

Unit 3: A New Nation (1801 – 1860)

8th Grade Social Studies

20 Class Meetings

Revised April 2026

Essential Questions

- How influential were our “Founding Fathers?”
- Did the guiding ideology of “Manifest Destiny” really allow for democratic and spiritual growth, and the inevitable continental expansion for the United States?
- How was power and land redistributed to the great cultural detriment in indigenous peoples?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: The Jeffersonian Democracy principles sought to limit government involvement in the daily lives of its citizens and create a primarily agrarian economy but was rarely successful.

- Examine challenges facing George Washington in establishing a new government and country.
- Interpret Jefferson’s political system that favored public education, free voting, free press, limited government, and agrarian democracy and shied away from aristocratic rule.
- Connect the changing ideas of what it meant to be American to the new “Jacksonian Democracy.”

EU 2: Manifest Destiny, spurred on by western expansion and the Industrial Revolution, is the idea that the United States is destined to expand its dominion and spread democracy across the entire North American continent.

- Examine how Americans were driven by the ideology of “Manifest Destiny”, “American Optimism”, innovation and the allure of the American West.
- Explore the radical changes, both economic and social, that was brought on by the Industrial Revolution in America.
- Analyze the cause and effect of the Industrial Revolution and increased European immigration.

EU3: African slaves and Native Americans suffered irreparable harm, destruction of culture and institutional racism that directly led to the American Civil War.

- Cite the failures of government and leadership that expanded the institution of slavery.
- Analyze the causes, specifically slavery and westward expansion, that directly led to the United States Civil War.

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CT Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards:

- **8.Civ.5.a.** Explain laws that institutionalized slavery in the Colonial Era and in the Constitution (e.g., Black Laws of Virginia, Fugitive Slave Act, Three-Fifths Clause).
- **8.Civ.3.a.** Examine the origin, purpose, and impact of the founding documents (e.g., popular sovereignty, republicanism, separation of powers, enfranchisement, liberty).
- **8.His.3.a.** Develop questions to analyze the significance of the methods of resistance employed by enslaved and free Black people in the United States (e.g., work resistance, violence, sabotage, petition, forming maroon communities, independent churches, and educational associations).
- **8.His.5.a.** Analyze the perspectives of immigrant groups and their reasons for moving to and within the United States (e.g., German, Irish, Scandinavian, Chinese, Jewish).
- **8.Civ.14.a.** Analyze attempts by individuals and groups with nativist views to shape the United States in the Antebellum Period (e.g., Philadelphia Riots of 1844, Know Nothing Party).
- **8.Civ.14.b.** Compare movements for social change and the strategies they employed by the United States in the Antebellum Period (e.g., abolition, Second Great Awakening, suffrage, temperance).
- **CIV 8.3** Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in multiple settings.

Common Core State Standards:

- **SL.8.1.D** Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- **SL.8.1.B** Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- **SL.8.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly
- **RH. 6-8.2** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **INQ 6-8.17** Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.
- **INQ 6-8.5** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources.

ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

Competency 1: Write effectively for a variety of purposes.

Competency 2: Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.

Competency 3: Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.

Competency 4: Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.

Competency 5: Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

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Unit Content Overview

1. “Tis one. We have become a nation.” – Benjamin Rush

- The Federal government must be strong but also recognize the individual states.
- The U.S. Constitution guarantees us all basic rights.
- Which Americans were intentionally left out of the Bill of Rights?

2. “It [is] ridiculous to suppose that a man had less rights in himself than...his neighbors ...This would be slavery, and not that liberty.”- Thomas Jefferson

- How can a man as brilliant and revered as Thomas Jefferson be so completely contradictory in his words and actions?
- The War of 1812 ended British hostility towards America and transformed the nation into an industrial giant.
- Western expansion and the industrial revolution take hold.

3. “I will say, finally, that I despair of the republic while slavery exists therein one.” – W Garrison

- The institution of slavery in America created a cancer on the union from inception.
- The social and economic changes occurred at rapid pace which exacerbated the Civil War.

