

The United States and Louisiana: The Early Republic through Reconstruction


Chapter 1: Inquiry and the Social Studies – Quick Notes

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Section 1: What is History?

➤ Essential Question

- How does studying history help people make better decisions?




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Section 1: What is History?

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- history
- historians



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History and Decision-Making

➤ **History** is the story of the successes and failures from the past that shaped our world today.

➤ Philosopher George Santayana wrote, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

➤ We study history in the hope that we learn from our ancestors’ mistakes so we can have a better world now and moving forward.



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History Preview

➤ This book has information on the beginnings of both Louisiana and the United States.

➤ Learning the history of our state and country provides some of the information needed for decision-making in a world full of different people.

➤ There are many factors that shaped our state and country, from the beginnings of our young nation as well as how it grew and changed over the next hundred years.



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The First Years

- President Washington realized a government led by elected citizens following the structure of a written constitution was new and untested.
- During Washington’s two terms in office, the nation, faced conflicts with natives, the Spanish, the French, and the British.
- Conflicts also occurred within the country as people worked out the best way for the nation to operate successfully.




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Louisiana Purchase

- The United States nearly doubled in size when it purchased France’s claim on Louisiana in 1803.
- The Louisiana Purchase became one of the most important events of Thomas Jefferson’s presidency.
- Its purchase also led to the formation of the state of Louisiana in 1812.




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Regional Differences

- Settlers began to move westward into the Louisiana territory searching for land and opportunity, but this caused increasing conflicts with indigenous people on the land.
- More states were added as time went on, and the country grew through the 1800s.
- Northern states adopted new inventions to aid industries in their economy, while Southern states expanded their plantation economy.




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Regional Differences Pt. 2

- Many southern states became dependent on cotton crops grown by enslaved people to expand their economies.
- Southern states saw slave labor and the racist views that supported it as essential for survival.
- However, a growing number of non-slave states rejected slavery because it was inhumane and at odds with the country’s founding ideals.



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Civil War and Reconstruction

- As the issue of slavery divided the North and South, they began to see themselves as distinct parts of the country, called sectionalism.
- Abraham Lincoln became president in 1860, but he did not win any southern states where slavery was legal due to his stance against it.
- Within a month of Lincoln's election, southern states began seceding from the United States to form the Confederate States of America, and the Civil War began by April 1861.




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Civil War and Reconstruction Pt. 2

- After 4 years, the war ended with a Union victory and, eventually, freedom for all enslaved people, but the cost was high.
- Nearly three quarters of a million people lost their lives, and destroyed infrastructure disrupted the Southern economy for decades.
- The Reconstruction Period helped rebuild and reunify the country, and laws were passed to assist the poor and formerly enslaved, though racism hurt these efforts into the 20th century.




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History Is a Never-Ending Story

- This has just been a very small part of the history you will learn from this textbook, but history is also a never-ending story.
- Historians spend their time questioning, examining, and studying the past, hoping to learn more.
- History is being made as people make decisions and take actions in the present day, which future historians will one day examine as well.




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Inquiry

- Learning history means learning to ask and answer questions like a **historian**, or a person who is an expert or student of the past.
- Historians may study a particular time period, area of the world, person, or group of people and their activities and or culture.
- Historians ask various kinds of questions such as when something happened, why it mattered, and what the causes and effects were.



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Section 2: What is Geography?

➤ Essential Question

- What is the importance of studying relationships between people and their environment?




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Section 2: What is Geography?

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- geography
- environment
- absolute location
- latitude
- longitude
- relative location
- human geography
- physical geography
- geographer



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What is Geography?

➤ **Geography** is the study of the physical features that describe places on Earth and how people make decisions about how to adapt to their **environment** (surroundings).

➤ The study of geography can be described by five themes, which help us ask and answer questions about our world.

➤ These themes are location, place, human/environment interaction, movement, and regions.



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Location: Position on Earth's Surface

➤ Location describes where a place is on Earth.

➤ **Absolute location** uses **latitude** (an imaginary line that measures a location's distance north or south of the equator) and **longitude** (an imaginary line that measures a location's distance east or west of the prime meridian) to find the exact location of a place on Earth.

➤ **Relative location** is a location described by where it is in relation, or compared, to somewhere else.



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Place: Physical and Human Characteristics

- All places have physical and human characteristics that make them unique.
- Places defined by **human geography** characteristics include languages spoken, customs practiced, and belief systems.
- Places described by **physical geography** characteristics include landforms, climate, vegetation, and other natural characteristics.
- When learning about a place, it is important to understand the relationship between culture and location.



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Human/Environment Interaction: Shaping the Landscape

- This theme describes how people make decisions about interacting with their environment and how the environment responds.
- People may clear land for farming or housing, redirect water sources, and so on, but this can cause erosion to wash away fertile soil and cause animals and plants to lose their habitats.
- There can be short-term and long-term consequences to decisions humans make about how they choose to live in their environment.



