

Period 5 (1844-1877)

Key Concept 5.1

The United States became more connected with the world, pursued an expansionist foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere, and emerged as the destination for many migrants from other countries.

A) Popular enthusiasm for U.S. expansion, bolstered by economic and security interests, resulted in the acquisition of new territories, substantial migration westward, and new overseas initiatives.

- migration West was driven by a desire for resources
- Manifest Destiny
- The Mexican-American War led to renewed debates over slavery
- Westward expansion was helped by federal legislation (Transcontinental RR, Homestead Act)
- Led to more ties with Asia

B) In the 1840s and 1850s, Americans continued to debate questions about rights and citizenship for various groups of U.S. inhabitants.

- Immigrants (mostly from Ireland/Germany) flooded in, formed ethnic communities
- An anti-Catholic, nativist movement developed (Know-Nothing Party)

Key Concept 5.2

Intensified by expansion and deepening regional divisions, debates over slavery and other economic, cultural, and political issues led the nation into civil war.

A) Ideological and economic differences over slavery produced an array of diverging responses from Americans in the North and South.

- The North's expanding manufacturing led to a reliance on free labor
- Many objected to slavery, not on moral grounds but because it undermined the free labor market (free-soil movement)
- Rise of the abolition movement (Douglass, Tubman, Garrison)
- Defenders of slavery – positive good, protected by the Constitution

B) Debates over slavery came to dominate political discussion in the 1850s, culminating in the bitter election of 1860 and the secession of Southern States

- Debates after the Mexican-American War
- Attempts to resolve (Comp. of 1850, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Dred Scott) failed.
- Second Party System (Democrats/Whigs) failed, the parties became sections.

- Republican Party = North, Democratic party = South
- Election of 1860 – Lincoln, free-soil platform, no Southern electoral votes

Key Concept 5.3

The Union victory in the Civil War and the contested reconstruction of the South settled the issues of slavery and secession, but left unresolved many questions about the power of the federal government and citizenship rights.

A) The North's greater manpower and industrial resources, the leadership of Abraham Lincoln and others, and the decision to emancipate slaves eventually led to the Union military victory over the Confederacy in the devastating Civil War.

- total war
- Emancipation Proclamation reframed the purpose of the war and kept England from recognizing the Confederacy
- Gettysburg Address – connected abolition to America's founding ideals
- Southern infrastructure was destroyed

B) Reconstruction and the Civil War ended slavery, altered relationships between the states and the federal government, and led to debates over new definitions of citizenship, particularly regarding the rights of African Americans, women and other minorities.

- 13th Amendment – abolished slavery
- 14th Amendment – civil rights
- 15th Amendment – voting cannot be denied based on race (still gender though)
- The women's rights movement divided over the 15th Amendment
- Some short term success (political opportunities for freedmen)
- Failed due to Southern resistance and waning Northern support
- Southern planters still dominated (sharecropping)
- The rights granted by the 14th/15th Amendments were stripped away but became the basis for upholding civil rights in the 20th century (1950s/60s)