Grade 7 Louisiana Social Studies

Governing the New Nation

Student Volume

Benjamin Banneker

Thomas Jefferson

John Adams

Whiskey Rebellion

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Governing the New Nation

Student Volume

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ISBN: 979-8-88970-045-6

Governing the New Nation

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Chapter 1
George Washington's Presidency and Precedents

The Framing Question

What precedents were set for the new nation during George Washington's presidency?

The New Republic

Delegates had toiled in the sweltering heat of a hot Philadelphia convention hall to write the U.S. Constitution. Now they would get a chance to see if the words they had so eloquently and skillfully put on paper would actually work in the real world. By the end of June in 1788, the required nine states had ratified the Constitution. The new country was ready to welcome the first chief executive, or president, of the United States.

George Washington (1732–99) was the first president of the United States of America.

That chief executive was none other than George Washington. He was the first and only president unanimously elected by the **Electoral College**, a system laid out by the Constitution.

Vocabulary

Electoral College, n. a group of representatives who elect the president and vice president based on the popular vote in each state

Washington's Election and Inauguration

When George Washington was elected as the first president at the beginning of 1789, there were only thirteen states and sixty-nine electoral college votes available. George Washington received all sixty-nine votes, including the ten from his home state of Virginia. However, he was wary of this unanimous, or uncontested, support. He knew that the young country had many big problems, and he doubted his ability to solve them. He shared these worries in letters with his friends. In one letter, he wrote, "I greatly apprehend [worry] that my countrymen will expect too much from me."

There was one thing that Washington did not doubt: his wish for a simple, not grand, **inaugural ceremony** to make his new job official. He also saw no need for a fancy or overly important-sounding title for the chief executive. Washington was determined to fulfill the country's goal of establishing a *new* style of government. He did not want to resemble a king or an emperor. After all, fighting to be free from a king was what the Revolutionary War had been all about! Nevertheless, some in Congress wanted to give the new president titles such as "His Highness the President of the United States of America and the Protector of Their Liberties." Washington insisted on something much simpler—the title the president goes by to this day: "Mr. President." In the event that a woman is elected president, she will be known as "Madame President."

Vocabulary

inaugural ceremony, n. the series of official events in which a newly elected candidate is installed in, or takes, office

Find Out the Facts

How many women have tried to become president, and who were they?

Mr. President, George Washington, made the long and winding journey from his beloved home at Mount Vernon, in Virginia, to New York City to take the oath that would make his new job official. His request for a simple inauguration was ignored by many of his fellow Americans, who flocked to see Washington. In every village and town he traveled through, he attended speeches, parades, and dinners in his honor. Citizens lined the streets to cheer as his carriage passed by. On the country roads, men on horseback rode with Washington's carriage. All this traffic filled the country air with dust as the journey became one long parade.

After eight long days, Washington finally arrived in New York. Inauguration Day—April 30, 1789—dawned bright and sunny in New York City. A crowd of thousands assembled in front of the building known as Federal Hall. Shortly after noon, George Washington and a small group of officials stepped out on the balcony. Placing his hand on a Bible, Washington repeated the **oath of office** included in the new Constitution:

"I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

George Washington was sworn in as president on April 30, 1789. In 1933, the Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution officially set the beginning of a U.S. president's term as January 20.

There were no loudspeakers in 1789, so few people on the street below could

Vocabulary

oath of office, n. a promise made by a government official to obey the law and fulfill the responsibilities of their job

hear the words. Nevertheless, they knew they had witnessed a historic moment. After Washington spoke the final words of the oath, an official called out, "Long live George Washington, president of the United States!" The crowd cheered wildly. Washington's real work, and the work of the Constitution, was about to begin.

Washington's Presidency

President Washington and Congress wanted to proceed carefully because, as the first president said, "I walk on untrodden ground." In other words, every action that was taken would be new and might set a pattern for how to do things in the future. Washington wanted to set the right **precedents** by closely following the Constitution.

Vocabulary

precedent, n. an example for future actions or decisions

Think Twice

What might be the biggest differences between inheriting a royal throne and being elected as the leader of a brand-new country?

Once Washington became president, he had to work with Congress to figure out how to carry out his duties. The Constitution typically did not provide specific instructions on how things should be done. It established three branches of government: legislative, judicial, and executive. It also mentioned "departments" in the executive branch, but it did not describe those departments or specify how many there should be.

So Congress decided to create three executive departments. The first one was the Department of State, which would help the president with foreign affairs. The second was the Department of War, responsible for defending the country. The third department was the Department of the Treasury, which would handle taxes, payments, and the government's money. Each department was led by a secretary, or director.

