* Chapter 6
* The New Republic
* 1789-1816
* Section 1
* The newly ratified constitution was vague in many areas and was also untested. Washington and other Founding Fathers knew that a good start was necessary to ensure the new “republican experiment” would last.
* The new government had some issues:
  + A large national debt ($52 million—inherited from the Confederation)
  + No navy and an army of only 400 men
  + No respect from other nations
* George Washington was unanimously elected as the first president and John Adams was elected as his vice president.
* Washington and his administration (the officials in the executive branch of government) set many precedents (acts or statements that become traditions to be followed):
  + The Constitution called for one Supreme Court and left the job of creating the lower courts up to the new government. So, Congress passed the Judiciary Act of 1789 to create the lower federal courts.
  + The formation of the cabinet is considered Washington’s most important precedent. The cabinet is a group of federal leaders who headed the major departments of the executive branch and advised the president.
    - The first four cabinet departments were the departments of State (foreign policy), Treasury (money), War (defense) and the Attorney General.
    - Cabinet members were appointed by the President and approved by the Senate.
    - In 1907 the Cabinet was officially recognized by law.
* Alexander Hamilton was given the job of organizing the nation’s debts and setting it on a course of economic security.
* He believed that a strong, centralized government was necessary to preserve the nation.
* Hamilton saw the nation’s agricultural economy as backward (he hated it). He wanted to develop commercial and industrial economy that could support a large federal government and military.
* Hamilton saw the national debt as an asset: rather than pay down those debts using cash reserves, he wanted to pay for them by selling government bonds, which would pay annual interest to the holders.
* In order to pay the annual interest, Hamilton proposed new taxes and high tariffs (taxes on imported goods).
* He also asked Congress to create a national bank that could regulate state banks, strengthen the national government, and ensure that business interests were closely aligned with those of the government.
* Hamilton saw 3 great benefits from his system:
  + 1. It would establish the nation’s financial credibility, making it easier to borrow money in the future.
  + 2. It would buy political support from the wealthiest Americans, which he believed was essential for the government’s stability
  + 3. It would enrich investors, who could then build new and/or more businesses
* Hamilton’s plan was meant to redistribute wealth in 2 ways:
  + From farmers to merchants and from the South to the North.
* Basically, to pay back the national debt, the people (mostly farmers) would be taxed.
* Obviously, the southern farmers are going to be outraged by Hamilton’s plan.
* The debate over Hamilton’s plan led to a debate over interpretation of the Constitution:
  + Loose construction called for a loose or broad interpretation of the Constitution, empowering the federal government to interpret laws for the “general welfare.”
  + Strict construction limited the federal government to only those powers explicitly written in the Constitution.
* In 1791, Congress narrowly passed Hamilton’s plan. In order to get southerners on board, Hamilton promised that in ten years the nation’s capital would move south to the banks of the Potomac River, between Maryland and Virginia.
* Rural farmers hated the whiskey tax, which reminded them of the taxation by Great Britain, so they began intimidating and attacking tax collectors.
* Hamilton welcomed the opportunity to exercise the new power of the national government by suppressing the **Whiskey Rebellion**.
* Under Hamilton’s command, 12,000 militia men were sent to the region and the rebellion was quickly dissolved.
* The Whiskey Rebellion and its outcome fueled debate.
  + The Federalists blamed the rebellion on a set of political clubs known as the Democratic Societies.
  + Jefferson and Madison defended the societies and were appalled that so many troops were sent to suppress citizens who were merely exercising popular dissent.
* Two sides (political parties) formed in America:
  + Jefferson and Madison (Democratic Republicans)—supported by southern farmers (common people)
  + Adams and Hamilton (The Federalists)—supported mostly by northern merchants (wealthy elites)
* Section 2
* In 1792, Washington had won reelection, but in 1796 he refused to run again. WHY?
* Washington’s health was declining and he was ready to return to Mount Vernon and escape the political turmoil
* He also recognized that the young nation needed him to set an example by walking away from power, proving that he was not a king.
* His voluntary retirement after 2 years set a two-term precedent that lasted until FDR in the 1940s.
