



History and Government of the United States

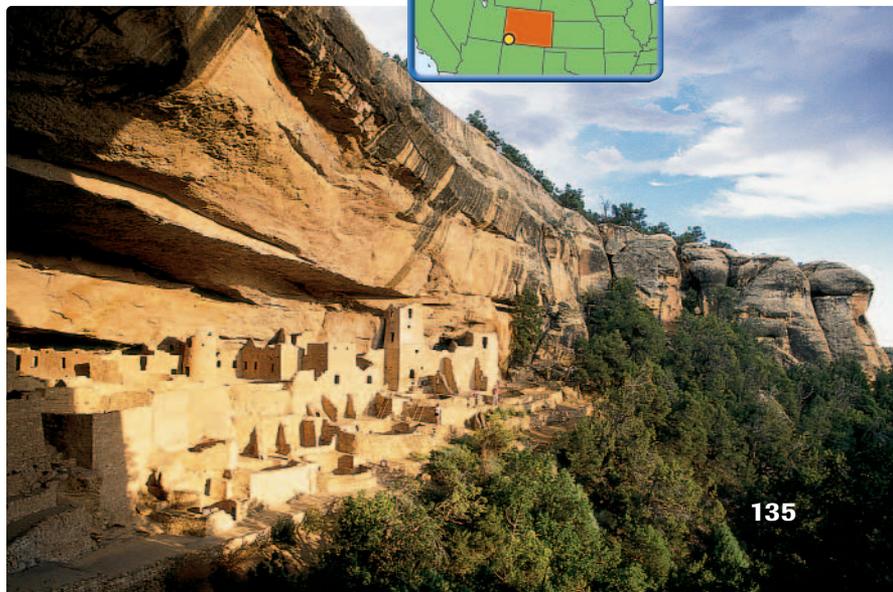
A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE Women were North America's first farmers. In all early cultures except the hunter-gatherer culture of the Southwest, women cultivated the land. They discovered which wild plants could be used as food for the family. They planted the seeds, tended the garden, harvested the crops, and prepared food for meals. Corn, beans, and squash were the first of these foods. Women also learned which leaves, bark, roots, stems, and berries could be used for medicines. Their efforts helped to ensure the survival of human settlement in North America—and the part of the land that became the United States.

Creating a Nation

The United States occupies nearly two-fifths of North America. It is the world's third largest country in both land area and population. It is rich in natural resources and is also fortunate to have a moderate climate, fertile soil, and plentiful water supplies. For thousands of years, this bounty has attracted waves of immigrants who came to find a better life. This continuing immigration is a recurring theme in the country's history; so is the constant **migration**, or movement, of peoples within the United States.

MANY PEOPLES SETTLE THE LAND As you read in Chapter 5, the first inhabitants of North America were believed to be nomads who came from Asia at least 13,000 or more years ago. These people settled the continent, spreading south along the Pacific coast and east to the Atlantic. Over the centuries, they developed separate cultures, as the map on page 104 shows. These native peoples occupied the land undisturbed until the 15th century, when Europeans began to explore what they called the "New World." The Spanish arrived first. They searched the present-day Southeast and Southwest for gold and other treasure. In 1565, they founded St. Augustine, Florida, the oldest permanent European settlement in the United States.

The French and English came later. France was interested in fisheries and the fur trade. In the early 1600s, the French settled along the northern Atlantic Coast and the St. Lawrence River in what is now Canada. The English arrived at about the same time. During the 1600s and 1700s,



Main Ideas

- The United States is a "nation of immigrants," settled by people from all over the world.
- The United States is the most diverse and highly industrialized and urbanized nation in the world.

