

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	v
Unit 1: Guide to Critical Thinking	
Purpose of This Unit.....	1
When is an Argument Not a Fight?.....	1
Assertions	2
Evidence	2
Reasoning	4
by Cause-and-Effect	5
by Comparison	7
by Generalization	8
by Proof	11
by Debate	13
Assumptions	15
Values	16
Arguments—Model and Five Main Parts	18
Unit 2: New Republic	
Lesson 1 Identifying Sources	19
Lesson 2 Evaluating Sources	20
Lesson 3 Determining Causes and Effects	22
Lesson 4 Evaluating Cause-and-Effect Reasoning.....	24
Lesson 5 Identifying and Evaluating Comparisons.....	27
Lesson 6 How Did Early Industrialization Change Small New England Villages?	29
Lesson 7 What Were the Characteristics of the Ideal Woman in the Early 1800s?	40
Lesson 8 What Arguments Were Made for and Against Women’s Rights?	48
Lesson 9 Was Andrew Jackson a Representative of the Common People?	71
Unit 3: Slavery	
Lesson 10 Identifying and Evaluating Evidence	77
Lesson 11 Assessing Cause-and-Effect	80
Lesson 12 Analyzing Generalizations	82
Lesson 13 Identifying and Assessing Types of Reasoning	84
Lesson 14 Was Slavery Good or Bad?	86
Lesson 15 How Did Slavery Affect Slaves?	91
Lesson 16 What Was It Like to Be a Slave?	100
Lesson 17 What Do Visual Sources Show about Slavery?	128
Lesson 18 Were Slaves Fed an Adequate Diet?	137
Unit 4: Civil War	
Lesson 19 Assessing the Reliability of Sources	147
Lesson 20 Analyzing Cause-and-Effect	149
Lesson 21 Identifying and Evaluating Types of Reasoning	152
Lesson 22 Identifying and Evaluating Proof and Debating Reasoning	155
Lesson 23 Which Side Caused the Firing on Fort Sumter?	158
Lesson 24 What Do Historians Assume about the Causes of War?	160
Lesson 25 What Were the Causes of the Civil War?	167
Lesson 26 What Led to the Emancipation Proclamation and England’s Neutrality in the Civil War?	177
Lesson 27 What Role Did Racism Play in the Civil War and Nineteenth-Century America?	183
Bibliography: Major Sources Used for Lessons	189

LESSON 9 Was Andrew Jackson a Representative of the Common People?

Andrew Jackson was elected president in 1828. This lesson presents two interpretations on the issue of whether Jackson was a representative of the

common people against the rich. Read the interpretations and answer the questions which follow.

Historian A

(1) When Andrew Jackson was elected President in 1828, he symbolized the change in politics from control by the rich aristocrats to control by the common people. The rich had built a system based on an alliance of government and business. This alliance was pushed for or adopted in such policies as the U.S. Bank and the American System [tariffs and government-supported transportation to help business]. In the 1820s the common people became increasingly discontented with the Neofederalist program, however. Western farmers blamed the Panic of 1819 on the tight money policies of the U.S. Bank. Workingmen were also upset by rising prices, which they associated with the U.S. Bank, and by the loss of control and craftsmanship which they experienced in the spreading factory system.

(2) More of the common people could vote in the 1820s, and this allowed them to elect a president who would represent their interests—Andrew Jackson. The new president began immediately to make changes by replacing government officials with representatives of the common people. He brought in reformers as unofficial advisors, called the kitchen cabinet. These advisors would help bring about the necessary changes in the rich-dominated system.

(3) One of the symbols of privilege and dominance by the rich was the U.S. Bank. Under the direction of Nicholas Biddle, the Bank had extensive control over the monetary system (such as prices and credit) of the country. President Jackson believed that true democracy included equality of economic opportunity as well as political equality. So, Jackson attacked the Bank. An examination of Jackson's veto message of the Bank charter shows not a criticism of the Bank in terms of too much inflation or not enough money expansion. Rather, it shows a criticism that the Bank had too much power and gave extensive privileges to the rich. Jackson characterized the Bank War as a contest between the *rich and powerful* and the *humble members of society*.

(4) Jackson was extremely popular with the common man after he defeated the U.S. Bank. The rich conservatives were depressed by Jackson's reforms. They banded together into the Whig Party in order to defeat their new opponent whom they called *King Andrew the First*. Eventually, the Whigs adopted mass rallies and empty slogans to attract popular support at election time. They avoided talking about the issues which Jackson brought to the nation's attention.

