

Module 4: Creating a New Nation - 1788 to the 1840s
Topic 4 Content: Andrew Jackson – The Jacksonian Era Notes

Introduction



Andrew Jackson's election to the presidency spurred the Jacksonian Era, a political movement that achieved greater democracy for the "common man." Click **Start** to learn about President Andrew Jackson and the Jacksonian Era.

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New Political Strategies



Almost as soon as he lost the election of 1824, Andrew Jackson began laying the groundwork for the next presidential election. He felt that he personified the “democratic spirit” of the people. In the election of 1828, Andrew Jackson used new campaign tactics to successfully defeat John Quincy Adams. Those new tactics included things like campaign rallies, kissing babies, and greeting supporters. Prior to this election, most candidates stayed home and did very little to actually campaign by meeting with voters. With his victory, Jackson became the seventh president of the United States and the first from a western state.

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Age of the Common Man

Andrew Jackson-The Jacksonian Era



“Age of the Common Man”

- A time marked by an increase in participation in politics by everyday citizens
- Voting rights included all white males
- Size of the electorate increased
- Advantageous to appeal to the “common man”

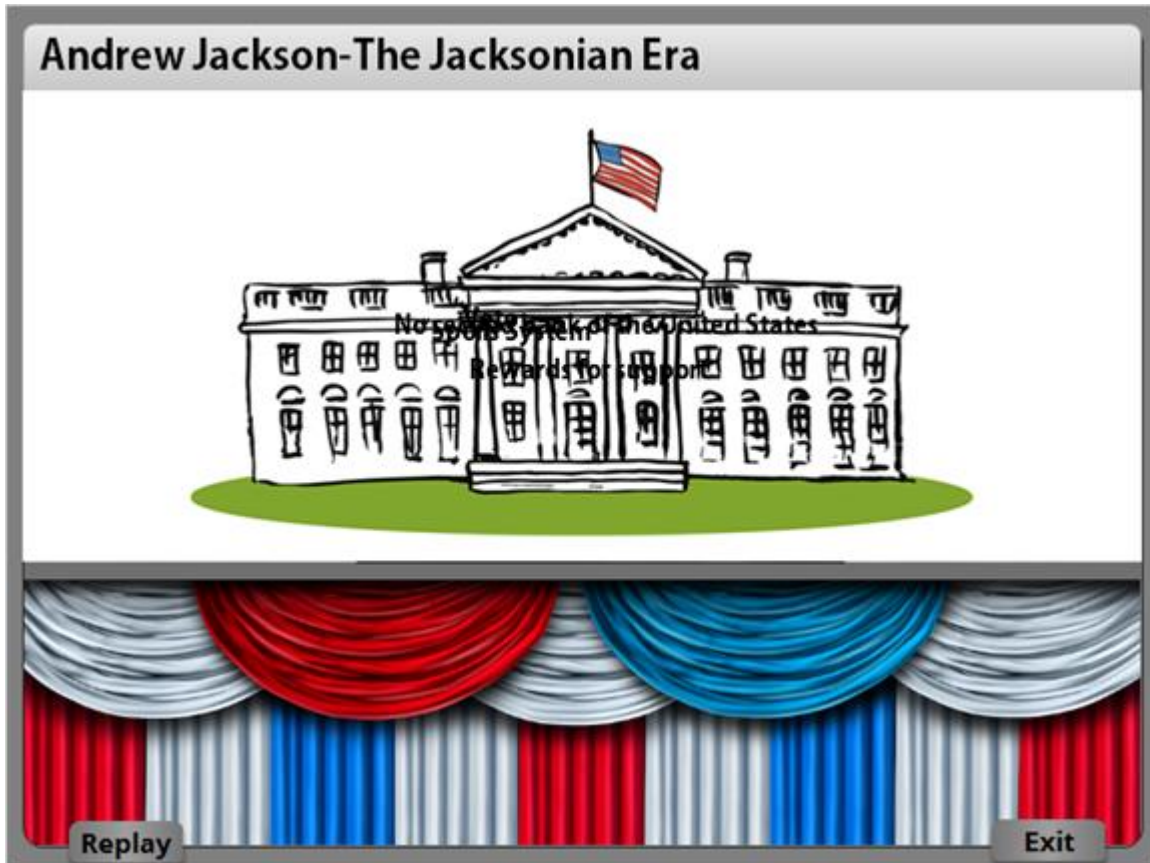


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Andrew Jackson’s election to the presidency was considered the start of the “age of the common man” in American politics - a time marked by an increase in participation in politics by every day citizens, not simply those classified as wealthy or elite. During the 1820s, states began changing the qualifications to vote, to include all white males. Before these changes, only those white males who owned property were allowed to vote. This greatly increased the size of the electorate, or the group of people who could vote. As seen in the election of 1828, the presidential candidate who appealed to this larger electorate made up of more common men would be victorious.

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A Change in Politics



President Jackson changed the way both the presidency and politics operated. He challenged the economic elite by refusing to renew the charter for the Second Bank of the United States. For the first time in American history, he used public offices as rewards for his supporters. This was called the “spoils system” and it challenged the political elite of Washington. He was the first president to make extensive use of the veto, a power that greatly increased the power of the president. Many of the changes that Andrew Jackson instituted are common today, but during his time, they were new and caused some of his opponents to claim that he was acting like a king.