Places & Terms

migration

Columbian Exchange

Louisiana Purchase

frontier

suburb

representative democracy

CONNECT TO THE ISSUES

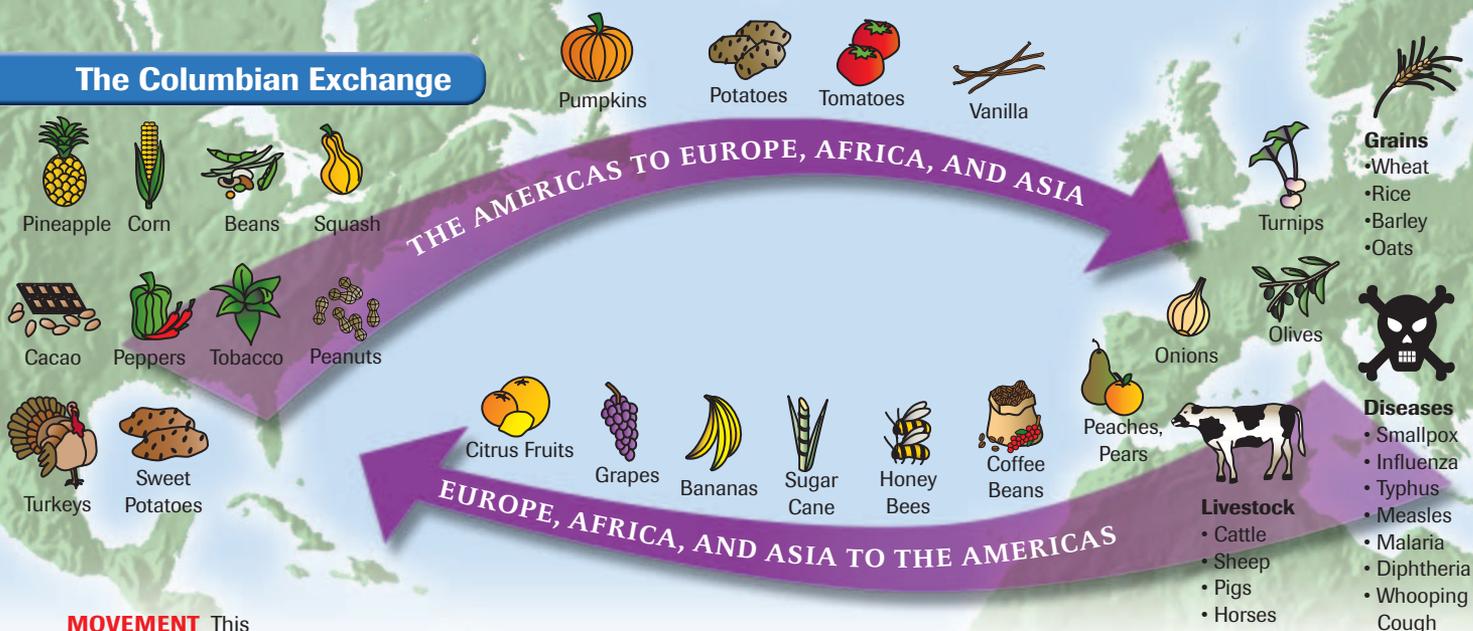
TERRORISM Beginning in the late 20th century, the United States has been subjected to terrorist attacks by individuals and groups opposed to its policies.

HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION

Early Native American settlers in the Southwest often built their dwellings into canyon walls. The dwellings shown are in Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado.

Why did the earliest settlers choose such locations for their dwellings?

The Columbian Exchange



MOVEMENT This infographic shows how plants, animals, and diseases were transferred between the Eastern and Western hemispheres as trade followed the voyages of Christopher Columbus to the Americas.

they settled to the south—on rivers and bays along the Atlantic coast from present-day Maine to Georgia. The English made their first permanent settlement in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607.

European colonies often displaced Native Americans. In 1617, the Europeans brought Africans to America to work as slave laborers on cotton and tobacco plantations in the South. The coming of the Europeans also began what historians call the **Columbian Exchange**. The infographic above shows how the arrival of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere affected the lives of both Europeans and the native peoples.

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING THE UNION The French and the English eventually fought in North America over trade and territory. In 1763, Great Britain gained control of all of North America east of the Mississippi River. But its control was short-lived. Britain's 13 American colonies soon began to resent the policies forced on them by a government thousands of miles away across the Atlantic. Their protests led to the American Revolution (1775–1783) and the founding of the United States of America. The new nation grew rapidly, and settlers pushed westward to the Mississippi. In 1803, the United States nearly doubled in size when the government purchased the vast plains region between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains from France. This territory became known as the **Louisiana Purchase**.

In the early 1800s, immigrants from Western Europe arrived in great numbers. They settled in cities in the Northeast, where industrialization was beginning. One such city was Lowell, Massachusetts, which had become a booming textile center by the 1840s. The newcomers also moved to rich farmlands in what is now the Midwest.

Meanwhile, sectionalism was growing. People were placing loyalty to their region, or section, above loyalty to the nation. The result was rising political and economic tensions between an agricultural South dependent on slave labor and the more industrialized North. These tensions led to the Civil War (1861–1865). It took four years of bloody fighting and many more years of political conflict to reunite the country.

