

Chapter Summary

Creating a Nation, Beginnings to 1877

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

*What characteristics define a society?
Why do people form governments?
How should societies settle disputes?*

This chapter discusses the origins of the U.S. from Pre-Columbian times, through European exploration and colonization of America; it explores the causes of the American Revolution, the formation of a republic, the growth of a nation through sectionalism, and a bloody civil war.

Origins of the American Nation

- Mesoamerican culture was a highly developed civilization based on agriculture.
- Spain and France explored the New World.
- European explorers discovered new crops but altered ecosystems and spread disease.
- Pilgrims and Puritans came to America for religious freedom.
- Americans protested taxation and wanted self-government.
- Cash crops and trade developed in the colonies.
- Europeans began to immigrate to America.

The Young Republic

- England and France fought for control of North America.
- The colonists declared independence from England.
- Americans realized the need for a stronger national government.
- Delegates met to draft a constitution.
- Three branches of government were created.
- The Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution.
- The New Republic faced growing pains that led to the Civil War.

Antebellum America

- Slavery and sectionalism divided the nation.

- The industrial revolution transformed the United States.
- Roads, canals, and railroads were built.
- The cotton gin made cotton “King” in the South.
- Reform movements targeted prisons and schools.

The Sectional Crisis

- Manifest Destiny lured settlers to California and Oregon.
- The spread of Slavery to the West fueled the sectional crisis.
- The Missouri Compromise maintained a balance between slave and free states in the Senate.
- Texas became part of the U.S.
- The U.S fought a war with Mexico and gained California and other southwestern territories.
- Lincoln’s election was viewed as a threat to the Southern way of life.

The Civil War and Reconstruction

- The North had more people and factories than the South.
- Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.
- Vicksburg and Gettysburg were turning points in the war.
- Lincoln was assassinated.

Chapter Summary *Cont.*

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- The Southern States were restored to the Union.
- African Americans were granted constitutional rights.