

Evaluate the extent to which events from 1775-1800 fostered and shaped the development of a national identity.

Document 1: Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, "*Letters From an American Farmer*" 1782

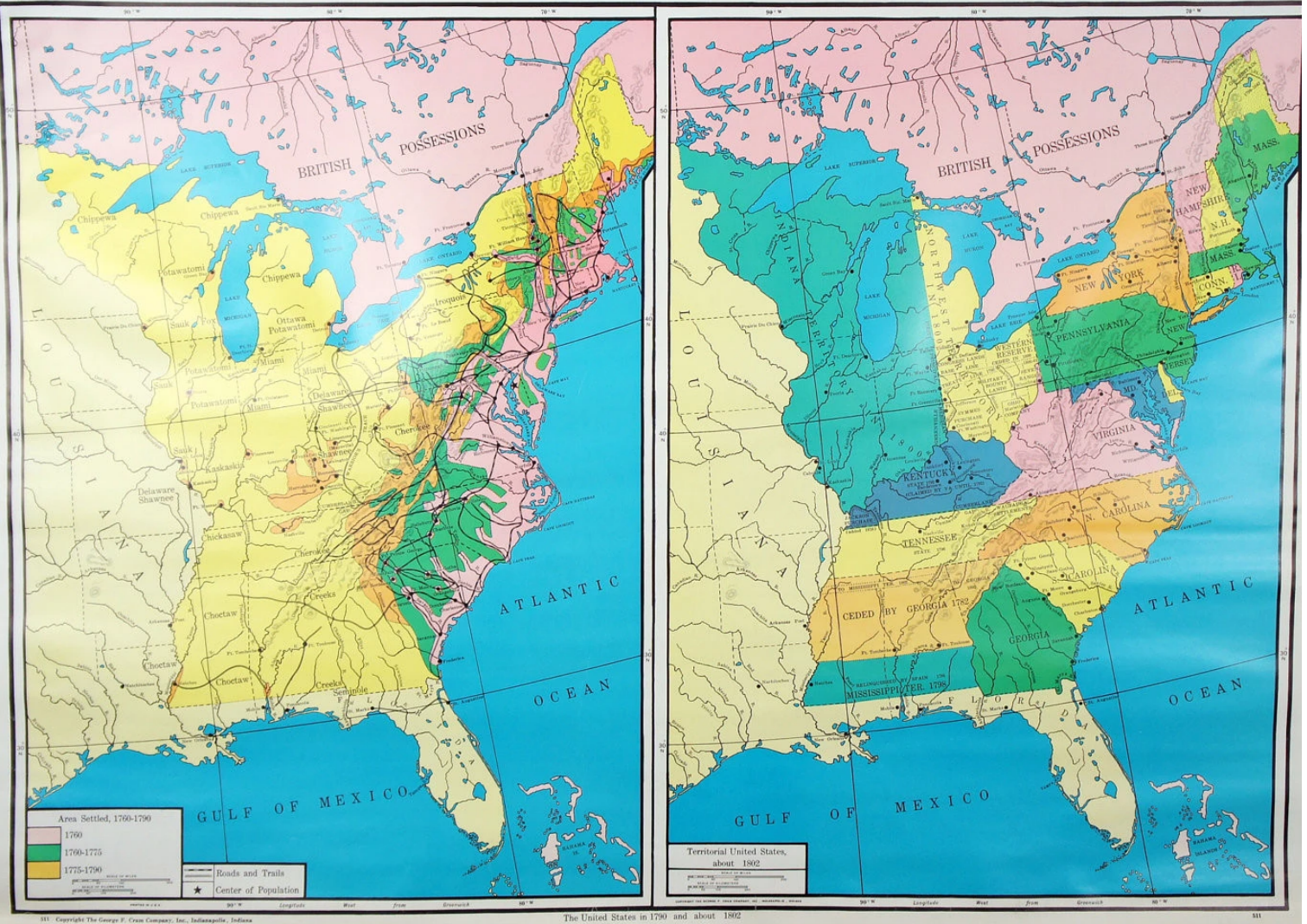
What then is the American, this new man? He is either a European or the descendant of an European; hence that strange mixture of blood which you will find in no other country...He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds....Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity [descendants] will one day cause great changes in the world... The inhabitants of Massachusetts, the middle states, the southern ones will be as different as their climates; their only points of unity will be those of religion and language.

The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles. He must therefore entertain new ideas and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labor, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence. This is an American.

Describe Doc 1 here:

Evaluate the extent to which events from 1775-1800 fostered and shaped the development of a national identity.

Document 2: The United States settlement maps, 1790 (left) and 1800 (right)



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Document 3: ISAAC WELD, Travels throughout the States of North America 1797

What I have here said, respecting the condition and treatment of slaves, appertains, it must be remembered, to those only who are upon the large plantations in Virginia; the lot of such as are unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the lower class of white people, and of hard task-masters in the towns, is very different. In the Carolinas and Georgia again, slavery presents itself in very different colors from what it does even in its worst form in Virginia. I am told that it is no uncommon thing there, to see gangs of negroes staked at a horse race, and to see these unfortunate beings bandied about from one set of drunken gamblers to another for days together. How much to be deprecated [disapproved of] are the laws which suffer such abuses to exist! yet these are laws enacted by people who boast of their love of liberty and independence, and who presume to say that it is in the breasts of Americans alone that the blessings of freedom are held in just estimation .