Creating these departments led to yet another precedent. The Constitution says the president may seek advice from his department heads. At first, Washington just talked to each secretary separately about the work his department was doing. After a while, though, President Washington felt he needed advice on many other matters. He began meeting with all the secretaries at the same

time to get their advice as a group. The department heads came to be called the *president's cabinet*, which means a group of advisers. The first cabinet also included an attorney general, who gave the president legal advice. The meetings came to be known as *cabinet meetings*.

Every president since Washington has had a cabinet. As time passed, Congress added more departments to the executive branch, and the president's cabinet grew. The president's cabinet and the vice president together are known as the president's administration.

This illustration depicts President Washington's first cabinet. From left to right, it shows Henry Knox, Thomas Jefferson, Edmund Randolph (Washington's first attorney general), Alexander Hamilton, and George Washington.

George Washington had an impressive administration. His vice president was John Adams, longtime statesman and one of Thomas Jefferson's coauthors on the Declaration of Independence. John Jay was Washington's first secretary of state, but Jefferson took over when Jay became the first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Jefferson handled the United States' relationships with other countries, such as Great Britain and France. Alexander Hamilton, whose *Federalist* essays had gathered support for the ratification of the Constitution, was the secretary of the treasury. As such, Hamilton was responsible for managing the country's finances. Finally, Henry Knox served as the secretary of war. A former military leader under Washington, Knox oversaw the nation's military and helped set up training facilities and weapon factories.

Conflicting Ideas

Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson were both highly capable and patriotic individuals. However, they held opposing views on almost every issue. This led Washington to feel like he was trying to steer a coach with horses pulling in different directions. It is likely that Hamilton and Jefferson had never

met before they were appointed to Washington's cabinet. James Madison, who drafted the Bill of Rights, knew both men well and introduced them. Madison expected them to get along. However, conflicts between Hamilton and Jefferson quickly arose within a few months.

Their differences extended to their visions for the country's future. Hamilton supported both farming and the growth of manufacturing for a **diverse** economy. He envisioned Americans working in factories, producing goods for sale **domestically** and internationally. Jefferson felt differently. He believed that America should primarily remain a nation of small farmers, with limited manufacturing and trade. Hamilton envisioned the development of large cities throughout the United States, while Jefferson was wary of cities. Having observed the poverty and hunger in European cities, Jefferson did not want America to follow the same path.

Hamilton advocated for a strong central government that was closely tied to powerful business interests. He believed that this arrangement would promote a strong and stable country. Hamilton also supported a plan where the national government would assume, or take on, the states' **debts** from the American Revolution. On the other hand, Jefferson believed in the principle of laissez-faire, or less government interference. He thought that a smaller government would provide greater freedom and independence to a nation of farmers and small businesses.

Vocabulary

diverse, adj. having many different types or parts

domestically, adv. relating to or originating within a country; nationally

Vocabulary

debt, n. money owed after borrowing it

The two also disagreed on who should lead the government and make decisions. Hamilton believed that government should be entrusted to "the rich, the well-born, and the able." He thought that only those from important, aristocratic families had the necessary experience and wisdom to govern effectively. However, this did not mean that Hamilton believed ordinary people were incapable of governing. He simply believed that certain groups or types of people possessed the required experience.

Jefferson, in contrast, believed in the involvement of ordinary people in the governance of their own country. He believed that when people were well-informed, they could be trusted to

govern themselves, regardless of their income or family background.

One significant economic measure undertaken by Alexander Hamilton was the establishment of the First Bank of the United States, a national bank. This was instrumental in creating a common **currency**, although some people opposed it.

Hamilton's and Jefferson's differing beliefs caused them to dislike each other. Each viewed the other as a threat to the future of the young American republic. However, both men made significant contributions to the nation's early development and well-being.

The disagreements between Hamilton and Jefferson ultimately led to the emergence of political parties in the United States. A political party is a group

Vocabulary

currency, n. a system of money

Find Out the Facts

Research the first common currency used in the United States of America.

Alexander Hamilton founded the First Bank of the United States, commonly known as the First Bank, in 1791. While no longer a bank, the building still stands today in Philadelphia.

of individuals who share similar opinions on how the government should function and what actions it should or should not take. These people join together to elect representatives who align with their beliefs. In the 1790s, those Americans who favored Hamilton and his ideas called themselves *Federalists*. Supporters of Thomas Jefferson called themselves *Democratic-Republicans*. As you will read, President Washington distrusted these political parties and would warn against them in his remaining time as president.

The Judicial System

The executive branch was not the only branch of government about which the Constitution was not very specific. It also provided few details about the judicial system. The Constitution mentioned the Supreme Court but did not mandate how many judges should make up the court. Congress decided that there should be six judges on the Supreme Court. Over the years, Congress has changed this number several times, going back and forth between seven, eight, nine, and ten before finally settling on nine judges. However, the Constitution still does not prohibit changing the number of judges, meaning that Congress could potentially change this total again.

Find Out the Facts

What inspired Congress to change the number of judges on the Supreme Court one of the times it did so?