Vocabulary:

- Committee, Amend, Bills, Law, Veto, Articles of Confederation, National Government, Barbary Pirates, Louisiana Purchase, Lewis & Clark, Tecumseh, The War of 1812, Fort McHenry, Treaty of Ghent, Market Revolution, New Technologies, Manifest Destiny, Immigration, “American Dream”, Cotton Gin, Frederick Douglas, Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman, William Still, Fugitive Slave Act.

Interdisciplinary Connection:

- Language Arts – reading informational texts.

Daily Learning Objectives with *TWPS*

Students will be able to ...

- Compare and contrast the differences between Articles of Confederation and the U.S Constitution, specifically the Bill of Rights. **
 - *What do you think is the first thing you should do when starting a new country?*
- Examine challenges facing George Washington in establishing a new government and country. **
 - *If you became the first leader of a new country, what would your title be and why?*
- Connect the Jeffersonian Democracy principles sought to limit government involvement in the daily lives of its citizens and to create a primarily agrarian economy that was rarely successful. **** (Essay writing lesson as well)
 - *If “All men are created equal,” how can we make sense of Thomas Jefferson owning slaves and still be regarded as one of our greatest Founding Fathers?*
- Interpret Jefferson’s political system that favored public education, free voting, free press, limited government, and agrarian democracy and shied away from aristocratic rule. **

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- *Given what you just learned about the War of 1812 from your Edpuzzle, why do you think they refer to that conflict as the 2nd American Revolution?*
- Explore the radical changes, both economic and social, that were brought on by the Industrial Revolution in America. **
 - *How many different types of Revolutions can you think of? Are they all political? Please list some of your ideas.*
- Analyze the cause and effect of the Industrial Revolution and increased European immigration. **
 - *Given Do you know the history of your ancestors arriving in America? Please tell me about where your family's roots originated.*
- Cite the failures of government and leadership that expanded the institution of slavery. **
 - *What comes to mind when you hear the term **Underground Railroad**? Please list some of your ideas.*
- Analyze the direct causes, specifically slavery and westward expansion, that directly led to the United States Civil War. **
 - *What could have been done to avoid the Civil War ... if anything?*

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Guided notes
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Written feedback
- Think-pair-share and small-group discussions
- Graphic organizers
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Word walls with visuals
- Anchor charts
- Small group instruction
- Text and video chunking with guiding questions
- Close reading with text-dependent questions

EL Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
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- Homework
- Word walls with visuals
- Anchor charts
- Small group instruction
- Conferencing
- Text and video chunking with guiding questions
- Close reading with text-dependent questions
- Modified Assessments
- Frayer Model

Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Do Now – CNN10
- TWPS
- Exit Slips
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Completed guided notes
- Completed graphic organizers
- Revision worksheets
- Homework
- AIMS Web
- Performance Task – Argumentative Essay – The Character of Thomas Jefferson

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Pear Assessment Vocab Quiz - EU1, EU2
- Pear Assessment Unit 1 Test – EU1, EU2, EU3
- Performance Task – Argumentative Essay – The Character of Thomas Jefferson – EU2

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: Thomas Jefferson Argumentative Essay

Description: Students will craft a five (5) paragraph opinion essay about the accomplishments, failures, and character of Thomas Jefferson. (EU1) The guide will provide resources from primary sources and an essay scaffold for using the Writing Revolution model.

Writing Prompt: Please craft a well-researched and formal three paragraph essay that answers the following question: **In your opinion, was the life and presidency of Thomas Jefferson a success or a failure? Were his significant accomplishments enough to override his failures?** Please be sure to include specific examples from two sources to support your claim and view.

Evaluation: Scoring Guide

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Unit Resources

- Pear Edulastic
- Excerpt of Washington's Farewell Address
- Junior Scholastic – Harriet Tubman MapQuest
- [Two Famous Friends](#)
- Crash Course Thomas Jefferson w/ notes
- PBS Ken Burns in the Classroom - Jefferson
- Crash Course Black History – Underground Railroad
- *America: The Story of Us* episode 3
- Excerpt from the Broadway play *Hamilton*
- Revision worksheets