TOPIC 7

Society and Culture Before the Civil War (1820–1860)

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Go back two centuries

to explore American **SOCIETY AND CULTURE BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR**. See how kids your age and younger worked in factories or picked cotton—10 to 14 hours a day. See how African Americans fought for their freedom and courageous women fought for their rights.

Explore The Essential Question

Why is culture important?

Popular music, art, novels—all are important parts of our culture today. How did musicians, artists, and writers inspire Americans before the Civil War?

ASSESSMENT

Vocabulary and Key Ideas

1. **Describe** How did **suffrage** change during the early years of the Age of Jackson?
2. **Check Understanding** Why did many people disapprove of the **spoils system**?
3. **Define** What was the **frontier**?
4. **Recall** What happens during a **depression**?
5. **Describe** How is a **caucus** different from a **nominating convention**?
6. **Use** What was the significance of the **National Road**?
7. **Check Understanding** What happened when Mexico signed the **Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo**?

Critical Thinking and Writing

8. **Identify Point of View** Write a paragraph identifying the points of view the Whig Party and the Democratic Party held on major issues. What can you conclude about each party's point of view on the government's role in the economy?
9. **Explain an Argument** Explain how the issues of states' rights and nullification affected the nation during the Age of Jackson.
10. **Summarize** What is Manifest Destiny and how did this idea affect Americans and the people they encountered in the West?
11. **Revisit the Essential Question** Why did people move into the West? Think about the varied groups of people who settled in the West and their reasons for leaving their homes.
12. **Writing Workshop: Write a Narrative** Using the passages and notes you have written in your Active Journal, write a narrative from the perspective of a person moving westward during this time period. Tell about important or memorable events during your journey. Include description and sensory details to bring the narrative alive for readers. Create a strong opening and a memorable ending.

Analyze Primary Sources

13. The quotation presents one view of the conflict about
    - **A.** the Second Bank of the United States.
    - **B.** the Indian Removal Act.
    - **C.** the "corrupt bargain."
    - **D.** states' rights.

"When the laws undertake . . . to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of the society—the farmers, mechanics, and laborers—who have neither the time nor the means of [getting] favors for themselves . . . have a right to complain of the injustices of their government."

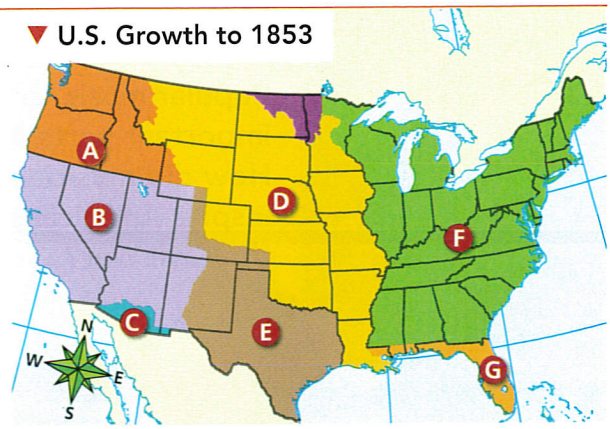
—President Andrew Jackson

Analyze Maps

Use the map to answer the following questions.

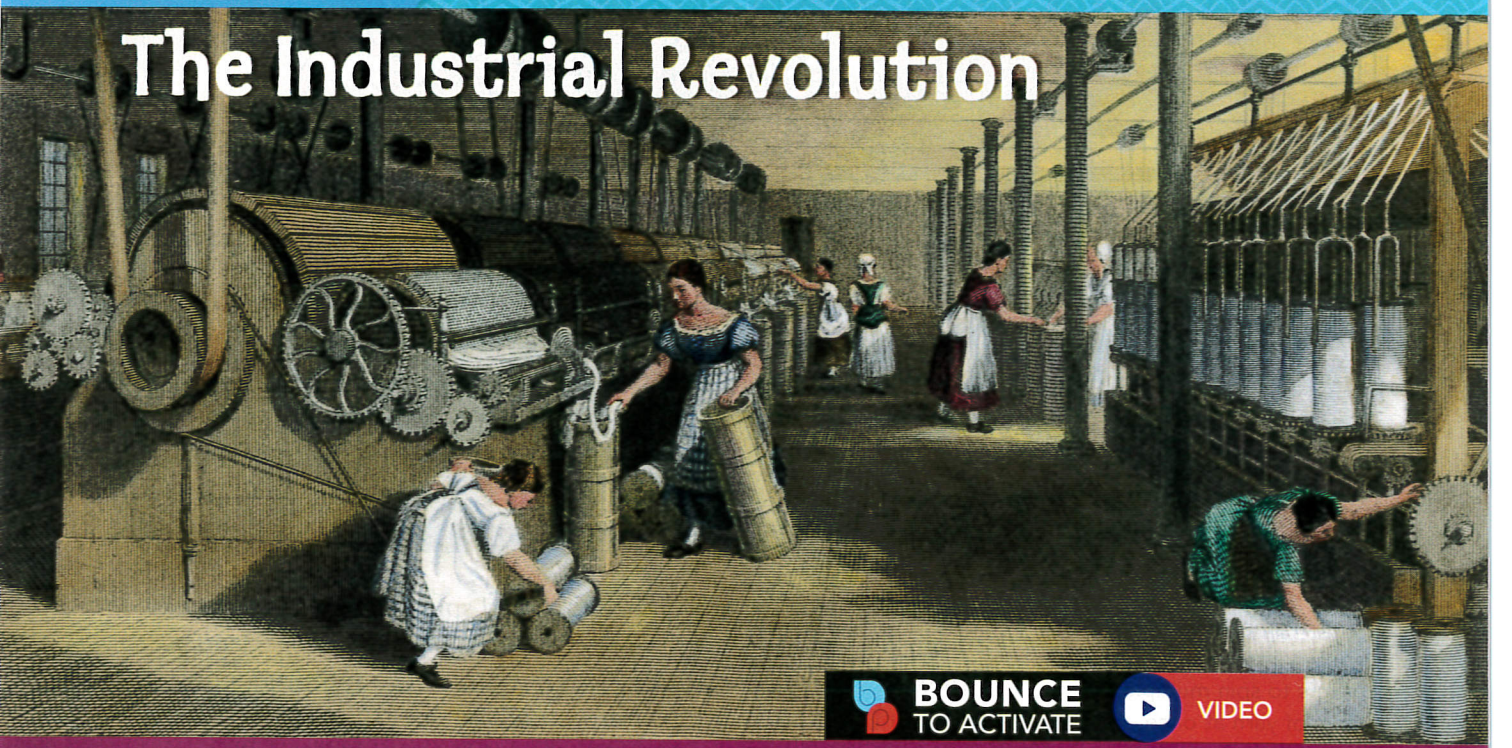
14. The Trail of Tears ended in which territory? Where did these American Indians live before they were relocated?
15. How did the Oregon Trail get its name? In which territory did the Oregon Trail begin?
16. Which territory did the United States acquire following the Mexican-American War? Which states were formed from this territory?

