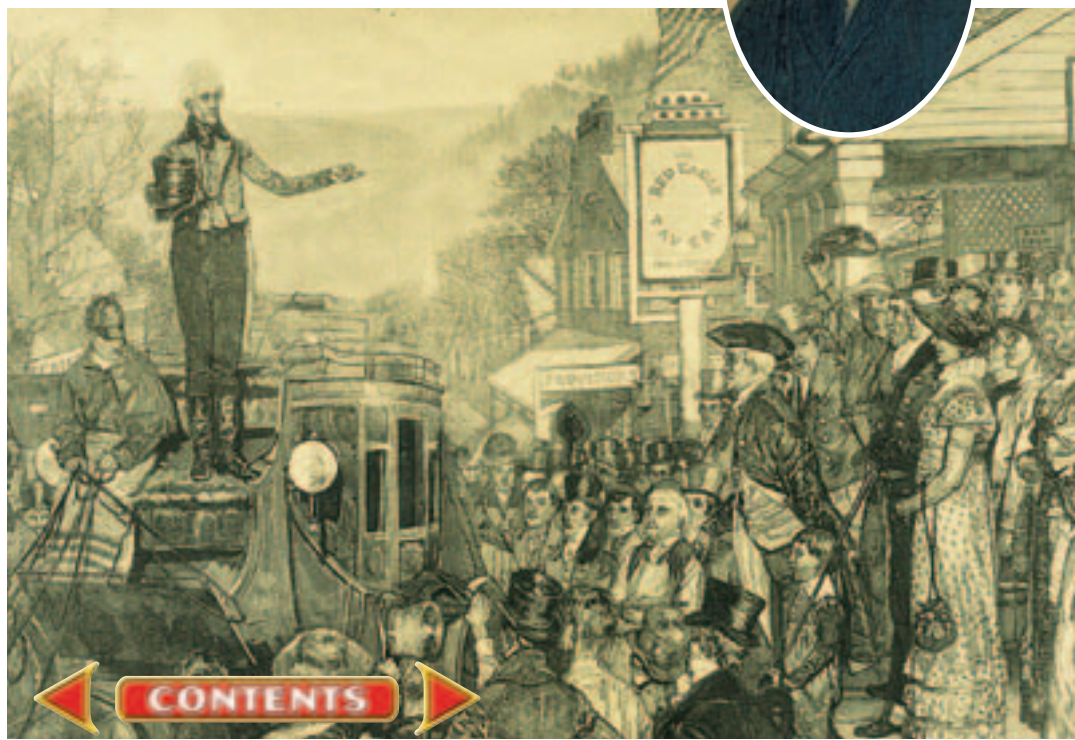
**The Spoils System** As president, Andrew Jackson returned the common people's admiration of him. He had a great belief in the capability and intelligence of average Americans. More than earlier presidents, Jackson felt that the majority should rule in a democracy and that ordinary citizens should play a more prominent role in government.

Toward that end, Jackson strongly supported the **spoils system**, the practice of appointing people to government jobs on the basis of party loyalty and support. Rewarding supporters with government jobs had long been part of American politics, but Jackson was the first president to force out large numbers of government employees in order to appoint his own followers. A shocked John Quincy Adams charged that the president's actions made government "a perpetual . . . scramble for office."

Jackson considered the spoils system to be democratic. By getting rid of a permanent office-holding class, he opened up government to more ordinary citizens. He felt that since government jobs were "so plain and simple," they should be rotated at will and given to supporters.

 **History Through Art**

**Jackson's Popularity** Andrew Jackson attracted large crowds on his trip to Washington, D.C., in 1829 to take office. His determined character can be seen in the portrait on the right by famous painter Asher Durand. [In what ways was Jackson different from previous presidents?](#)



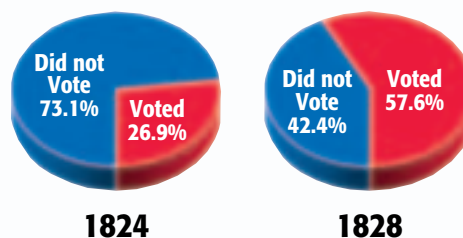
# Why It Matters

## The 1828 Election

The election of 1828, which put Andrew Jackson in office, was one of the most significant in American history. It showed the increasing strength of the West, the power of sectionalism, and the impact of a more democratic process.



### Increased Voter Participation



Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*

The percentage of eligible voters who actually cast a ballot increased dramatically in the election of 1828. So did the absolute number: three times as many people voted for president in 1828 than in 1824. This was mainly because many states had lowered or eliminated property ownership as a voting qualification. In Jacksonian terms, it was a new era, the era of the “common man.”

- ◀ At a public reception open to all, crowds flocked to the White House to celebrate Jackson’s inauguration. In the confusion, people trampled over one another, soiling the carpets and ruining furniture as they rushed to meet the president. “It was a proud day for the people,” wrote a friend of the president. “General Jackson is their own President.” Other observers were horrified. Joseph Story, a Supreme Court justice, remarked with disgust, “The reign of King ‘Mob’ seems triumphant.”

**A More Open Electoral System** In addition to these measures aimed at strengthening democracy, Jackson’s supporters moved to make the political system—specifically, the way in which presidential candidates were chosen—more democratic. At that time, political parties used the **caucus system** to select presidential candidates. The members of the party who served in Congress, known as the party caucus, would meet to choose the nominee for president. Jackson’s supporters believed that such a method restricted access to office mainly to the elite and well connected.

The Jacksonians replaced the caucus with the **national nominating convention**. At nominating conventions, delegates from the states gathered to decide on the party’s presidential nominee. Through the convention, proponents believed, political power would come from the people rather than from elite political institutions. In 1832 the Democrats held a nominating convention to renominate Andrew Jackson for president.

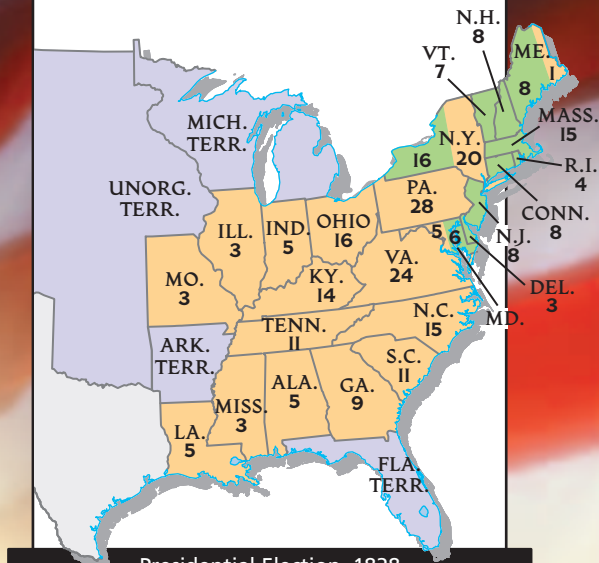
**Reading Check** **Examining** In what ways did the United States become more democratic in the early 1800s?

## The Nullification Crisis

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

**The Debate Over Nullification** Throughout the early 1800s, South Carolina’s economy had been weakening. Many of the state’s residents blamed this situation on the nation’s tariffs. Because it had few industries, South Carolina purchased many of its manufactured goods, such as cooking utensils and tools, from England, but tariffs made them extremely expensive. When Congress levied yet another new tariff in 1828—which critics called the **Tariff of Abominations**—many South Carolinians threatened to **secede**, or withdraw, from the Union.