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Movement: People and Ideas Travel

- Movement is when people, goods, and ideas travel from one location to another.
- Major examples of movement in history have been European explorers, the invention of airplanes, and the creation of the Internet.
- Today, goods and people can move freely and quickly around the world thanks to advancements in movement.




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Regions: How They Form and Change

- Regions are areas with distinctive human and/or physical characteristics that are united by the presence of some common characteristic.
- It is important to remember that regions are not the same as countries.
- Regions usually involve an area that includes partial or whole countries or can be found across more than one country.
- These could include plains, mountains, farms, and so on.



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Inquiry

- Learning geography means learning to ask and answer questions like a **geographer**, a person who is an expert on the physical features of Earth and its atmosphere.
- Geographers also study ways that humans affect, and are affected by, these features.
- Geographers ask various kinds of questions such as where an event took place, how the location affected the event, and so on.




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Section 3: What is Political Science?

- Essential Question
 - Why do people study government?




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Section 3: What is Political Science?

- What terms do I need to know?
 - political science
 - politics
 - government
 - political scientist




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What is Political Science?

- **Political science** is the study of governments and how they are organized.
- Understanding different types of government can help people understand how governments make decisions and how those choices affect citizens.
- Political science has three main parts: civic life, politics, and government.



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Civic Life

- Civic (public) life is the part of your life you live out in the world, while going to school, shopping, participating in a sporting event, or going to church.
- Personal life is that part of your life you spend alone or with your family.
- Civic life looks at how citizens' decisions affect the local community, while private or personal life includes decisions that people make about their own personal interests.




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Politics

- **Politics** is a process through which every social group reaches decisions that are agreed to and enforced, and they can help people reach goals not achievable by themselves.
- Many people see politics negatively and avoid it, but it is a necessary part to any community.
- It is through politics that voices can be heard and issues can be debated, and citizens can have an active role in their communities and governments.




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Government


- **Government** is made up of the people and institutions in a society that have the authority to make, carry out, and enforce laws, as well as settle disputes.
- Most government decisions are focused on the distribution of resources, how to share (or fairly distribute) benefits and burdens, and how to manage conflict.



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- It is important for citizens to understand that people have different opinions and views about civic life, politics, and government.
- Citizens must be able to make informed, or educated, decisions about their government and what their government should and should not do.
- Citizens must also be able to make decisions about how they live their lives together and how they can support the proper use of power by the government.
- An important part of citizenship education is understanding the relationship between historical events and government.



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➤ In this textbook, you will learn about the purposes and functions of government at the start of the new nation of the United States.

➤ Your study will examine the power, duties, and responsibilities exercised at each level of government, as well as actions in the three branches of government.

➤ This knowledge will help you understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy and the importance of being an active citizen in your country.




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Inquiry

➤ Learning geography means learning to ask and answer questions like a **political scientist**, a person who is an expert in the study of government and politics.

➤ Political scientists ask various questions, such as who leaders were, how they were chosen, the rules or laws at play, and so on.



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Section 4: What is Economics?

➤ Essential Question

- What role do scarcity and specialization play in trade?




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Section 4: What is Economics?

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- economics
- scarcity
- trade
- specialization
- economist



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What is Economics?

- **Economics** is the study of how decisions are made about how to allocate/distribute limited resources to satisfy our unlimited wants.
- Individuals, groups, and societies all experience **scarcity** (the situation that exists when there is unlimited demand but not enough supply of a good or service).
- Effective decision-making requires a person to compare the additional costs of alternatives, or choices, with the additional benefits.



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Trade

- **Trade**, or the voluntary exchange of goods and services among people and countries, occurs as a result of scarcity and specialization.
- **Specialization** occurs when a person, business, or country focuses on producing the goods and services they can make best and trading for what they are unable to produce.
- Scarcity and specialization lead to trade among individuals/organizations within the same or different countries.




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Production, Distribution, and Consumption

- Production use resources to create goods or services, and a manufacturing leap in the 19th century revolutionized the production of many goods.
- Distribution involves transporting goods from where they are produced to a market, and various inventions and improvements of the 19th century related to travel increased the delivery speed of goods.
- Consumption is the use of goods and services by consumers, and the overall wealth of the United States increased in the 19th century, allowing for increased demand of goods and services.




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Production, Distribution, and Consumption

- Social studies is more than just one subject in school.
- It brings together experts from at least four areas:
 - history
 - geography
 - political science
 - economics
- You will have a better understanding of our past, present, and future when studying Louisiana and the United States from these points of view.




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Inquiry

- Learning geography means learning to ask and answer questions like an **economist**, a person who is an expert on the choices people and societies make about production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.
- Economists ask various kinds of questions such as what is produced, how do people satisfy their wants and needs, and how are scarce resources used.



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