

Reform Movements



Essential Question

What inspires people to try to improve their society?



About the Engraving: This 1834 engraving shows women and children working in a New England textile mill. The American textile industry—and the factory system—were born in mills like this one, where workers toiled long hours for low wages.

In this module you will learn how the Second Great Awakening started a period of great social reform.

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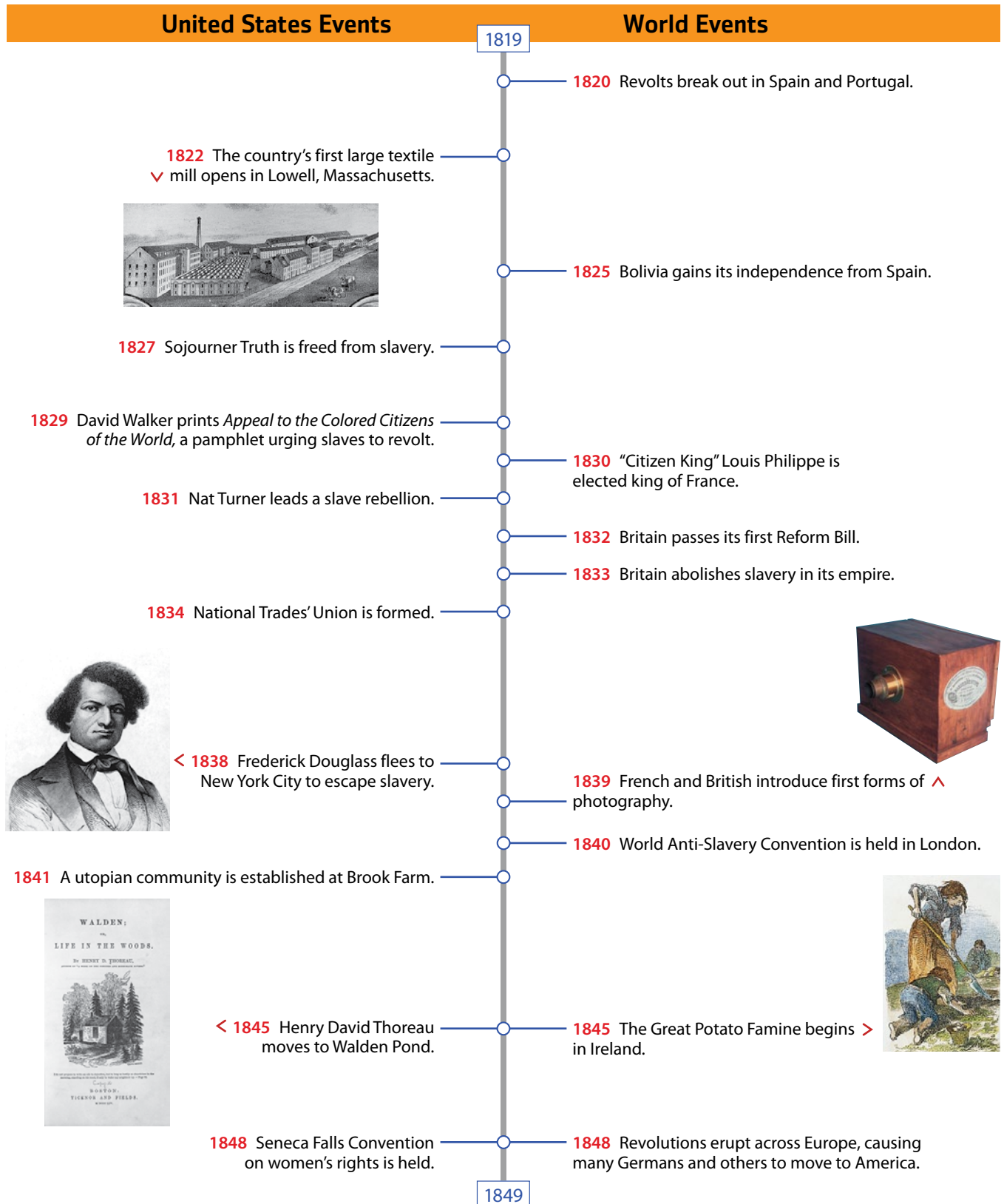
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Religion Sparks Reform

The Big Idea

A renewal of religious sentiment—known as the Second Great Awakening—inspired a host of reform movements.

Why It Matters Now

Many modern social and political reform movements grew out of the reform movements of 19th-century America.

Key Terms and People

Charles Grandison Finney

Second Great Awakening
revival

Ralph Waldo Emerson

transcendentalism

Henry David Thoreau

civil disobedience

utopian

One American's Story

When **Charles Grandison Finney** preached, his listeners shrieked, moaned, and fainted. Finney was the most famous preacher of the era. He inspired emotional religious faith by using a speaking style that was as much high drama as prayer or sermon. Converted at the age of 29, Finney traveled by horseback to deliver his message. Finney seated the most likely converts in his audiences on a special “anxious bench,” where he could fasten his eyes upon them. He lectured on the depth of the conversion experience.



Charles Grandison Finney

“I know this is all so much algebra to those who have never felt it. But to those who have experienced the agony of wrestling, prevailing prayer, for the conversion of a soul, you may depend upon it, that soul . . . appears as dear as a child is to the mother who brought it forth with pain.”

—Charles Grandison Finney, quoted in *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*

The convert’s duty was to spread the word about personal salvation. This religious activism—or evangelism—was part of an overall era of reform that started in the 1830s. Reforms of the period included women’s rights, school reform, and abolition, the movement to outlaw slavery. All of these movements emerged as responses to rapid changes in American society. These changes included industrial growth, increasing migration and immigration, and new means of communication.

The Second Great Awakening

Many reform movements traced their roots to the revivals of the broad religious movement known as the **Second Great Awakening** that swept the United States after 1790. Finney and his contemporaries were part of this Awakening. These preachers rejected the 18th-century Calvinistic belief that God predetermined one's salvation or damnation—whether a person went to heaven or hell. Instead, they emphasized individual responsibility for salvation. They also insisted that people could improve themselves and society.

RELIGION AND THE INDIVIDUAL Religious ideas current in the early 1800s promoted individualism and responsibility, much like Jacksonian democracy emphasized the power of the common citizen. Some Christians believed it was their moral duty to help improve the lives of others and called for the reform of unjust practices. These included slavery and the poor treatment of workers. Reformers cited scripture while condemning such practices. Others looked to their churches for support as they called for increased rights for women and African Americans.

This new religious excitement also led Americans to flock to churches in higher numbers than ever before. Some, unable to find a church that shared their specific beliefs, formed churches of their own. Across the country, Christian churches split as various denominations competed to proclaim the message of a democratic God, one who extends the possibility of salvation to all people. The forums for their messages were large gatherings, where some preachers could draw audiences of 20,000 or more at outdoor camps.

REVIVALISM Such a gathering was called a **revival**. A revival is an emotional meeting designed to awaken religious faith through impassioned preaching and prayer. A revival might last five days. During the day, the participants studied the Bible and examined their souls. In the evening, they heard emotional preaching that could make them cry out, burst into tears, or tremble with fear.

NOW

&

THEN

Modern Revivalism

The Second Great Awakening changed the nature of religion for many Americans. It inspired an evangelical form of Christianity, one that emphasized the actions of the individual over the teachings of clergy. Evangelical Christians believed that their spiritual salvation was in their own hands.

Evangelical Christianity reemerged in several different religious organizations in the late 20th century. One example is the Christian Coalition of America, a religiously based citizen-action organization founded in 1989.



As in the Second Great Awakening, members of these religious organizations often are active in political movements that spring from personal religious beliefs. Indeed, some of the organizations use television much like Finney used the revival meeting to encourage believers to act on their faith.

Revivalism swept across the United States in the early 19th century. Some of the most intense revivals took place in a part of western New York known as the burned-over district because of the religious fires that frequently burned there. Charles Finney fanned these flames, conducting some of his most successful revivals in Rochester, New York. The Rochester revivals earned Finney the reputation of “the father of modern revivalism.”

Not all Americans embraced the revival concept, though. Some traditional ministers loudly protested any change in their religious customs. They feared that revivals threatened the stability of the church. They also feared that revivalist preachers were too casual in their approach to spiritual matters. These opponents tried—usually unsuccessfully—to keep revivals out of their communities. Despite their efforts, revivalism had a strong impact on the public. According to one estimate, in 1800 just 1 in 15 Americans belonged to a church, By 1850, 1 in 6 was a member.

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCH The Second Great Awakening also brought Christianity on a large scale to enslaved African Americans. There was a strong democratic impulse in the new churches and a belief that all people—black or white—belonged to the same God. Thus, camp meetings and the new Baptist or Methodist churches were open to both blacks and whites. Slaves in the rural South—though they were segregated in pews of their own—worshipped in the same churches, heard the same sermons, and sang the same hymns as did the slave owners. Unlike their owners, however, many enslaved African Americans interpreted the Christian message as a promise of freedom for their people.

In the North, many free African Americans worshipped in separate black churches, like Richard Allen’s Bethel African Church in Philadelphia. By 1816 this church became the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Allen inspired his congregation to strengthen its faith as well as to fight against slavery.

“Our only design is to secure to ourselves, our rights and privileges to regulate our affairs temporal and spiritual, the same as if we were white people, and to guard against any oppression which might possibly arise from the improper prejudices or administration of any individual having the exercise of Discipline over us.”

—Richard Allen, from *Segregated Sabbaths*

Membership in the African Methodist Episcopal Church grew rapidly. It became a political, cultural, and social center for African Americans, providing schools and other services that whites denied them.

Eventually the African American church developed a political voice and organized the first black national convention, held in Philadelphia in September 1830. Richard Allen convened the meeting, in which participants agreed to explore the possible settlement of free African Americans and fugitive slaves in Canada. Allen’s convention was the first of what would become an annual convention of free blacks in the North. The African American church gave its members a deep inner faith, a strong sense of community, and the spiritual support to oppose slavery.