The growing turmoil troubled one politician in particular: **John C. Calhoun**, the nation’s vice president and a resident of South Carolina. Calhoun felt torn between upholding the country’s policies and helping his fellow South Carolinians. Rather than support secession, Calhoun put forth the idea of **nullification**



Candidate	Popular Vote	Electoral Vote	Political Party
Jackson	647,231	178	Democrat
Adams	509,097	83	Republican

▲ The growing political influence of what was then the West is evident in the number of electoral votes delivered by western states.

accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below. . . Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!☺☺

—quoted in *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster*

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

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

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

✓ **Reading Check Summarizing** What caused the nullification crisis?

to defuse the situation. He explained this idea in an anonymously published work, *The South Carolina Exposition and Protest*, which argued that states had the right to declare a federal law null, or not valid. Calhoun theorized that the states had this right since they had created the federal Union.

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

Hayne asserted that the Union was no more than a voluntary association of states and advocated the motto, “Liberty first and Union afterward.” Webster countered that neither liberty nor the Union could survive without binding federal laws:


“I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not

## Policies Toward Native Americans

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

This idea had been gaining support in the United States since the Louisiana Purchase. John C. Calhoun had formally proposed it in 1823 when he was secretary of war. Many Americans believed that the

Great Plains was a wasteland that would never be settled. They thought that if they moved Native Americans to that region, the nation's conflict with them would be over. In 1830, Jackson pushed through Congress the **Indian Removal Act**, which provided money for relocating Native Americans.

Most Native Americans eventually gave in and resettled in the West, but not the Cherokee of Georgia. Over the years, this Native American group had adopted aspects of white culture, and they hired lawyers to sue the state of Georgia. Their case, *Worcester v. Georgia*, eventually reached the Supreme Court. In 1832 Chief Justice John Marshall ordered state officials to honor Cherokee property rights. Jackson refused to support the decision. "Marshall has made his opinion," the president reportedly said, "now let him enforce it."  (See page 1083 for information on *Worcester v. Georgia*.)

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

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



### Reading Check

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

### ECONOMICS

## Jackson Battles the National Bank

One of the most contentious developments of Jackson's presidency was his campaign against the Second Bank of the United States. Like most Westerners and many working people, President Jackson was suspicious of the Bank. He regarded it as a monopoly that benefited the wealthy elite.

Despite its reputation, the Bank played an important role in keeping the money supply of the United States stable. At the time, most American paper money consisted of bank notes issued by private state banks. State banks issued bank notes with the promise that the notes could always be turned in for "hard" money—gold or silver coins.

### Geography Skills

- 1. Interpreting Maps** Name two Native American groups in the northern half of the United States that were forced to move.
- 2. Applying Geography Skills** Where did the Trail of Tears end?

The state banks, however, would often issue more paper money than they could redeem in gold or silver. This let them make more loans at lower interest rates, but it created the danger of inflation. To prevent the state banks from loaning too much money, the Bank of the United States regularly collected bank notes and asked state banks to redeem them for gold and silver. This action forced state banks to be careful about how much money they loaned, and it also limited inflation.

The Bank had done a good job stabilizing the money supply and interest rates, but many western settlers, who needed easy credit to run their farms, were unhappy with the Bank's lending policies. President Jackson also believed the Bank was unconstitutional, despite the Supreme Court's ruling in *McCulloch v. Maryland*. He did not believe that as president he had to accept this Supreme Court ruling.

To make the Bank an issue in the 1832 presidential campaign, Jackson's congressional opponents introduced a bill extending the Bank's charter for another 20 years. Congress passed the bill, but Jackson vetoed it. When the election was over, it was clear that most Americans supported Jackson. He easily won a second term.

Jackson took his re-election as a directive from the people to destroy the Bank at once, even though its charter did not run out until 1836. He removed the government's deposits from the Bank and placed them in state banks. The removal of the deposits forced the Bank to call in its loans and stop lending.

By putting an end to the Bank of the United States, Jackson had won a considerable political victory. Later, however, critics would charge that the end of the Bank contributed significantly to the financial woes that plagued the country in the years ahead.

 **Reading Check** **Examining** Why was President Jackson against the Second Bank of the United States?

## A New Party Emerges

Andrew Jackson's forceful style had earned him plenty of detractors, and by the mid-1830s a new party emerged to oppose him. The group named itself the Whigs after the party in England that had worked to limit the king's power. The Whigs advocated a larger federal government, industrial and commercial development, and a centralized economy. Jackson's Democrats, on the other hand, favored a limited federal government, and they distrusted eastern merchants and business leaders.



### Analyzing Political Cartoons

**Kingly Rule?** Jackson's strong-willed leadership attracted many critics. Here the cartoonist portrays Jackson as an absolute monarch. **What does Jackson appear to be trampling underfoot?**

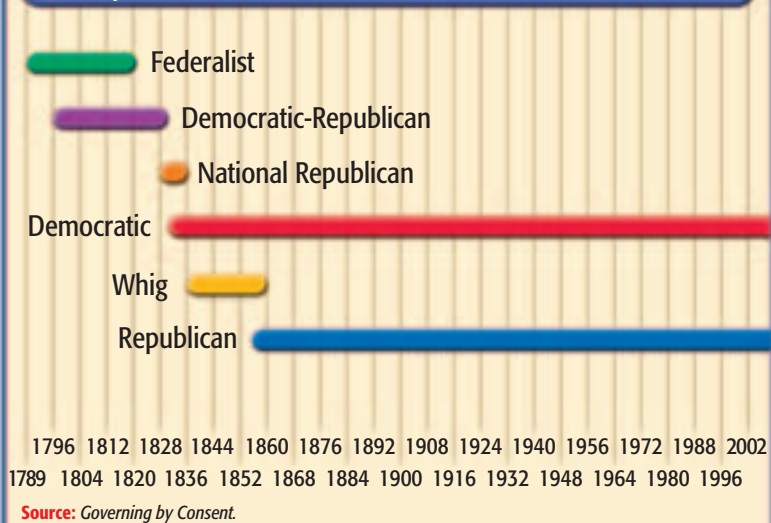
**The Presidency of Martin Van Buren** The Whigs were united in opposing Jackson, but they were unable to settle on a leader. During the 1836 presidential election, Jackson's popularity and the nation's continuing prosperity helped Democrat Martin Van Buren defeat the Whigs, who had three candidates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

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

**"Tippecanoe and Tyler Too"** With the nation experiencing hard times, the Whigs looked forward to ousting the Democrats in the presidential election of 1840. They nominated General William Henry Harrison, who was regarded as a hero for his role in



## Major American Political Parties Since 1789



### Graph Skills

- Interpreting Graphs** What party shown had the shortest life span?
- Comparing** How long have Republicans and Democrats been major political rivals?

the Battle of Tippecanoe and in the War of 1812. John Tyler, a Southerner and former Democrat who had left his party in protest over the nullification issue, joined the ticket as the vice presidential candidate. Adopting the campaign slogan “Tippecanoe and Tyler too,” the Whigs blamed Van Buren for the economic depression. To attract western voters, they presented Harrison, a man born to wealth and privilege, as a simple frontiersman.

The strategy worked. Harrison won a decisive victory—234 electoral votes to 60, although the popular

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

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

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

By the middle of the 1800s, a wave of social change was sweeping across the nation. Americans began examining numerous aspects of their culture, from religion to literature. A social transformation soon began, which eventually led to the shaping of a uniquely American society.

**Reading Check Identifying** What new political party won the presidential election of 1840?

## SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

- Define:** spoils system, caucus system, secede, nullification.
- Identify:** Tariff of Abominations, John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, Force Bill, Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears, Panic of 1837.

### Reviewing Themes

- Groups and Institutions** In what ways did the United States become more democratic during Jackson’s presidency?

### Critical Thinking

- Determining Cause and Effect** What effect did the Panic of 1837 have on the presidential election of 1840?
- Categorizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the policies of the Whigs and Jackson’s Democrats.

Party	Policies
Whigs	
Democrats	

### Analyzing Visuals

- Examining Art** Study the artwork on page 267. Some wealthy Americans claimed that President Jackson’s supporters were a “mob” element in the nation. How does the artist portray Jackson’s supporters? Why do you think so?

