

CONCEPT CURRICULUM:

Period 4: 1800–1848

Key Concept 4.1: The United States began to develop a modern democracy and a new national culture, while Americans sought to define the nation’s democratic ideals and change their society and institutions to match them.

- I. The nation’s transition to a more participatory democracy was achieved by expanding suffrage from a system based on property ownership to one based on voting by all adult white men, and it was accompanied by the growth of political parties.
 - A) In the early 1800s, national political parties continued to debate issues such as the tariff, powers of the federal government, and relations with European powers.
 - B) Supreme Court decisions established the primacy of the judiciary in determining the meaning of the Constitution and asserted that federal laws took precedence over state laws.
 - C) By the 1820s and 1830s, new political parties arose — the Democrats, led, by Andrew Jackson, and the Whigs, led by Henry Clay — that disagreed about the role and powers of the federal government and issues such as the national bank, tariffs, and federally funded internal improvements.
 - D) Regional interests often trumped national concerns as the basis for many political leaders’ positions on slavery and economic policy.

- II. While Americans embraced a new national culture, various groups developed distinctive cultures of their own.
 - A) The rise of democratic beliefs, a response to rationalism, and changes to society caused by the market revolution, along with greater social and geographical mobility, contributed to a Second Great Awakening among Protestants that influenced moral and social reforms and inspired utopian and other religious movements.
 - B) A new national culture emerged that combined American elements, European influences, and regional cultural sensibilities.
 - C) Enslaved blacks and free African Americans created communities and strategies to protect their dignity and family structures, and they joined political efforts aimed at changing their status.

- III. Increasing numbers of Americans, many inspired by new religious and intellectual movements, worked primarily outside of government institutions to advance their ideals.
 - A) Americans, primarily women, formed new voluntary organizations that aimed to change individual behaviors and improve society through temperance and other reform efforts.
 - B) Abolitionist and antislavery movements gradually achieved emancipation in the North, contributing to the growth of the free African American population, even as many state governments restricted African Americans’ rights. Antislavery efforts in the South were largely limited to unsuccessful slave rebellions.
 - C) A women’s rights movement sought to create greater equality and opportunities for women, expressing its ideals at the Seneca Falls Convention.

Key Concept 4.2: Innovations in technology, agriculture, and commerce powerfully accelerated the American economy, precipitating profound changes to U.S. society and to national and regional identities.

- I. New transportation systems and technologies dramatically expanded manufacturing and agricultural production.
 - A) Entrepreneurs helped to create a market revolution in production and commerce, in which market relationships between producers and consumers came to prevail as the manufacture of goods became more organized.
 - B) Innovations including textile machinery, steam engines, interchangeable parts, the telegraph, and agricultural inventions increased the efficiency of production methods.
 - C) Legislation supported the development of roads, canals, and railroads, which extended and enlarged markets and helped foster regional economic interdependence. Transportation networks linked the North and Midwest more closely than either was linked to the South.

- II. The changes caused by the market revolution had significant effects on U.S. society, workers’ lives, and gender and family relations.
 - A) Increasing numbers of Americans, especially women and men working in factories, no longer relied on semi-subsistence agriculture; instead they supported themselves producing commercial goods for distant markets.
 - B) Gender and family roles changed in response to the market revolution, particularly with the growth of definitions of domestic ideals that emphasized the separation of public and private spheres.

- III. Economic development shaped settlement and trade patterns, helping to unify the nation while also encouraging the growth of different regions.
- A) Large numbers of international migrants moved to industrializing northern cities, while many Americans moved west of the Appalachians, developing thriving new communities along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.
 - B) Increasing Southern cotton production and the related growth of Northern manufacturing, banking, and shipping industries promoted the development of national and international commercial ties.
 - C) Southern business leaders continued to rely on the production and export of traditional agricultural staples, contributing to the growth of a distinctive Southern regional identity.
 - D) Plans to further unify the U.S. economy, such as the American System, generated debates over whether such policies would benefit agriculture or industry, potentially favoring different sections of the country.

Key Concept 4.3: The U.S. interest in increasing foreign trade and expanding its national borders shaped the nation's foreign policy and spurred government initiatives.

- I. Struggling to create an independent global presence, the United States sought to claim territory throughout the North American continent and promote foreign trade.
- A) Following the Louisiana Purchase, the United States government sought influence and control over North America and the Western Hemisphere through a variety of means, including exploration, military actions, American Indian removal, and diplomatic efforts such as the Monroe Doctrine.
 - B) Frontier settlers tended to champion expansion efforts, while American Indian resistance led to a sequence of wars and federal efforts to control and relocate American Indian populations.
- II. The United States' acquisition of lands in the West gave rise to controversies over the extension of slavery into new territories.
- A) As over-cultivation depleted arable land in the Southeast, slaveholders began relocating their plantations to more fertile lands west of the Appalachians, where the institution of slavery continued to grow and spread.
 - B) Antislavery efforts increased in the North, while in the South, although the majority of Southerners owned no slaves, most leaders argued that slavery was part of the Southern way of life.
 - C) Congressional attempts at political compromise, such as the Missouri Compromise, only temporarily stemmed growing tensions between opponents and defenders of slavery.