


Lesson Resources - Glossary Terms from "A New Nation"

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Glossary Terms from: 

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abolitionist

one who works actively to end slavery

Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819

treaty between Spain and the United States in which Spain agreed to sell Florida to the United States and other boundary issues were agreed upon

agrarian

related to farms and farming

Alamo

an old Spanish mission building in Texas where Mexican forces under Santa Anna besieged Texans in 1836

Alexander Hamilton

first secretary of the treasury, leading Federalist, and proponent of a strong federal government

American Colonization Society

an organization in the early 1800s that proposed to end slavery by helping African Americans move to Africa

American System

a program for economic growth promoted by Henry Clay in the early 1800s that called for high tariffs on imports

Andrew Jackson

He was the seventh president of the United States and served from 1829 to 1837. He was a military hero during the War of 1812 and the Seminole Wars. He supported full democratic rights for all white men, Native American removal, and a limited federal government.

antebellum

“before war”; the period before the Civil War (1815–1861)

anthem

a patriotic song used to express praise or loyalty to a nation

Bank of the United States

the first federal bank, chartered in 1791, issued currency for the country and stabilized the economy

Battle of San Jacinto

an 1836 battle between Texans and Mexicans during the Texas war for independence from Mexico

Bleeding Kansas

also known as the Border War, a series of confrontations that included election fraud, raids, and revenge murders in Kansas and neighboring Missouri over the question of slavery in Kansas

border ruffians

proslavery Missourians who crossed the border to vote in Kansas

Brer Rabbit

a trickster who uses cleverness to overcome stronger and more fearsome foes; the main character in a series of folk stories that originated among enslaved people in the southern United States

cabinet

the advisors and department leaders selected by the president

California gold rush

the rush to find gold that brought thousands of new residents to California and produced millions of dollars in new wealth for the region and the United States

cash crop

a crop grown mostly for sale rather than for the needs of the farmer's family

Compromise of 1850

a political agreement passed by Congress in 1850 for the purpose of avoiding conflict between the North and South by compromising over various issues, especially the issue of the expansion of slavery into new territories and states

cotton gin

the machine invented by Eli Whitney in 1793–1794 that cleaned the seeds from cotton

David Walker

African American abolitionist who urged people to actively resist slavery

Democratic-Republicans

members of a political party favoring a strict interpretation of the Constitution, restricting the federal government's power in favor of states' rights

domestic slave trade

a system of buying and selling enslaved persons within the borders of the United States

Dred Scott

enslaved African American who took his fight for freedom to the Supreme Court in 1857

Eli Whitney

inventor of the cotton gin, which revolutionized the textile industry and helped the South's economy. He also introduced the use of interchangeable parts in factory production of goods.

empresario

a person who arranged for the settlement of land in Texas during the 1800s

excise tax

taxes made on the purchase of specific goods

expansionism

a policy of increasing a country's size by expanding its territory

Federalist Party

the political party led by Alexander Hamilton that favored a strong federal government

Five Civilized Tribes

the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles, who had established treaty agreements with the United States in the late 1700s or early 1800s, lived in peace with their neighbors, and adopted more of the ways of whites than most Native Americans

folktale

a story passed from person to person, usually through oral telling, that reflects cultural beliefs and values

Frederick Douglass

former slave who became a famous writer, speaker, and a leader of the abolitionist movement

Free-Soil Party

the bipartisan antislavery party founded in the United States in 1848 to keep slavery out of the western territories

French Revolution

a rebellion in France beginning in 1789 that overthrew the French monarchy

gang-labor system

a system of enslaved labor in which workers assigned to groups, or gangs, labor in fields all day under close supervision; commonly used on plantations, particularly cotton plantations, in the southeastern United States

General Antonio López de Santa Anna

dictatorial president of Mexico during the 1830s and 1840s; a career soldier and politician

gradualists

people who wanted to abolish slavery by operating within the parameters of the existing political and legal system