### Writing About History

- Persuasive Writing** Imagine you are a Native American living in the United States during Andrew Jackson’s presidency. Write a letter to President Jackson giving your opinion of the Indian Removal Act.

# SECTION 2 A Changing Culture

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

The United States underwent dramatic social and cultural changes during the early and mid-1800s.

### Key Terms and Names

nativism, Know-Nothings, Second Great Awakening, Charles Grandison Finney, Joseph Smith, romanticism, transcendentalism, utopia

### Reading Strategy

**Categorizing** Complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by listing beliefs of various religious groups of the Second Great Awakening.

Religious Groups	Beliefs

### Reading Objectives

- **Explain** the goals of the different groups active in the Second Great Awakening.
- **Identify** the key ideas of romanticism and two important romantic thinkers or writers.

### Section Theme

**Groups and Institutions** The Second Great Awakening increased support for many religious groups in the United States.

### Preview of Events



## ★ An American Story ★

By June of 1850, Daniel Guiney had made up his mind. He was going to leave his impoverished town in Ireland and move to the United States. The enthusiastic letters he had received from friends convinced him that life had to be better in the United States. Ireland was suffering a devastating famine. Tens of thousands of citizens were dying of starvation, while many more were fleeing the country.

By August 1850, Guiney and a group from his neighborhood had moved to Buffalo, New York. After settling in, Guiney wrote back home about the wondrous new land where they now resided.

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

—quoted in *Out of Ireland*



*Immigrant's trunk*

## The New Wave of Immigrants

Daniel Guiney was just one of the millions of immigrants who came to the United States in search of a better life in the mid-1800s. The arrival of these newcomers coincided with a time when Americans were blazing new paths in a host of cultural





### **Picturing History**

**The Bay and Harbor of New York** Immigrants arrive in New York City. Castle Garden, the building in the distant left, served as a processing facility for immigrants beginning in 1855. Many immigrants saw posters such as this one (left) advertising passage between Liverpool and Boston. **What two nationalities made up the majority of immigrants to America during the mid-1800s?**

areas, including religion, art, and literature. Together, these events helped bring great changes to American society in the years before the Civil War.

Between 1815 and 1860, the United States experienced a massive influx of immigrants. Over 5 million foreigners arrived on its shores. Many had fled violence and political turmoil at home, while others sought to escape starvation and poverty. Most of these newcomers found opportunity and a fresh start, but some also found discrimination and prejudice.

**Newcomers From Ireland and Germany** The largest wave of immigrants, almost 2 million, came from Ireland. The driving force behind the massive exodus was the onset of widespread famine in 1845, when a fungus destroyed much of the nation's crop of potatoes, a mainstay of the Irish diet. Most Irish immigrants arrived in the United States with no money and few marketable skills. They generally settled in the industrialized cities of the Northeast, where many worked as unskilled laborers and servants.

Between 1815 and 1860, Germans represented the second largest group of immigrants. By 1860 over 1.5 million Germans had arrived in the United States. Most had enough money to move beyond the large

eastern cities and settle in the Midwest. There they became farmers or went into business. Like most other immigrants, Germans reveled in their newfound sense of freedom and liberty. German immigrant August Blümmer expressed this sentiment in a letter he wrote in 1838:

“Over there [Germany] common sense and free speech lie in shackles. . . . I invite you to come over here, should you want to obtain a clear notion of genuine public life, freedom of people and a sense of being a nation. . . . I have never regretted that I came here, and never! never! again shall I bow my head under the yoke of despotism and folly.”

—quoted in *News from the Land of Freedom*

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

In the 1800s, many Americans were strongly anti-Catholic. Many prominent ministers preached

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

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

## A Religious Revival

As immigrants added to the diversity of society, Americans were transforming the society in which they lived. One important change came in American religious life, where traditional Protestantism experienced a dramatic revival, and new forms of worship became prominent.

**The Second Great Awakening** By the end of the 1700s, many church leaders sensed that Americans’ commitment to organized religion was weakening. This deterioration was due in large part to the growth of scientific knowledge and rationalism, notions that challenged the doctrine of faith. In the early 1800s, religious leaders organized to revive Americans’ commitment to religion. The resulting movement came to be called the **Second Great Awakening**. It began in Kentucky, among frontier farmers, and quickly spread to the rest of the country. Leaders of the various Protestant denominations—most often Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians—held camp meetings that attracted thousands of followers for days of song, prayer, and emotional outpourings of faith.

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

One of the most prominent advocates of this new message was a Presbyterian minister named **Charles Grandison Finney**. Finney preached that each person contained within himself or herself the capacity for spiritual rebirth and salvation. Finney helped found modern revivalism. His camp meetings were carefully planned and rehearsed to create as much emotion as possible. He compared his methods to those used by politicians and salespeople, and he used emotion to focus people’s attention on his message. Finney began preaching in upstate New York, where he launched a series of revivals in towns along the Erie Canal. He then took his message to the cities of the Northeast.

Finney also served as president of Oberlin College in Ohio, the first college in the United States to admit women and African Americans. Although Oberlin became a center for social reform movements in the United States, Finney warned against using politics to change society. He believed that if Christian ideas reformed people from within, society would become better, but if people remained selfish and immoral, political reforms would not make any difference.

**New Religious Groups Emerge** A number of other religious groups also flourished during this period. The Unitarians and Universalists broke away from the New England Congregational Church. Unitarians reject the idea that Jesus was the son of God, arguing instead that he was a great teacher. Their name comes from the belief that God is a unity, not a trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Universalists believe in the universal salvation of souls. They reject the idea of hell and believe God intends to save everyone.

### History Through Art

**Religious Zeal** J. Maze Burban’s *Religious Camp Meeting* dramatizes religious revivalism, showing a charismatic preacher reaching many in the audience. [From studying the image, can you suggest other reasons people might want to attend?](#)



## Profiles IN HISTORY

### Margaret Fuller 1810–1850

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

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



Fuller's success in editing *The Dial* caught the eye of Horace Greeley, the famous editor of the *New York Tribune*. In 1844 Greeley hired Fuller to be the *Tribune's* literary critic. In 1846 he sent Fuller to Europe to cover European reform efforts.

While visiting Italy, Fuller met and married Giovanni Angelo Ossoli, a revolutionary fighting to unite Italy into one country.

Fuller sent home reports about the Italian revolution of 1848, becoming the first American woman foreign war correspondent. In 1850, as the revolution fell apart, Fuller, Ossoli, and their young son set sail for the United States. Tragedy struck when their ship sank near Long Island, New York, and all three drowned.

## A Literary Renaissance

The optimism of the Second Great Awakening about human nature also influenced philosophers and writers. Many leading thinkers of the day adopted the tenets of romanticism, a movement that began in Europe in the 1800s. **Romanticism** advocated feeling over reason, inner spirituality over external rules, the individual above society, and nature over environments created by humans.

