

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Democracy expanded in the 1820s as more Americans held the right to vote.
2. Jackson's victory in the election of 1828 marked a change in American politics.

The Big Idea

The expansion of voting rights and the election of Andrew Jackson signaled the growing power of the American people.

Key Terms and People

nominating conventions, p. 323
 Jacksonian Democracy, p. 323
 Democratic Party, p. 323
 John C. Calhoun, p. 323
 spoils system, p. 324
 Martin Van Buren, p. 324
 Kitchen Cabinet, p. 324

TAKING NOTES

As you read, take notes on how an expansion of voting rights led to Andrew Jackson's election to the presidency. Write your notes in a flowchart like the one below.



Jacksonian Democracy

If YOU were there...

It's 1829, and you live in Washington, D.C. You've come with a friend to the party for Andrew Jackson's inauguration as president. Your friend admires Jackson as a man of the people. You are less sure about his ability. Jackson's inauguration soon turns into a rowdy party, as mobs crowd into the White House. They break glasses and overturn the furniture.

How would you feel about having Jackson as your president?

BUILDING BACKGROUND In the early years of the United States, the right to vote belonged mainly to a few—free white men who owned property. As the country grew, more men were given the right to vote. This expansion of democracy led to the election of Andrew Jackson, a war hero. But not everyone approved of Jackson.

Expansion of Democracy

America in the early 1800s was changing fast. In the North, workshops run by the craftspeople who owned them were being replaced by large-scale factories owned by businesspeople and staffed by hired workers. In the South, small family farms began to give way to large cotton plantations, owned by wealthy white people and worked by enslaved African Americans. Wealth seemed to be concentrating into fewer hands. Many ordinary Americans felt left behind.

These same people also began to believe they were losing power in their government. In the late 1700s some Americans thought that government was best managed by wealthy, property-owning men. Government policies seemed targeted to help build the power of these people. The result was a growing belief that the wealthy were tightening their grip on power in the United States.

Hoping for change, small farmers, frontier settlers, and slaveholders rallied behind reform-minded Andrew Jackson, the popular hero of the War of 1812 and presidential candidate in the 1824 election. They believed Jackson would defend the rights of the common

Democracy in Action

Democracy spread in the early 1800s as more people became active in politics. Many of these people lived in the new western states. In these mostly rural areas, a political rally could be as simple as neighboring farmers meeting to talk about the issues of the day, as the farmers in the painting on the right are doing.

During the early 1800s democracy and demonstrations blossomed in the United States. The demonstrators of today owe much to the Americans of Andrew Jackson's time. Today, political rallies are a familiar sight in communities all over the country.



ANALYSIS
SKILL

ANALYZING INFORMATION

How are the people in both pictures practicing democracy?

people and the slave states. And they had been bitterly disappointed in the way Jackson had lost the 1824 election because of the decision in the House of Representatives.

During the time of Jackson's popularity, many democratic reforms were made. Some states changed their qualifications for voters to grant more white males suffrage. The revised rules, however, usually excluded free blacks from voting as they had been allowed under original state constitutions. Political parties began holding public **nominating conventions**, where party members choose the party's candidates instead of the party leaders. This period of expanding democracy in the 1820s and 1830s later became known as **Jacksonian Democracy**.

READING CHECK Finding Main Ideas

How did voting rights change in the early 1800s?

Election of 1828

Jackson supporters were determined that their candidate would win the 1828 election. They formed the **Democratic Party** to support Jackson's candidacy. Many people who backed President Adams began calling themselves National Republicans.

The 1828 presidential contest was a rematch of the 1824 election. Once again, John Quincy Adams faced Andrew Jackson. Jackson chose **John C. Calhoun** as his vice presidential running mate.

The Campaign

The 1828 campaign focused a great deal on the candidates' personalities. Jackson's campaigners described him as a war hero who had been born poor and rose to success through his own hard work.

THE IMPACT TODAY

Just as they did in the 1820s, presidential campaigns today frequently focus on personal image—strong versus weak or government-insider versus newcomer, for example.

Primary Source

LETTER

People's President

Washington resident Margaret Bayard Smith was surprised by the chaos surrounding Jackson's inauguration.

“What a scene did we witness! . . . a rabble, a mob, of boys, . . . women, children, scrambling, fighting, romping . . . Cut glass and china to the amount of several thousand dollars had been broken . . . But it was the people's day, and the people's President, and the people would rule.”

—Margaret Bayard Smith, quoted in *Eyewitness to America*, edited by David Colbert

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

How does the author view the people that support Jackson?

Adams was a Harvard graduate whose father had been the second U.S. president. Jackson's supporters described Adams as being out of touch with everyday people. Even a fan of Adams agreed that he was “as cold as a lump of ice.” In turn, Adams's supporters said Jackson was hot tempered, crude, and ill-equipped to be president of the United States. When the ballots were counted, Jackson had defeated Adams, winning a record number of popular votes.

Jackson's Inauguration

Jackson's supporters saw his victory as a win for the common people. A crowd cheered outside the Capitol as he took his oath of office. The massive crowd followed Jackson to a huge party on the White House lawn. The few police officers on hand had difficulty controlling the partygoers.

As president, Jackson rewarded some of his supporters with government jobs. This **spoils system**—the practice of giving government jobs to political backers—comes from the saying “to the victor belong the spoils [valued goods] of the enemy.”

Secretary of State **Martin Van Buren** was one of Jackson's strongest allies in his official cabinet. President Jackson also relied a great deal on his **Kitchen Cabinet**, an informal group of trusted advisers who sometimes met in the White House kitchen.

READING CHECK Analyzing How might the spoils system cause disputes?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW The expansion of democracy swept Andrew Jackson into office. In the next section you will read about the increasing regional tensions that occurred during Jackson's presidency.

Section 1 Assessment

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Online Quiz

KEYWORD: SC7 HP10

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

1. a. **Recall** What changes did the new western states make that allowed more people to vote?
b. **Draw Conclusions** How did **nominating conventions** allow the people more say in politics?
c. **Predict** How might changes to the voting process brought about by **Jacksonian Democracy** affect politics in the future?
2. a. **Recall** What two new political parties faced off in the election of 1828? Which candidate did each party support?
b. **Make Inferences** Why did **Andrew Jackson** have more popular support than did Adams?
c. **Evaluate** Do you think the **spoils system** was an acceptable practice? Explain your answer.

Critical Thinking

3. **Identifying Effect** Review your notes on the election of Andrew Jackson to the presidency. Then use a cause-and-effect chart like this one to show the ways in which Jacksonian Democracy increased Americans' political power.

Jacksonian
Democracy

increased Americans'
political power

FOCUS ON WRITING

4. **Noting Significance** As you read this section, note things that made Jackson's political campaign and election significant in the history of American politics.