▼ U.S. Growth to 1853



LESSON 1

The Industrial Revolution



GET READY TO READ

START UP

Examine the illustration of workers in a textile mill. What would it be like to work here, in a large room filled with rapidly spinning machines?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How did work change between 1800 and 1850?
- What was family life like in different regions of the country during this period?

TAKE NOTES

Literacy Skills: Cite Evidence

Use the graphic organizer in your Active Journal to take notes as you read the lesson.

PRACTICE VOCABULARY

Use the vocabulary activity in your Active Journal to practice the vocabulary words.

Vocabulary

Industrial Revolution
capital
capitalist
scarcity
supply
interchangeable parts
Lowell girls
urbanization

Academic Vocabulary

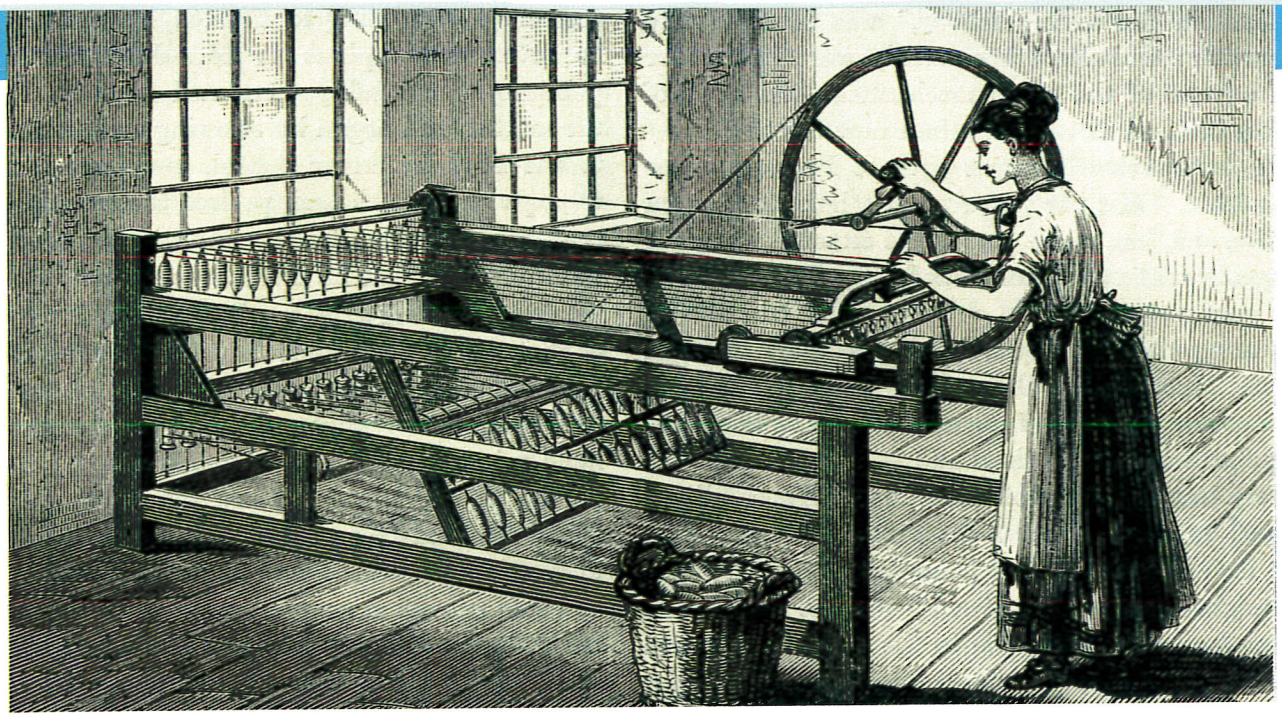
profit
credit

In the early 1800s, busy factories and whirring machinery were part of a revolution that was spreading to the United States. Unlike the American Revolution, this one had no battles or fixed dates. The new revolution—the **Industrial Revolution**—was a long, slow process that completely changed the way goods were produced and where many people worked and lived.

The Industrial Revolution Begins

Before the 1800s, most Americans were farmers and most goods were produced by hand. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, this situation slowly changed. Machines replaced hand tools. New sources of power, such as steam, replaced human and animal power. While most Americans continued to farm for a living, the economy began a gradual shift toward manufacturing.