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

**American Writers Emerge** The most influential transcendentalist was **Ralph Waldo Emerson**. In his 1836 essay *Nature*, Emerson wrote

that those who wanted fulfillment should work for communion with the natural world. Emerson influenced other writers, including **Margaret Fuller** and **Henry David Thoreau**. Thoreau believed that individuals must fight the pressure to conform. "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer," he wrote. "Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

Emerson and Thoreau were only two of many writers who set out to create uniquely American works. Washington Irving, famous for his "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1819), became one of the first prominent American writers. **James Fenimore Cooper** romanticized Native Americans and frontier explorers in his *Leatherstocking Tales*, the most famous being *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). **Nathaniel Hawthorne**, a New England customs official, wrote over 100 tales and novels. His novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), with its Puritan setting, explored the persecution and psychological suffering that results from sin. **Herman Melville**, another New Englander, wrote the great *Moby Dick* (1851). **Edgar Allan Poe**, a poet and short story writer, achieved fame as a writer of terror and mystery. Perhaps the most important poet of the era was **Walt Whitman**, who published a volume of poetry in 1855 called *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman loved nature,

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

After enduring continuous harassment in Ohio, Missouri, and elsewhere, Mormons from around the Midwest moved to Commerce, Illinois, in the spring of 1839. They bought the town, renamed it Nauvoo, and began building a self-contained community. The group prospered in the Midwest, with Nauvoo numbering about 15,000 in 1844. Persecution continued, however, and that same year local residents murdered Smith. After Smith's death, Brigham Young became the leader of the Church. The Mormons then left Illinois and trekked westward to the Utah territory, where they put down permanent roots.

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

the common people, and American democracy, and his famous work reflects these passions. The best-remembered female poet of the era was **Emily Dickinson**, who wrote simple, personal, deeply emotional poetry.

**The Penny Press** Another important development of the early 1800s was the rise of the mass newspaper. Before the 1800s, most newspapers catered to well-educated readers. They were typically published once a week and cost around six cents, which was far beyond the reach of the average worker.

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

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

**Reading Check Evaluating** What were the main themes of American writers in the early 1800s?

## Utopian Communities

The ideas that drove the religious and artistic movements of the United States in the mid-1800s—optimism about human nature and a belief in

people's ability to redefine their lives—also spurred the establishment of new communities. The people who formed these communities believed that society tended to corrupt human nature. They thought that the way to a better life was to separate themselves from society and form their own **utopia**, or ideal society. Cooperative living and the absence of private property characterized these communities, and dozens of them sprang up and flourished during the Jacksonian Era.

In New England, near West Roxbury, Massachusetts, transcendentalist George Ripley established a utopian community known as **Brook Farm** in 1841. The farm offered its members the chance to engage in intellectual activity while cooperatively running a farm. Ultimately, Brook Farm collapsed after a large fire left the group with huge debts.

The religious group known as the **Shakers** established small utopian communities from Maine to Kentucky. The group got its name from a ritual “shaking” dance that members performed. The Shakers reached their peak in the mid-1800s with some 6,000 members. Since they did not believe in marrying or having children, the group could only expand by making converts.

In the end, the number of Americans who chose to live in utopian communities was relatively small. Many more, inspired by a strong faith in human goodness, attempted not to escape society but to reform it.

**Reading Check Interpreting** What spurred the establishment of utopian societies?

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

1. **Define:** **nativism, romanticism, transcendentalism, utopia.**
2. **Identify:** Know-Nothings, Second Great Awakening, Charles Grandison Finney, Joseph Smith.
3. **Summarize** the goals of the Know-Nothings.

### Reviewing Themes

4. **Groups and Institutions** What religious denominations increased their influence in the United States during the Second Great Awakening?

### Critical Thinking

5. **Interpreting** How did the writers of the early to mid-1800s reflect American life?
6. **Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list American cultural movements in the mid-1800s.



### Analyzing Visuals

7. **Examining Art** Study the painting on page 275 of the camp meeting. What elements of the image suggest that the revival attracted many working-class people?

### Writing About History

8. **Expository Writing** Imagine you are an Irish or German immigrant in the mid-1800s. Write an essay contrasting the United States with your homeland. Describe your new life in the United States and how you are treated.

# SECTION 3 Reforming Society

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

Spurred on by a revival of religion and a heightened belief in the power of individuals, Americans engaged in reform efforts in the early and mid-1800s.

### Key Terms and Names

Dorothea Dix, Lyman Beecher, benevolent society, temperance, penitentiary, Horace Mann, Elizabeth Cady Stanton

### Reading Strategy

**Taking Notes** As you read about American reform efforts in the early and mid-1800s, use the section's major headings to create an outline like the one below.

Reforming Society  
I. The Reform Spirit  
A.  
B.  
C.  
D.  
II.

### Reading Objectives

- **Analyze** the connection between religious and social reform.
- **List** major areas of society that reformers set out to improve.

### Section Theme

**Continuity and Change** Reform movements sought to change American society, but in ways that upheld American values and ideals.

### Preview of Events

1843

1843

Dorothea Dix calls for reforming care of mentally ill

1847

1848

Seneca Falls Convention

1851

1851

Maine passes first state law prohibiting alcohol

1855

1852

Massachusetts passes first mandatory school attendance law



Dorothea Dix

## ★ An American Story ★

By 1841 Dorothea Dix had been a schoolteacher in Massachusetts for many years. That year, a clergyman asked her to lead a Sunday school class at a local prison. What Dix saw there appalled her. Mentally ill persons lay neglected in dirty, unheated rooms. Putting aside her teaching career, she began a crusade to improve prison conditions for the mentally ill and to provide them with the treatment they needed.

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

—adapted from *Old South Leaflets*

## The Reform Spirit

Largely through the efforts of **Dorothea Dix**, more than a dozen states enacted sweeping prison reforms and created special institutions for the mentally ill. As influential as she was, Dix was just one of many citizens who worked to reform various aspects of American society in the mid 1800s.

The reform movements of the mid-1800s stemmed in large part from the revival of religious fervor. Revivalists preached the power of individuals to improve themselves and the world. **Lyman Beecher**, a prominent minister, insisted that it was the nation's citizenry more than its government that should take charge of building a better society. True reform, he said, could take place only through "the voluntary energies of the nation itself."

Under the guidance of Beecher and other religious leaders, associations known as **benevolent societies** sprang up in cities and towns across the country. At first, they focused on spreading the word of God and attempting to convert nonbelievers. Soon, however, they sought to combat a number of social problems.

One striking feature of the reform effort was the overwhelming presence of women. Young women in particular had joined the revivalist movement in much larger numbers than men. One reason was that many unmarried women with uncertain futures discovered in religion a foundation on which to build their lives. As more women turned to the church, many also joined religious-based reform groups. These reform groups targeted aspects of American society they considered in dire need of change. Among these issues were excessive drinking, prisons, and education.

**The Temperance Movement** A number of reformers argued that no social vice caused more crime, disorder, and poverty than the excessive use of alcohol. Men who drank excessively, they argued, spent their money on liquor rather than food and other family necessities, and they sometimes abused their wives and children. While some may have disagreed with this assessment, no one could dispute the fact that

alcoholism was widespread during the early 1800s. In small towns throughout the West, citizens drank to ease the isolation and loneliness of rural life, while in the pubs and saloons in eastern cities, drinking was the main leisure activity for many workers.

Although advocates of **temperance**, or moderation in the consumption of alcohol, had been active since the late 1700s, the new reformers energized the campaign and greatly increased its influence. Temperance groups formed across the country, preaching the evils of alcohol and persuading heavy drinkers to give up liquor. In 1833 several of these groups joined together to form the **American Temperance Union**.

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

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



### History Through Art

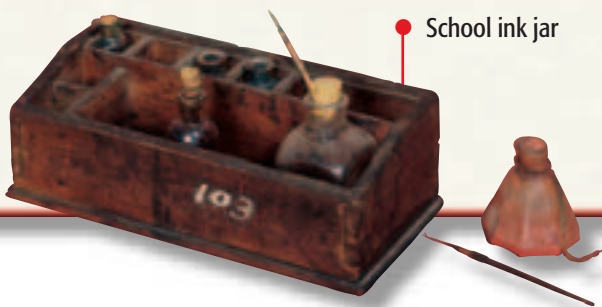
**Drunkard's Progress** In 1846 Nathaniel Currier made this lithograph (left), or print made by engraving on stone. It clearly lays out the path to degradation that begins in Step 1, a glass of alcohol with a friend. Some innkeepers advertised their temperance principles with a sign such as the one above. **From looking at the lithograph, how can you tell that women were often temperance supporters?**



# What *Life* Was Like...

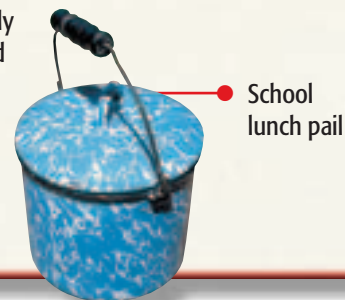
## Old-Fashioned School Days

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



### ● One-Room Schoolhouse

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



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

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

One of the leaders of the public education movement was Massachusetts legislator **Horace Mann**. As president of the Massachusetts Senate, Mann pressed for more public education and backed a bill in 1837 creating a state board of education in Massachusetts.