The Supreme Court is the top court in the country. However, Congress created other courts so that people in every part of the country could use the court system. These courts were organized according to where in the country they would exist. This organization established what are known as **judicial circuits**. The term *circuit* originates from the practice in England whereby judges traveled from place to place to hear cases. Several judicial circuits can be found throughout the United States. Judges for both the Supreme Court and all of the lower courts in each of the judicial circuits are nominated by the president.

Vocabulary

judicial circuit, n. lower courts that are organized according to region

Writers' Corner

Using your research, write a short paragraph explaining what was behind the decision to change the number of Supreme Court justices.

They must then be confirmed, or approved, by the Senate. This process of Senate confirmation of a president's judicial nomination is known as *advice and consent*. It is a role that is spelled out for the Senate in the Constitution. It is also used to confirm a president's nominations for cabinet positions.

The Whiskey Rebellion

During President Washington's first year, Congress passed another important law regarding the government. The new Constitution gave the federal government the power to tax. In 1789, Congress placed a tax on about eighty imported products, or products that had been produced in other countries and were sold in America. The new tax affected only a few imported items. Yet the money it brought in was enough to make it possible for the new government to start paying its bills for the first time.

To further address the nation's debts, Alexander Hamilton proposed a solution that involved Congress implementing taxes on other goods, including domestically produced whiskey. While people had differing opinions on other aspects of Hamilton's plan, the majority found the tax on whiskey to be reasonable and in accordance with the Constitution. Congress passed the tax with a majority vote, and President Washington signed it into law.

However, some settlers living on the western **frontier** considered the tax to be unfair. Many of these settlers were corn farmers who relied on selling their surplus crop for income. Unfortunately, the high cost of transporting corn by wagon to eastern cities significantly increased its price, making it difficult to find buyers for their produce. As a result, frontier farmers often turned their corn into whiskey, as it was more cost-effective to ship barrels of whiskey than the corn itself. For these farmers, taxing whiskey seemed like taxing their way of making a living. Furthermore, actual money was scarce on the frontier, so many farmers used whiskey as a substitute currency. Taxing whiskey, therefore, was equivalent to taxing their money supply.

Think Twice

Why do you think the ability of the federal government to levy, or collect, taxes is considered important today?

Vocabulary

frontier, n. where newly settled areas meet unsettled but not necessarily uninhabited areas

In 1794, farmers from western Pennsylvania united in opposition and refused to pay the tax. They believed that the tax violated their rights, particularly because they felt that the national government did not adequately represent their needs and concerns. They believed it was another case of "taxation without representation." They even threatened and physically harmed tax collectors.

President Washington empathized with the farmers, but he believed in upholding the law. He also saw it as crucial for the new government to demonstrate its ability to enforce laws. Thus, the president donned his former military uniform and led thirteen thousand troops to western Pennsylvania to quell the uprising known as the Whiskey Rebellion.

Thankfully, no shots were fired. Upon hearing of the approaching troops, the farmers surrendered their weapons and fled. Some leaders of the rebellion were tried and convicted, but Washington eventually pardoned them, which brought

Think Twice

Why do you think Washington wore his old military uniform to face the farmers?

George Washington, pictured here on a white horse, put an end to the Whiskey Rebellion without anyone firing a single shot.

an end to the rebellion. This event emphasized that the new government had the power to enact and enforce laws.

However, the use of troops to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion left a bitter feeling among many farmers. It highlighted the strength of the national government and its willingness to exercise its power. As a result, the farmers turned against the Federalist Party and shifted their support to the Democratic-Republican Party. To them, Thomas Jefferson took a more favorable stance toward farmers' interests.

A New Capital

Congress passed a number of other laws during its first session, the impact of which we can still witness today. One of these laws was the Residence Act of 1790. This law designated Washington, D.C., as the nation's capital—a new city where the federal government would be headquartered. President Washington chose as the location land that was situated along the banks of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. The states of Maryland and Virginia ceded land from their territories for the creation of this capital city.

The Dinner Table Bargain

In 1790, the United States faced two specific decisions: where to build the national capital and what to do about the country's remaining debts from the American Revolution. Southern leaders, led by James Madison, argued for the U.S. capital to be located closer to the southern states. But many other government leaders, including Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, thought a capital in the North would better support the strong central government they envisioned. Legend states that the matter was settled over dinner with Thomas Jefferson: Hamilton agreed to a capital along the banks of the Potomac River (which flows through Maryland and Virginia) if his plan to take over the states' war debts was approved. Madison agreed on behalf of the South, and the "Dinner Table Bargain" was struck.

Plans to begin construction of the new city, named after the country's first president, started shortly after Congress passed the law creating it. The new city was to be its own distinct district, one that was not a part of any state. This is why Washington is located within the District of Columbia, better known as D.C.

