

Democracy With Limits

Trace the ideas, forces, and limits of the Jacksonian era.

SS.8.A.4.16 "Identify key ideas and influences of Jacksonian democracy."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three statements that describe ideas of Jacksonian democracy, and circle phrases that name forces or events that influenced the movement.

The Jacksonian Era

- ① In the 1820s and 1830s, many states removed property requirements for voting. This change allowed more white men to vote, even if they did not own land. Andrew Jackson and his supporters presented this wider suffrage as a victory for the "common man." Jacksonian democracy emphasized political equality for white male citizens and argued that government should respond to ordinary voters. It did not extend equal political rights to women, enslaved people, free Black people, or most Native Americans.
- ② New campaign methods helped spread these ideas. Democrats organized local committees, held rallies, and used newspapers to reach voters. Jackson's supporters also attacked the Second Bank of the United States, which they portrayed as serving wealthy interests rather than the public. Their distrust of concentrated economic power influenced Jackson's Bank War. In government, Jackson defended the spoils system, the practice of giving many jobs to political supporters. Supporters called it rotation in office, while critics feared it rewarded loyalty over skill.
- ③ Jacksonian democracy expanded participation for some people but created sharp limits for others. In 1830, Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act, supporting the forced relocation of southeastern Native nations. The policy led to immense suffering, including the Cherokee Trail of Tears. This action conflicted with the movement's language about political fairness. The era also saw fierce debates over federal power, including South Carolina's challenge to a federal tariff. Jackson opposed nullification and insisted that states could not cancel federal laws.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What idea about voting was central to Jacksonian democracy? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.

- 2 What economic concern influenced Jackson's opposition to the Second Bank of the United States?

- 3 How did local committees, rallies, and newspapers help advance Jacksonian democracy?

- 4 How did the Indian Removal Act reveal a limit of Jacksonian democracy?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write exactly four sentences explaining how wider voting rights and new campaign methods worked together to increase political participation. Then explain how Native removal shows that this participation was not equal for all people.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline three statements that describe ideas of Jacksonian democracy, and circle phrases that name forces or events that influenced the movement. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What idea about voting was central to Jacksonian democracy? Use one detail from the passage to support your answer.	Jacksonian democracy supported wider voting rights for white men. Many states removed property requirements, allowing more white men to vote.
2	What economic concern influenced Jackson's opposition to the Second Bank of the United States?	Jackson and his supporters distrusted concentrated economic power and believed the Bank served wealthy interests rather than the public.
3	How did local committees, rallies, and newspapers help advance Jacksonian democracy?	They helped Democrats organize and reach more voters with their ideas.
4	How did the Indian Removal Act reveal a limit of Jacksonian democracy?	Although the movement promoted political fairness for white male citizens, the Act supported the forced relocation of Native nations and caused immense suffering.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Because many states ended property requirements, more white men could take part in elections. Democratic committees, rallies, and newspapers helped parties reach these new voters. However, the Indian Removal Act supported forced relocation of Native nations. This policy shows that Jacksonian democracy expanded participation selectively, not equally for all people.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect wider white male suffrage, party campaigning, distrust of concentrated power, or the spoils system to Jacksonian democracy. For the limitation, students should explain that Native removal contradicted or excluded people from the movement's claims of political fairness.