He then stepped down from his elective office to serve as secretary of the new board. During his 12 years in that post he doubled teachers' salaries, opened 50 new high schools, and established schools for teacher training called "normal schools." Massachusetts quickly became the model for all other northern states. Mann's driving conviction was that a nation without an educated populace would have to struggle just to survive, much less prosper:

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

—from "Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education," 1848

In 1852 Massachusetts passed the first mandatory school attendance law; New York passed a similar measure the next year. In the years before the Civil War, reformers campaigned for district, or common,

### First Readers

Generations of students used McGuffey's Readers, first produced in the 1830s by William McGuffey. His readers—the first Eclectic Reader is pictured here—ranged from simple to advanced and aimed to give students a happy, positive feeling. A college president at the end of his life, McGuffey began teaching in frontier Ohio schools when he was only 13.



School desk

schools at the primary level. Reformers believed that such schools could teach all children the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as instill a work ethic. District schools were open to all and were supported by district taxes, state funds, and tuition paid by parents.

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

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

**Women's Education** When officials talked about educating voters, they had men in mind—women were still not allowed to cast a ballot in the 1800s. Nonetheless, a number of women took advantage

of the reform movement to create more educational opportunities for girls and women.

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

Also in the 1800s, **Elizabeth Blackwell** became the first woman to earn a medical degree in the United States or Europe. In 1857 she founded the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, which was staffed entirely by women.

 **Reading Check** **Identifying** What three areas of social reform did reformers target?

## The Early Women's Movement

In the early 1800s, the Industrial Revolution began to change the economic roles of men and women. In the 1700s, most economic activity took place in or near the home because most Americans lived and worked in a rural farm setting. Although husbands and wives had distinct chores, maintaining the farm was the focus of their efforts. By the mid-1800s, these circumstances had started to change, especially in the northeastern states. The development of factories and other work centers separated the home from the workplace. Men now often left home to go to work, while women tended the house and children. In time, this development led to the emergence of the first women's movement.

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

The Christian revivalism of the 1820s and 1830s greatly influenced the American family. For many



**Student Web Activity** Visit the *American Vision* Web site at [tav.glencoe.com](http://tav.glencoe.com) and click on **Student Web Activities—Chapter 8** for an activity on reform movements.



parents, raising children was treated as a solemn responsibility because it prepared young people for a disciplined Christian life. Women often were viewed as more moral and charitable than men, and they were expected to be models of piety and virtue to their children and husbands.


The idea that women should be homemakers and should take responsibility for developing their children's characters evolved into a set of ideas known as "true womanhood." Magazine articles and novels aimed at women reinforced the value of their role at home. In 1841 **Catherine Beecher**, a daughter of minister and reformer Lyman Beecher, wrote a book called *A Treatise on Domestic Economy*. The popular volume argued that women could find fulfillment at home and gave instruction on childcare, cooking, and health matters.

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

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

An advocate of this idea was Margaret Fuller. Fuller argued that every woman had her own relationship with God and needed "as a soul to live

freely and unimpeded." She declared, "We would have every arbitrary barrier thrown down and every path laid open to women as freely as to men." Fuller believed that if men and women, whom she called the "two sides" of human nature, were treated equally, it would end injustice in society.

In 1848 **Lucretia Mott** and **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**, two women active in the antislavery movement, organized the **Seneca Falls Convention**. This gathering of women reformers marked the beginning of an organized women's movement. The convention issued a "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" that began with words expanding the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal. . . ." Stanton shocked many of the women present by proposing that they focus on gaining the right to vote. Nevertheless, the Seneca Falls Convention is considered by many to be the unofficial beginning of the struggle for women's voting rights.  (See page 1070 for more information on the "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions.")

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

 **Reading Check** **Examining** What events of the mid-1800s sparked the first women's movement?

## SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

1. **Define:** *benevolent society, temperance, penitentiary.*
2. **Identify:** Dorothea Dix, Lyman Beecher, Horace Mann, Elizabeth Cady Stanton.
3. **State** the main goal of the early women's movement.

### Reviewing Themes

4. **Continuity and Change** How did the Second Great Awakening affect the reform movements of the mid-1800s?

### Critical Thinking

5. **Evaluating** In what ways did the new penitentiaries change the prison system?
6. **Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the major reform areas.



### Analyzing Visuals

7. **Examining Art** Study the painting of the New England school on page 280. How was the room heated? What kinds of supplies did the students have?

### Writing About History

8. **Expository Writing** Think of reforms you believe are needed today in the United States. Write a letter to your legislator expressing why you believe the reforms are needed. Give examples of problems in your community as evidence.

# American LITERATURE



**Henry David Thoreau** was part of the Transcendentalist movement that started as a reform movement within the Unitarian Church. Transcendentalism stressed the connection of the soul of the individual to the soul of the world. Simply put, the Transcendentalists believed that God resided in each person. None of the works of poetry and prose during this period more fully embodied Transcendental ideals than Thoreau's *Walden*. Part journal, part social commentary, and part sermon, the work summarizes and expands Thoreau's experiences at Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts, where he built a cabin and lived in relative solitude for two years.

### Read to Discover

What does Thoreau say we must do to live in society?

### Reader's Dictionary

**swath:** path

**sublime:** supreme; awesome

**perturbation:** annoyance; irritation

## from *Walden*

by Henry David Thoreau

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience. . . . For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants. . . . Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers. . . . Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumbnail. . . .



Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. . . . Why should we knock under and go with the stream?

### Analyzing Literature

- 1. Recall** What motivated Thoreau to go and live alone in the wilderness?
- 2. Interpret** What do you think the phrase "every nutshell and mosquito's wing" means?
- 3. Evaluate and Connect** Do you think you could live alone in the woods for two years as Thoreau did? Why or why not?

### Interdisciplinary Activity

**Language Arts** Imagine you are Thoreau at the end of your first year at Walden. Write a diary entry describing your feelings looking back on the first year and ahead to the year to come.

# The Abolitionist Movement

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

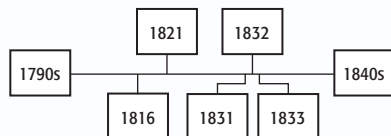
In the midst of the nation's reform movement, a number of citizens embarked on a crusade known as abolitionism to end slavery in the United States.

### Key Terms and Names

gradualism, American Colonization Society, abolition, William Lloyd Garrison, emancipation, American Antislavery Society, Frederick Douglass

### Reading Strategy

**Sequencing** As you read about the beginning of the abolitionist movement, complete a time line similar to the one below to record early events of this movement.



### Reading Objectives

- **List** groups involved in the early abolitionist movement.
- **Analyze** how Northerners and Southerners viewed abolitionism.