Document 4: Benjamin Rush, Information to Europeans Who Are Disposed to Migrate to the United States of America, 1790

It is agreeable to observe the influence which our republican governments have already had upon the tempers and manners of our citizens.

Amusement is everywhere giving way to business, and local politeness is yielding to universal civility. We differ about forms and modes in politics, but this difference begins to submit to the restraints of moral and social obligation. Order and tranquility appear to be the natural consequence of a well-balanced republic, for where men can remove the evils of their governments by frequent elections, they will seldom appeal to the less certain remedies of mobs or arms. It is with singular pleasure that I can add further that, notwithstanding the virulence of our dissensions about independence and the federal government, there is now scarcely a citizen of the United States who is not satisfied with both and who does not believe this country to be in a happier and safer situation than it was in the most flourishing years of its dependence upon Great Britain.

Document 5: George Washington, Farewell Address, 1796

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

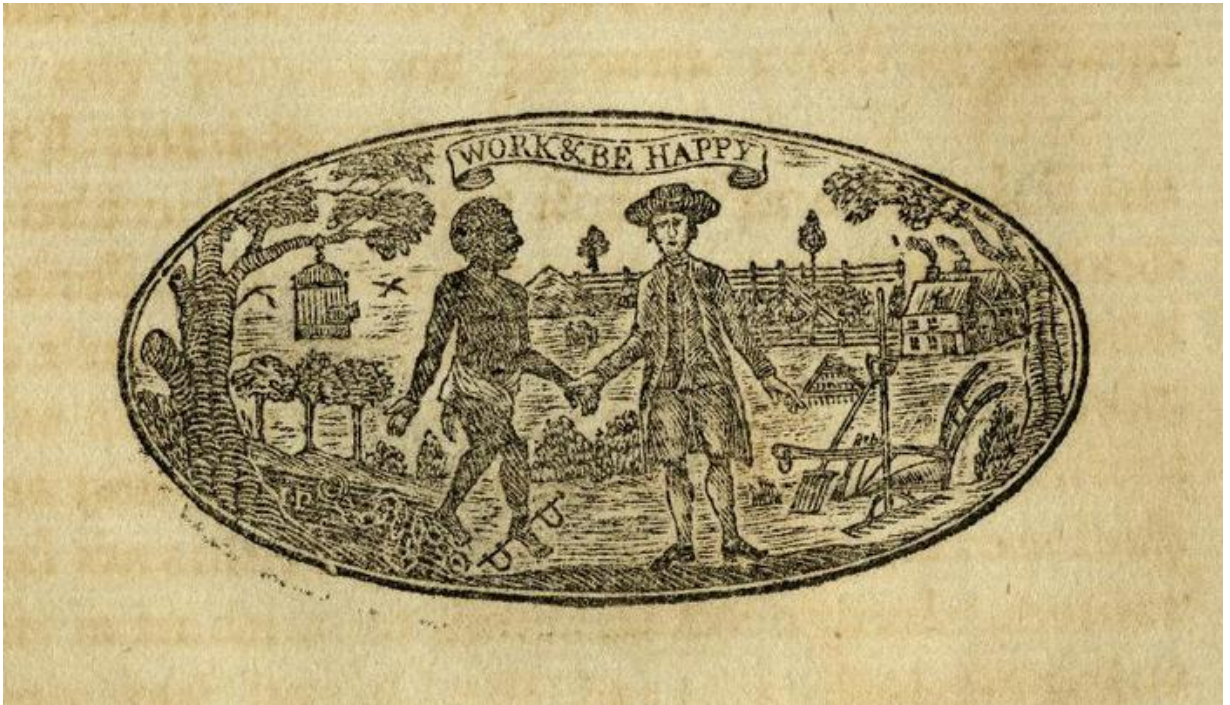
The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

Document 6: Noah Webster ON THE NECESSITY OF FOSTERING AMERICAN IDENTITY AFTER INDEPENDENCE, 1787

Systems of Education should be adopted and pursued which may . . . implant in the minds of the American youth the principles of virtue and of liberty. . . Education, in a great measure, forms the moral characters of men, and morals are the basis of government...But every child in America should be acquainted with his own country. He should read books that provide him with ideas that will be useful to him in life and practice as a citizen...In America, female education should have for its object what is useful. Young ladies should be taught to speak and write their own language with purity...However ambitious a woman may be to pursue ambitions outside the home, her real merit is known only at home...Real honor and permanent esteem are always secured by those who preside over their own families with dignity and instill the moral and virtuous traits of citizens in them...

Document 7: Societies founded to promote progress and national identity



Seal of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, 1800