[continued on next page]

Historian A

[continued from previous page]

(5) As a result, the Whigs regained control of the government in 1840. Conservative policies were reimposed on the country. However, the rich conservatives could not undo most of Jackson's reforms. Jackson had established the principles that the lower classes were to have more say in the political decisions of the nation, and that the government would

play a strong role in the economic system. These principles became the liberal tradition which was reinforced by the other liberal presidents: Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt. The rich conservatives criticized the liberal policies as too radical. However, the result of liberal reform was to keep the capitalists from destroying capitalism.

Historian B

(1) Liberal historians, such as Historian A, have characterized the Jacksonian period of American History as a struggle between the liberal viewpoints of the working class, led by the Democratic Party of Andrew Jackson, and the conservative viewpoints of the wealthy class, led by the Whigs. This narrow characterization oversimplifies and distorts a much more complex struggle in the 1820s and 1830s.

(2) First of all, Jackson himself was not a common man, but rather an aristocrat in Tennessee. Likewise, many of the leading Jacksonians were men of great wealth or men eager to become wealthy. They took political positions to gain the support of workers, but used to help aspiring capitalists, not workingmen.

(3) There were, in fact, rich and poor in both Democratic and Whig Parties. The whole idea that there was a struggle of the poor (organized in one party) against the rich (united in the other party) is mistaken. This is shown in an examination of the two parties in New York State. Both parties included big and small businessmen, farmers, workers, and used the same slogans

and appeals.¹

(4) Through studying voting patterns one is led to the conclusion that ethnic and religious differences rather than class difference, are what influenced people to vote for one party over the other. There really were no significant differences in the Democrats and the Whigs in terms of political-economic ideology (beliefs). Americans were simply too individualistic to be organized by classes into political parties. Almost all Americans believed in liberal ideals such as equality of opportunity. Both parties appealed broadly to these ideals and avoided touchy issues.

(5) What the liberal historians have described as a struggle between the parties of the rich and poor was, in reality, a consensus [agreement] of political beliefs by both parties. Americans in the Jacksonian period differed in their viewpoints not because of class differences, but rather because of ethnic and religious differences. Andrew Jackson, far from being the champion of farmers and workers, was an astute politician who used class rhetoric to gain support for his own political ends.

[continued from previous page]

Endnote for Historian B

1. From Lee Benson, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case*, Princeton University Press, 1961, pp. 148-50, pp. 183-85. This information was summarized by Historian B.

In a study of voting patterns in counties in New York State in the 1844 Election two results were noted:

First, within the same county there was no significant relationship between the wealth of towns and how those towns voted in the 1844 Election. That is, some wealthy towns voted overwhelmingly Democrat while other wealthy towns voted overwhelmingly against the Democrats. Likewise, some poor towns voted Democrat while others did not.

For example, in Delaware County two towns (Davenport and Hamden) of about equal economic status (average value of dwelling per family was \$305 for Davenport and \$502 for Hamden) had completely different voting percentages for the Democrats. Davenport gave the Democrats 81.1 percent of its vote, and Hamden gave 31.8 percent. One of the wealthiest towns (Franklin) gave the Democrats only 44.9 percent of its vote. The richest town in the county (Delhi) and one of the poorest towns (Masonville) gave the Democrats about the same percentage of votes (48.5 and 46.8 percent, respectively).

This pattern is the same for all the other counties studies in New York State. Urban areas were not studied since the average value of dwelling per family could not be constructed from the available information.

Second, ethnic group and religious affiliation were very much related to how people voted. We can only estimate group percentages, but the estimates clearly show the basic point that ethnic group and religious group were important. In the 1844 Election, Yankees were fairly evenly divided between Whigs (55 percent) and Democrats (45 percent), Negroes voted about 95 percent for the Whigs. Catholic immigrants (Irish French and French Canadians) voted overwhelmingly Democrat (80 percent to 95 percent) while Protestant immigrants (Irish, Welsh, Scots, and English) voted overwhelmingly Whig (75 percent to 90 percent). It is interesting to note the difference between Catholic and Protestant Irish voting.

These estimates were made by comparing the vote in the counties and towns in the 1844 Election with the ethnic and religious make-up of those counties and towns. The estimates lead to the conclusion that the native Americans were rather evenly divided between the two parties while the immigrant groups leaned strongly for one party or the other.

[continued on next page]

[continued from previous page]



Historian A

1. What is the main point of Historian A's interpretation?
2. Evaluate the reasoning used in the first paragraph, second sentence.
3. Evaluate the reasoning used in the last two sentences of paragraph four and the first sentence of paragraph five.
4. Evaluate one piece of evidence used to support this interpretation.
5. What is the author's view of the political system of the United States in the early 1800s?
6. How strong is Historian A's interpretation?

[continued on next page]