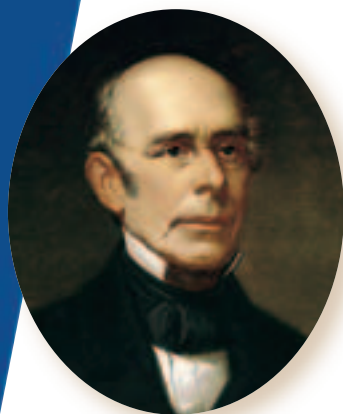
### Section Theme

**Individual Action** Abolitionist reformers challenged the morality and legality of slavery in the United States.

### Preview of Events



## ★ An American Story ★



William Lloyd Garrison

In 1831 William Lloyd Garrison began publishing a fiery antislavery newspaper in Boston. One day in 1834, a large group gathered outside Garrison's office to express its disapproval of his views. An onlooker, Thomas Low Nichols, described what followed:

“I was in the editorial office of Mr. Garrison when the crowd began to gather in the street below. . . . There were hundreds—then thousands. It was a mob of people dressed in black broadcloth, a mob of gentlemen—capitalists, merchants, bankers, a mob of the Stock Exchange and of the first people in Boston, which considered itself the nicest of cities, and intellectually the ‘hub of the universe’. . . . There was a great howl of rage; but, a moment after, it became a yell of triumph. Garrison had been seen to go from the building into a narrow lane behind it. Pursued, he took refuge in a carpenter's shop, only to be dragged out and carried into the midst of the mob. . . . I saw him, his hat off, his bald head shining, his scanty locks flying, his face pale. . . .”

—quoted in *Witness to America*

## Early Opposition to Slavery

By the 1830s, a growing number of Americans had begun to demand an immediate end to slavery in the South. Of all the reform movements that began in the early 1800s, the movement to end slavery was the most divisive. By pitting North against South, it polarized the nation and helped bring about the Civil War.

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

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

**Colonization** The first antislavery societies also believed that ending slavery would not end racism in the United States. Many thought that the best solution was to send African Americans back to their ancestral homelands in Africa. In December 1816, antislavery reformers founded the **American Colonization Society** (ACS) to move African Americans to Africa. The society had the support of many prominent Americans, including James Madison, James Monroe, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John Marshall.

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

Colonization was never a realistic solution to slavery and racism, however. The cost of transporting African Americans was high, and the ACS had to depend on donations. Moving the roughly 1.5 million African Americans who lived in the United States in 1820 to Africa was nearly impossible. Furthermore, most African Americans regarded the United States as their home and were not prepared to migrate to another continent. Only an estimated 12,000 African Americans moved to Africa between 1821 and 1860.

 **Reading Check** **Identifying** What two religious groups were among the first to oppose slavery?

Fact

Fiction

Folklore

**Abolitionist Songs** Abolitionists used songs to stir up enthusiasm for their cause. To make songs easier to learn, they often wrote new words for old tunes. Here is a stanza William Lloyd Garrison wrote to the tune of “Auld Lang Syne”:



I am an abolitionist!  
I glory in the name;  
Though now by Slavery’s minions hiss’d,  
And covered o’er with shame;  
It is a spell of light and power—  
The watchword of the free:—  
Who spurns it in this trial-hour,  
A craven soul is he!

*Banner celebrating Garrison’s abolitionist newspaper, the Liberator*

## The New Abolitionists

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

### **TURNING POINT**

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

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

In 1829 Garrison became assistant to Benjamin Lundy, the Quaker publisher of the Baltimore antislavery newspaper, *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Garrison admired Lundy but grew impatient with his gradualist approach. In 1831 Garrison left his mentor and, with fellow abolitionist Isaac Knapp, founded Boston’s antislavery newspaper, the *Liberator*.

## Profiles IN HISTORY

### Prudence Crandall 1803–1890

In 1831 Prudence Crandall was running a successful school for girls in Canterbury, Connecticut, when Sarah Harris, the daughter of a prominent African American farmer, sought admission. When Crandall agreed to let her in, local parents objected, and many withdrew their children from the school.

Rather than reverse her decision, Crandall announced that she was reorganizing her school as a teacher-training institution for African American women. The citizens of Canterbury erupted in protest. To combat Crandall's effort, the state legislature passed the "Black Law," which forbade Connecticut schools from admitting out-of-state African



American students and severely limited the type of schools that in-state African Americans could attend. Crandall ignored the law and was arrested in August 1833.

In a highly publicized case, prosecutors convicted her, but her conviction was overturned on appeal. In the wake of the trial, residents terrorized the school, dirtying its well, refusing it supplies, and creating other hardships. In 1834, Crandall closed her school.

Upon her death nearly 60 years later, a friend recalled her willingness to fight for what she believed in. "She had deep convictions of right. . . . Neither death, life, angels, principalities, things present, things to come, heights, depths, nor any other creature could keep her from following her convictions."

The paper's style was anything but moderate, as Garrison wrote caustic attacks on slavery and called for an immediate end to it. To those who objected to his fiery language, he responded that the time for moderation was over:

“I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually [remove] her babe from the fire into which it has fallen—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest; I will not equivocate; I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD.”

—from the *Liberator*

With his balding head, his steel-rimmed glasses, and his plain black suits, Garrison was as mild-looking as his words were strong. Inside this soft-spoken man, however, an intense passion burned. In his

mind, the situation was very clear: Slavery was immoral and slaveholders were evil. The only option was immediate and complete **emancipation**, or the freeing of all enslaved people.

Garrison soon attracted enough followers in the North to enable him to found the New England Antislavery Society in 1832 and the **American Antislavery Society** in 1833. Membership in both organizations grew quickly. By the mid-1830s, there were hundreds of society chapters, and in 1838, there were more than 1,350 chapters with over 250,000 members.

**Other Abolitionists at Work** As the anti-slavery movement gained momentum, new leaders emerged from Garrison's shadow and carried on the effort. Theodore Weld, a disciple of the evangelist Charles Grandison Finney, was one of the most effective leaders, recruiting and training many abolitionists for the American Antislavery Society. Arthur and Lewis Tappan, two devout and wealthy brothers from New York City, also emerged as leaders.

The orator Wendell Phillips, the poet John Greenleaf Whittier, and many others became active in the cause as well. Many women also gave their efforts to the abolitionist movement. Prudence Crandall worked as a teacher and abolitionist in Connecticut, and Lucretia Mott often spoke out in favor of abolitionism. Some Southern women also joined the crusade. Among the earliest were Sarah and Angelina Grimké, South Carolina sisters who moved north to work openly against slavery.

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

One of the most prominent African American figures in the movement was **Frederick Douglass**, who had escaped from slavery in Maryland. Douglass was a brilliant thinker and an electrifying speaker. "I appear before the immense assembly this evening as a thief and a robber," he told one Massachusetts

group in 1842. “I stole this head, these limbs, this body from my master, and ran off with them.” Douglass published his own antislavery newspaper, the *North Star*, and wrote an autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, which quickly sold 4,500 copies after its publication in 1845.

Another important African American abolitionist was **Sojourner Truth**. She gained freedom in 1827 when New York freed all remaining enslaved people in the state. In the 1840s her antislavery speeches—eloquent, joyous, and deeply religious—drew huge crowds. Though lacking a formal education, Truth enthralled listeners with her folksy wit, engaging stories, contagious singing, and strong message.