President Washington selected an experienced surveyor, Andrew Ellicott, to determine the boundaries of the new city and oversee its planning. A French-American architect named Pierre Charles L'Enfant was hired to design a map of how the new city's streets would be arranged. L'Enfant's design was inspired by his native Paris, France.

Another important hire Ellicott made was Benjamin Banneker, a free African American man who had never been enslaved and who showed a strong interest in math, science, and engineering. At age twenty-two, Banneker created one of the first clocks in America. Later, using his knowledge of astronomy, he accurately predicted lunar and solar events, including the 1789 solar eclipse. Banneker's skills in mathematics caught the attention of Andrew Ellicott, who appointed him as an assistant in developing plans for the new capital city in 1791.

This was the plan for the City of Washington, as originally laid out in 1792 by Pierre Charles L'Enfant (1754–1825), a French-born American architect and urban planner.

When the lead architect, L'Enfant, was fired in 1792, he took the plans with him, leaving the project in jeopardy. However, Banneker's detailed memory of the plans saved the day. He also published his own almanac, providing useful information to people like fishers, farmers, and businesspeople.

A U.S. postage stamp honoring the achievements of Benjamin Banneker

Think Twice

Why do you think Congress decided that the capital city would not be part of any state?

Washington's Farewell

George Washington was elected for a second term as president in 1792. However, he chose not to serve beyond his eight-year presidency, even though there was no limit on terms mentioned in the Constitution at that time. Washington believed that no one person should have too much power. Today, the Twenty-Second Amendment states that a president can only serve two terms in office.

As Washington's second term was ending, he became concerned about the growing divisions in politics. In a

In this engraved portrait of George Washington, he is holding his Farewell Address.

Washington's Policy Challenges at Home and Abroad

At the beginning of Washington's second term in office, France went to war with Great Britain as well as its allies. President Washington wanted to maintain good relations with Great Britain, especially with regard to trade. Washington steered a course of neutrality, meaning the United States would not pick a side. Together, he and Alexander Hamilton put forward the Jay Treaty, which normalized trade with Britain. For their part, the British gave up their forts near the Great Lakes. But not everyone agreed with Washington's policies, as you will discover.

speech called "Washington's Farewell Address," he warned about the dangers of political parties dividing Americans. He encouraged people to focus on what they had in common instead. He emphasized that they shared the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. Washington reminded the American people that they had fought together for their independence and freedom through joint efforts and cooperation. He urged them to prioritize unity rather than allow differences to separate them. As you will read, Washington's wish was not easily granted.

Think Twice

What is your opinion on the two-term limit for the office of president?

Find Out the Facts

Find out what the 1795 Treaty of Greenville hoped to achieve between the United States and Native American peoples in the Northwest Territory.

PRIMARY SOURCE: EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS BY THOMAS JEFFERSON AND ALEXANDER HAMILTON ABOUT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL BANK

Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson wrote the following in a letter to George Washington on February 15, 1791, expressing his opinion on establishing a national bank.

I consider the foundation of the Constitution as laid on this ground that "all powers not delegated to the U.S., by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States or to the people" to take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specially drawn around the powers of Congress, is to take possession of a boundless feild [field] of power, no longer susceptible of any definition.

Alexander Hamilton wrote the following in a letter to Edward Carrington, a supervisor of revenue in Virginia, on May 26, 1792. In this excerpt, the secretary of the treasury shares his feelings on Jefferson's approach to monetary policy, including a national bank.

It was not 'till the last session that I became unequivocally convinced of the following truth—"That Mr. Madison cooperating with Mr. Jefferson is at the head of a faction decidedly hostile to me and my administration, and actuated by views in my judgment subversive of the principles of good government and dangerous to the union, peace and happiness of the Country." . . . Mr. Jefferson with very little reserve manifests his dislike of the funding system generally; calling in question the expediency of funding a debt at all. . . . In various conversations with foreigners as well as citizens, he has thrown censure on my principles of government and on my measures of administration. He has predicted that the people would not long tolerate my proceedings & that I should not long maintain my ground. . . . In the question concerning the Bank he not only delivered an opinion in writing against its constitutionality & expediency; but he did it in a stile [style] and manner which I felt as partaking of asperity and ill humour towards me.

Sources: "To George Washington from Thomas Jefferson, 15 February 1791," *Founders Online*, National Archives. [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 7, *1 December 1790–21 March 1791*, edited by Jack D. Warren, Jr. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1998, pp. 348–353.]

"From Alexander Hamilton to Edward Carrington, 26 May 1792," *Founders Online*, National Archives. [Original source: *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, vol. 11, *February 1792–June 1792*, edited by Harold C. Syrett. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966, pp. 426–445.]

PRIMARY SOURCE: GEORGE WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

Beginning in September 1796, George Washington's Farewell Address appeared in newspapers around the country. Washington had stepped down from the presidency after serving two terms. In the address, he expressed his thoughts, advice, and warnings concerning governance and the nation's future.