Technological Innovations The Industrial Revolution started in Britain in the mid-1700s. New machines transformed the textile industry.



Analyze Images The spinning jenny invented by James Hargreaves allowed workers to spin multiple spools of yarn at once. **Draw Conclusions** How did this invention affect the supply and cost of producing textiles?

Since the Middle Ages, workers had used spinning wheels to make thread. A spinning wheel, however, could spin only one thread at a time. In 1764, James Hargreaves developed the spinning jenny, a machine that could spin several threads at once. Other inventions sped up the process of weaving thread into cloth. In the 1780s, Edmund Cartwright built a loom powered by water. It allowed a worker to produce a great deal more cloth in a day than was possible before. These technological innovations would change how goods were made not only in Britain, but also in America and around the world.

New Ways to Produce Goods New inventions led to a new system of producing goods. Before the Industrial Revolution, most spinning and weaving took place in the home. Industrial production involved large machines, however, and these had to be housed in large mills near rivers. Water flowing downstream or over a waterfall turned a wheel that captured the power to run the machines.

To set up and operate a spinning mill required large amounts of **capital**, or invested money. Capitalists supplied this money. A **capitalist** is a person who invests in a business to make a **profit**. Capitalists built factories and hired workers to run the machines.

Academic Vocabulary
profit • *n.*, the difference between the cost of a good and its selling price

The new factory system brought workers and machinery together in one place to produce goods. Factory workers earned daily or weekly wages. They had to work a set number of hours each day.

In Britain, investors saw an opportunity. Because a single worker could produce much more with a machine than by hand, the cost of goods made by machine was much lower and more of those goods could be sold. If an investor built a factory that could produce cloth more cheaply, the investor could make a profit. Investors' desire to make a profit brought about rapid industrialization.

During the Industrial Revolution, the demand for factory-made products grew. In economics, demand is the readiness of people to

purchase goods or services. The **supply**, or amount of goods available to sell, depended in part on the natural resources factories could get. To make products, factories needed raw materials, power, and laborers to run machinery. Some resources, such as cotton and iron, were in short supply. This **scarcity**, or limited supply, resulted in high prices. In response to high prices, farmers began to grow more cotton to supply spinning mills. Miners and others searched for new sources of iron and other materials used in machinery. The growing demand for products and for the supplies needed to make them led to a great change in standards of living.

INTERACTIVE
Early Textile Mill

READING CHECK **Summarize** How did the Industrial Revolution affect the forces of supply and demand?

America's First Factories

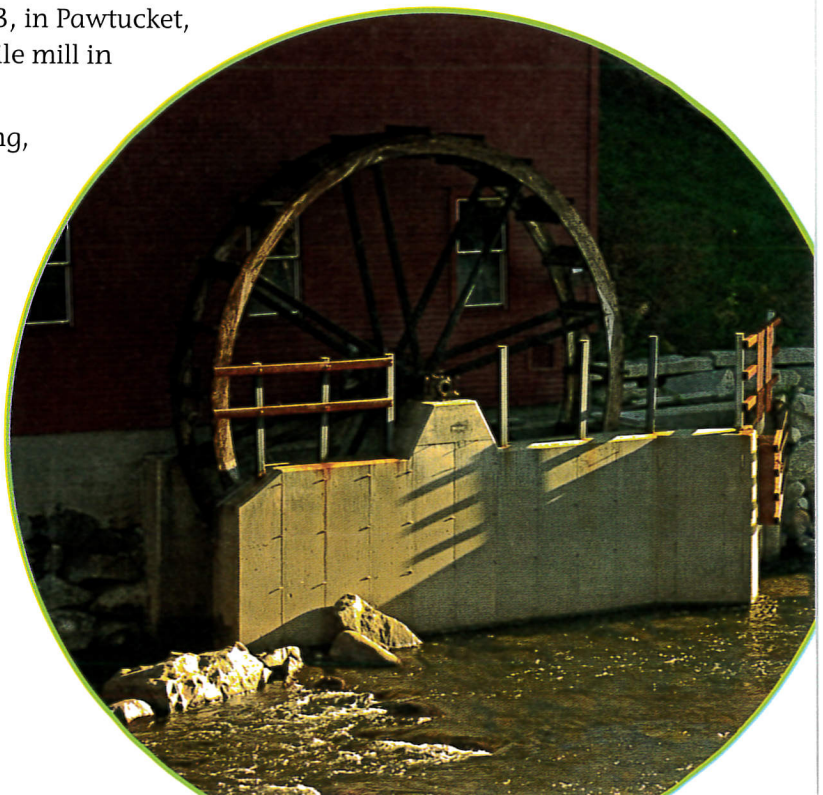
Britain wanted to keep its technological innovations, or new technologies, secret. It did not want rival nations to copy the new machines. Therefore, the British Parliament passed a law forbidding anyone to take plans of the new machinery out of the country.

Slater Emigrates to the United States Samuel Slater soon proved that this law could not be enforced. Slater was a skilled mechanic in a British textile mill. He knew that his knowledge and skills would be in demand in the United States. In 1789, Slater boarded a ship bound for New York City. British officials searched the baggage of passengers sailing to the United States to make sure they were not carrying plans for machinery with them. Slater, however, did not need to carry any plans. Having worked in the British mills from an early age, Slater knew not only how to build the mills and machinery but also how to operate them.

The First American Mill Slater soon visited Moses Brown, a Quaker capitalist who had a mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. The mill was not doing well because its machinery constantly broke down. Slater set to work on improving the machinery. By 1793, in Pawtucket, he built what became the first successful textile mill in the United States that was powered by water.

Slater's factory was a huge success. Before long, other American manufacturers began using his ideas.

