

This New Man

Who Counted as an American, 1782–1800

- Unit 3**
- 3.11 Developing an American Identity
 - 3.12 Movement in the Early Republic

“What then is the American, this new man? ...
Here individuals of all nations are melted into
a new race of men, whose labours and
posterity will one day cause great changes in
the world.”

J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur

Letters from an American Farmer, Letter III, 1782

Original spelling.

What the exam expects

Evaluate the extent to which settler expansion influenced North America from 1754 to 1800.

Settler expansion drove many of the period's conflicts, because settlers moved west faster than any government could control them. Colonists defied Britain's Proclamation of 1763 line, and after 1783 **westward migration** for cheap land set off war with the **Western Confederacy**. Frontier farmers also rose against a federal tax in the **Whiskey Rebellion** until Washington sent militia.

Describe one change in relations between American Indians and the United States from 1776 to 1815.

In the 1790s Native nations north of the Ohio went from winning battles to signing away their land. The **Western Confederacy** beat two U.S. armies with British guns. Then Anthony Wayne won at **Fallen Timbers**, Britain agreed in **Jay's Treaty** to leave its forts, and the nations gave up most of Ohio in the **Treaty of Greenville**.

Explain how attitudes toward slavery in the North and South diverged from 1776 to 1800.

After 1776 slavery began to shrink in the North and grow in the South. The **Pennsylvania Gradual Abolition Act** started a northern pattern of slow emancipation, and the **Northwest Ordinance** banned slavery north of the Ohio. In the South the **cotton gin** made slavery more profitable after 1793, and slavery spread with cotton across inland Georgia and South Carolina.

Explain the continuities and changes in American culture from 1754 to 1800.

After 1776 Americans set out to build a national culture, yet much of it reworked British and classical models, and the regions stayed different. *Letters from an American Farmer* hailed a "new man," but **Noah Webster's** American English was still English and **Neoclassical architecture** copied Rome. **Disestablishment** came fast in Virginia and took until 1833 in Massachusetts.

Don't mix these up

- ✗ "Settlers crossed the Appalachians mainly to escape crowded coastal cities." Cheap, plentiful land drew them west, since most were farm families who wanted land of their own.
- ✗ "Jay's Treaty opened the Mississippi River and New Orleans to western farmers." Pinckney's Treaty with Spain did that in 1795, while Jay's Treaty with Britain got British troops out of their forts on U.S. soil.
- ✗ "The cotton gin reduced the South's need for enslaved workers." The gin only pulled seeds from cotton, so it made upland cotton profitable and raised demand for enslaved people to plant and pick it.

Study list

	What it was	Why it matters
Disestablishment 1776–1833	State laws that ended tax support for an official church. Virginia went furthest with Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom (1786), which barred forcing anyone to attend or pay for a church.	Virginia's statute became a model for the First Amendment, which barred Congress from setting up a national church.
Pennsylvania Gradual Abolition Act Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery 1780	The first state law to end slavery gradually. It freed no one already enslaved, and children later born to enslaved mothers had to serve their mothers' enslavers until age 28.	Northern states began ending slavery by slow legal steps, while slavery in the South and West kept growing.
<i>Letters from an American Farmer</i> 1782	J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur's essays on American life. Letter III asks, "What then is the American, this new man?" and answers that Europeans of many nations melt into one people.	Crèvecoeur pictured Americans as a new people, separate from Europe, just as the United States won its independence.
Noah Webster 1783–1789	A Connecticut teacher whose spelling book (1783) taught generations of children to read. His <i>Dissertations on the English Language</i> (1789) called for an American standard of English.	Webster wanted "a system of our own, in language as well as government," yet his American English stayed close to Britain's.
Western Confederacy 1785–1795	An alliance of the Shawnee, Miami, Delaware, and other nations that fought U.S. settlement north of the Ohio River. With British guns, it beat U.S. armies in 1790 and 1791.	Its rout of Arthur St. Clair's army, the U.S. Army's worst defeat by Native nations, pushed Congress to raise a bigger one.
Neoclassical architecture Federal style 1780s–1790s	A building style that borrowed the columns of ancient Greece and Rome. Jefferson modeled Virginia's Capitol on a Roman temple, and Philadelphia's First Bank used the lighter Federal style.	Leaders copied ancient Rome to present the United States as a republic, so a new national identity took an old European form.
Northwest Ordinance 1787	The law that set up the Northwest Territory, with an elected assembly at 5,000 free adult men and statehood on equal terms at 60,000 free inhabitants. It banned slavery and encouraged schools.	Its slavery ban made the Ohio River a line between free and slave soil, though enslavers could reclaim people who fled north.