The Unity of Government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main Pillar in the Edifice [building] of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very Liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes & from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices [tricks] employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly & insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union, to your collective & individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual & immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium [defense or protection] of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing [dismissing] whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble [weaken] the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

Source: "Farewell Address, 19 September 1796," *Founders Online*, National Archives. [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 20, *1 April–21 September 1796*, edited by David R. Hoth and William M. Ferraro. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2019, pp. 703–722.]

Chapter 2

The New Nation and the First Party System

The Framing Question

How did the events, ideas, and people during the presidencies of Adams and Jefferson impact the development of the United States?

This map shows the distribution of electoral votes in the 1796 presidential election. John Adams won most of the votes in the Northeast, and Jefferson was more popular in the South. Both candidates received votes from the states between, making it a close election.

Adams and Jefferson

After Washington left the presidency, the new nation was in flux. Never before had the country had a contest for its leader. John Adams, who had been Washington's vice president, was the candidate of the Federalist Party. The Democratic-Republicans named Thomas Jefferson as their choice for president. John Adams won the election of 1796, but just barely. In those days, the person who came in second became the vice president, even though he might be from another political party. So Thomas Jefferson became vice president of the United States. This method of election would soon change.

An Old Problem

From the beginning of his presidency, John Adams faced decisions that challenged his already-waning popularity. One immediate problem had actually begun while George Washington was still president. As you have learned, those old enemies, France and Great Britain, were at war again. During the American Revolution, France had come to America's aid. Now the French thought that it was America's turn to help them. Some Americans agreed, particularly because the French people had just had a revolution of their own. They had overthrown their king and set up a republic.

Many of the Americans who wanted to help France were Democratic-Republicans. Indeed, Thomas Jefferson was a strong

supporter of France. Federalists, like Alexander Hamilton, believed that the United States should side with Great Britain, viewing close ties with Britain as helpful for economic growth. These contrasting views on foreign policy became a key factor in the formation of the two parties. Individual Americans aligned themselves with their preferred diplomatic approach. As you know, President Washington decided that the United States would not take sides.

Think Twice

Why do you think President Washington decided to remain neutral?

Even before John Adams became president, the British navy had begun seizing American ships carrying goods to France. But they not only seized ships; they also captured sailors, forcing them to serve on British ships. This practice is known as **impressment**. However, by the time John Adams became president, things were worse. Now, the French navy was seizing American merchant ships, too.

Vocabulary

impressment, n. the act of seizing people and forcing them to serve against their will, such as in the military

President John Adams

At the same time, the French government was threatening the United States. In 1797, President Adams sent three American representatives to France to ask the French to stop and negotiate peace. But before they would even agree to talk, three French agents, known as X, Y, and Z, approached the three Americans with a demand for a hefty bribe. This became known as the XYZ Affair and outraged the American people. In response, Congress created a navy department and paid

for the building of a number of ships. It looked like the United States would once again be at war.

President Adams knew that taking military action would make him popular. But he decided he must try once more to find another solution. He sent a new ambassador, or official government representative, to France. This time, the French government talked with the American ambassador, and the two nations reached an agreement.

President Adams made a decision that many believed was the right thing to do: he worked to keep America out of a war. However, this caused him to lose a significant amount of support from those who wanted the country to engage in war. Even members of his own political party, the Federalists, turned against him. On the other hand, the Democratic-Republicans, who were already opposed to Adams, were not going to support him, even if his actions aligned with their own position on avoiding war.

More Controversy

President Adams also found himself embroiled in a major dispute at home. This challenge concerned the power of the federal government. In 1798, he signed the Alien and **Sedition** Acts. These laws aimed to restrict the freedom of immigrants and critics of the government. The Alien Act allowed the president to expel any foreigner he considered dangerous to the country, and the Sedition Act made it a crime to speak or write anything against the government. These acts caused controversy and raised concerns about freedom of speech and the rights of immigrants. The Federalists, represented by Alexander Hamilton, supported these acts. They viewed the new laws as a means to protect national security and suppress political dissent, particularly from immigrant populations. However, the acts were highly unpopular among the Democratic-Republicans who opposed Adams. In fact, the Virginia and Kentucky legislatures passed resolutions, secretly penned by James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, in protest against the acts.

Vocabulary

sedition, n. an action that moves people to resist or act out against lawful authority

Think Twice

Do you think the Alien and Sedition Acts were justified, or did they infringe on peoples' rights?

The Election of 1800

John Adams ran for reelection in 1800. Once again, he was opposed by Thomas Jefferson, the leader of the Democratic-Republicans.