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

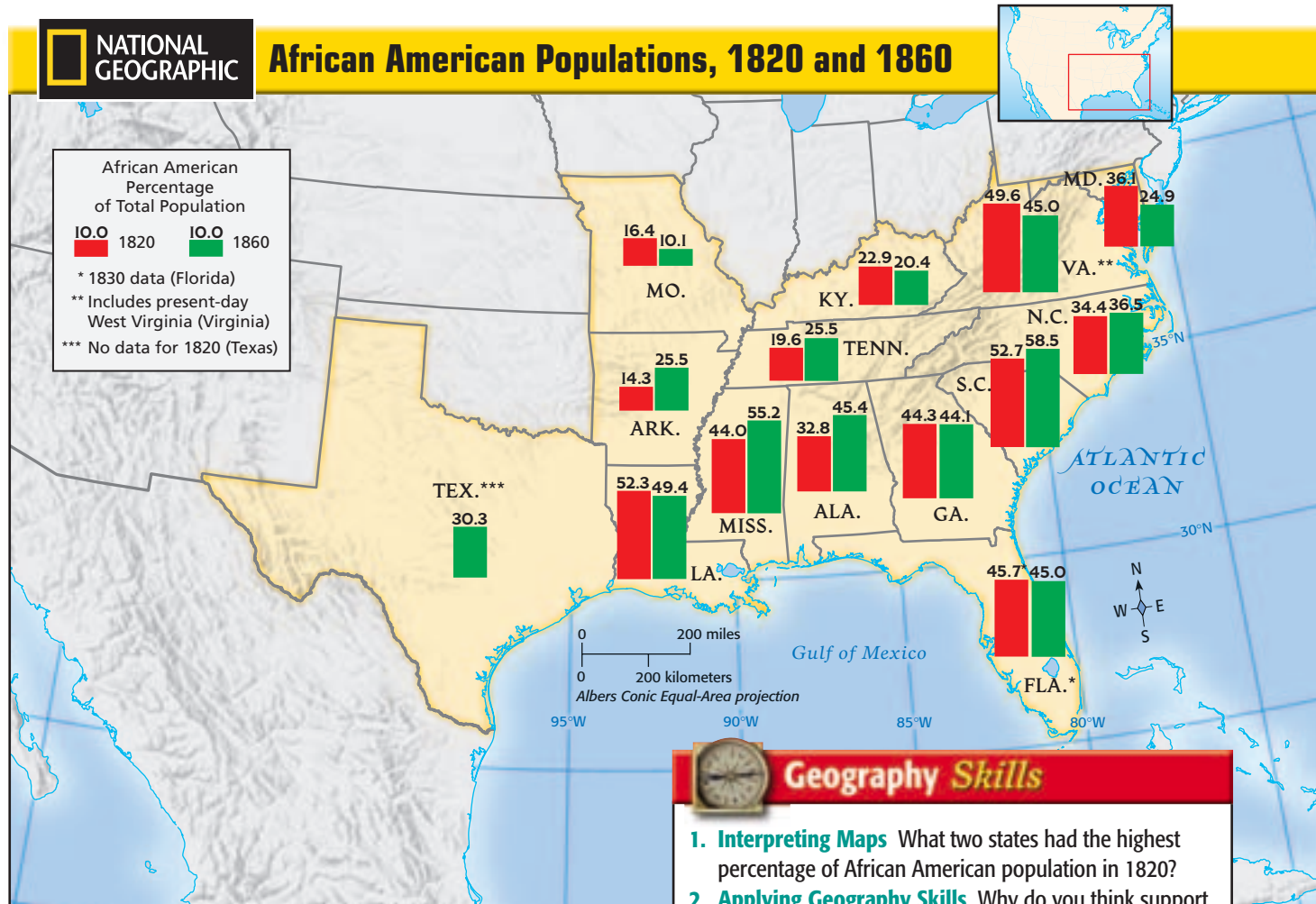
## The Response to Abolitionism

Abolitionism was a powerful force, and it provoked a powerful public response. In the North, citizens looked upon the abolitionist movement with

views ranging from support to indifference to opposition. In the South, many residents feared that their entire way of life was under attack. They rushed to defend the institution of slavery, which they saw as the key to the region’s economy.

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

Given such attitudes, the attack on Garrison in Boston was not surprising. In fact, it was one of many such assaults. In 1837 in Illinois, for example,



**Geography Skills**

- Interpreting Maps** What two states had the highest percentage of African American population in 1820?
- Applying Geography Skills** Why do you think support for gradualism and colonization was stronger in Virginia than in South Carolina?





Frederick Douglass (seated at left) at an abolitionist rally in Cazenovia, New York, in 1850

abolitionist publisher Reverend Elijah P. Lovejoy was killed trying to protect his printing press from a mob. Yet Northerners also resented Southern slave-catchers, who kidnapped African American runaways in the North and hauled them back to the South. In response, several states in the North passed personal liberty laws restricting slave recapture.

**Reaction in the South** To most Southerners, slavery was a “peculiar institution,” one that was distinctive and vital to the Southern way of life. While the North was building cities and factories, the South remained mostly agricultural, becoming increasingly tied to cotton and the enslaved people who planted and picked it. Southerners responded to the growing

attacks against slavery by strongly defending the institution. South Carolina’s governor called it a “national benefit,” while Thomas Dew, a leading Southern academic, claimed that most slaves had no desire for freedom, because they enjoyed a close and beneficial relationship with their slaveholders. “We have no hesitation in affirming,” he declared, “that, throughout the whole slaveholding country, the slaves of good [slaveholders] are his warmest, most constant, and most devoted friends.”

Less than eight months after Garrison printed his first shocking words in the *Liberator* in 1831, **Nat Turner**, an enslaved preacher, led an uprising that killed over 50 Virginians. Many Southerners believed that papers like the *Liberator* sparked this rebellion. Although Garrison’s paper did not even circulate in the South, furious Southerners demanded the suppression of abolitionist material as a condition for remaining in the Union. Southern postal workers refused to deliver abolitionist newspapers. In 1836, under Southern pressure the House of Representatives passed a gag rule providing that all abolitionist petitions be shelved without debate.

For all the uproar it caused, the abolitionist movement remained relatively small. Very few people before the Civil War ever accepted the idea that slavery must be immediately eliminated. The crusade that William Lloyd Garrison had started, however, and that thousands of men and women struggled to keep alive, became a constant and powerful reminder of how much slavery was dividing the nation.

**Reading Check** **Evaluating** How did Northerners and Southerners view abolitionism?

## SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

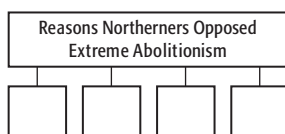
- Define:** *gradualism, abolition, emancipation.*
- Identify:** American Colonization Society, William Lloyd Garrison, American Antislavery Society, Frederick Douglass.
- Describe** how free African Americans worked to end slavery.

### Reviewing Themes

- Individual Action** Which individuals helped build support for abolition, and what did they do to win that support?

### Critical Thinking

- Interpreting** Why is William Lloyd Garrison’s publication of the *Liberator* considered a turning point in the abolitionist movement?
- Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the reasons why many Northerners opposed extreme abolitionism.



### Analyzing Visuals

- Analyzing Maps** Study the map on page 287. In which states did the percentage of African American population decrease by at least 5 percent between 1820 and 1860?

### Writing About History

- Descriptive Writing** Imagine that you are working for the *Liberator* in the 1830s. Write a letter to a friend describing what you hope to accomplish as a member of the staff of an abolitionist newspaper. Be sure to explain why you accepted the job.

# Technology SKILLBUILDER

## Developing a Multimedia Presentation

### Why Learn This Skill?

You want to present a research report on some aspect of the Second Great Awakening to your classmates, and you want to hold their attention. How do you do it? You might try using a variety of media. Using a variety of media in your presentations makes them more interesting and engaging for your audience.

### Learning the Skill

A basic multimedia presentation involves using several types of media. Suppose you wanted to present a report on the American literary renaissance. To introduce the important writers of the era, you might show photographs of them. You also could play a voice recording of a story written by one of the writers or present a video showing a screenplay based on one of their books.

You can also develop a multimedia presentation on a computer. Multimedia, as it relates to computer technology, is the combination of text, video, audio, and animation in an interactive program.

To create multimedia presentations on a computer, you need to have certain tools. These may include traditional computer graphics tools, draw programs, animation programs that make images move, and authoring systems that tie everything together. Your computer manual will tell you which tools your computer can support.