* Washington retired with a record of outstanding achievements:
  + The western lands had been opened up for settling and peace had been made with the Native Americans for the time being.
  + The Whiskey Rebellion was suppressed with no major injuries
  + He kept the nation out of France’s Revolution and out of war with Great Britain
  + The national debt was successfully being lowered
  + The Federalist candidate, John Adams, narrowly defeated Thomas Jefferson in the election of 1796.
* Adams faced difficulties as president:
  + Hamilton, who had retired from public office, tried to control the government and the Federalist Party from behind the scenes; his meddling weakened the Adams administration and they became enemies.
  + Due to trouble with France, Adams needed to build up our military. To do so he imposed unpopular taxes on stamps and land, gaining him more enemies.
  + The Federalists exploited the French conflict by passing the controversial **Alien and Sedition Acts** which authorized the president to arrest and deport immigrants who criticized the federal government. Many felt this was unconstitutional. These acts were very unpopular.
    - **The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions** (written by Madison and Jefferson) declared the Alien and Sedition Acts unconstitutional.
  + Election of 1800
* Adams lost to Jefferson.
* In the Electoral College, Jefferson tied with his running mate, Aaron Burr. Voters meant for Burr to be Jefferson’s running mate, but at this time the Constitution did not make distinctions between presidential and vice presidential electoral votes. So, the House of Representatives had to decide. They chose Jefferson and he became president.
* Burr accepted their decision. This peaceful transfer of power set an important precedent.
* To avoid another electoral crisis, the Constitution was amended in 1804 to require electors to vote separately for president and vice president.
* Section 3
* Once Jefferson and the Democratic Republicans took over in 1800, they vowed to do things very differently than Washington and Adams had. Jefferson calls it the “republican revolution.”
* Jefferson immediately did away with the Alien and Sedition Acts and Hamilton’s taxes.
* Despite cutting taxes, Jefferson lowered the national debt from $80 million (when he took office) to $57 million (in 1809).
* How did Jefferson lower the national debt without taxing?
  + He made major cuts to the military and streamlined the government’s bureaucracy (the departments and workers that make up the government)
  + He encouraged the westward movement of farming families, which increased the sale of federal lands.
* In 1801, John Marshall became the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
* Marshall and Jefferson were cousins, but they were political enemies. Marshall was a Federalist and was appointed at the last minute by John Adams before he left office.
* John Marshall applied 4 principles to interpret the Constitution:
  + 1. His Supreme Court claimed the power to review the acts of Congress and the President to determine if they were constitutional. This power is known as **judicial review**.
  + 2. Marshall insisted that federal laws were superior to state laws.
  + 3. Like Hamilton, Marshall broadly interpreted the Constitution to find implied powers for the national government.
  + 4. He insisted on the “**sanctity of contracts**,” which limited the power of state government to interfere with business.
  + In the Supreme Court case of *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), Marshall established this power of judicial review.
* Jefferson insisted that farm ownership was essential to the freedom of white Americans, but without expansion there would not be enough land for farms for the rapidly growing population (the population was doubling every 25 years!).
* Jefferson wanted Louisiana, which was controlled by the Spanish. He thought we could easily conquer the Spanish to gain control of it. However, in 1801, through European wars, France’s new dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte, forced Spain to give him the Louisiana Territory. The French then threatened to block American access to the market in New Orleans.
* Jefferson decided to try and buy the territory from Napoleon, instead of going to war.
* To our advantage, Napoleon’s plans in Europe had been foiled and he needed money to continue fighting the British, so he agreed.
* In the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, Jefferson obtained a large territory extending from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains. For $15 million, the Louisiana Purchase nearly doubled the size of the U.S.
* In 1804, Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the new territory in what became known as the **Lewis and Clark Expedition.** The men made friends with a Shoshone Indian named **Sacajawea,** and her husband, who guided them.
* From 1793 to 1807, America benefited greatly from the war in Europe.
  + The French asked for our help to “reexport” their cargo on American ships since Britain had captured most of the French ships. The value of this reexporting soared from $300,000 in 1790 to $59 million in 1807.