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

How did the Second Great Awakening revolutionize the American religious tradition?

Transcendentalism and Reforms

Many reform-minded individuals sought an alternative to traditional religion but found revivalism too public a forum for religious expression. Among them were the transcendentalists and the Unitarians. Both groups sought ways to improve American society while remaining apart from mainstream Christian churches.



Ralph Waldo Emerson

TRANSCENDENTALISM By the mid-1800s some Americans were taking new pride in their emerging culture and in their land. New England writer **Ralph Waldo Emerson** was one reformer who nurtured this pride. He led a group practicing **transcendentalism**. Transcendentalism was a philosophical and literary movement that emphasized living a simple life. In their lives and in their writings, the transcendentalists celebrated the truth found in nature and in personal emotion and imagination.

Although it was not specifically a religious movement, transcendentalism grew in part in reaction to American religion. Threads of transcendentalist thinking can be found in early New England puritan thought. In addition, some transcendentalists were students of Buddhism and other Asian traditions. Emerson and the other transcendentalists channeled these influences into a desire to reform society. Each person had it in himself or herself to make the world a better place.

“What is man born for but to be a Reformer, a Remaker of what man has made; a renouncer of lies; a restorer of truth and good. . . . The power, which is at once spring and regulator in all efforts of reform, is the conviction that there is infinite worthiness in man which will appear at the call of worth, and that all particular reforms are the removing of some impediment.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, from “Man the Reformer”

Historical Source

Hudson River School

This painting, entitled *A View of the Mountain Pass Called the Notch of the White Mountains*, by Thomas Cole is an example of the Hudson River School. Like the transcendentalists, the painters celebrated the beauty of the American landscape and the truth found in personal emotion.

Analyze Historical Sources

What relationship between humans and nature does Cole’s painting portray?



The Transcendentalists

To the transcendentalists, the path to knowledge lay in personal experience and intuition. They believed individuals should forge their own paths. They also believed that self-reliance would bring enlightenment. Henry David Thoreau urged people to reject the greed and materialism of American culture. Margaret Fuller remained part of society but urged readers to reject the traditional beliefs that prevented women from achieving equality and fulfillment.



HENRY DAVID THOREAU

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 thumb-nail. . . . Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. . . .

If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. . . .

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. . . .

—from *Walden* (1854)



MARGARET FULLER

"Is it not enough," cries the irritated trader, "that you have done all you could to break up the national union, and thus destroy the prosperity of our country, but now you must be trying to break up family union, to take my wife away from the cradle and the kitchen-hearth to vote at polls and preach from a pulpit? Of course, if she does such things, she cannot attend to those of her own sphere. She is happy enough as she is. She has more leisure than I have—every means of improvement, every indulgence."

"Have you asked her whether she was satisfied with these indulgences?"

"Consent—you? It is not consent from you that is in question—it is assent from your wife."

"Am not I the head of my house?"

"You are not the head of your wife. God has given her a mind of her own."

—from *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845)

Analyze American Literature

What does each selection reveal about habits and attitudes in 1850s America?

Exalting the dignity and worth of the individual, the transcendentalists spawned a literary movement that stressed American ideals of optimism, freedom, and self-reliance. Emerson's friend **Henry David Thoreau** put the idea of self-reliance into practice. Abandoning community life, he built himself a cabin on the shore of Walden Pond near Concord, Massachusetts. He lived in the cabin alone for two years. In *Walden*, published in 1854, Thoreau advised readers to follow their inner voices.

Because Thoreau believed in the importance of individual conscience, he urged people not to obey laws they considered unjust. Instead of protesting with violence, they should peacefully refuse to obey those laws. This form of protest is called **civil disobedience**. In an essay titled "Civil Disobedience," Thoreau wrote that people should act according to their own beliefs, even if doing so meant breaking the law. For example, Thoreau did not want to support the U.S. government, which allowed slavery and fought the war with Mexico. He refused to pay taxes and went to jail. Thoreau's essay proved to be hugely influential, even beyond his own lifetime. In the 20th century, it inspired such reformers as Mohandas Gandhi, who led a nonviolent struggle to free his native India from British rule, and American civil rights leaders, who fought for equality for African Americans.

In their writings, Thoreau and other transcendentalists also tried to change opinions about many prevailing political issues. Emerson, Thoreau, and other transcendental activists wrote passionate arguments against slavery. Emerson wrote to President Martin Van Buren in 1838 to protest the forced removal of Native Americans from the eastern United States. Margaret Fuller, a friend of Emerson, spoke out on the subject of equal rights for women. An editor of the transcendentalist magazine *The Dial*, Fuller also supported prison reform, poverty relief, and the abolition of slavery.

Despite their passionate words, the transcendentalists did not bring about any major changes in American society. Transcendental ideals did, however, help shape the art and literature of the period. In their writings, Emerson and Thoreau celebrated living in harmony with nature. A similar philosophy helped shape the paintings of a group of artists known as the Hudson River School. Like the transcendentalists, painters of this school celebrated the beauty of the untouched American landscape and the truth found in personal emotion. They believed that the majesty of the land could inspire spiritual transformations in the people who observed it.

UNITARIANISM Transcendental ideals did not appeal to all potential reformers. Among those opposed to their ideas were the Unitarians. Rather than responding to emotions, Unitarians emphasized reason and appeals to conscience as the paths to perfection. In New England, Unitarians quickly attracted a wealthy and educated following.

In place of the dramatic conversions the revivals produced, Unitarians believed conversion was a gradual process. William Ellery Channing, a prominent Unitarian leader, asserted that the purpose of Christianity was "the perfection of human nature, the elevation of men into nobler beings." Unitarians agreed with revivalists that individual and social reform was both possible and important.

Reading Check
Synthesize How
did religion influence
transcendentalist
beliefs?

ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

Hawthorne at Brook Farm

New England writer Nathaniel Hawthorne spent about six months at Brook Farm in 1841. He hoped to find solitude in which to write, but instead spent close to ten hours a day working in the barns and fields. He was forced to conclude that life there was “unnatural and unsuitable” for him.

Ten years after he left Brook Farm, Hawthorne, now considered an established author, wrote *The Blithedale Romance* (1852). A fictional account of communal life based on Brook Farm, the book suggests that striving for perfection may yield unexpected results.

Americans Form Ideal Communities

Some of the optimism of religious and social reform also inspired the establishment of **utopian communities**, experimental groups who tried to create “utopias,” or perfect places, in which to live. During the first half of the 1800s, more than 90 utopian communities were established in the United States. These communities varied in their philosophies and living arrangements. However, they shared some common goals, such as self-sufficiency. One of the best-known utopian communities was New Harmony, Indiana. Another was Brook Farm, located near Boston.

In 1841 transcendentalists George and Sophia Ripley established Brook Farm to “prepare a society of liberal, intelligent and cultivated persons, whose relations with each other would permit a

more wholesome and simple life than can be led amidst the pressure of our competitive institutions.” A fire destroyed the main building at Brook Farm in 1847, and the community immediately disbanded. Transcendentalist Bronson Alcott likewise formed a utopian community that he called the Fruitlands. Intended to be a cooperative vegetarian community where people would live in harmony with nature, it lasted only seven months.

Like Brook Farm and the Fruitlands, most utopian communities were short-lived. The failure of these experiments did not lessen the zeal of their founders. Many became active in humanitarian reform movements, such as abolition and women’s rights.

Religious belief spurred other ideal communities. The Shakers, who followed the teachings of Ann Lee, set up their first communities in New York, New England, and on the frontier. Shakers shared their goods with each other, believed that men and women are equal, and refused to fight for any reason. When a person became a Shaker, he or she vowed not to marry or have children. Shakers depended on converts and adopting children to keep their communities going. In the 1840s the Shakers had 6,000 members—their highest number. In 2009 only about three Shakers remained in the entire United States.

School and Prison Reform

By the mid-19th century, Americans with various philosophies had joined together to address some of the various social ills that troubled the young nation. Some social reformers were particularly horrified by the treatment shown to those unable to care for themselves, including children and the mentally ill. They focused their attention on schools and other institutions.

Reading Check

Summarize What values shaped life in Shaker communities?

IMPROVING EDUCATION Before the mid-1800s no uniform educational policy existed in the United States. School conditions varied across regions. Massachusetts and Vermont were the only states to pass a compulsory school attendance law before the Civil War. Younger and older pupils were in the same classrooms. Few children continued in school beyond the age of ten.

In the 1830s Americans increasingly began to demand tax-supported public schools. In 1834 Pennsylvania established one of the first such systems. Although enrollment in the public schools was optional, a storm of opposition erupted from well-to-do taxpayers. They saw no reason to support schools that their children, who were mostly enrolled in private schools, would not attend. Opposition also came from some German immigrants who feared that their children would forget the German language and culture. Education supporters countered these arguments, however, noting that schooling would give children better economic opportunities and help make them responsible citizens. Within three years, about 42 percent of the elementary-school-age children in Pennsylvania were attending public schools.

One remarkable leader in the public school reform movement was Horace Mann of Massachusetts. After a childhood spent partly at work and partly in poor schools, Mann declared, “If we do not prepare children to become good citizens, . . . if we do not enrich their minds with knowledge, then our republic must go down to destruction, as others have gone before it.” In 1837 he became the first secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. In 12 years of service, Mann established teacher-training programs and instituted curriculum reforms. He also doubled the money the state spent on schools.

Other states soon followed Massachusetts’s and Pennsylvania’s good example. By the 1850s every state had provided some form of publicly funded elementary schools. In states in the far West and in southern states, however, it took years before public schools were firmly established.