Interchangeable Parts American manufacturers also benefited from the pioneering work of American inventor Eli Whitney. Earlier, skilled workers made goods by hand. For example, gunsmiths spent days making the barrel, stock, and trigger for a single musket. Because the parts were handmade, each musket differed a bit from every other musket. If a part broke, a gunsmith had to make a new part to fit that particular gun.



Analyze Images A restored water wheel stands outside a New England mill. **Infer** Water wheels had been used for many years at grain mills. Did they differ significantly from those that powered textile mills?

▲ Eli Whitney's development of interchangeable parts, while making muskets, revolutionized manufacturing.

Whitney wanted to speed up the making of guns by having machines manufacture each part. All machine-made parts would be alike—for example, one trigger would be identical to another. Identical parts would fit together with all other parts, and gunsmiths would not have build each gun from scratch. **Interchangeable parts** would save time and money.

Because the government bought many guns, Whitney went to Washington, D.C., to try to sell his idea. At first, officials laughed at his plan. Carefully, Whitney sorted parts for 10 muskets into separate piles. He then asked an official to choose one part from each pile. In minutes, the first musket was assembled. Whitney repeated the process until 10 muskets were complete.

In 1798, Whitney began producing muskets in the first factory to rely on interchangeable parts. The idea of interchangeable parts spread rapidly. Inventors designed machines to produce interchangeable parts for clocks, locks, and many other goods. With such machines, small workshops grew into factories.

Factories Spread The War of 1812 provided a boost to American industries. The British blockade cut Americans off from their supply of foreign goods. As a result, they had to produce more goods themselves. American merchants and bankers sought new ways to meet the increased demand. To profit from the efficiency provided by manufacturing, they built more factories. As American investors took advantage of new technologies and built more factories, the American economy grew.

Where Were Factories Built? The natural resources available to the people of a region shaped their economic activities. The first factories were built in the Northeast. Pennsylvania had abundant forests and iron ore. Lumbermen felled great swaths of forest for the timber used to make charcoal. Pennsylvania factories used the charcoal for power. These factories turned iron ore, which was mined and smelted locally, into machines, tools, and guns.

In New England, textile factories were built alongside the hilly region's numerous fast-moving streams. Falling water provided power for the mills. Humans also modified the landscape by building dams and canals to help power the mills. These modifications spurred economic growth. Wool and cotton produced in the South provided the raw materials for thread, yarn, and fabric. In Lynn, Massachusetts, businesses developed a step-by-step shoemaking process in the early 19th century. The large factories attracted new workers to the town, and the economy grew rapidly. New England became the first region in the United States to develop manufacturing on a wide scale.

The Market Economy and the Industrial Revolution In the United States, the Industrial Revolution took place in a period marked by the growth of a free enterprise, or market, economy. British restrictions on trade had been lifted. Hamilton's reforms had strengthened the banking system, and banks were able to lend more

money. New access to **credit**, or borrowed money, allowed people to start mills and factories in cities and in rural places where swift streams provided power.

A market revolution was taking place. Mills and factories sprouted throughout the Northeast. New technologies, such as interchangeable parts and the steamboat, allowed for more efficient production and the transportation of goods. New roads and canals linked towns, expanding opportunities for commerce.

Businesses operated, for the most part, without much government control. Nor did the government own factories or intervene heavily in the market. The government, however, protected contracts and property. People could buy, sell, or use property as they saw fit.

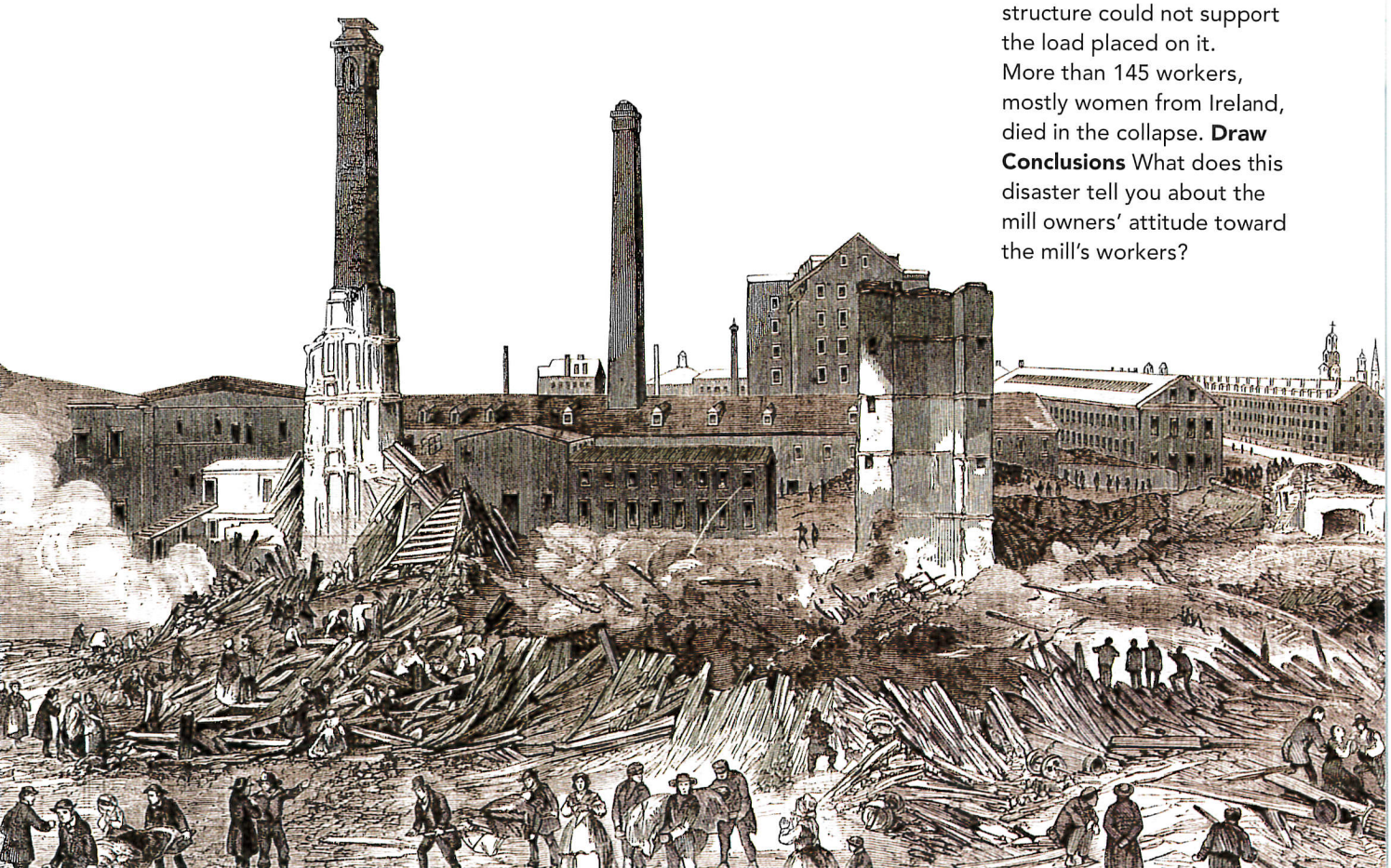
Most Americans wanted the freedom to try new things. They believed in competition, which encouraged new inventions. In 1792, a group of 24 investors had started the New York Stock Exchange. This stock market raised private capital to pay for new ventures. Success meant profits and brought new wealth to investors. Profits led to new investment and further economic growth.

