AP US History Study Guide: Period 4 (1800–1848)

Period 4 Overview (1800-1848): The Age of Jefferson & Jackson

The period from 1800 to 1848 marked a transformative era in American history, characterized by the nation's struggle to define its democratic ideals and the rapid expansion of its borders and economy. Politically, the United States developed a more participatory democracy, expanding suffrage to virtually all adult white men and giving rise to new, robust political parties like the Democrats and the Whigs. Geographically and economically, the nation grew dramatically through acquisitions like the Louisiana Purchase and initiatives spurred by Manifest Destiny, while a market revolution, fueled by innovations in technology and transportation, reshaped society, agriculture, and commerce. This era of growth, however, was also marked by deepening sectional tensions. Debates over tariffs, the national bank, internal improvements, and, most critically, the extension of slavery into new territories, created profound regional divisions that would challenge the very unity of the republic.

Key AP Historical Themes in Period 4

- American and National Identity (NAT): The nation forged a new national culture through art, literature, and philosophy while reform movements and regional identities challenged a unified definition of what it meant to be an American.
- Politics and Power (POL): This period saw the expansion of suffrage, the rise of the Second Party System (Democrats and Whigs), and critical Supreme Court decisions that established the primacy of federal power.
- Work, Exchange, and Technology (WXT): The Market Revolution, driven by new technologies like the cotton gin and transportation systems like canals and railroads, fundamentally altered how Americans worked and lived, creating a more integrated national economy.
- Culture and Society (CUL): The Second Great Awakening spurred significant moral and social reform movements, including abolitionism, temperance, and women's rights, while new ideals like transcendentalism influenced American thought.
- Migration and Settlement (MIG): Large numbers of international migrants, particularly from Ireland and Germany, settled in northern cities, while internal migration surged westward, leading to the forced removal of American Indians.
- Geography and the Environment (GEO): U.S. territorial expansion was a dominant theme, from the Louisiana Purchase to the acquisition of Oregon and

the Southwest, which in turn spurred debates over the use of land and the spread of slavery.
- America in the World (WOR): The nation sought to establish an independent global presence through diplomatic efforts like the Monroe Doctrine and military actions like the War of 1812, all while expanding its foreign trade.

Breakdown by Key Concepts

Key Concept 4.1

- Main Idea: The United States developed a more modern, participatory democracy and a new national culture, even as Americans debated the nation's core democratic ideals and launched reform movements to align society with those principles.
- Essential Vocabulary:
    - Second Party System: The political system that emerged in the 1820s and 1830s, characterized by competition between the Democratic Party, led by Andrew Jackson, and the Whig Party, led by Henry Clay.
    - Judicial Review: The principle, established by Chief Justice John Marshall in the case of *Marbury v. Madison*, that the Supreme Court has the authority to determine the constitutionality of laws passed by Congress and the states.
    - Second Great Awakening: A Protestant religious revival during the early 19th century that emphasized individual salvation and moral action, inspiring major social reform movements in temperance, abolition, and women's rights.
- Illustrative Examples:
    - Growth of Participatory Democracy:
        - The Election of 1800 ("Revolution of 1800") marked a peaceful transfer of power between parties.
        - By 1828, property requirements for voting were largely eliminated for white men, ushering in the "Age of the Common Man."
        - Political debates raged over tariffs (Tariff of 1828, Compromise Tariff of 1833), the national bank (Jackson's veto of the Second Bank), and federally funded internal improvements.
        - Andrew Jackson's use of the spoils system rewarded political supporters with government jobs.
    - Judicial Power:
        - Chief Justice John Marshall's court asserted federal power over states in landmark cases like *McCullough v. Maryland* (upholding

the national bank) and *Gibbons v. Ogden* (affirming federal control of interstate commerce).
    - New National Culture & Reform:
        - Transcendentalist writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau emphasized individualism and nature.
        - The Hudson River School created a distinct American style of landscape painting.
        - Reform movements emerged, including Dorothea Dix's efforts for prison reform, Horace Mann's advocacy for education reform, and the American Temperance Society.
        - Abolitionist movements grew, with figures like William Lloyd Garrison calling for "immediate and uncompensated" emancipation.
        - The women's rights movement was formally launched at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, issuing the Declaration of Sentiments.
- Historical Thinking Skill Connection (Continuity and Change): To what extent did the Jacksonian Era's "Age of the Common Man" represent a fundamental change from the political ideals and practices of the Jeffersonian democratic-republicans?