  + In the process of aiding the French in rexporting, we sold our surplus produce to feed French soldiers and also enslaved Africans and plantation owners in the West Indies.
  + This greatly expanded our shipbuilding and construction in America.
* The British hated our reexporting for the French.
* At this time, Great Britain is in a difficult war with France and other European nations and they desperately need sailors for their huge navy.
* The British navy began **impressing**, or taking American sailors from their ships and forcing them to serve in the British navy. The British insisted that anyone born under its empire (meaning anyone born in the colonies *before* the Revolutionary War) was a British subject for life.
* The Democratic Republicans insisted that these British actions insulted the U.S. and threatened our country’s growth.
* In 1807, the British attacked an American warship, the *Chesapeake*, in order to take some of its sailors. Most Americans saw this as the final straw.
* Jefferson persuaded Congress to issue an embargo against Great Britain, which means we suspended trade by ordering American ships to stay in port.
* Jefferson hoped this would starve the British, but instead they found other markets to buy from, so the embargo on the British was a failure.
* Section 4
* Americans were outraged by the British abuses on America and wanted the government to do something about it.
* Another growing problem was the Native Americans in the West, which the British openly supported and even aided.
* In 1811, some aggressive young politicians known as the **War Hawks** took the lead in Congress. They were strong nationalists who denounced the impressments of American sailors and British support for the Native Americans. They pushed for war against Britain to regain national honor.
* In 1812, President Madison urged Congress to declare war.
* The War of 1812
* The declaration of war divided the nation. We were unprepared, disunited and we only had a small army and navy.
* Our plan was to invade the British-controlled Canada to stop the aid they were supplying to Native Americans. We also hoped this would drive the British out of North America.
* Jefferson, who advised Madison, believed that we didn’t need a professional army. He thought our state militias could take Canada with ease and without excessive cost.
* Jefferson was wrong…the small British and Indian forces in Canada repeatedly defeated American invasion attempts in 1812-1813. These invasions only embarrassed America.
* The War of 1812
* The small American navy, however, performed well. They captured 4 British ships during 1812.
* The Americans had no success with invading Canada, but they were successful in defeating Britain’s Indian allies within the U.S.
  + In 1813, Commander William Henry Harrison killed Tecumseh, a Shawnee warrior who led the military resistance movement against American expansion and fought with the British in the War of 1812.
  + In 1814, Andrew Jackson defeated the Creek Indians of Alabama, who had allied with the British. Jackson then invaded Florida (Spanish) and defeated the Seminole Indians.
* The War of 1812
* In 1814, the British took the offensive. Most of the British forces had been in Europe fighting Napoleon. Once he was defeated, they all came to America and invaded the U.S.
* The British captured Washington DC and burned the White House and Capitol.
* However, the Americans won an important victory at Fort McHenry.
* Here, Francis Scott Key celebrated by writing a poem entitled “The Star-Spangled Banner” that later became the national anthem.
* More victories followed and America, led by General Andrew Jackson, won the most important one at the **Battle of New Orleans** in January of 1815.
  + The casualties from this battle are particularly sad because it came 2 weeks after the Americans and the British had signed a peace treaty in Belgium. Unfortunately, it took over a month for the news to reach North America.
* The Treaty of Ghent ended the War of 1812.
* Since America had failed at their invasions in Canada and the British had failed in their American invasions, both sides decided on a peace treaty that restored prewar boundaries.
* The Americans considered this treaty a victory since they heard the news just after Jackson’s victory at the Battle of New Orleans. This gave the impression that Jackson had forced the British to surrender.
* Results of the War of 1812:
* Americans experienced a surge of nationalism and a new confidence in the strength of their country.
* The Federalists were discredited because they opposed a war that became very popular once it was over. By 1820, the party was dead.
* The Native Americans were defeated for the time being and we gained millions of acres of land in the southern U.S.
* Tensions grew between Americans, Native Americans and Spaniards in Florida, which led the Spanish to cede Florida to the U.S. in 1819. We gave them Texas in return.