

A United Nation?

Expansion and Reform
(1801–1861)



Politics and economics

Rising sectionalism

19th-century reform

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will know about the following political and economic changes in the first half of the 19th-century:

- The Industrial Revolution
- Henry Clay's American System
- The rise and fall of the Second Bank of the United States
- The presidency of Andrew Jackson
- The formation of the Whig Party.



Looking back timeline



Use this timeline to recap key historical events in the 18th and 19th centuries. Either press on a date or drag the pointer along the timeline to read about what happened in each year.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Following the War of 1812, the young nation found itself with several major economic problems:

- The U.S. was millions of dollars in debt to other countries.
- Britain flooded the market with cheap manufactured goods, underselling American companies.
- Many citizens were more concerned with the welfare of their own state than that of the nation. They felt little pressure to support American industry.





Revolution in the North



In the early 19th century, another revolution was taking place in New England: the **Industrial Revolution**.

Previously, families made many necessary items at home. With the rise of industrialization, more people began to work for others in exchange for wages.



The development of **interchangeable parts** meant that basic goods like tools and cloth could be **mass produced** quickly and cheaply in factories.





Blockades during the War of 1812 had crippled New England shipping. This created a large population of unemployed workers in Northeastern cities.

The Northeast's many rivers made the region perfect for water-powered factories.

In 1822, **Lowell**, MA became the site of a revolutionary system that mechanized all aspects of textile production.

The Lowell factories were manned by young women who lived in company boarding houses and lived by rigid company schedules and moral codes.





Since the beginning of colonization, the U.S. had been made up of small agricultural communities. In the 1800s, the North became the center of industry, while the South developed plantation farming and settlers created new systems in the West.

Press **start** to learn more.

start

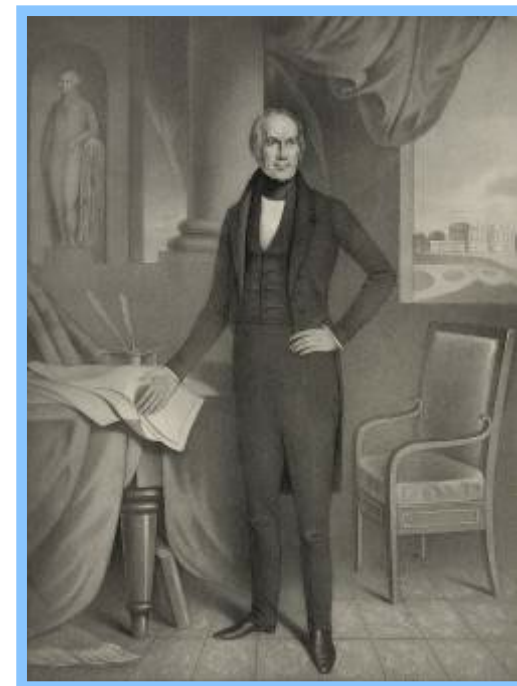




Speaker of the House **Henry Clay** began promoting what he later named the **American System**.

He believed that for the U.S. to be a strong, profitable and united nation, the government needed to:

- encourage domestic trade by putting a **tariff** on foreign goods
- develop internal transportation systems
- restore the national bank, which had been weakened under Jefferson.





Henry Clay said of tariff opponents: "It is not free trade that they are recommending to our acceptance. It is, in effect, the British colonial system that we are invited to adopt ... the recolonization of these States, under the commercial dominion of Great Britain."
Can you correctly label the economic ties Clay wanted to see in the U.S.?
Press **start** to begin.

start



What does Clay's quotation mean?



President **James Madison** created the Tariff of 1816 to protect American industry from cheaper British goods.

In 1811, construction began on a **National Road**, which stretched from Maryland to Illinois by 1838.



Another major improvement was the **Erie Canal**, which was completed in 1825. By connecting the Great Lakes with the Hudson River, the Canal created a quick, reliable trade route between the Midwest and the Northeast.

Why might Southerners dislike the tariff?



Following the U.S. victory in the War of 1812, a sense of **nationalism** swept the country.



This was underscored by political changes under President **James Monroe**. Monroe worked to eliminate party tensions, appointing both Federalists and Democratic-Republicans to political office.

In 1817, Monroe toured the nation and received a warm welcome in every region. A reporter dubbed it the **Era of Good Feelings**.





In the late 1700s, Alexander Hamilton had proposed a Bank of the United States as a way of managing the country's foreign debts. After the War of 1812, the government created the Second Bank of the U.S. for the same reason. The new Bank faced some serious challenges as the 19th century went on.

Press **start** to begin.

start



How should banks be regulated?





Jackson the common man

By the election of 1828, voting rights had been extended to include white males from poorer classes. The victor of this election would need to appeal to the common man.

Andrew Jackson, hero of the War of 1812, was that victor.

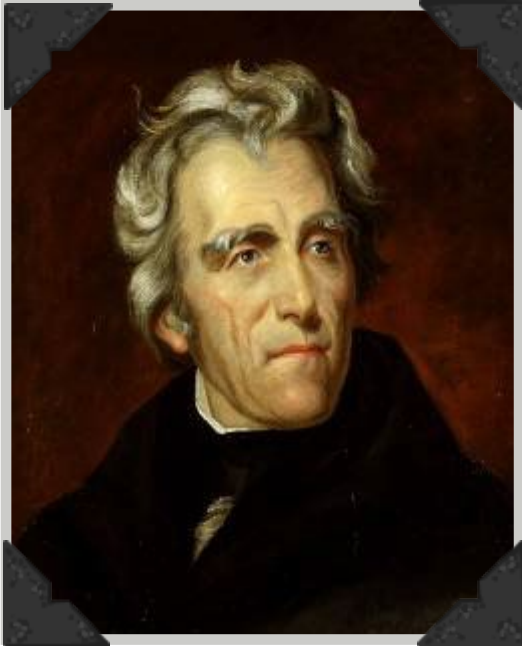
Although Jackson was a wealthy plantation owner, he managed to convince voters that he was no different than they were.

Jackson won in a landslide over his opponent, incumbent **John Quincy Adams**.





Jackson distrusted entrenched politicians, feeling they were out of touch with the needs of the people.



He replaced many government employees with friends from his own party. This became known as the **spoils system**, from the phrase, “to the victor go the spoils.”

During his two terms in office, Jackson showed his dislike for wealthy elites and special interest groups. This was reflected in his veto of the National Bank.





The Whig Party

Some felt Jackson's power was becoming tyrannical and formed the **Whig Party**. The Whigs supported the American System and the concept of a national bank.

The party attracted Northern businessmen and Westerners who wanted public funding for internal developments.

By the election of 1840, the Whigs formed a formidable opposition to the Democratic incumbent, **Martin Van Buren**.

They successfully elected **William Henry Harrison**.