Low taxes allowed businesses to hold on to large amounts of capital and use it to expand and create even more wealth. The desire for profit and accumulated wealth sparked new ventures under new investors.

The Role of Market Forces Investors looked to the market to decide where to invest or what businesses to start. In a market economy, goods are bought and sold, and wages are determined, by the market. If a product is in high demand and the supply is limited,

Academic Vocabulary

credit • *n.,* an agreement or contract in which a borrower receives money or goods now, with an agreement to repay a greater amount later



Analyze Images The Pemberton Mill in Lawrence, MA, collapsed January 10, 1860, because the building's structure could not support the load placed on it. More than 145 workers, mostly women from Ireland, died in the collapse. **Draw Conclusions** What does this disaster tell you about the mill owners' attitude toward the mill's workers?

the price will be high. Entrepreneurs started businesses to supply high-priced or high-demand products. They abandoned businesses where the demand and price were low.

Workers faced the same market forces. People with skills that were in demand in factories could expect higher wages than those whose skills had less value in the market.

READING CHECK **Understand Effects** How did transportation boost the market revolution in the early 1800s?

Daily Life in Factory Towns

Slater and Whitney's innovations were just the first steps in America's Industrial Revolution. During the early 1800s, entire cities began to emerge around factories.

Mills in Lowell During the War of 1812, Francis Cabot Lowell, a Boston merchant, found a way to improve on British textile mills. In Britain, one factory spun thread and a second factory wove it into cloth. Why not, Lowell wondered, combine spinning and weaving under one roof? The new mill that he built in Waltham, Massachusetts, had all the machines needed to turn raw cotton into finished cloth.

After Lowell's death, his partners took on a more ambitious project. They built an entire factory town and named it after him. In 1821, Lowell, Massachusetts, was a village of five farm families.

By 1836, it boasted more than 10,000 people. Visitors to Lowell described it as a model community composed of "small wooden houses, painted white, with green blinds, very neat, very snug, very nicely carpeted."

Analyze Images The town of Lowell was set up to be a factory town. **Compare and Contrast** Map ❶ shows Lowell in 1821, and map ❷ shows the town in 1845. What changes can you see?

❶

"Lowell Girls" To work in their new mills, the company hired young women from nearby farms. The **Lowell girls**, as they came to be called, usually worked for a few years in the mills before returning home to marry. These young women, and women like them in other mill towns, made an important economic contribution to American society by providing labor for the Industrial Revolution. Most sent their wages home to their families.

At first, parents hesitated to let their daughters work in the mills. To reassure parents, the company built boardinghouses, or buildings with many shared bedrooms and a kitchen that served meals. The company also made rules to protect the young women.

British author Charles Dickens toured Lowell in 1842. The Lowell girls impressed him. He later wrote:

Primary Source

> "It is their station to work. And they do work. They labour in these mills, upon an average, twelve hours a day, which is unquestionably work, and pretty tight work too."
>
> —Charles Dickens, *American Notes and Pictures from Italy*

Although factory work was often tedious, hard, and dangerous, many women valued the economic freedom they got from working in the mills. One worker wrote her sister Sarah back on a farm in New Hampshire:

Primary Source

"Since I have wrote you, another pay day has come around. I earned 14 dollars and a half . . . I like it well as ever and Sarah don't I feel independent of everyone!"

— from *Lowell Offering: Writings by New England Mill Women*

In Lowell and elsewhere, mill owners hired mostly women and children. They did this because they could pay women and children half of what they would have had to pay men.

Child Labor Boys and girls as young as seven worked in factories. Small children were especially useful in textile mills because they could squeeze around the large machines to change spindles.

Today, most Americans look upon child labor as cruel. Yet in the 1800s, farm children also worked hard. Most people did not see much difference between children working in a factory or on a farm. Often, a child's wages were needed to help support the family.