REFORMING PRISONS AND ASYLUMS In 1831 French writer Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States to study its penitentiary system. Observing prisoners who were physically punished or isolated for extended periods, de Tocqueville concluded that “while society in the United States gives the example of the most extended liberty, the prisons of the same country offer the spectacle of the most complete despotism [rigid control].” Prisons were overcrowded. Prisoners were poorly fed. Many prisons did not even offer basic bathing facilities. Reformers quickly took up the cause.

In cities such as Boston and Philadelphia, concerned individuals formed prison reform societies. Among the leaders of these societies were many members of the clergy, who were concerned about the spiritual well-being of prisoners. They wanted prisons to focus less on punishing prisoners and more on rehabilitating them. Because of these reformers’ efforts, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania—and, later, other states—built new, more humane prisons.

Similarly, some reformers worked to improve the state of care for the mentally ill in the United States. Mentally ill people and nonviolent criminals were often confined in prisons alongside violent criminals. Some were regularly mistreated, beaten, or starved as punishment. Compassionate individuals campaigned to improve the lives of those who were being mistreated.

One of the most influential of these reformers was **Dorothea Dix**, who was compelled by personal experience to join the movement for social reform. On visiting a Massachusetts house of correction, Dix was horrified to discover that jails often housed mentally ill people.

"I proceed, gentlemen, briefly to call your attention to the present state of insane persons confined within this Commonwealth. . . . Chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience! . . . Injustice is also done to the convicts: it is certainly very wrong that they should be doomed day after day and night after night to listen to the ravings of madmen and madwomen."

—Dorothea Dix, *Report to the Massachusetts Legislature*

In 1843 she sent a report of her findings to the Massachusetts legislature, who in turn passed a law aimed at improving conditions for the mentally ill. Despite protests that such programs would be too costly—and occasional claims from opponents that her reports were false or exaggerated—Dix persuaded nine southern states to set up public hospitals for the mentally ill. By 1880 more than 100 mental institutions operated in the United States.

Prison and asylum reformers like Dix emphasized the idea of rehabilitation, treatment that might reform the sick or imprisoned person to a useful position in society. There was, as revivalists suggested, hope for everyone.

Reading Check

Analyze
Motives What arguments were made for and against education reform?

Lesson 1 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Use a web diagram to identify key people, events, institutions, and ideas that relate to the Second Great Awakening in the United States.



Why did revivalism catch hold in the early 19th century?

2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

3. **Synthesize** Consider the philosophical and religious ideas expressed during this period. What were the key values and beliefs that guided reformers' actions?

Think About:

- concepts of individualism and individual salvation
- attitudes toward social responsibility
- the viewpoints of Finney, Channing, and Emerson

4. **Summarize** What changes did the Second Great Awakening bring about in American society?
5. **Analyze Issues** How do you think the 19th-century reform movements in schools, prisons, and asylums might have influenced reform movements today?
6. **Make Inferences** Why might the idea of utopian communities appeal to the transcendentalists?

Slavery and Abolition

The Big Idea

Slavery became an explosive issue, as more Americans joined reformers working to end it.

Why It Matters Now

Questions of economic and social inequality continue to challenge the people of the United States.

Key Terms and People

abolition

William Lloyd Garrison

emancipation

David Walker

Frederick Douglass

Nat Turner

antebellum

gag rule

One American's Story

Jameãs Forten's great-grandfather had been brought from Africa to the American colonies in chains, but James was born free. In 1781, 15-year-old James went to sea to fight for American independence. Captured by the British and offered passage to England, the patriotic youth refused, saying, "I am here a prisoner for the liberties of my country. I never, NEVER shall prove a traitor to her interests."

By the 1830s Forten had become a wealthy sailmaker in Philadelphia, with a fortune rumored to exceed \$100,000. Though some people argued that free blacks should return to Africa, Forten disagreed and responded with sarcasm.

"Here I have dwelt until I am nearly sixty years of age, and have brought up and educated a family. . . . Yet some ingenious gentlemen have recently discovered that I am still an African; that a continent three thousand miles, and more, from the place where I was born, is my native country. And I am advised to go home . . . Perhaps if I should only be set on the shore of that distant land, I should recognize all I might see there, and run at once to the old hut where my forefathers lived a hundred years ago."



James Forten, a wealthy leader of Philadelphia's free black community, took an active role in a variety of political causes.

—James Forten, from *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community 1720–1840*

Forten's unwavering belief that he was an American led him to oppose the effort to resettle free blacks in Africa and also pushed him fervently to oppose slavery.

Abolitionists Speak Out

By the 1820s more than 100 antislavery societies advocated the resettlement of blacks in Africa. They believed that African Americans were an inferior race that could not coexist with white society. Yet most free blacks considered America home, and only about 1,400 blacks emigrated to Africa between 1820 and 1830. As one black pastor from New York angrily proclaimed, “We are natives of this country. We only ask that we be treated as well as foreigners.”

Whites were increasingly joining African Americans in publicly criticizing slavery. Preachers like Charles G. Finney, who termed slavery “a great national sin,” fueled white support for **abolition**, the call to outlaw slavery.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON The most radical white abolitionist was an editor named **William Lloyd Garrison**. Active in religious reform movements in Massachusetts, Garrison started his own paper, *The Liberator*, in 1831. The paper’s major objective was to deliver an uncompromising message: immediate **emancipation**—the freeing of slaves—with no payment to slaveholders.

“[I]s there not cause for severity? I will be harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject [immediate emancipation], I do not wish to think or speak or write, with moderation . . . I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD.”

—William Lloyd Garrison, from *The Liberator*

As white abolitionists began to respond to Garrison’s ideas, he founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832, followed by the nationwide American Anti-Slavery Society a year later. For a time, Garrison was very successful in attracting followers with his message. By 1840 his American Anti-Slavery Society had between 150,000 and 200,000 members. He enjoyed core black support; three out of four early subscribers were African Americans. Whites who opposed abolition, however, hated him. Some whites supported abolition but opposed Garrison when he attacked churches and the government for failing to condemn slavery.

DAVID WALKER Garrison alienated whites even more when he associated with fiery abolitionist **David Walker**. A free black resident of Boston, Walker was part of a wave of militant abolitionists who became active in the 1820s. In his *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, published in 1829, he advised blacks to fight for freedom rather than to wait for slave owners to end slavery. He wrote, “The man who would not fight . . . ought to be kept with all of his children or family, in slavery, or in chains, to be butchered by his cruel enemies.” He warned white Americans that a racial war was inevitable, unless society immediately acknowledged the rights of black Americans.

Walker’s words were both radical and controversial. Northerners—even many abolitionists—condemned his writings as dangerous. Southerners put a price on his head and blocked circulation of his *Appeal*. In cities like New Orleans and Charleston, people could be arrested for distributing his essay.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS Born into slavery in 1817, **Frederick Douglass** had been taught to read and write by the wife of one of his owners. Her husband ordered her to stop teaching Douglass, however, because reading “would forever unfit him to be a slave.” When Douglass realized that knowledge could be his “pathway from slavery to freedom,” he studied even harder.

By 1838 Douglass held a skilled job as a ship caulker in Baltimore. He earned the top wages in the yard but was not allowed to keep any of his earnings. After a disagreement with his owner, Douglass decided to escape. Borrowing the identity of a free black sailor and carrying official papers, he reached New York and tasted freedom for the first time.

Douglass became an eager reader of *The Liberator*, which, he said, “sent a thrill of joy through my soul, such as I had never felt before.” He began to attend meetings of antislavery societies and, at one conference in Massachusetts, Douglass was inspired to tell the tale of his early life and escape. Among those who heard his story was William Lloyd Garrison, who happened to be at the same conference. When Garrison heard Douglass speak of his experiences, he was so impressed he eagerly sponsored the former slave as a lecturer for the American Anti-Slavery Society. A superb speaker, Douglass thrilled huge audiences. “I appear before the immense assembly this evening as a thief and a robber,” he would say. “I stole this head, these limbs, this body from my master and ran off with them.”

Some skeptics doubted that a speaker as eloquent as Douglass could ever have been a slave. To counter such claims, he wrote an autobiography in 1845. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* helped inform a new circle of readers about the harsh realities of slavery. It also made Douglass a leading figure in the abolition movement. The success of the book in the United States enabled Douglass to undertake a two-year speaking tour of Great Britain, where he won more support for the antislavery cause.

Document-Based Investigation Historical Source

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Escaped slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass wrote an autobiography in hopes that his experiences would help convince Americans of the evils of slavery. He described in great detail the hardships he had faced as a child and young man.

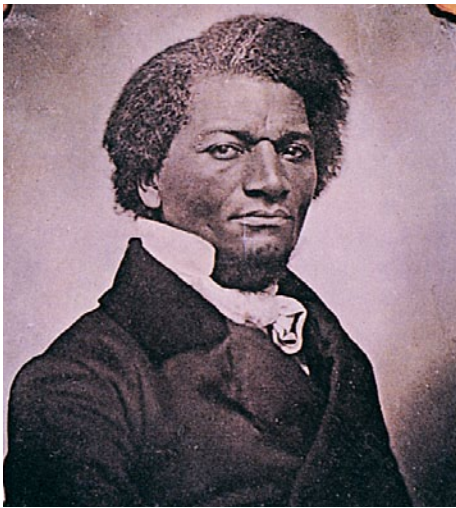
“I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it. By far the larger part of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. . . . A want of

information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood. The white children could tell their ages. I could not tell why I ought to be deprived of the same privilege.”

—Frederick Douglass, from *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*

Analyze Historical Sources

1. Why do you think slave owners may have kept slaves from knowing their ages or other personal details?
2. For what purpose might Douglass have compared slaves to horses in this passage?



Frederick Douglass, 1851

Reading Check

Contrast How did the various antislavery activists differ in approach?