BACKGROUND

About 600,000 Africans were brought to the United States to work as slave laborers from 1617 until the importation of slaves was banned in 1808.

An Industrial and Urban Society

In the second half of the 19th century, millions of Americans were on the move. They settled on newly opened lands west of the Mississippi and in the rapidly industrializing cities of the North and Midwest.

WESTWARD MOVEMENT From departure points such as Independence, Missouri, hundreds of thousands of pioneers left in covered wagons bound for the West. They blazed trails that crossed prairie, plains, desert, and mountains, moving toward the Pacific. A wagon train on the Oregon Trail might have taken up to six months to reach its destination 2,000 miles away. 

To make way for white settlers, the U.S. government removed Native Americans from their lands by treaty, or by force. In Chapter 5, you read that the first transcontinental railroad across the United States was completed in 1869. Railroads brought people to the West, and western cattle and products to markets in the East. By 1890, about 17 million people lived between the Mississippi and the Pacific. The free, open land that had been available and suitable for settlement—the **frontier**—was now fully settled.

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND URBANIZATION As the West was being settled, immigrants—mainly from Western and Eastern Europe—poured into the United States. About 14 million came from 1860 to 1900.

Some joined the movement to the West. Others settled in urban areas undergoing industrialization. Cities such as New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago expanded rapidly. Both recent immigrants and large numbers of Americans from rural areas came to cities such as these to work in textile, steel, oil, food processing, and other industries. The United States was being transformed from a rural, agricultural nation to an urban, industrialized one.

World Power and Domestic Change

As the 20th century began, the United States was the dominant economic and political power in the Western Hemisphere. By the century's end, it would be the world's sole superpower.

LOOKING BEYOND ITS BORDERS The United States had tried to avoid involvement in foreign affairs during its decades of growth. Because of its ample natural and human resources, it had been almost self-sufficient from its founding. Its farms grew the food necessary for survival, and the nation's factories produced the manufactured goods it needed. It was also protected



Using the Atlas

 Refer to the map on page 103. What landforms must be crossed by pioneers going from Independence, Missouri, to the Pacific coast?

Development of the West

1803

The United States purchases French territory west of the Mississippi.

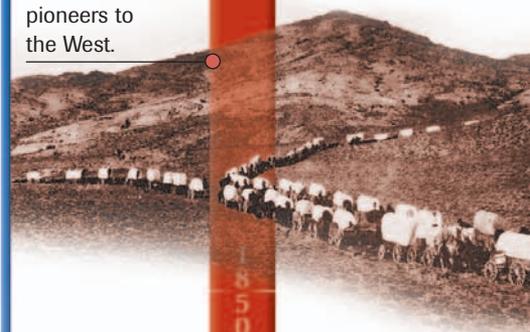


1804–1806

Lewis and Clark expedition explores the area of the Louisiana Purchase.

1840s

Wagon trains begin moving pioneers to the West.



1869

A symbolic **“golden spike”** is used to mark the completion of a transcontinental railroad across the United States.

1898

The United States continues its westward expansion, annexing Hawaii.

1890

Land available for settlement on the western frontier has nearly disappeared.

Growth of Technology

1900



1913
Use of an **assembly line** in Ford auto plants streamlines manufacturing.

1920
Regular radio programming by station KDKA in Pittsburgh begins the era of mass communication.

1947
The first mass television audience watches baseball's World Series.

1959
The development of the **integrated circuit** would make the widespread use of computers possible.

1961
U.S. manned exploration of space starts as Alan B. Shepard, Jr., is launched into suborbit of the Earth.

1969
The U.S. Department of Defense develops a computer network that later leads to the Internet.

2000
Mapping **human genetic material (DNA)** is a breakthrough in biotechnology.



DNA

2000

from foreign conflicts by two vast oceans—the Atlantic and the Pacific. But a global economic depression and two world wars brought significant changes. When World War II ended in 1945, the United States was the only major nation that had escaped physical damage and had a healthy economy.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND TECHNOLOGICAL GROWTH The last half of the 20th century was a time of rapid social change. Americans were on the move. Large numbers of people began migrating from cities to surrounding **suburbs**, the communities outside of a city. Some Americans left the colder climates of the Northeast and Midwest for the warmer South and West. Also, immigrants continued to arrive by the hundreds of thousands. But now they came mainly from the countries of Latin America and Asia. **B**

These years saw much social unrest, especially during the 1960s and 1970s. The civil rights movement fought to gain equal rights for African Americans. The feminist movement sought equality for women. Also, many students and others protested U.S. involvement in a war between Communist and non-Communist forces in Vietnam (1955–75).