Long Hours Working hours in the mills were long—12 hours a day, 6 days a week. True, farmers also put in long hours. However, farmers worked shorter hours in winter. Mill workers, in contrast, worked nearly the same hours all year round.

As industries grew and competition increased, employers took less interest in the welfare of their workers. Working conditions eventually declined.

Changes at Home The Industrial Revolution had a great impact on home life. Previously, most Americans worked in agriculture. The entire family lived at home and farmed the land together. In the Northeast, some families took part in cottage industries, making goods at home. Local merchants supplied them with materials, such as wool. Home workers, usually women and girls, would spin the wool into yarn and

Analyze Images Although farm work was hard, it varied. Factory workers did the same task for many hours at a time all year round. **Draw Conclusions** Do you think mill workers found their jobs satisfying?

weave it into cloth. Other cottage workers made shoes. As the factory system spread, the family economy gave way to industrial production. More family members left the home to earn a living.

These changes affected ideas about the role of women. In poorer families, women often had to go out to work. In wealthier families, husbands supported the family while wives stayed at home. For many husbands, having a wife who stayed at home became a sign of success. Men and women began to be viewed as fundamentally different. As a result, distinct gender-based roles began to be assigned by society. Women were judged to be best suited to the domestic life, while men were expected to go out and earn a living in the world.

Analyze Images In cottage industries, women were able to work at home and earn money for doing things such as weaving and spinning. **Infer** After factory work replaced cottage industry, how did family life change?

READING CHECK **Draw Conclusions** How did competition and the quest for profit change working conditions in American mills?

How Did Cities Expand?

In 1800, nearly five million Americans lived in rural areas, compared to 322,000 who lived in cities. During the Industrial Revolution, many people left farms for cities, attracted by the job opportunities to be found in factories. As investors found that factories produced a profit, they invested those profits in building more factories, which attracted still more workers from farms. Older cities expanded rapidly, while new cities sprang up around factories. This movement of the population from rural areas to cities is called **urbanization**. Urbanization increased as industry grew.

Urbanization was a steady but gradual process. In 1800, only 6 percent of the nation's population lived in urban areas. By 1850, the number had risen to 15 percent. Not until 1920 did more Americans live in cities than in rural areas.

By today's standards, these early cities were small. A person could walk from one end of any American city to the other in as little as 30 minutes. Buildings were, at most, only a few stories tall. As the factory system spread, the nation's cities grew.

Problems in Cities Growing cities had numerous problems. Many of these resulted from the human modification of the environment. Dirt and gravel streets turned into mud-holes when it rained. Cities had no sewers, and people threw garbage into the streets. A visitor to New York reported that "The streets are filthy, and the stranger is not a little surprised to meet the hogs walking about in them, for the purpose of devouring the vegetables and trash thrown into the gutter."

Untreated sewage and garbage often seeped into wells or flowed into streams and rivers, polluting the water. The contaminated water spread disease. Epidemics of cholera (KAHL ur uh) raged through cities, killing thousands of people.

At about the same time, coal became an important source of industrial and home heating power. The smoke and soot from burning coal seriously modified the environment, polluting the air and dirtying cities. It also caused health problems.

Attractions Besides work opportunities, cities also had attractions. Theaters, museums, and circuses created an air of excitement. In cities, people could shop in fine stores that sold the latest fashions from Europe. Some offered modern "ready-to-wear" clothing. While most women continued to sew their own clothes, many enjoyed visiting hat shops, china shops, shoe stores, and "fancy-goods" stores.

READING CHECK **Summarize** What were some drawbacks of urbanization?

New Inventions

Northern industry grew steadily in the mid-1800s. Most northerners still lived on farms. However, more and more of the northern economy began to depend on manufacturing and trade.

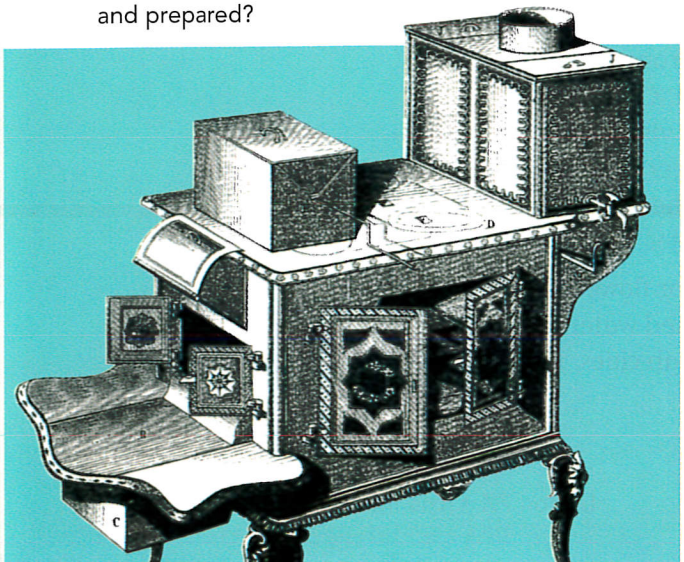
The 1800s brought a flood of new inventions in the North. "In Massachusetts and Connecticut," a European visitor exclaimed, "there is not a laborer who has not invented a machine or a tool." Americans of the period were a practical people. Americans, and especially northerners, looked to science for new and useful applications that could be put to work at once. They expected technology to bring economic development and to change the way people lived.