	What it was	Why it matters
Naturalization Act of 1790 1790	Congress's first rule for making immigrants citizens. It let any alien who was a "free white person" become a citizen after two years' residence by proving good character in court.	From the start, Congress made whiteness a test for naturalized citizenship, so European immigrants could become citizens and others could not.
Westward migration 1780s–1790s	The rush of settlers across the Appalachians after 1783, by Daniel Boone's Wilderness Road and down the Ohio River, into Kentucky and Tennessee. Most came for cheap land.	Kentucky's population nearly tripled in the 1790s, and settlers pressing onto Native hunting grounds fed war north of the Ohio.
Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 1793	A federal law that let an enslaver seize a person who had escaped to another state and, after a brief hearing with no jury, take that person back.	Congress put federal power behind slavery in its first years, and the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 later toughened that support.
Cotton gin 1793	Eli Whitney's machine for pulling the seeds from short-staple cotton. It made upland cotton profitable, first in inland South Carolina and Georgia and after 1800 farther west.	Heavy British demand for cotton tied the South's future to slavery just as northern states were ending it.
Whiskey Rebellion 1794	An uprising of western Pennsylvania farmers against Hamilton's 1791 whiskey tax, which they had to pay in scarce cash. Rebels burned the house of the federal tax inspector, John Neville.	Like Shays's Rebellion, it pitted backcountry farmers against eastern-made taxes, but this time a stronger national government enforced its tax.
African Methodist Episcopal Church AME Church 1794–1816	Richard Allen's Bethel Church in Philadelphia and the national denomination it formed with other Black congregations in 1816. Allen, a formerly enslaved preacher, opened Bethel after white Methodists segregated worship.	Free Black Americans answered discrimination by building institutions of their own, with churches at the center of community life.
Battle of Fallen Timbers 1794	Anthony Wayne's victory over the Western Confederacy near present-day Toledo, Ohio, in a campaign that used Chickasaw and Choctaw scouts. Retreating warriors found the gates of nearby British Fort Miamis shut.	Wayne then burned Native towns and cornfields, and the confederacy, short of food and without British support, could not keep fighting.
Jay's Treaty Jay Treaty 1794	Chief Justice John Jay's treaty with Britain. Britain agreed to leave its forts in the Northwest by 1796 but said nothing about impressment, and the Senate approved it by exactly two-thirds.	Britain had armed Native nations from its western forts since 1783, and its promise to leave weakened Native resistance in the Northwest.

	What it was	Why it matters
Domestic slave trade internal slave trade 1790s	The sale of enslaved people from Virginia and Maryland to cotton lands farther south and west, which often split families. It was underway by the 1790s and grew much larger after 1808.	When Congress banned slave imports in 1808, Chesapeake enslavers supplied the cotton frontier by selling people they already held.
Treaty of Greenville 1795	The treaty in which 12 Native nations gave up most of present-day Ohio for \$20,000 in goods and yearly payments. They also agreed to sell other land only to the United States.	The United States turned a battlefield win into a land cession, a pattern of war and treaty that Tecumseh later rose against.
Pinckney's Treaty 1795	Thomas Pinckney's treaty with Spain, which opened the Mississippi to American shipping, granted a three-year right of deposit (duty-free storage) at New Orleans, and set Florida's northern border at the 31st parallel.	Opening the river settled western farmers' main complaint against Spain and tied the West more firmly to the Union.
Gabriel's Rebellion 1800	A plan by Gabriel, an enslaved blacksmith, to lead enslaved men in seizing Richmond, Virginia's capital, in August 1800. A storm and two informers stopped it before it began.	Gabriel's men turned the Revolution's own words against slavery, and one witness said they planned a flag reading "death or Liberty."

Also in the film

Charles Willson Peale 1786	Philadelphia painter who opened a museum that set his portraits of Revolutionary leaders beside natural history displays.
Indian Intercourse Act 1790	The law that let only the federal government buy Native land, a rule settlers and traders largely ignored.
Little Turtle 1790–1795	Miami war leader who helped defeat two U.S. armies, then challenged the Greenville boundary before signing the treaty.
Pierre-Charles L'Enfant 1791	French-born engineer who drew the plan for the federal city on the Potomac, later Washington, D.C.
Blue Jacket 1791–1795	Shawnee war leader against St. Clair and Wayne who told the Greenville council, "We must think of war no more."
Gilbert Stuart 1796	Painter whose unfinished 1796 portrait of Washington became the model for the one-dollar bill.
Charles Brockden Brown 1798	Philadelphia novelist whose <i>Wieland</i> set a European-style Gothic story in a Pennsylvania family's home.

Short-answer practice

“You have pointed out to us the boundary line between the Indians and the United States, but I now take the liberty to inform you, that that line cuts off from the Indians a large portion of country, which has been enjoyed by my forefathers time immemorial, without molestation or dispute. The print of my ancestors’ houses are every where to be seen in this portion.”