When Garrison began attacking the government for failing to abolish slavery, though, Douglass found himself disagreeing with his former sponsor. Hoping that abolition could be achieved through peaceful political actions without resorting to violence, Douglass broke with Garrison in 1847 and began his own anti-slavery newspaper. He named it *The North Star*, after the star that guided runaway slaves to freedom. At its most popular, *The North Star* attracted several thousand readers from the United States, Europe, and the West Indies.

Despite their efforts, abolitionists such as Garrison, Walker, and Douglass did not ultimately achieve their goals. They were not able to end slavery in the United States, and few slaves were freed as a result of their actions. While they did manage to spread their antislavery message, their words seemed to be best received by those people who already agreed with them. Almost all of these supporters lived in the North; most southern voters still supported slavery. Even among northerners who opposed the spread of slavery, most were hesitant to call for its total abolition, feeling that such a step would be extreme. In the end it would take a war and presidential action to end slavery.

Free African Americans

The freedom that abolitionists wanted for all African Americans was already a reality for some. Throughout the United States, free African Americans lived and prospered. Some were former slaves who had been freed by their owners or who had saved money to buy their freedom. Others had won freedom as a reward for service in the American Revolution or the War of 1812. As free black citizens married and had children, their population increased. By the 1830s free black communities existed in every region of the nation.

FREE BLACKS IN THE SOUTH Although free black southerners did not endure the same hardships as their enslaved counterparts, their lives were not always easy. State laws denied them such basic rights as voting, testifying in court, and attending school. Other laws required that free African Americans find gainful employment. Those without jobs could be sentenced to forced labor. At the same time, however, states limited the jobs that were available to free African Americans. In 1850 most of the 434,000 free blacks in the South worked as day laborers, but some held jobs as artisans.

Despite the legal restrictions they faced, some southern blacks became very successful. A few became wealthy and used their money to buy slaves of their own. For example, William Ellison of South Carolina, who was born a slave, was taught to make and repair cotton gins. By 1860 he had become wealthy enough to buy his freedom, a plantation, and at least 60 slaves. All in all, there were more than 3,000 black slave owners in the United States before the Civil War.

FREE BLACKS IN THE NORTH African Americans living in the South viewed the North as a land of freedom and opportunity. To an extent, they were correct. Northern blacks did have more rights than those in the South. Since the Revolutionary War, for example, most African Americans in the North had enjoyed the right to vote. Additionally, free blacks in the North had more freedom to move from place to place than did those in the South.

In some northern cities, black children had the opportunity to attend school, a right denied to most in the South. The African Free School, the first school created to educate African American children in the United States, opened in New York in 1787. By 1834 the city had two African Free Schools. In Boston, the Abiel Smith School opened in 1835 as the first government-funded school for black children in that city.

Some northern African Americans took advantage of their freedom and education to become social and political leaders. Richard Allen, the founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, was a respected preacher in Philadelphia. Businessman James Forten built a substantial fortune and became a vocal crusader for African American rights. In Boston, William Wells Brown became the country's first African American playwright and novelist.

Northern blacks still faced discrimination, though. In Philadelphia, for example, black residents were not admitted to concert halls or on public transportation. In some places, only the lowest-paying jobs were open to them. Over time, northern blacks lost some of their political rights as well. New Jersey banned free blacks from voting in 1807, as did Pennsylvania in 1838. Connecticut and New York also placed voting restrictions on black citizens. The only states in which voting rights were never limited for African Americans were Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts.

To help endure this discrimination, black citizens banded together to establish social organizations. For example, they formed mutual aid societies, which helped members learn important life skills and provided assistance for those in need. Many free blacks joined the many antislavery societies active in the North by the late 1820s. Churches also served valuable roles in black communities. More than just places of worship, they became important gathering places where people discussed issues central to their lives.

FREE BLACKS IN THE WEST As Americans moved westward in the early 1800s, many African Americans joined the migration. Among them were free blacks hoping to escape discrimination. In 1835, for example, a group of free black settlers from North Carolina, fearing that remaining in the South would lead to a loss of freedom, purchased land in Indiana and established a community known as the Roberts Settlement. In addition, many black settlers headed to California. By 1860 more than 4,000 African Americans lived in California, which was home to the West's largest black population. San Francisco, in particular, was home to a thriving black community.

While life in the West promised hope to some southern free blacks, they found discrimination awaited them nonetheless. In the early 1800s states in the region started to pass laws limiting African Americans' rights. Voting rights, social equality, and economic freedom gradually disappeared through the 1830s and 1840s.

Reading Check

Summarize What role did social institutions play in northern African American communities?

Life Under Slavery

After 1830 Americans hotly debated the issue of slavery, but many African Americans still lived in bondage. In fact, the population of slaves in America had nearly doubled in the years between 1810 and 1830, growing from 1.2 million to roughly 2 million.

The institution of slavery had changed substantially since the 1700s. In those days, most slaves had recently arrived from the Caribbean or Africa and spoke one of several non-English languages. Most of these slaves worked on small farms alongside people with whom they could not easily communicate. By 1830 the majority had been born in America and spoke enough English to be able to communicate with other slaves. The rise of the plantation in the mid-1700s brought further change to the lives of the enslaved.

RURAL SLAVERY On large plantations, men, women, and even children toiled from dawn to dusk in the fields. The whip of the overseer or slave driver compelled them to work faster. Solomon Northup, who was born free and later enslaved, recalled the never-ending labor.

“The hands are required to be in the cotton field as soon as it is light in the morning, and, with the exception of ten or fifteen minutes, which is given them at noon to swallow their allowance of cold bacon, they are not permitted to be a moment idle until it is too dark to see, and when the moon is full, they often times labor till the middle of the night. They do not dare to stop even at dinner time, nor return to the quarters, however late it be, until the order to halt is given by the driver.”

—Solomon Northup, from *Twelve Years a Slave*



Slave quarters, from a photograph taken around 1865

Because their lives were so difficult, slaves sought comfort in the limited cultural activities available to them. Many of these activities were based on religion. On many plantations, slaves were allowed to worship together, often under the leadership of a slave preacher. For many slaves, religion provided the hope of salvation, if not in this life then in the next.

In addition, religious gatherings offered slaves an opportunity to socialize while singing, dancing, and storytelling. Spirituals—emotional songs that expressed religious beliefs—played significant roles in slave culture. Slaves sometimes sang spirituals to express their joys or sorrows or to keep a steady rhythm while working in the fields. Songs and stories also helped slaves preserve

and pass on their cultural heritage. Because most states banned slaves from learning to read or write, they had to pass on their memories and traditions by word of mouth.

Family provided another comfort to many slaves. Marriage among slaves was common throughout the South, although slave marriage had no legal standing. In fact, slave owners often encouraged their slaves to marry and have children. Slaves with families, they believed, would be less likely to rebel or run away.

By 1850 most slaves lived on plantations or large farms that employed ten or more slaves, but many lived on small farms, laboring beside their owners. Others lived and worked in the cities.

URBAN SLAVERY By the 1830s the promise of cotton wealth had lured many southern whites into farming. This trend created a shortage of white laborers for such industries as mining and lumber. As a result, demand for slaves as workers in mills and on ships rose. Slaves who had developed specialized skills on plantations were now in demand in southern cities. For example, slaves filled skilled occupations such as blacksmithing or carpentry, resulting in a new class of skilled black laborers. Most slaves lived rurally—2.8 million in 1850, compared with the 400,000 slaves living in cities. However, enslaved blacks could hire themselves out as artisans in southern cities, often more easily than free blacks in the North, where racial discrimination prevailed.

Many enslaved women and children worked the same jobs as men in southern industry. Slave owners “hired out” their slaves to factory owners. In return, the slave owners collected the pay of their slaves without having to supervise their activities. Thus, urban slaves spent more time beyond the watchful eye of their slave owners. Frederick Douglass remarked on differences between rural and urban slavery, noting that “a city slave is almost a freeman, compared with a slave on the plantation. He is much better fed and clothed, and enjoys privileges altogether unknown to the slave on the plantation.” Douglass also noted that “a vestige of decency” in the cities limited the acts of “atrocious cruelty” to slaves that were common on plantations.

Still, slaves never lost sight of their goal of freedom. For some, it was time to take more drastic and organized action.

SLAVE REVOLTS The most extreme form of resistance to slavery was armed rebellion. Slave revolts were uncommon but not unknown in the South. In 1811 more than 300 slaves in Louisiana had marched on New Orleans with spikes and axes before a well-trained militia with firearms stopped them. Gabriel Prosser had hatched a plot to take over Richmond in 1800. Denmark Vesey had led a conspiracy to control Charleston in 1822. The authorities thwarted both of these conspiracies before they grew into larger rebellions.

The bloodiest slave uprising in U.S. history took place in 1831. **Nat Turner** was born into slavery in 1800 in Southampton County, Virginia. A gifted preacher, Turner believed that he had been chosen to lead his people out of bondage. In August 1831 Turner judged an eclipse of the sun to be a divine signal for action. With nearly 80 followers, Turner’s band attacked four plantations and killed almost 60 white inhabitants before being captured by state

and federal troops. Though Turner himself hid out for several weeks, eventually he was captured, tried, and hanged. In the retaliation that followed, whites killed as many as 200 blacks—many of them innocent of any connection with the uprising.

A revolt among slaves bound for the Caribbean in 1839 led to a legal victory for American abolitionists. African captives aboard the Spanish ship *Amistad* rebelled against the crew and demanded that they be returned to Africa. Instead, the ship's navigator sailed north along the U.S. coast to Long Island, where the U.S. Navy captured the ship. The captives were arrested and tried for mutiny and the murder of the ship's captain and cook. Both a federal court and the U.S. Supreme Court found the *Amistad* rebels innocent, ruling that the captives had the right to defend themselves against unlawful capture and enslavement. The rebels returned to Africa in 1842.