Key Concept 4.2

- Main Idea: Technological, agricultural, and commercial innovations powerfully accelerated the American economy, leading to a "market revolution" that caused profound changes in U.S. society, regional identities, and family structures.
- Essential Vocabulary:
    - Market Revolution: The economic transformation in the early 19th century that saw a shift from a semi-subsistence economy of scattered farms and artisans to a national network of industry and commerce.
    - Lowell System: A factory system used in the textile mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, which primarily employed young, unmarried women and housed them in company-owned dormitories.
    - Cult of Domesticity: A widespread cultural creed that glorified the customary functions of the homemaker. It defined women's roles as being confined to the private, domestic sphere while men occupied the public sphere of work and politics.
- Illustrative Examples:
    - Technological Innovations:
        - Eli Whitney’s cotton gin and interchangeable parts.

        - Samuel Slater’s factory system and textile machinery.
        - John Deere’s steel plow and Cyrus McCormick’s mechanical reaper, which revolutionized agriculture.
        - Robert Fulton’s steamboat (*The Clermont*) and the proliferation of steam locomotives.
        - Samuel Morse's telegraph, which improved communication.
    - Transportation and Interdependence:
        - The Erie Canal (completed 1825) connected the Great Lakes to the Atlantic, sparking a "Canal Era."
        - The Cumberland (National) Road was the first major federally funded highway.
        - Transportation networks linked the manufacturing North with the agricultural Midwest more closely than either was linked to the South.
    - Societal Changes:
        - The factory system replaced semi-subsistence agriculture for many workers.
        - A growing gap emerged between a small, wealthy business elite and a large population of laboring poor.
        - Immigration from Ireland and Germany provided a new source of labor for industrializing northern cities.
        - The South's reliance on "King Cotton," produced by enslaved labor, deepened its regional identity and created a planter aristocracy.
- Historical Thinking Skill Connection (Causation): What were the most significant technological and financial causes of the Market Revolution in the first half of the 19th century?

Key Concept 4.3

- Main Idea: The United States' focus on expanding its national borders, increasing foreign trade, and asserting its dominance in the Western Hemisphere shaped its foreign policy and fueled both government and private expansionist initiatives.
- Essential Vocabulary:
    - Manifest Destiny: The 19th-century belief that the United States was divinely ordained to expand its dominion and spread democratic institutions across the North American continent.
    - Monroe Doctrine (1823): A U.S. foreign policy declaration that warned European nations against further colonization or intervention in the Western Hemisphere, asserting an American sphere of influence.

    - Missouri Compromise (1820): A congressional agreement that admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, while prohibiting slavery in the Louisiana Purchase territory north of the 36°30′ parallel.
- Illustrative Examples:
    - Territorial and Diplomatic Expansion:
        - The Louisiana Purchase (1803) doubled the size of the nation.
        - The Adams-Onis Treaty (1819) resulted in the U.S. acquisition of Florida from Spain.
        - The Oregon Treaty with Britain (1846) established the northern border at the 49th parallel.
        - The annexation of Texas (1845) and the subsequent Mexican-American War (1846-1848) were major manifestations of expansionism.
    - American Indian Removal:
        - Tecumseh's Confederacy resisted American encroachment in the Northwest.
        - The Indian Removal Act of 1830 led to the forced relocation of the Five Civilized Tribes.
        - The forced march of the Cherokee people from their lands became known as the Trail of Tears.
    - Sectional Conflict over Slavery's Extension:
        - The debate over Missouri's admission to the Union prompted Thomas Jefferson's "firebell in the night" warning about the dangers of sectionalism.
        - Southern leaders, like John C. Calhoun, began defending slavery as a "positive good" rather than a necessary evil.
        - The gag rule in Congress and the proposed Wilmot Proviso (1846) demonstrated the growing inability to compromise over the issue of slavery in new territories.
- Historical Thinking Skill Connection (Comparison): Compare the economic and political arguments used by slavery's defenders in the South with those used by the growing abolitionist movement in the North between 1820 and 1848.

Key People, Groups, & Ideas

Name/Group/Idea	Significance in Period 4	Key Concept Connection

Thomas Jefferson	Oversaw the Louisiana Purchase (1803) and his election in 1800 marked the "Revolution of 1800," a peaceful transfer of political power.	4.1, 4.3
Andrew Jackson	As president, symbolized the "Age of the Common Man," dismantled the Second Bank of the U.S., and implemented the Indian Removal Act of 1830.	4.1, 4.3
John Marshall	As Chief Justice, his Supreme Court decisions (*Marbury v. Madison, McCullough v. Maryland*) established the primacy of the judiciary and federal law over state laws.	4.1
Henry Clay	A leading Whig, he promoted the "American System" of internal improvements, protective tariffs, and a national bank. He was a central figure in political compromises.	4.1, 4.2
The Whig & Democratic Parties	Formed the Second Party System, debating the role of the federal government regarding the national bank, tariffs, and internal improvements.	4.1
The Second Great Awakening	A Protestant revival that inspired numerous social reform movements, including temperance, public education (Horace Mann), and prison reform (Dorothea Dix).	4.1
Transcendentalism	A philosophical and literary movement, led by figures like Emerson and Thoreau, that	4.1