During this period, the U.S. economy boomed, despite some periods of economic downturn, or recession. The economy, too, was being transformed. Changes in technology altered the way goods were produced. The use of computers revolutionized the workplace. Providing services and information technology surpassed industrial production in importance. The United States also became the world's greatest economic power. Today, it plays a major role in a global economy that is increasingly competitive.

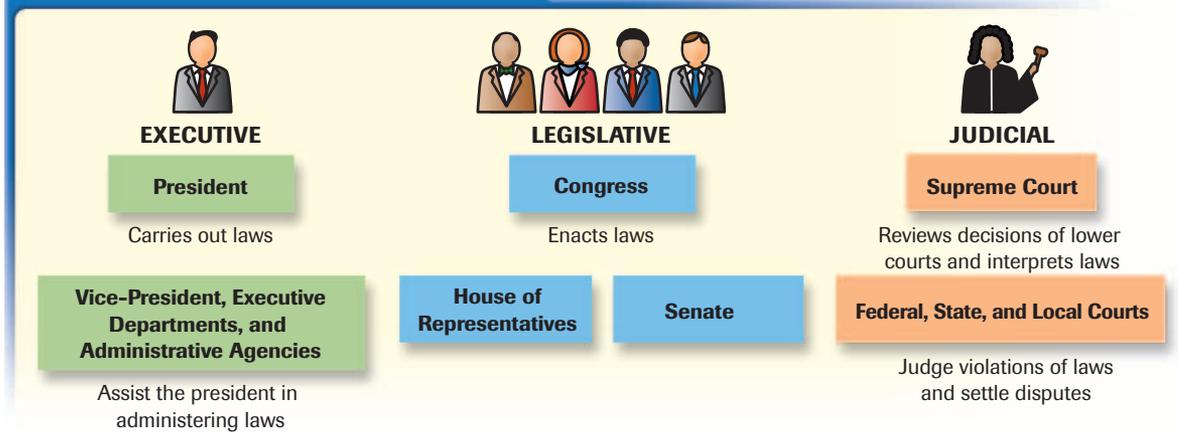
LIVING IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY Meanwhile, American political influence spread throughout the world after the Second World War. The United States became the leader of the world's non-Communist nations. Their goal was to stop the spread of communism, spearheaded by the Soviet Union (now Russia). A competition for world influence called the Cold War (roughly 1945–1991) followed. When communism in Europe collapsed in 1991, the United States emerged as the world's sole superpower. As such, it has used its diplomatic and military power to try to keep the peace and to further American interests in the international community.



Seeing Patterns

B What kinds of movement were taking place in the United States in the last half of the 20th century?

Government of the United States



Governing the People

One of the strengths of the United States is the political system created by the U.S. Constitution, drawn up in 1787. The United States is a **representative democracy**, where the people rule through elected representatives. It is also a federal republic, where powers are divided among the federal, or national, government and various state governments.

As you can see on the chart above, there are three separate and equal branches of the federal government. The executive branch, headed by the president, carries out the laws. The president also approves or vetoes proposed laws. The legislative branch makes the laws, and the judicial branch interprets the laws by reviewing decisions of lower courts. The 50 states also have executive, legislative, and judicial branches. They exercise powers not specifically granted to the federal government by the Constitution.

In this section, you read about the history and government of the United States. In the next, you will learn about its economy and culture.



Assessment

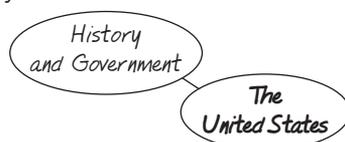
1 Places & Terms

Explain the meaning of each of the following terms.

- migration
- Columbian Exchange
- Louisiana Purchase
- frontier
- suburb
- representative democracy

2 Taking Notes

MOVEMENT Review the notes you took for this section.



- Where did people migrate from to populate North America?
- Where did people move after the frontier was fully settled?

3 Main Ideas

- Why did the United States attract so many immigrants?
- How was the United States able to become a world power?
- How are the powers of government in the United States divided?

4 Geographic Thinking

Making Inferences How did the physical geography of the United States contribute to its economic growth? **Think about:**

- land and mineral resources
- its relative global location

 See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R4.



EXPLORING LOCAL GEOGRAPHY Make a list of physical features that would have attracted settlement to your area. Then do research or call your local historical society to find out when your community was founded and what groups settled there. Combine your findings in a **report** about your community.