Abolitionists in the United States cheered the *Amistad* mutiny ruling as a blow for equality for all Americans. Southern slave owners, however, noted that their slaves were lawful property and therefore not subject to the Court's decision. In fact, events like the *Amistad* case and Turner's bloody rebellion strengthened the resolve of southern whites to defend slavery and to control their slaves.

Reading Check

Make Inferences

How did the Supreme Court's decision in the *Amistad* case encourage antislavery activists?

Slave Owners Defend Slavery

In some states, in the aftermath of the Turner rebellion, people argued that the only way to prevent further slave revolts was through emancipation. Others, however, chose to tighten restrictions on all African Americans.

VIRGINIA DEBATE Virginia governor John Floyd wrote of his wish for a “law . . . gradually abolishing slavery in this State.” By January 1832 the state legislature was hotly debating that very prospect. “Nothing else could have prompted [the discussions],” reported the *Richmond Enquirer*, “but the bloody massacre [Turner's Rebellion] in the month of August.”

The debate over the future of slavery in Virginia resulted in a motion for abolition in the state legislature. The motion lost by a 73 to 58 vote, primarily because the state legislature was balanced toward eastern slaveholders rather than nonslaveholders in the western part of the state. That loss closed the debate on slavery in the **antebellum** (pre-Civil War) South.

BACKLASH FROM REVOLTS In addition to forcing the Virginia debate, whites' fear of future slave revolts had another important effect. Most slave owners believed that education and privilege inspired revolt. Thus, many slave owners pushed their state legislatures to further tighten controls on African Americans. These controls became known as slave codes.

In 1833, for example, Alabama forbade both free and enslaved blacks from preaching the gospel unless “respectable” slaveholders were present. Georgia followed suit. In 1835 North Carolina became the last southern state to deny the vote to free blacks. In some states, free blacks lost other freedoms, including the rights to own guns, purchase alcohol, assemble in public, and

testify in court. In some southern cities, African Americans could no longer own property, learn to read and write, or work independently as carpenters or blacksmiths.



To fight negative images of slavery, some southerners tried to depict slaves as happy, well-cared-for members of the plantation family.

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

How did slave revolts harden southern white attitudes about basic liberties for blacks?

PROSLAVERY DEFENSES Some proslavery advocates used the Bible to defend slavery, citing passages that counseled servants to obey their masters. Slavery, southern slave owners argued, actually benefited blacks by making them part of a prosperous and Christian civilization. Even southern white Christian ministers gradually shifted toward accepting slavery during this period. Some had attacked slavery as immoral in the early 1800s, but by the 1830s most white ministers in the South agreed that slavery and Christianity could coexist.

To further justify the continuation of slavery, slave owners invented the myth of the happy slave, a cherished addition to the plantation family. To this image they contrasted that of the northern wage slave, a wage-earning immigrant or free black who worked for pennies in dark and airless factories. George Fitzhugh, a Virginia slave owner, argued that whereas northern mill owners fired their workers when they became too old or sick to work, southerners cared for their slaves for a lifetime.

Abolitionists, however, continued to campaign for emancipation. One maneuver was to swamp Congress with petitions to end slavery in the District of Columbia. Southern representatives countered in 1836 by securing the adoption of a **gag rule**, a rule limiting or preventing debate on an issue. This rule effectively deprived citizens submitting petitions of their right to have them heard. The gag rule eventually was repealed in 1844.

Nevertheless, as abolitionists' efforts intensified during the 1850s, some turned to violence. The more clear-sighted began to sound the alarm: this turmoil over slavery would lead to a divided nation.

Lesson 2 Assessment

- 1. Organize Information** In a two-column chart, list the major antislavery and proslavery actions that occurred between 1820 and 1850. Note the results of each action that you list.

Antislavery Actions	Proslavery Actions

Which activity do you think was most effective?
Explain

- 2. Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- 3. Synthesize** Which do you think was a more effective strategy for achieving the abolitionists' goal of eliminating slavery: violence or nonviolence? Why?

Think About:

- Garrison's and Walker's remarks
- Frederick Douglass's views
- southerners' reactions to Nat Turner's rebellion

- 4. Form Generalizations** What led abolitionists like Garrison, Walker, and Douglass to oppose slavery?
- 5. Summarize** What arguments did southern proslavery whites employ to defend slavery?
- 6. Compare** Note similarities and differences between the situations of African Americans, both free and enslaved, in the North, South, and West.

Women and Reform

The Big Idea

Women reformers expanded their efforts from movements such as abolition and temperance to include women's rights.

Why It Matters Now

The efforts of 19th-century women reformers inspired both woman suffragists in the early 1900s and present-day feminists.

Key Terms and People

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Lucretia Mott

cult of domesticity

Sarah Grimké

Angelina Grimké

temperance movement

Seneca Falls Convention

Sojourner Truth

One American's Story

Elizabeth Cady Stanton timed her marriage in 1840 so that she could accompany her husband to London for the World's Anti-Slavery Convention, where her husband was a delegate. At the antislavery convention, Stanton and the other women delegates received an unpleasant surprise.

"Though women were members of the National Anti-Slavery society, accustomed to speak and vote in all its conventions, and to take an equally active part with men in the whole antislavery struggle, and were there as delegates from associations of men and women, as well as those distinctively of their own sex, yet all alike were rejected because they were women."

—Elizabeth Cady Stanton, quoted in
Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Elizabeth
Cady Stanton



At the convention, Stanton found a friend in the Quaker abolitionist **Lucretia Mott**. Stanton and Mott vowed "to hold a convention as soon as we returned home, and form a society to advocate the rights of women." They kept their pledge and headed the first women's rights convention, assembled at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848.

Women's Roles in the Mid-1800s

In the early 19th century, women in the United States had limited options. Most Americans—including most women—believed that women were inferior to men. Prevailing customs in both the North and the South held that women were ill-suited to dealing with public matters, such as business, government, and politics. Tradition demanded instead that women restrict their activities after marriage to the home and family. Housework and childcare were considered the only proper activities for married women. Later, that tradition became known as the **cult of domesticity**.



Books and magazines praised the virtues of women staying at home, publishing articles about fashion, childcare, and family obligations.

Reading Check Identify Problems

What were the main problems faced by women across the country in the mid-1800s?

During the Industrial Revolution, many young women took jobs in factories. By 1850 roughly one in five married white women had spent a few years working for wages before they were married. About one in ten single white women worked outside the home, earning about half the pay men received to do the same job. Also, women were not free to spend their own wages. Any money earned by married women legally belonged to their husbands, as did any property the women had owned before. Single women were expected to turn over most of their earnings to their families.

The rising number of working women did not change American attitudes about gender. In fact, the Industrial Revolution intensified the cultural restrictions on women. Believing that industrialization was threatening family life by taking women out of the household, Americans clung tighter to the notion that a woman's place was in the home. A movement arose to urge women to shun factory jobs. Books and magazines praised the virtues of women staying at home, caring for their families and obeying their husbands.

The restrictions on women during this time also extended to political and legal rights. Women could neither vote nor sit on juries in the early 1800s, even if they were taxpayers. Typically, women could not enter into any contracts except marriages. In many instances, married women even lacked guardianship rights over their children.

Women Mobilize for Reform

Despite the limits placed on them by society, women actively participated in all the important reform movements of the 19th century. The optimistic message of the Second Great Awakening inspired many middle-class white women. Women were often shut out of meetings by disapproving men. Frustrated, some responded by expanding their efforts to seek equal rights.

WOMEN ABOLITIONISTS **Sarah and Angelina Grimké**, daughters of a South Carolina slaveholder, spoke eloquently for the abolition of slavery. Growing up on a southern plantation, the Grimké sisters witnessed the horrors of slavery firsthand. In 1836 Angelina Grimké published *An Appeal to Christian Women of the South*, in which she called upon women to “overthrow this horrible system of oppression and cruelty.” Women abolitionists also raised money, distributed literature, and collected signatures for petitions to Congress.

Lucretia Mott (1793–1880)



History has it that Lucretia Mott was so talkative as a child that her mother called her Long Tongue. As an adult, she used her considerable public-speaking skills to campaign against slavery.

Mott became interested in women's rights when she learned that her salary as a teacher would be roughly half of what a man might receive. She was a prominent figure at the Seneca Falls Convention, at which she delivered the opening and closing addresses. Mott and her husband later acted on their abolitionist principles by taking in runaway slaves escaping on the Underground Railroad.

Some men supported women's efforts. William Lloyd Garrison, for example, joined the determined women who had been denied participation in the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840. "After battling so many long years for the liberties of African slaves, I can take no part in a convention that strikes down the most sacred rights of all women." Other men did not. The Massachusetts clergy criticized the Grimké sisters for assuming "the place and tone of man as public reformer."

Opposition only served to make women more determined. The abolitionist cause became a spur to other reform causes, as well as to the women's rights movement.

WORKING FOR TEMPERANCE Many women, for example, became active in the **temperance movement**, the effort to prohibit the drinking of alcohol. Temperance activists believed that excessive drinking brought out the worst in people. Speaking at a temperance meeting in 1852, Mary C. Vaughan attested to the evils of alcohol.

"There is no reform in which woman can act better or more appropriately than temperance. . . . Its effects fall so crushingly upon her . . . she has so often seen its slow, insidious, but not the less surely fatal advances, gaining upon its victim. . . . Oh! the misery, the utter, hopeless misery of the drunkard's wife!"

—Mary C. Vaughan, from *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*

In the early 19th century, alcohol flowed freely in America. Liquor helped wash down the salted meat and fish that composed the dominant diet and, until the development of anesthetics in the 1840s, doctors dosed their patients with whiskey or brandy before operating.