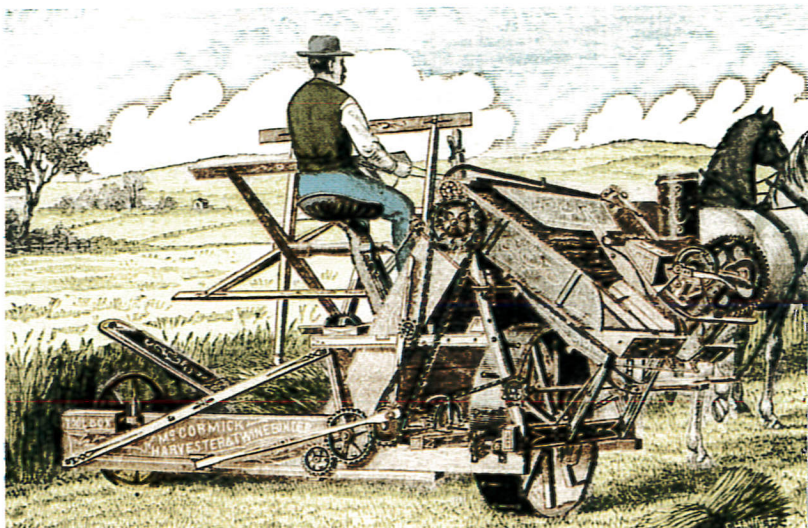
Technology refers to ways of doing things, sometimes involving advanced scientific knowledge, or tools that make use of advanced knowledge. Innovation is coming up with new ways of doing things.

New technologies during the colonial period, such as Franklin's lightning rod, had brought limited and modest changes to daily life in America. By comparison, the scientific and technological innovations of the 1800s transformed American life.

In 1834, Philo Stewart developed a cast-iron stove small enough for use in an average kitchen. His factory-built wood-burning stove was a great success. About 90,000 were sold. The cast-iron stove was only

Analyze Images New stoves and new farm equipment were among the inventions of this era. **Draw Conclusions** How did inventions like these affect the way food was grown and prepared?





one sign of the way northern factories were changing the lives of ordinary people.

Joseph Henry, a New Yorker, showed that electric current could be sent through a wire over long distances to ring a bell. His work paved the way for later inventions. Thomas Davenport, a blacksmith, invented an early type of electric motor in 1834.

Both inventions were adapted and marketed. Competition among inventors brought about more innovation.

Analyze Images Telegraph offices like this one were communication hubs. **Infer** When a telegram came in to such an office, how do you think it might have been handled?

In 1846, Elias Howe patented a sewing machine. A few years later, Isaac Singer improved on Howe's machine. Soon, clothing makers bought hundreds of the new sewing machines. Workers could now make dozens of shirts in the time it took a tailor to sew one by hand.

Farm Machines Some new inventions made work easier for farmers. In 1825, Jethro Wood began the manufacture of an iron plow with replaceable parts. John Deere improved on the idea when he invented a lightweight steel plow. Earlier plows made of iron or wood had to be pulled by oxen, which were strong but slow. A horse, less strong but faster than an ox, could pull a steel plow through a field more quickly.

In 1847, Cyrus McCormick opened a factory in Chicago that produced mechanical reapers. The reaper was a horse-drawn machine that cut and gathered wheat and other grains. McCormick's reaper could do the work of five people using hand tools.

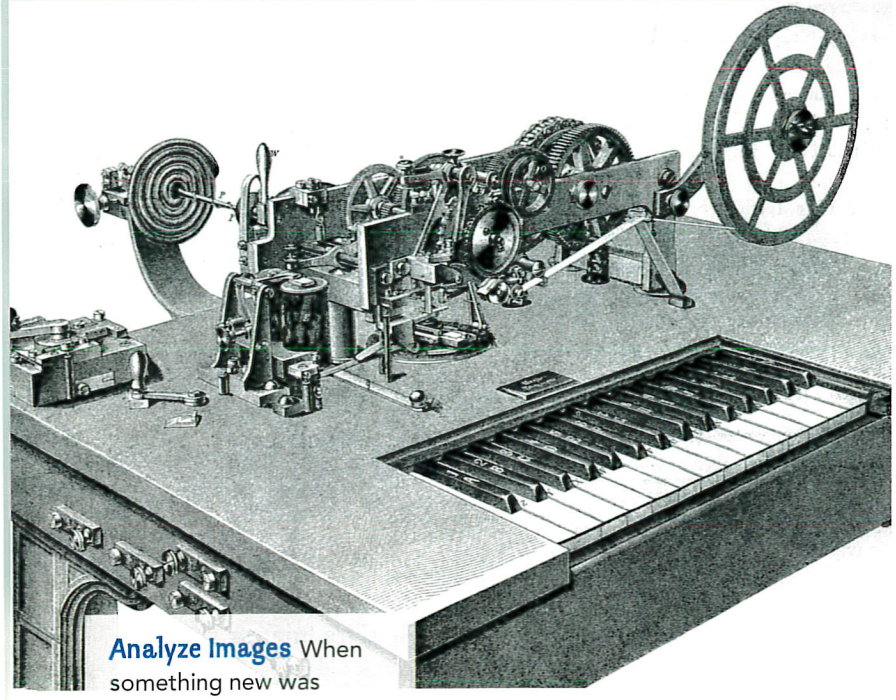
Other farm machines followed. There was a mechanical drill to plant grain, a threshing machine to beat grain from its husk, and a horse-drawn hay rake. These machines helped farmers raise more grain with fewer hands. As a result, thousands of farmworkers left the countryside. Some went west to start farms of their own. Others found jobs in new factories in northern cities.

The Telegraph Connects the Nation Samuel F. B. Morse received a patent for a "talking wire," or telegraph, in 1844. The telegraph was a device that sent electrical signals along a wire. It was a new technology that was made possible by scientific discoveries about electricity. Morse also devised a code of dots, dashes, and spaces so messages could be sent. The dots stood for short tones, the dashes for long tones. This system of dots and dashes became known as the Morse code.