	emphasized individualism, nature, and human perfectibility.	
The American System	Henry Clay's economic plan to unify the nation through protective tariffs, a national bank, and federal funding for roads and canals. Generated significant debate.	4.1, 4.2
The Lowell System	A textile factory system in Massachusetts that primarily employed young women, representing a major shift in production, labor, and gender roles during the Market Revolution.	4.2
The Seneca Falls Convention	The first major women's rights convention in the U.S. (1848), where leaders like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott issued the Declaration of Sentiments.	4.1

Short Answer Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 complete sentences, drawing upon the information provided in the historical key concepts.

1. How did the decisions of the Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Marshall affect the relationship between the federal government and state governments?
2. Describe the key disagreements between the Democratic Party, led by Andrew Jackson, and the Whig Party, led by Henry Clay, during the Second Party System.
3. What social and intellectual trends contributed to the rise of the Second Great Awakening, and what types of movements did it inspire?
4. Identify two distinct strategies employed by abolitionist and antislavery movements and explain the primary goal of each.

5. What was the "market revolution," and which key inventions increased the efficiency of manufacturing and agriculture during this period?
6. How did new transportation systems like canals and roads impact the American economy and the relationship between different regions?
7. Explain how the market revolution changed gender and family roles, leading to the rise of the "cult of domesticity."
8. Besides the Louisiana Purchase, what were some of the key diplomatic efforts and military actions the U.S. used to expand its influence over North America?
9. What was the federal government's response to American Indian resistance to frontier expansion, as exemplified by the Indian Removal Act?
10. How did the Missouri Compromise of 1820 attempt to resolve sectional tensions over the expansion of slavery, and why was it considered only a temporary solution?

Answer Key

1. Supreme Court decisions under John Marshall established the primacy of the judiciary in interpreting the Constitution. These rulings, such as in *McCullough v. Maryland* and *Gibbons v. Ogden*, asserted that federal laws took precedence over state laws, thereby strengthening the power of the federal government.
2. The Democrats and Whigs fundamentally disagreed on the role and powers of the federal government. Their key points of contention included the existence of a national bank, the implementation of protective tariffs, and the use of federal funds for internal improvements like roads and canals.
3. The Second Great Awakening was a response to rationalism, the market revolution, and increased social mobility. This Protestant revival was driven by democratic and individualistic beliefs, and it inspired moral and social reforms such as the temperance movement, prison reform, and education reform, as well as utopian communities.
4. One strategy was gradual emancipation, promoted by groups like the American Colonization Society. Another, more radical strategy was "immediate and uncompensated" emancipation, championed by William Lloyd Garrison and the American Anti-slavery Society. Abolitionists also engaged in direct action through efforts like the Underground Railroad.
5. The market revolution was a shift in production and commerce where organized manufacturing and market relationships between producers and consumers became dominant. Key inventions that increased efficiency included Eli Whitney's

cotton gin and interchangeable parts, Samuel Slater's factory system, John Deere's steel plow, and Cyrus McCormick's mechanical reaper.

6. New transportation systems like the Erie Canal and the Cumberland Road extended and enlarged markets, fostering regional interdependence. These networks, supported by legislation, linked the North and Midwest more closely than either region was linked to the South, promoting regional specialization.
7. The market revolution moved production outside the home, leading to a redefinition of gender roles. This resulted in the "cult of domesticity," an ideal that emphasized the separation of public (male) and private (female) spheres. Women like the Grimke sisters and Lydia Child challenged this new domestic ideal.
8. The U.S. sought influence through diplomatic efforts like the Adams-Onis Treaty (1819) to acquire Florida and the Monroe Doctrine (1823) to assert control over the Western Hemisphere. It also engaged in military actions such as the First Seminole War and the Mexican-American War to claim territory.
9. American Indian resistance to expansion led to a series of wars and federal efforts to control and relocate these populations. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was a central piece of this policy, leading to the forced relocation of American Indian populations to designated "Indian Territory," most notoriously via the Trail of Tears.
10. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 was a congressional attempt to maintain the sectional balance between free and slave states in the Senate. It only temporarily stemmed tensions, as exemplified by Thomas Jefferson's warning of a "firebell in the night," because it did not resolve the underlying moral and political conflicts over the extension of slavery into newly acquired territories.