### Practicing the Skill

Ask yourself the following questions when developing a multimedia presentation:

- 1 Which forms of media do I want to include? Video? Sound? Animation? Photographs? Graphics?
- 2 Which of these media forms does my computer support?
- 3 What kind of software programs or systems do I need? A paint program? A draw program? An animation program? A program to create interactive, or two-way, communication? An authoring system that will allow me to change images, sound, and motion?
- 4 Is there a “do-it-all” program I can use to develop the kind of presentation I want?



### Skills Assessment

Complete the Practicing Skills questions on page 291 and the Chapter 8 Skill Reinforcement Activity to assess your mastery of this skill.

### Applying the Skill

**Developing a Multimedia Presentation** Using your answers to the questions under “Practicing the Skill” as guidelines, write a plan describing a multimedia presentation on writers of the American literary renaissance or romanticism. Indicate what tools you will need and what you must do for a successful presentation.



Glencoe’s **Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook CD-ROM, Level 2**, provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.

## Reviewing Key Terms

On a sheet of paper, use each of these terms in a sentence.

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. spoils system     | 8. utopia             |
| 2. caucus system     | 9. benevolent society |
| 3. secede            | 10. temperance        |
| 4. nullification     | 11. penitentiary      |
| 5. nativism          | 12. gradualism        |
| 6. romanticism       | 13. abolition         |
| 7. transcendentalism | 14. emancipation      |

## Chapter Summary

### Democracy Expanded for Some

- Nominating convention replaced caucus system of choosing presidential candidates.
- Voting rights were expanded for white males.
- Jackson's spoils system favored common people.

### Change Was Limited for Others

- Women's movement gained attention but accomplished little else.
- Native Americans were driven out of the South.
- Nativism led to discrimination against immigrants.

### The Second Great Awakening Inspired Reform

- Commitment to religion swelled church congregations.
- New religions were established.
- American literature blossomed; romanticism and transcendentalism influenced art.
- Prison reform movement resulted in better facilities.
- Access to education was expanded.
- Abolitionist and temperance movements grew steadily.

### Reform Efforts Led to Further Division

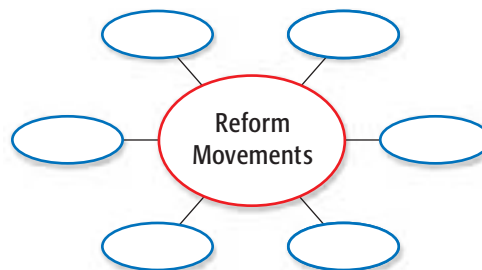
- Members of newly established religions were persecuted.
- Many Northerners opposed slavery but saw abolition as a threat to the existing social system.
- Some publishers of abolitionist literature were attacked.
- Southerners defended slavery as an economic necessity.
- House of Representatives was pressured to impose a gag rule limiting debate on abolitionist petitions.

## Reviewing Key Facts

- Identify:** Tariff of Abominations, Daniel Webster, Trail of Tears, Second Great Awakening, Joseph Smith, Lyman Beecher, Horace Mann, William Lloyd Garrison.
- In what two ways did President Andrew Jackson expand democracy?
- What were two factors that led to President Jackson's decision to sign the Indian Removal Act?
- What main ideas did American romanticists and transcendentalists believe?
- How did reformers improve the public education system in the early to mid-1800s?
- Name four groups of people involved in the abolitionist movement, and list what each did to try to end slavery.

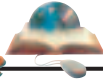
## Critical Thinking

- Analyzing Themes: Groups and Institutions** Which group or groups of Americans did not benefit from the reforms of the early to mid-1800s? Explain.
- Synthesizing** What were the main themes of American writers, philosophers, and artists during the Second Great Awakening? Do you think their writings and works of art influenced the reform movements in the United States during the early to mid-1800s? Explain your answer.
- Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the areas of life that people in the United States tried to improve during the early to mid-1800s.



- Interpreting Primary Sources** Some people did not support free public education in the early 1800s. The excerpt below was an editorial written to the members of the legislature. It appeared in the *Raleigh Register* of November 9, 1829. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

☞☞Common schools indeed! Money is very scarce, and the times are unusually hard. . . . Gentlemen, it appears to me that schools are sufficiently plenty, and that the people have no desire they should be increased. Those



## Self-Check Quiz

Visit the *American Vision* Web site at [tav.glencoe.com](http://tav.glencoe.com) and click on **Self-Check Quizzes—Chapter 8** to assess your knowledge of chapter content.

now in operation are not all filled, and it is very doubtful if they are productive or of much real benefit. Would it not redound as much to the advantage of young persons, and to the honour of the State, if they should pass their days in the cotton patch, or at the plow, or in the cornfield, instead of being [confined] in a school house, where they are earning nothing?☺☺

—from the *Raleigh Register*, November 9, 1829

- What reasons does the author give for opposing free public education?
- Are the author's reasons valid? Explain your answer.

## Practicing Skills

- Developing a Multimedia Presentation** Develop a plan for a presentation on the social and cultural changes in the United States discussed in this chapter. Consider the following points to help guide you.
  - What specific examples would you use to show the different social and cultural changes taking place in the country?
  - What form of media would you use for each example?

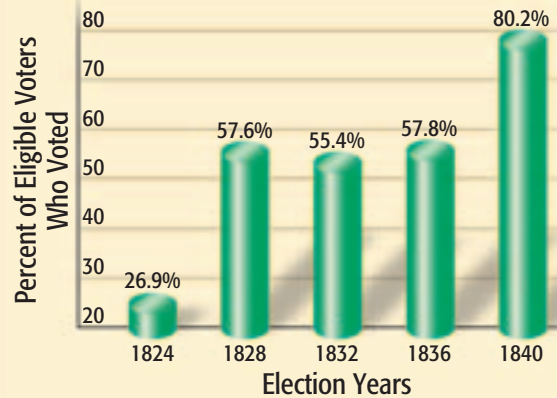
## Writing Activity

- Portfolio Writing** You read in a Boston newspaper that the Massachusetts legislature is going to hear statements from citizens concerning the care of the mentally ill. Prepare and write a paper that you can read to the committee members on this subject. In the paper, explain your ideas on caring for the mentally ill and whether or not you feel society has an obligation to do so. Save the paper in your portfolio.

## Chapter Activities

- Research Project** Conduct research to learn more about one reformer discussed in the chapter. Role-play the person by introducing yourself to the class and describing your background, what you want to reform, and how you will go about making these improvements.
- American History Primary Source Document Library CD-ROM** Read "Women's Rights" by Sojourner Truth, under *The Growing Nation*. Imagine that you are a reporter for a newspaper and your assignment is to cover the Ohio Women's Convention. Write an article in which you review Truth's speech. In your article, explain her arguments for women's rights and describe how members of the convention reacted to her speech.

## Voter Participation, 1824–1840



Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*.

## Geography and History

- The graph above shows voter participation from 1824 to 1840. Study the graph, and then answer the questions below.
  - Interpreting Graphs** In which presidential election year did voter participation increase the most from the previous presidential election year?
  - Applying Graph Skills** What do you think accounted for the increase in voter participation?

Standardized  
Test Practice

**Directions:** Read the passage below and answer the question that follows.

Susan B. Anthony, who was raised as a Quaker, was a powerful organizer in the women's rights movement. A dedicated reformer, she joined the temperance movement and worked for the American Antislavery Society. Sojourner Truth, a former enslaved person, spoke out against slavery and in defense of women's rights. Truth often attended women's rights conventions to remind women that their African American sisters had a place in the movement.

Susan B. Anthony and Sojourner Truth both worked for which of the following reforms?

- Abolitionism and education
- Education and temperance
- Temperance and women's rights
- Women's rights and abolitionism

**Test-Taking Tip:** The important word in this question is *both*. Several reform movements are mentioned, but the question asks about the reforms *both* women supported.