However, many Americans—including members of the new Protestant denominations that arose in the Second Great Awakening—saw drunkenness as a serious problem. Lyman Beecher, a Connecticut minister, had begun lecturing against all use of liquor in 1825. A year later, the American Temperance Society was founded. By 1833 some 6,000 local temperance societies dotted the country. Members decried the evils of alcohol, blaming liquor for sickness, poverty, and the breakup of families. In 1851 reformers persuaded the state legislature of Maine to outlaw the sale of alcohol. Over the next several years, a dozen more state legislatures followed suit. Although they did not achieve a nationwide ban on alcohol, temperance activists brought about a decline in the consumption of alcohol that would continue into the 1860s.

EDUCATION FOR WOMEN Until the 1820s girls had few educational opportunities beyond elementary school. As Sarah Grimké, who ran a school for women with her sister Angelina, complained in *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman* (1838), a woman who knew “chemistry enough to keep the pot boiling, and geography enough to know the location of the different rooms in her house,” was considered learned enough.

“During the early part of my life, my lot was cast among the butterflies of the fashionable world, I am constrained to say . . . that their education is miserably deficient. . . . Our brethren may reject my doctrine . . . but I believe they would be ‘partakers of the benefit’ . . . and would find that woman, as their equal, was unspeakably more valuable than woman as their inferior, both as a moral and an intellectual being.”

—Sarah Grimké, from *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman*

In 1821 Emma Willard opened one of the nation’s first academically rigorous schools for girls in Troy, New York. The Troy Female Seminary became the model for a new type of women’s school. Despite much mockery that “they will be educating cows next,” Willard’s school prospered.

In 1837 Mary Lyon overcame heated resistance to found another important institution of higher learning for women, Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (later Mount Holyoke College) in South Hadley, Massachusetts. In the same year, Ohio’s Oberlin College admitted four women to its degree program, thus becoming the nation’s first fully coeducational college.

African American women faced even greater obstacles to getting an education. In 1831 white Quaker Prudence Crandall opened a school for girls in Canterbury, Connecticut. Two years later, she admitted an African American girl, but the townspeople protested so vigorously against desegregated education that Crandall decided to admit only African American students. This aroused even more opposition, and in 1834 Crandall was forced to close the school and leave town. Only after the Civil War would educational opportunities for African American women finally, though slowly, begin to expand.

WOMEN AND HEALTH REFORM In the mid-19th century, educated women also began to work for health reforms. Elizabeth Blackwell, who in 1849 became the first woman to graduate from medical college, later opened the New York Infirmary for Women and Children. In the 1850s Lyman Beecher’s daughter, Catharine, undertook a national survey of women’s health. To her dismay, Beecher found three sick women for every healthy one. It was no wonder: women rarely bathed or exercised, and the fashion of the day included corsets so restrictive that breathing sometimes was difficult.

Amelia Bloomer, publisher of a temperance newspaper, rebelled. Bloomer often wore a costume of loose-fitting pants tied at the ankles and covered by a short skirt. Readers besieged her with requests for the sewing pattern. Most women who sewed the “bloomers,” however, considered it a daring venture, as women wearing pants outraged many men.

Reading Check

Summarize What gains did women make in education in the 1820s and 1830s?

Did these gains extend to African American women?

The Women's Rights Movement Emerges

The various reform movements of the mid-19th century fed the growth of the women's movement by providing women with increased opportunities to act outside the home.

SENECA FALLS In 1848 Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott decided to hold a women's rights convention. They announced what would become known as the **Seneca Falls Convention** (for the New York town in which it was held). Stanton and Mott composed an agenda and a detailed statement of grievances. Stanton carefully modeled this "Declaration of Sentiments" on the Declaration of Independence. The second paragraph began with a revision of very familiar words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal." Like the Declaration of Independence, this new declaration was intended to proclaim the equality of all people. The women at Seneca Falls, however, wanted to make it clear that "all people" included women. At the convention, participants also proposed and adopted several resolutions that spoke to the circumstances with which women reformers had struggled.

Nearly 300 women and men gathered at the Wesleyan Methodist Church for the convention. The participants approved all parts of the declaration unanimously—including resolutions to encourage women to participate in all public issues on an equal basis with men—except one. The one exception, which still passed by a narrow majority, called for women "to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise," the right to vote.

The right to vote remained a controversial aim. Its inclusion in the declaration was entirely due to the insistence of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who was a passionate supporter of this right. Besides considering the vote her natural right as a citizen, Stanton saw the right to vote as a key to the power to contribute to other causes she cared about, like abolition. Some attendees at the



In 1888 delegates to the First International Council of Women met to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Seneca Falls. Elizabeth Cady Stanton is seated third from the right.

Declaration of Sentiments

Delegates at the Seneca Falls Convention spent hours debating and refining the points made in the Declaration of Sentiments. After much discussion, the declaration was adopted. A total of 68 women and 32 men signed the completed document.

Analyze Historical Sources

Why do you think the author of this passage felt voting rights were so important?

“The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.”

—Seneca Falls Convention, from *Declaration of Sentiments*

conference agreed. Among them was abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who delivered an eloquent talk in support of women’s suffrage.

The resolution about the vote came as a surprise to Lucretia Mott, who had not expected to address the issue at the conference. She thought that such a call was too bold a step for the time and would overshadow the other issues to be discussed at Seneca Falls. Indeed, when she first heard the resolution, she warned Stanton that they would be ridiculed across the country. Mott knew that some thought suffrage was an extreme solution to a nonexistent problem. As Lucy Stone’s sister wrote in 1846, “I can’t vote, but what care I for that, I would not if I could.”

The resolution at Seneca Falls was only the beginning of what would become a long fight for voting rights. Stanton continued to campaign tirelessly on the issue, and soon other reformers joined her. Still, it would be more than 70 years before women nationwide were allowed to vote.

SOJOURNER TRUTH Women reformers made significant contributions to improving social conditions in the mid-19th century. Yet conditions for slaves worsened. Isabella Baumfree, a slave for the first 30 years of her life, took the name **Sojourner Truth** when she decided to sojourn (travel) throughout the country preaching and, later, arguing for abolition. At a women’s rights convention in 1851, the tall, muscular black woman was hissed at in disapproval. Because Truth supported abolition, some participants feared her speaking would make their own cause less popular. But Truth won applause with her speech that urged men to grant women their rights.

Sojourner Truth (1797–1883)

Sojourner Truth, born Isabella Van Wagener (or Baumfree), became legally free on July 4, 1827, when slavery was abolished in New York. A deeply spiritual woman, Truth became a traveling preacher dedicated to pacifism, abolitionism, and equality. She earned a reputation for tenacity, successfully suing for the return of her youngest son who had been illegally sold into slavery.

Truth was not taught to read or write but dictated her memoirs, published in 1850 as *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Northern Slave*.

After the Emancipation Proclamation, Truth's final cause was to lobby (unsuccessfully) for land distribution for former slaves.



“Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain’t I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain’t I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother’s grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain’t I a woman?”

—Sojourner Truth, from *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Northern Slave*

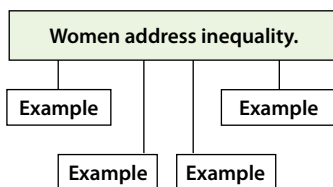
As Truth showed, hard work was a central fact of life for most women. In the mid-19th century, this continued to be the case as women entered the emerging industrial workplace. Once there, they continued the calls for women’s rights and other social reforms.

Reading Check

Contrast How did the Seneca Falls Convention differ from the World’s Anti-Slavery Convention held in 1840?

Lesson 3 Assessment

- 1. Organize Information** Create a graphic organizer and fill it in with historical events, ideas, or people that relate to the main idea.



- 2. Key Terms and People** For each term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- 3. Analyze Issues** The Seneca Falls “Declaration of Sentiments” asserted that “Woman is man’s equal.” In what ways would that change the status women held at that time? Cite facts to support your answer.

Think About:

- women’s social, economic, and legal status in the mid-1800s
- married women’s domestic roles
- single women’s career opportunities and wages

- 4. Evaluate** In what ways did the reform movements affect the lives of women—both white and African American? Use details from the section to support your answer.
- 5. Draw Conclusions** Why do you think that many of the people who fought for abolition also fought for women’s rights?

The Changing Workplace

The Big Idea

A growing industrial work force faced problems arising from manufacturing under the factory system.

Why It Matters Now

The National Trades' Union was the forerunner of America's labor unions today.

Key Terms and People

cottage industry

master

journeyman

apprentice

strike

National Trades' Union

One American's Story

In 1841 a brief narrative appeared in the *Lowell Offering*, the first journal written by and for female mill workers. A young girl who toiled in the mill—identified only by the initials F.G.A.—wrote about the decision of “Susan Miller” to save her family’s farm by working in the Lowell, Massachusetts, textile mills.

At first, Susan found the factory work dispiriting, but she made friends and was proud of the wages she sent home.

“Every morning the bells pealed forth the same clangor, and every night brought the same feeling of fatigue. But Susan felt . . . that she could bear it for a while. There are few who look upon factory labor as a pursuit for life. It is but a temporary vocation; and most of the girls resolve to quit the Mill when some favorite design is accomplished. Money is their object—not for itself, but for what it can perform.”

—F. G. A., *Lowell Offering*, 1841



A young worker from the mills in Waltham, or Lowell, 1850

Just a few decades earlier, work outside the home might not have been an option for girls like Susan. At the same time that women’s roles began to expand, changes occurred in the way goods were manufactured.

Industry Changes Work

Before “Susan” and other girls began to leave the farms for New England’s textile mills, women had spun and sewn most of their families’ clothing from raw fibers. In fact, in the early 19th century almost all clothing was manufactured at home. Moving production from the home to the factory split families, created new communities, and transformed traditional relationships between employers and employees. The textile industry pioneered the new manufacturing techniques that would affect rules and behavior required of most American workers.

RURAL MANUFACTURING Until the 1820s only the first step in the manufacture of clothing—the spinning of cotton into thread—was mechanized widely in America. People then finished the work in a **cottage industry** system, in which manufacturers provided the materials for goods to be produced at home. Although women did most of this work, men and children sometimes helped as well. The participants in this cottage industry brought the finished articles to the manufacturer, who paid them by the piece and gave them new materials for the next batch of work.