Harriet Tubman

former slave who helped hundreds of other to freedom

Henry Clay

a leading member of the House of Representatives for Kentucky under Presidents Madison and Monroe who spoke for the interests of the West, and who later served as a U.S. senator and Secretary of State

Henry David Thoreau

an American author and leader of the transcendentalist movement, also known for his acts of civil disobedience

immediatists

abolitionists who fought to end slavery immediately

immigrant

a person who moves from one country to settle in another country

impressment

the practice of forcing people into military service

Indian Removal Act

law that gave President Andrew Jackson the power to force Native Americans to move to Indian Territory; this later became the state of Oklahoma

industrialization

the development of machine-powered production and manufacturing

inflation

a steady rise in prices that occurs as money loses value and things cost more

interchangeable parts

identical components that can be used in place of one another in manufacturing

James Madison

renowned U.S. statesman and fourth president of the United States; often called the "father of the Constitution" for the major role he played at the Constitutional Convention of 1789, which framed the federal Constitution

James Monroe

the fifth president of the United States, best known for the Monroe Doctrine

James Polk

He was the eleventh President of the United States, serving from 1845–1849. He led the expansion of the United States to the Pacific Coast through the acquisition of the Oregon Territory and the Mexican Cession.

John Brown

abolitionist who led a raid on the federal armory at Harpers Ferry in order to initiate an armed slave uprising

John Quincy Adams

He was the sixth president of the United States who earlier served as a U.S. diplomat, senator, and Secretary of State. He is the son of John Adams, the second president.

Kansas-Nebraska Act

a law passed in 1854 creating the Kansas and Nebraska Territories but leaving the question of slavery open to local residents

King Cotton

refers to the domination of cotton as a cash crop for plantation owners in the South

Know-Nothing Party

a political party of the 1850s that was anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant

Liberty Party

abolitionist political party of the 1840s

Lincoln-Douglas debates

a series of seven political debates between the challenger, Abraham Lincoln, and the incumbent, Stephen A. Douglas, in an election for the U.S. Senate seat from Illinois

Lowell System

a system of production implemented by Francis Cabot Lowell that brought all steps of the manufacturing process under one roof; first used in Lowell's textile mills in Massachusetts in the early nineteenth century

Manifest Destiny

belief that it was God's plan for America to expand from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean

manufacturing

the large-scale production of goods by hand or by machine

manumission

the act of releasing a slave from slavery or servitude

Market Revolution

a shift in the economy of the United States in the 1820s–1830s in which people began manufacturing more food and goods for trade and profit

Mexican Cession

the region in the southwest United States, including modern-day New Mexico, that Mexico surrendered in the Mexican-American War

middle class

a social class between the upper class and the lower class, mainly including small land, factory and business owners, professionals, government officials, and skilled workers

Missouri Compromise

law passed in 1820 dividing the Louisiana Territory into areas prohibiting slavery and areas allowing slavery

Monroe Doctrine

policy declared by President James Monroe warning European nations not to interfere in the Western Hemisphere

Nat Turner's rebellion

large slave rebellion in 1831 Virginia

nativism

a policy of favoring native inhabitants over immigrants

neutrality

the policy or status of a nation that does not participate in a war between other nations

Panic of 1819

an economic crisis in which American banks failed, and many people lost their savings and homes

Panic of 1837

a major financial crisis in the United States that lasted until the mid-1840s

paternalism

the false idea that white slaveholders acted in the best interests of enslaved persons by feeding, housing, and disciplining them as well as teaching them about Christianity; used by slaveholders to justify slavery

plantation economy

an economic system in which most resources, including labor, are tied up in large-scale agricultural production, particularly of crops for trade

popular sovereignty

political theory that government is subject to the will of the people; before the Civil War, the idea that people living in a territory had the right to decide by voting if slavery would be allowed there

protective tariff

a tax on imported goods that is meant to protect U.S. businesses from foreign competition

pull factor

a condition that attracts people to move to a new area

push factor

a condition that drives people from their homeland

Reign of Terror

time period during the French Revolution from September 1793 to July 1794 when people in France were arrested for not supporting the revolution and many were executed