The election of 1800 marked an important moment in the development of political parties. It helped shape the country's political system and paved the way for future elections. The Democratic-Republicans were mostly the old Anti-Federalists, who had opposed ratifying the U.S. Constitution without the addition of a Bill of Rights. They believed it was needed to protect individual and states' rights. Adams, on the other hand, remained a Federalist who believed in strong central government.

There was plenty of fighting and name-calling between the two parties leading

Find Out the Facts

Research which states had the highest debts from the American Revolution and why.

Tally of Electoral Votes in the 1800 Presidential Election

	Thomas Jefferson (of Virginia)	Aaron Burr (of New York)	John Adams (of Massachusetts)	Charles C. Pickney (of South Carolina)	John Jay (of New York)
New Hampshire			6	6	
Massachusetts			16	16	
Rhode Island			4	3	1
Connecticut			9	9	
Vermont			4	4	
New York	12	12			
New Jersey			7	7	
Pennsylvania	8	8	7	7	
Delaware			3	3	
Maryland	5	5	5	5	
Virginia	21	21			
Kentucky	4	4			
North Carolina	8	8	4	4	
Tennessee	3	3			
South Carolina	8	8			
Georgia	4	4			
Totals	**73**	**73**	**65**	**64**	**1**

This chart lists the total electoral votes in the presidential election of 1800. This time, Jefferson won seventy-three votes to Adams's sixty-five.

up to the election of 1800. Each party had different ideas about what *kind* of country the United States should be. And the election itself was somewhat confusing and even controversial. As you have read, at that time, the candidate who received the most votes from the Electoral College became president. The runner-up then became vice president. However, the results of the 1800 election introduced a new, confusing outcome: Jefferson and his running mate Aaron Burr defeated Adams, but they each received the same number of votes from the Electoral College. This meant that the decision of who should become president moved to the House of Representatives, where members had to vote for a candidate. It took over thirty tries before Jefferson finally won the majority of the votes and became the third president of the United States.

Despite all of this confusion, the election ultimately marked the first time in the United States that power was transferred from one political party to another. And it was done peacefully. It also inspired Americans to change the electoral process to avoid similar complications in the future. In 1804, the Twelfth Amendment was added to the Constitution. This amendment stated that

Vocabulary

demagogue, n. a political leader who appeals to people's predjudices and desires to gain power

Think Twice

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Electoral College system?

The Electoral College

In a presidential election, voters across states cast their votes for the president. Electors in the Electoral College, established by the Constitution, then vote on behalf of these voters. Each state has the same number of electors as it does members of Congress. The candidate who receives the most Electoral College votes becomes the president.

This system was written into the Constitution because the Founding Fathers believed that ordinary people might not be sufficiently informed to choose the best president. Another of their fears was that people might be misled by a **demagogue**. Additionally, they wanted to ensure that candidates would not solely focus on winning the most populous states and neglect the less populated ones. Thus, using congressional representation to determine the number of electors was seen as a fair system.

instead of casting two votes for president, electors would cast one vote for president and a separate vote for vice president.

Mr. President, Thomas Jefferson

President Jefferson believed that for people to truly pursue happiness, their rights and freedoms needed to be protected. He thought the best way to ensure this was through self-governance, where ordinary people had control over their own lives.

President Thomas Jefferson

However, he believed in one condition: the people needed to be educated. In his eyes, an uneducated society would not be able to maintain its freedom for long. Jefferson had tried to implement free education in Virginia before becoming president. But this idea was considered too radical at the time, and he was unsuccessful. Even if Jefferson's beliefs had been more widely accepted, only free, white males would have had opportunity to benefit from them.

Another issue that Jefferson passionately worked toward was the abolition, or end, of slavery. He viewed slavery as an evil practice. He actively tried to persuade Virginia to pass a law that would grant freedom to children born to enslaved individuals. He also drafted the 1784 Land Ordinance, which aimed to prohibit slavery in all western states. Unfortunately, the ordinance narrowly lost in Congress by just one vote. However, in 1807, Jefferson did manage to sign a bill into law that prohibited the international slave trade in the United States.

Despite championing the idea of liberty, Jefferson, like many other wealthy landowners in the South, owned slaves. This contradiction was brought to his attention through an exchange of letters with Benjamin Banneker, who had played

a role in planning Washington, D.C. Banneker questioned how slavery could persist when the principles of equal creation and unalienable rights were highlighted in the Declaration of Independence. He also wondered how Jefferson, a proclaimer of these values, could continue to uphold slavery.

In his response, Jefferson admitted that slavery was indeed wrong. He acknowledged that Banneker's achievements were evidence of what African Americans could accomplish if given their freedom. However, Jefferson had no satisfactory answers to Banneker's probing questions. Particularly, he struggled to justify his use of enslaved workers. Like many landowners of that time, Jefferson continued the practice of slavery, postponing the difficult fight against it that would eventually take place years later.