When entrepreneurs like Patrick Jackson, Nathan Appleton, and Francis Cabot Lowell opened their weaving factories in Waltham and, later, Lowell, Massachusetts, their power looms replaced the cottage industries. Mechanizing the entire process and housing the tools in the same place slashed the production time, as well as the cost, of textile manufacture. By the 1830s the company that Lowell and his partners had formed owned eight factories in Massachusetts with over 6,000 employees, at an investment of over \$6 million.

EARLY FACTORIES Textiles led the way, but other areas of manufacture also shifted from homes to factories. In the early 1800s skilled artisans had typically produced items that a family could not make for itself—furniture and



Families used spinning wheels to spin yarn, which they wove into cloth on home looms. They sold their cloth to local merchants.

tools, for example. As in cottage industries, the artisans usually worked in shops attached to their own homes. The most experienced artisans had titles: a **master** might be assisted by a **journeyman**, a skilled worker employed by a master, while also teaching an **apprentice**, a young worker learning a craft. Master artisans and their assistants traditionally hand-crafted their products until the 1820s, when manufacturers began using production processes that depended on the use of interchangeable parts.

The rapid spread of factory production revolutionized industry, but mainly in the North. The South and West remained mostly agricultural. In fact, some southern plantation owners criticized the industrial wage system for exploiting workers, forcing them to work long hours for little pay. Mill owners responded by pointing out that their workers at least earned wages, unlike slaves, who were considered property and earned nothing. In the West, on the other hand, most farm families tended their own fields and harvested their own crops. In every region, children worked alongside adults. While ten-year-old slave children picked cotton, one northern mill employed 100 children ages four to ten.




But even in the South and West, people benefited from the new industrial system. The cost of making household items and clothing dropped dramatically. This decrease was due in part to new machines allowing unskilled workers to perform tasks that once had required trained artisans. Unskilled artisans shifted from arduous farm work to boring and repetitive factory work and the tight restrictions imposed by factory managers. Nowhere were these restrictions more rigid than in the factory town of Lowell, Massachusetts.

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

How did factory production change American manufacturing?

Workers by Region

Northern Mills	Southern Cotton Plantations	Western Farms
		
Workers: mostly young women between the ages of 15 and 30	Workers: enslaved men, women, and children	Workers: farm families, both men and women
Length of Day: 12 hours	Length of Day: pre-dawn until after dark	Length of Day: dawn until after dark
Type of Labor: operating machines	Type of Labor: picking and bundling cotton	Type of Labor: planting, tending crops, caring for livestock
Payment: \$1 to \$6 a week	Payment: substandard food and shelter	Payment: dependent on crop prices

Farm Worker to Factory Worker



Lowell mill workers often lived in company-owned boarding houses.

Under the strict control of female supervisors, a work force—consisting almost entirely of unmarried farm girls from all over New England—clustered in Lowell and the other mill towns that soon dotted New England. At their boarding houses, the “mill girls” lived under strict curfews. The girls’ behavior and church attendance was closely monitored. But despite this scrutiny, most mill girls found time to enjoy the company of their coworkers. By 1828 women made up nine-tenths of the work force in the New England mills, and four out of five of the women were not yet 30 years old.

THE LOWELL MILL Mill owners hired females because they could pay them lower wages than men who did similar jobs. To the girls in the mills, though, textile work offered better pay than their only alternatives: teaching, sewing, and domestic work. Harriet Hanson, a young factory worker at Lowell, later recalled the few options available to a woman in search of income.

“If she worked out as servant, or ‘help,’ her wages were from 50 cents to \$1.00 a week; or, if she went from house to house by the day to spin and weave, or do tailoress work, she could get but 75 cents a week and her meals. As teacher, her services were not in demand, and the arts, the professions, and even the trades and industries, were nearly all closed to her.”

—Harriet Hanson Robinson, from “Early Factory Labor in New England”

Like Harriet Hanson, who eventually left factory work to pursue other work, most female workers stayed at Lowell for only a few years. Hanson, who later became involved in the abolition and women’s rights movements, applauded the mill girls’ influence in carrying “new fashions, new books, new ideas” back to their homes.

CONDITIONS AT LOWELL The workday at Lowell began at 5 a.m., mill girl Mary Paul wrote her father, with a bell ringing. According to her letter, by 7:00 the girls had to be at the mill, where they worked until 12:30 before breaking for lunch. After a 30-minute break, the workers returned to their stations, where they remained until 7:30.

These hours probably didn’t seem long to farm girls, but heat, darkness, and poor ventilation in the factories contributed to discomfort and illness. Overseers would nail windows shut to seal in the humidity they thought prevented the threads from breaking, so that in the summer the weaving rooms felt like ovens. In the winter, pungent smoke from whale-oil lamps blended with the cotton dust to make breathing difficult.

Northern Cities and Industry, 1830–1850

Explore ONLINE!



Mill conditions continued to deteriorate in the 1830s. Managers forced workers to increase their pace. Between 1836 and 1850, Lowell owners tripled the number of spindles and looms but hired only 50 percent more workers to operate them. Factory rules tightened, too. After gulping a noon meal, workers now had to rush back to the weaving rooms to avoid fines for lateness. Mill workers began to organize. In 1834 the Lowell Mills announced a 15 percent wage cut. About 800 mill girls conducted a **strike**, a work stoppage in order to force an employer to respond to demands.

STRIKES AT LOWELL Under the heading “UNION IS POWER,” the Lowell Mills strikers of 1834 issued a proclamation declaring that they would not return to work “unless our wages are continued to us as they have been.” For its part, the company threatened to recruit local women to fill the strikers’ jobs. Criticized by the Lowell press and clergy, most of the strikers agreed to return to work at reduced wages. The mill owners fired the strike leaders.

Reading Check

Analyze Causes

What factors contributed to the worsening conditions workers endured at Lowell beginning in the 1830s?

In 1836 mill workers in Lowell struck again, this time over an increase in their board charges that was equivalent to a 12.5 percent pay cut. Twice as many women participated as had two years earlier. Again, the company prevailed and fired the strike leaders. Most of the strikers returned to their spindles and looms.

In the 1840s the mill girls took their concerns to the political arena. In 1845 Sarah Bagley founded the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association to petition the Massachusetts state legislature for a ten-hour workday. The proposed legislation failed, but the Lowell association was able to help defeat a local legislator who opposed the bill.

Workers Seek Better Conditions

Conditions for all workers deteriorated during the 1830s. Workers were seen as tools rather than as individuals with needs and wants. A New England textile mill manager expressed this opinion clearly, declaring, “I regard my work people just as I regard my machinery.” Faced with such an attitude, skilled artisans, who had originally formed unions to preserve their own interests, began to ally themselves with unskilled laborers.

In their earliest attempts to organize, journeymen formed trade unions specific to each trade. For example, journeymen shoemakers organized one of the nation’s earliest strikes in 1806. During the 1830s the trade unions in different towns began to join together to establish unions for such trades as carpentry, shoemaking, weaving, printing, and comb making. By means of these unions, the workers sought to standardize wages and conditions throughout each industry.

In a few cities the trade unions united to form federations. In 1834, for example, journeymen’s organizations from six industries formed the largest of these unions, the **National Trades’ Union**, which lasted until 1837. The trade-union movement faced fierce opposition from bankers and owners, who threatened the unions by forming associations of their own.

Although only 1 or 2 percent of U.S. workers were organized, the 1830s and 1840s saw dozens of strikes—many for higher wages, but some for a shorter workday. Employers won most of these strikes because they could easily replace unskilled workers with strikebreakers who would toil long hours for low wages. In addition, court decisions declaring strikes illegal hampered workers’ efforts to organize.

In 1842, however, the Massachusetts Supreme Court supported workers’ right to strike in the case of *Commonwealth v. Hunt*. In this case, Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw declared that Boston’s journeymen bootmakers could act “in such a manner as best to subserve their own interests” as long as their behavior was not illegal. Unions of workers, he wrote, were not illegal conspiracies against business owners. For the first time, a prominent American court had upheld the rights of labor. The number of workers in such organizations was still small, though. By 1860 barely 5,000 workers were members of what would now be called labor unions. Still, far larger numbers of workers, 20,000 or more, participated in strikes for improved working conditions and wages.



This trade union banner was made for the glass cutters organization around 1840.

Reading Check
Draw Conclusions
Why was the
national trade union
movement important?

The most common demand among strikers was a shortened workday. During the 1830s many workers were expected to toil for 12 hours or more each day, often from sunup to sundown. Seeking an end to this grueling practice, workers around the country went on strike, often banding together to strengthen the weight of their demands. When Philadelphia coal workers struck for a ten-hour workday and a wage increase in 1835, for example, carpenters, printers, and other artisans joined them in what became the first general strike in the United States. Eventually, the strikes paid off. In 1837 the ten-hour workday was instituted for some federal employees. Ten years later, New Hampshire legally prohibited shifts of more than ten hours. Other states followed its example. Despite this success, however, business owners continued to fight back against strikers' demands. Many looked to a new source of labor less likely to protest their working conditions—immigrants.

Immigrants Join the Work Force

When business owners sought workers to replace striking union members, they often turned to immigrants. European immigration rose dramatically in the United States between 1830 and 1860. From 1845 to 1854 alone, nearly 3 million immigrants were added to the U.S. population of just over 20 million. The majority of the immigrants were from northwestern Europe, with the largest numbers coming from Ireland, Germany, and Great Britain.

Most immigrants in the early 1800s settled in the North and West. In general, immigrants avoided the South because slavery limited their economic opportunity. What's more, southerners were generally hostile to European, particularly Catholic, immigrants.