Congress gave Morse funds to run wire from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore. On May 24, 1844, Morse set up his telegraph in the Supreme Court chamber in Washington.

INTERACTIVE

New Inventions Improve Life



Analyze Images When something new was invented, other inventors started trying to improve it. A British inventor created this version of the telegraph. **Infer** Why might piano-style keys have been easier to use?

As a crowd of onlookers watched, Morse tapped out a short message: "What hath God wrought!" A few seconds later, the operator in Baltimore tapped back the same message. The telegraph worked!

Morse's invention was an instant success. Telegraph companies sprang up everywhere. Thousands of miles of wire soon stretched across the country. News could now travel long distances in a few minutes.

The telegraph helped many businesses thrive. Merchants and farmers could have quick access to information about supply, demand, and prices of goods in different areas of the country. The availability of nearly instant information about markets changed the way goods were sold and contributed to the development of a nationwide market.

The telegraph connected the nation in a completely new way. Almost every American town eventually had a telegraph, providing rapid communication from coast to coast.

Ordinary people could communicate quickly with distant family and friends. The presence of telegraph offices in cities and towns was yet another of the many attractions that helped drive urbanization. The telegraph is an example of how scientific discoveries influenced daily life during the 1800s.

READING CHECK **Identify Implied Main Ideas** How did the invention of new farm machines contribute to urbanization in the North?

Lesson Check

Practice Vocabulary

1. What key role did **capitalists** play in the **Industrial Revolution**?
2. How would a **scarcity** of natural resources affect the **supply** of goods to a market?

Critical Thinking and Writing

3. **Identify Cause and Effect** How did the use of interchangeable parts contribute to the Industrial Revolution?
4. **Summarize** Explain how the willingness of factory owners to hire women and children changed family life.
5. **Writing Workshop: Introduce Characters** In your Active Journal, write a brief description of each character, including yourself, to appear in the narrative essay you will write at the end of the Topic. Include where each one lives, where they work, relationships, and any other interesting characteristics.

Detect Changing Patterns

Follow these steps to learn to identify causes of change in a society.

INTERACTIVE
Identify Trends

1 Gather information about the society. Look at different resources to learn about life in the society you are studying. What resources could help you find information about why and how United States society changed during the period 1820–1860?

2 Identify possible sources of change in the society. Sources of change can be economic, political, social, or cultural.

a. What was the most revolutionary change during this period?

b. Were there other sources of change linked to that major change—in other words, effects that themselves became agents of change?

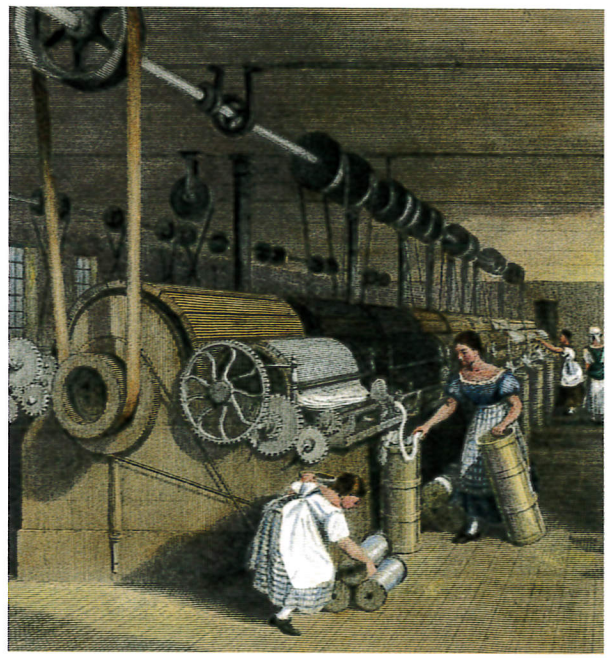
3 Determine how the sources of change led to new patterns of living. What do the "before and after" images below tell you about a new pattern of living that resulted from the major change that you have identified?

4 Summarize what you discover. Use the information you have learned in order to make a general statement. What can you say about the effects on society of this major change?

Secondary Source

▲ The loom was an important tool used by the women and other family members who produced yarn and cloth at home for textile merchants.

Secondary Source



▲ Young women (often helped by children) operated complex machinery to produce yarn and cloth at a factory for the textile industry.

LESSON 2

Industrialization and Immigration

GET READY TO READ

START UP

Look at the photograph. What do you think Americans' reactions were to the first trains?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How did the use of steam power affect the Industrial Revolution?
- What was family life like in the growing cities?
- What was the impact of the Industrial Revolution on working conditions and social class?

TAKE NOTES

Literacy Skills: Identify Main Ideas

Use the graphic organizer in your Active Journal to take notes as you read the lesson.

PRACTICE VOCABULARY

Use the vocabulary activity in your Active Journal to practice the vocabulary words.

Vocabulary		Academic Vocabulary
artisan	nativist	organize
trade union	Know-Nothing Party	immigrant
strike	discrimination	
famine		

Where early industry had been powered by water, the Industrial Revolution went farther when it harnessed steam. Factory efficiency increased, and with improvements to locomotive technology, markets continued to expand.

What Changes Did the Age of Steam Power Bring?

At first, railroads were used to provide transportation to canals. Horses or mules pulled cars along wooden rails covered with strips of iron. Then, in 1829, an English family developed a steam-powered locomotive engine to pull rail cars. The engine, called the Rocket, barreled along at 30 miles per hour.

Early Difficulties Not all Americans welcomed the new railroads. Workers who moved freight on horse-drawn wagons feared that they would lose their jobs. People who had invested in canals worried that competition from the railroads might cause them to lose their investments.