Republican Party

a new political party created in 1854 that was dedicated to stopping the spread of slavery to any place in the nation where it did not already exist

Robert Fulton

an American engineer and inventor who used a steam engine in a riverboat named the Clermont to sail up the Hudson River from New York to Albany in 1807

sabotage

the secret destruction of property or interference with production

Sam Houston

a soldier, lawyer, and politician who was instrumental in Texan independence and its subsequent annexation by the United States

Samuel Morse

an American inventor who developed the single-wire electrical telegraph and a system of communicating with short and long electrical signals known as Morse code in the 1830s

Samuel Slater

an English-American inventor and businessperson known for bringing knowledge of English textile machinery to the United States and launching the textile industry there

Second Bank of the United States

a federal bank chartered in 1816 to bring stability to the economy by controlling the national currency

Second Great Awakening

a widespread religious movement in the United States in the early 1800s

Second Middle Passage

the forced relocation and sale of more than one million enslaved African Americans within the borders of the United States in the early to mid-1800s

Seneca Falls Convention

first national convention on women's rights, organized in 1848 by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton

slave auction

a public event at which many enslaved persons are sold, usually to the buyers who offer the highest bid, or payment

slave codes

laws that controlled the lives of enslaved Africans and African Americans and denied them basic rights

slave patrol

a group of generally white men organized to monitor the behavior of enslaved people and enforce slave codes

specialize

to do one job or make one part of a product

Specie Circular

Andrew Jackson's declaration that all western land be sold using gold or silver

speculator

someone who invests money in a risky venture, such as a land purchase or a new business, to make a profit

spiritual

a religious folk song, particularly with roots among the enslaved African American people of the southeastern United States

spoils system

using political power to grant other positions to friends and supporters

Stono rebellion

slave rebellion in South Carolina in 1739

tariff

taxes on imports or exports

Tariff of Abominations

a revised federal tariff (or tax on imports) that lowered the tax on cotton products but raised it on many of the products made in the mid-Atlantic states

Tecumseh

a Shawnee chief who united Native American nations in the years leading up to the War of 1812 to resist the westward expansion of the United States

telegraph

a device invented by Samuel Morse in 1837 that uses coded bursts of electricity to send messages over long distances

temperance movement

a social movement that sought to improve family life by discouraging drinking alcohol

Trail of Tears

the forced journey of the Cherokees to land set aside for them by the United States in what is now Oklahoma

transcendentalism

a nineteenth-century movement that held that every individual can reach ultimate truths through spiritual intuition, which transcends reason and sensory experience; led by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau

Treaty of Ghent

a peace treaty signed by Britain and the United States in 1814 to end the War of 1812

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

the treaty, signed in 1848, ended the U.S. War with Mexico and granted the United States control of all of Texas, New Mexico, and California

Underground Railroad

system of secret routes used by escaping slaves that led from the South to the North or Canada

urbanization

the process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more and more people begin living and working in central areas

utopian community

a place where people try to create an ideal new way of living together, often marked by egalitarianism and self-sufficiency

War Hawks

the members of Congress from the South and the West who called for war with Britain prior to the War of 1812

War of 1812

Conflict between the United States and Britain that lasted from 1812 to 1815

Whig Party

a U.S. political party active between 1832–1858 that backed government support for the economy

Whiskey Rebellion

armed uprising in 1794 by farmers in western Pennsylvania who attempted to prevent the collection of the excise tax on whiskey

William Lloyd Garrison

Important abolitionist who founded The Liberator

Wilmot Proviso

unsuccessful proposal to a revenue bill that would ban slavery in territory acquired from the Mexican Cession

Worcester v. Georgia

an 1832 Supreme Court ruling that proclaimed state laws do not apply within Native American territory

working class

a group of people who work for wages, primarily through manual labor, and have a lower, less secure social and economic status than business owners and investors