The Louisiana Purchase

When President Jefferson and his Democratic-Republican Party took control of the government, they wasted no time in undoing the laws that the Federalists had put in place. They eliminated the unpopular whiskey tax. They also reduced government spending by reducing the size of both the army and navy.

However, one of Jefferson's most notable achievements was not something he planned for. It happened purely by chance. Acting swiftly when an opportunity presented itself, Jefferson was able to double the size of the United States. During the 1700s, France had claimed a vast territory between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains and named it Louisiana, after King Louis of France. However, after a war with Great Britain, France transferred Louisiana to Spain.

For farmers living in the western territories of the United States, the city of New Orleans held immense importance. Located at the mouth of the Mississippi River, New Orleans served as a crucial port for these farmers. Using wagons to transport crops to markets in the eastern cities was extremely expensive—and time-consuming. A solution was to load the crops onto rafts or flatboats and float them down the rivers. In these territories, all the rivers ultimately flowed into the Mississippi River, making New Orleans the final destination for these crops. Farmers would sell their produce to local merchants, who would then ship them farther to eastern cities, Europe, or the West Indies.

The Mississippi River has long been an important trade route that could not be cut off. It ends where it meets the Gulf of America, in southern Louisiana.

However, there was a potential problem looming in 1802. The Spanish, who still controlled New Orleans at that time, suddenly announced that western farmers could no longer use the port. To make matters worse, President Jefferson received alarming news that Spain had secretly transferred ownership of all of Louisiana, including New Orleans, back to France. Jefferson knew that the French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte had ambitions of establishing a vast empire in the Americas. This situation posed serious trouble for the United States and its western farmers, as they risked losing access to crucial markets and facing financial ruin.

President Jefferson took swift action. He sent two representatives, Robert Livingston and James Monroe, to France with instructions to offer $10 million for the city of New Orleans. As luck would have it, a recent turn of events played in America's favor. France and Great Britain, known for their frequent conflicts, were on the brink of another war. In need of funds and having now abandoned his idea of establishing a new French empire in North America, Bonaparte was open to negotiation. Furthermore, the French suggested that the *entire* Louisiana Territory, including New Orleans, could be purchased for $15 million. The Americans seized this opportunity and promptly accepted the deal.

This transaction, known as the Louisiana Purchase, doubled the size of the United States at just a few pennies per acre. It is considered the most remarkable bargain in American history and a major achievement of Jefferson's presidency.

At the time of the purchase, neither Jefferson nor anyone else fully comprehended the vastness of what had been acquired. The true extent of the territory would only be revealed when explorers ventured forth to document and explore the newly obtained lands.

The Barbary Pirates

For a long time, a group known as the Barbary pirates had been demanding a payment from foreign governments in exchange for the safe passage of their ships in the Mediterranean Sea. If the governments did not pay up, their ships and crews were captured. The Barbary pirates were privateers who focused their efforts around ports in North Africa, in particular Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, and Morocco.

Jefferson had previously dealt with the pirates when he served as secretary of state. When he became president, the pirates' demands increased. Jefferson took a stand and refused to pay. As a result, the First Barbary War began.

Find Out the Facts

Research the area of land that was included in the Louisiana Purchase. Which Native American peoples were living on this land?

The Louisiana Purchase of 828,800 square miles (more than two million square kilometers) of French territory in 1803 included land in all or parts of fifteen current U.S. states, as well as a small area of present-day Canada.

Marbury v. Madison

During Jefferson's presidency, the Supreme Court heard a landmark case known as *Marbury v. Madison*. In early

1801, shortly before his term as president ended, President John Adams had appointed William Marbury as a judge. This appointment was confirmed by the Senate, but Marbury and three others did not receive their official documents, called commissions, while Adams was still in office. When Thomas Jefferson became president that March, he ordered his secretary of state, James Madison, to withhold the commissions. Marbury then petitioned the Supreme Court to take action.

The Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice John Marshall, ruled on February 24, 1803, that even though Marbury had a valid claim to the judgeship, the court did not actually have the authority to make the executive branch give him the job. Marshall explained that the law that gave the Supreme Court the power to demand that Marbury be given his judgeship was actually in conflict with the Constitution. The court, therefore, declared that the Judiciary Act of 1789 was unconstitutional. By issuing this decision, the Supreme Court established its power of **judicial review** and expanded the reach of the judicial branch. Judicial review gave the Supreme Court an important role in the government, as it could now officially check the actions of the other two branches against the Constitution. As for Jefferson, he opposed judicial review, believing that it was at odds with the principle of separation of powers.

Today, a statue of Justice John Marshall sits outside the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The impact of *Marbury v. Madison* can still be seen in Supreme Court decisions today. John Marshall and Thomas Jefferson were cousins. Despite their family ties, they had differing views on a range of issues.