IRISH IMMIGRATION Irish immigrants settled mostly in the large cities of the Northeast. They made up by far the largest number of immigrants during this period. Nearly a million Irish immigrants settled in America between 1815 and 1844. The number of Irish immigrants soared even higher the next year, though, when a major environmental crisis struck Europe. For more than a century, the poor people of Ireland had relied on potatoes as the staple of their diet. In fact, many Irish households ate little else. In 1845, however, a disastrous blight devastated the Irish potato crop. Deprived of their primary food source and receiving little support from the British government, millions of Ireland's poor faced starvation. The Great Potato Famine killed as many as 1 million of the Irish people.

Desperate to save themselves and their families, Irish people left their homeland in droves. Between 1845 and 1854 over 1 million Irish immigrants sought new homes in America. They settled in cities on the East Coast and looked for work in factories. Because most had been farmers in Ireland, however, they had no industrial training and had to accept grueling jobs for low wages.

Irish immigrants faced bitter prejudice, both because they were Roman Catholic and because they were poor. Frightened by allegations of a Catholic conspiracy to take over the country, Protestant mobs in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston rampaged through Irish neighborhoods. Native-born artisans, whose wages had fallen because of competition from unskilled

This 1848 engraving shows immigrants arriving in New York City from Europe.



laborers and factory production, considered Irish immigrants the most unfair competition of all. Their willingness to work for low wages under terrible conditions made the desperate Irish newcomers easy prey for employers who sought to break strikes with cheap labor.

The antagonism directed at Irish immigrants represented a significant change in American attitudes toward immigration. For generations, immigrants had generally been welcomed as adding to the new country's population and prosperity. After all, most Americans were descended from immigrants, often only a generation or two in the past. But the influx of so many immigrants at one time, most of them poor and Catholic, changed some people's views. They came to see immigrants as a threat to what they perceived as the American way of life.

Smarting from the hostility around them, Irish immigrants soon began to view unions as an opportunity to improve their condition. In fact, Irish dock workers organized New York City's most famous strike of the 1840s. When Irish women tailors organized the Ladies Industrial Association in New York City in 1845, their leader, Elizabeth Gray, denounced "tyrant employers." Though employers retained great power through the 1840s, unions did manage to win a few victories.

GERMAN IMMIGRATION Unlike the Irish who settled in mostly urban areas, German immigrants clustered in the Upper Mississippi valley and in the Ohio valley. Many settled in German communities or German neighborhoods within cities, where they continued to speak German at home and maintained their familiar lifestyles. Most German immigrants had been farmers in Europe, but some became professionals, artisans, and shopkeepers in the United States.

A number of factors, including both push factors and pull factors, drove German immigration. A push factor is a force that drives people to leave their homes, often to escape unpleasant or dangerous circumstances. A pull factor is an attraction that draws people to a new land, usually in search of new opportunity. Many of the Germans who moved to the United States were fleeing economic depression and overcrowding, which made jobs scarce. Others left to

escape religious persecution, heavy taxes, and forced military service. Still others fled after a failed revolution in Germany in 1848. Some, however, were not fleeing anything. They came to the United States in search of free land and the chance to build successful businesses—to achieve the American Dream.

The German immigrants who reached the United States in the 1840s did not face nearly as much persecution as had Irish arrivals. This was in large part because most German immigrants were Protestant, not Catholic. In addition, German immigrants were, on the whole, not as poor as Irish immigrants. Most were from the middle class and could afford to travel inland in search of land and work. As such, they were not seen as competition for limited factory jobs.

BRITISH IMMIGRATION The experience of British immigrants in the early 1800s was very different from the experiences of other groups. Like the Irish and Germans, most British arrivals in the country were seeking new economic opportunities. Because the Industrial Revolution had begun in Great Britain, though, many of these immigrants were already familiar with industrial equipment and were eagerly sought out as factory workers. English immigrants could therefore often choose their jobs and could command high wages. In fact, British immigrants usually earned much higher wages in the United States than they could have earned back home.

British immigrants also usually had an easier time adjusting to life in the United States than did their Irish or German counterparts. They found that they shared similar tastes in food, literature, and music with the Americans. They also spoke the same language, which made it easier to assimilate, or blend, into American society. In addition, most British immigrants were Protestants and thus did not face the same challenges as the Irish. As a result, the British did not find it necessary to establish separate communities but instead mingled with their American neighbors.

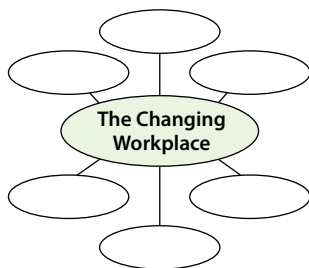
Reading Check

Draw Conclusions

Why was assimilation easier for British immigrants than for others?

Lesson 4 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** In a web diagram titled The Changing Workplace, list things that contributed to the changes in labor in the first half of the 19th century.



Which of these do you think was most significant in causing change?

2. **Key Terms and People** For each term in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

3. **Analyze Issues** Do you think the positive effects of mechanizing the manufacturing process outweighed the negative effects? Why or why not?

Think About:

- job opportunities for artisans, women, and unskilled male laborers
- changes in employer-employee relationships
- factory working conditions
- the cost of goods

4. **Summarize** How did increasing industrialization affect the lives of Americans in the early 1800s?
5. **Evaluate** If you were working in a factory during the mid-1800s, would you be a striker or a strikebreaker? Support your choice with details from the text.
6. **Analyze Causes** What push and pull factors led to an increase in immigration from Ireland and Germany?

Module 8 Assessment

Key Terms and People

For each term or name below, write a sentence explaining its significance in the reform era.

1. Second Great Awakening
2. revival
3. Ralph Waldo Emerson
4. abolition
5. William Lloyd Garrison
6. Frederick Douglass
7. Elizabeth Cady Stanton
8. temperance movement
9. strike
10. National Trades' Union

Main Ideas

Use your notes and the information in the module to answer the following questions.

Religion Sparks Reform

1. What new religious ideas set the stage for the reform movements of the mid-19th century?
2. How did the African American church support its followers?
3. How did Dorothea Dix contribute to reform?
4. What changes did the transcendentalists want to bring to American politics, and how did they try to achieve their goals?
5. What efforts were made to improve education in the 1830s?
6. How did education in the North differ from education in the South and West?

Slavery and Abolition

7. How did William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and David Walker each propose ending slavery? What means did they use to try to convince politicians and the public that slavery should be abolished?

8. How were the rights and opportunities of African Americans, both free and enslaved, limited?
9. What was the outcome of Nat Turner's rebellion?
10. How did slavery affect both rural and urban society in the South?
11. What cultural institutions did African American slaves develop or embrace to help them cope with their enslavement?
12. What steps did white southerners take to suppress slave revolts?

Women and Reform

13. What was the cult of domesticity?
14. What was the purpose of the Seneca Falls Convention?
15. What debate arose over the right to vote at Seneca Falls?
16. How did the Declaration of Sentiments reflect the ideas of the Declaration of Independence?
17. What was the goal of the temperance movement, and how successful was it in reaching that goal?

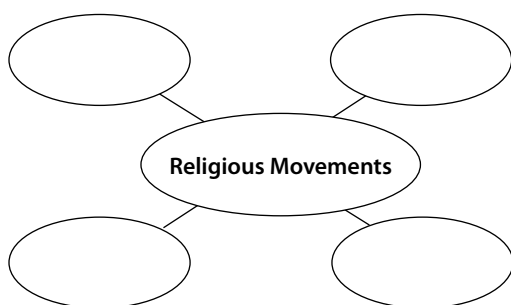
The Changing Workplace

18. How did working conditions in the Lowell textile mills present new opportunities and new hazards?
19. How did environmental factors in Europe lead to increased ethnic diversity in the United States?
20. Describe the increase in U.S. immigration in the mid-1800s. How did Americans react to the new arrivals?
21. Why did workers in various industries stage strikes in the early 1800s?
22. What role did immigrants play in the rise of the labor movement?

Module 8 Assessment, continued

Critical Thinking

1. **Categorize** In a web diagram, list the various reform movements that grew out of early-19th-century religious movements.



2. **Draw Conclusions** How did ideas about equality and freedom influence political and social movements during this period?
3. **Evaluate** Which of the reform movements that you studied in this module do you think was most successful in achieving its goals? Which was least successful? Explain your answers.
4. **Form Generalizations** Few slaves were freed through the actions of abolitionists like Garrison, Walker, and Douglass. Would you consider their efforts a success or a failure? Why?
5. **Evaluate** Based on the results, do you think the decision to strike at Lowell in the 1830s was a good one? Explain.
6. **Contrast** How were the labor forces in the North and South different in the early 1800s? How did reformers attempt to change the lives of workers in each region?
7. **Make Inferences** How did the mobility of Americans and the arrival of immigrants affect industry in the early 1800s?

Engage with History

Imagine that you are an anthropologist trying to determine how people's ethnic, racial, religious, socioeconomic, and professional backgrounds affected their opportunities in the early 19th century. Choose one of the individuals mentioned in this module, and develop a series of interview questions to discover their goals and aspirations, whether they felt able to achieve them, and if not, what they could do to improve their opportunities. Then answer the questions as you think your chosen individual would have.

Focus On Writing

Reread the excerpt from the Declaration of Sentiments. Conduct research to read more of the document and to learn about the conference, including its attendees and the writing of the declaration. Then write a report outlining the ideas contained within the declaration, and explain whether or not you believe the resolutions proposed in the document have been achieved.

Multimedia Activity

Select one of the following movements from this module for further study: revivalism, transcendentalism, prison reform, mental health reform, education reform, abolitionism, the women's rights movement, the temperance movement, or the labor movement. Prepare a multimedia presentation about your chosen movement. In your presentation, include information about the people who participated in it, the strategies they used to bring about change in society, any opposition they faced, and the results of their efforts, both successes and failures. You may wish to conduct additional research to learn more about your chosen movement.