Little Turtle, Miami leader, speech at the Greenville treaty council, July 22, 1795, as recorded through interpreters

(a) Briefly describe ONE argument Little Turtle makes in the excerpt.

(b) Briefly explain ONE historical development from 1783 to 1794 that led to the conflict over the land Little Turtle describes.

(c) Briefly explain ONE way Great Britain’s actions affected the conflict over this land from 1783 to 1795.

Disestablishment

1776–1833

This New Man

Pennsylvania Gradual Abolition Act

Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery

1780

This New Man

Letters from an American Farmer

1782

This New Man

Noah Webster

1783–1789

This New Man

Western Confederacy

1785–1795

This New Man

Neoclassical architecture

Federal style

1780s–1790s

This New Man

Northwest Ordinance

1787

This New Man

Naturalization Act of 1790

1790

This New Man

Westward migration

1780s–1790s

This New Man

Fugitive Slave Act of 1793

1793

This New Man

The first state law to end slavery gradually, by freeing enslaved women's future children at 28.
Other northern states copied its gradual model.

Connecticut teacher who wrote a 1783 spelling book and called for an American standard of English.
His books gave Americans a common way to spell.

Building style borrowing Greek and Roman columns, as in Jefferson's Virginia Capitol.
The style became the standard look of American public buildings.

First federal naturalization law, open only to an immigrant who was a "free white person."
Racial limits on naturalization lasted until 1952.

Federal law letting enslavers seize people who escaped to other states, with no jury trial.
Escaping to a free state did not make anyone legally free.

State laws that ended tax support for an official church after the Revolution.
New England kept church taxes longest, until 1833 in Massachusetts.

Crèvecoeur's essays on the American "new man," a blend of many European nations.
His "new man" was European, leaving out Black and Native Americans.

Shawnee, Miami, and allied nations that united, with British guns, to stop settlement north of the Ohio.
It beat two U.S. armies before losing at Fallen Timbers.

The 1787 law that set a path to statehood and banned slavery north of the Ohio.
Most later territories followed its path to statehood.

After 1783 settlers poured across the Appalachians into Kentucky and Tennessee, chasing cheap land.
Kentucky (1792) and Tennessee (1796) joined as slave states.

Cotton gin

1793

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Whiskey Rebellion

1794

This New Man

African Methodist Episcopal Church

AME Church

1794–1816

This New Man

Battle of Fallen Timbers

1794

This New Man

Jay's Treaty

Jay Treaty

1794

This New Man

Domestic slave trade

internal slave trade

1790s

This New Man

Treaty of Greenville

1795

This New Man

Pinckney's Treaty

1795

This New Man

Gabriel's Rebellion

1800

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A 1794 revolt by western Pennsylvania farmers against the federal whiskey tax.

The new federal government proved it could enforce its laws.

Anthony Wayne's 1794 defeat of the Western Confederacy in northwestern Ohio.

Defeat forced the confederacy to make peace at Greenville.

Selling enslaved people from the Chesapeake to new cotton lands, often breaking up families.

Forced migration carried slavery west with cotton.

Thomas Pinckney's 1795 treaty with Spain that opened the Mississippi and New Orleans to American trade.

Western crops could now reach the sea through New Orleans.

Eli Whitney's machine for removing cotton seeds, which made upland cotton profitable.

Planters needed more enslaved workers as cotton spread.

One of the first independent Black denominations, which grew from Richard Allen's Bethel Church in Philadelphia.

Black Methodists gained a church that white Methodists could not control.

John Jay's 1794 treaty in which Britain agreed to leave its western forts but not to stop impressment.

The fight over it hardened the split into two parties.

The 1795 treaty in which 12 defeated Native nations gave up most of present-day Ohio.

Settlers moved into Ohio, which became a state in 1803.

An enslaved blacksmith's 1800 plot to seize Richmond, which a storm and two informers foiled.

Virginia hanged 26 men and tightened its slave laws.

Model answers

- (a) Briefly describe ONE argument Little Turtle makes in the excerpt.

Little Turtle argued that the U.S. boundary line cut off a large part of his people's country. His ancestors had held that land without dispute since time immemorial, and traces of their houses still stood everywhere as proof.

- (b) Briefly explain ONE historical development from 1783 to 1794 that led to the conflict over the land Little Turtle describes.

In the 1783 Treaty of Paris, Britain recognized a U.S. border at the Mississippi, though no Native nation took part. Settlers seeking cheap land then crossed the Ohio, and the Western Confederacy went to war to stop them.

- (c) Briefly explain ONE way Great Britain's actions affected the conflict over this land from 1783 to 1795.

Britain kept forts on U.S. soil and armed the Western Confederacy from them, which kept the war going. In 1794, though, British Fort Miamis shut its gates on warriors fleeing Fallen Timbers, and without British help the confederacy gave up most of Ohio at Greenville in 1795.