Although Jefferson's role was indirect, the outcome of *Marbury v. Madison* had an impact on his presidency and the future of the country. The Supreme Court's decision altered the balance of powers. It limited the authority of the executive branch, including that of the president, as well as of Congress.

Vocabulary

judicial review, n. the authority of the Supreme Court to decide whether laws or actions by the government are constitutional

Writers' Corner

Write a script for a three-minute podcast about the history and influence of *Marbury v. Madison*.

PRIMARY SOURCE: LETTER FROM THOMAS JEFFERSON TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON, APRIL 18, 1802

President Jefferson wrote this letter to Robert Livingston, the U.S. minister to France, to express his concern about France taking over Louisiana. Jefferson states his hope that Livingston can convince France to sell New Orleans and Florida to the United States.

France is the one which hitherto has offered the fewest points on which we could have any conflict of right, and the most points of a communion of interests. from these causes we have ever looked to her as our natural friend, as one with which we never could have an occasion of difference. her growth therefore we viewed as our own, her misfortunes ours. there is on the globe one single spot, the possessor of which is our natural & habitual enemy. it is New Orleans, through which the produce of three eighths of our territory must pass to market, and from it's [its] fertility it will ere long yield more than half of our whole produce and contain more than half our inhabitants. France placing herself in that door assumes to us the attitude of defiance. Spain might have retained it quietly for years. her pacific dispositions, her feeble state, would induce her to increase our facilities there, so that her possession of the place would be hardly felt by us, and it would not perhaps be very long before some circumstance might arise which might make the cession of it to us the price of something of more worth to her. not so can it ever be in the hands of France. the impetuosity of her temper, the energy & restlessness of her character, placed in a point of eternal friction with us, and our character, which though quiet, & loving peace & the pursuit of wealth, is high minded, despising wealth in competition with insult or injury, enterprizing & energetic as any nation on earth, these circumstances render it impossible that France and the US. can continue long friends when they meet in so irritable a position. they as well as we must be blind if they do not see this; and we must be very improvident if we do not begin to make arrangements on that hypothesis.

Source: "From Thomas Jefferson to Robert R. Livingston, 18 April 1802," *Founders Online*, National Archives. [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 37, *4 March–30 June 1802*, edited by Barbara B. Oberg. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 263–267.]

PRIMARY SOURCE: JOHN MARSHALL, *MARBURY v. MADISON* (1803)

It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is. Those who apply the rule to particular cases, must of necessity expound and interpret that rule. If two laws conflict with each other, the courts must decide on the operation of each.

So if a law be in opposition to the constitution; if both the law and the constitution apply to a particular case, so that the court must either decide that case conformably to the law, disregarding the constitution; or conformably to the constitution, disregarding the law; the court must determine which of these conflicting rules governs the case. This is of the very essence of judicial duty.

If, then, the courts are to regard the constitution, and the constitution is superior to any ordinary act of the legislature, the constitution, and not such ordinary act, must govern the case to which they both apply.

Those then who controvert the principle that the constitution is to be considered, in court, as a paramount law, are reduced to the necessity of maintaining that the courts must close their eyes on the constitution, and see only the law.

This doctrine would subvert the very foundation of all written constitutions. . . .

That it thus reduces to nothing what we have deemed the greatest improvement on political institutions—a written constitution—would of itself be sufficient, in America, where written constitutions have been viewed with so much reverence, for rejecting the construction. But the peculiar expressions of the constitution of the United States furnish additional arguments in favour of its rejection.

The judicial power of the United States is extended to all cases arising under the constitution.

Source: Show-Cause Order Served on James Madison, Secretary of State; 1802; Original Jurisdiction Case Files, 1792–1998; Records of the Supreme Court of the United States, Record Group 267; National Archives Building, Washington, D.C.

Glossary

C

currency, n. a system of money **(8)**

D

debt, n. money owed after borrowing it **(7)**

demagogue, n. a political leader who appeals to people's prejudices and desires to gain power **(23)**

diverse, adj. having many different types or parts **(7)**

domestically, adv. relating to or originating within a country; nationally **(7)**

E

Electoral College, n. a group of representatives who elect the president and vice president based on the popular vote in each state **(3)**

F

frontier, n. where newly settled areas meet unsettled but not necessarily uninhabited areas **(10)**

I

impressment, n. the act of seizing people and forcing them to serve against their will, such as in the military **(20)**

inaugural ceremony, n. the series of official events in which a newly elected candidate is installed in, or takes, office **(3)**

J

judicial circuit, n. lower courts that are organized according to region **(9)**

judicial review, n. the authority of the Supreme Court to decide whether laws or actions by the government are constitutional **(28)**

O

oath of office, n. a promise made by a government official to obey the law and fulfill the responsibilities of their job **(4)**

P

precedent, n. an example for future actions or decisions **(5)**

S

sedition, n. an action that moves people to resist or act out against lawful authority **(21)**

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