

Name: _____

PrepUS History

Date: _____

Unit 3 - The New Nation Andrew Jackson Reading and Questions

DIRECTIONS: Read the following information about President Andrew Jackson. There are questions listed at the end of the reading; after reading the entire text, go back through and find and highlight the text that contains the information that will help you answer each question; write the question number in the margin next to this highlighted text. Then write the answers IN COMPLETE SENTENCES in the spaces provided, remembering to restate the question in your answer (that means you should be able to reconstruct the question from reading your answer).

Andrew Jackson had become a respected figure in the United States after his decisive victory at the Battle of New Orleans during the War of 1812. His resilience [*ability to recover quickly from setbacks*] as a military leader earned him the nickname “Old Hickory.” Jackson was also known to Americans as “the Common Man” because unlike previous presidential candidates, Jackson was born west of the Appalachian Mountains into a less fortunate [*poor*] home. This made him relatable and inspiring to most Americans, and brought hope that ordinary citizens could have an impact in the United States government.

After his controversial loss in the 1824 presidential election, Jackson and his supporters formed the Democrat party and campaigned throughout the United States to ensure that he would win the 1828 election, which he did. During the 1828 presidential election, voting rights had been expanded: no longer did males have to own land to vote in presidential elections. The hope of Jackson becoming president and his campaign efforts encouraged more men to take advantage of their new voting opportunities than ever before. Therefore, in the election of 1828, approximately 1.1 million men voted in comparison with 350,000 in the election of 1824. In 1829, Andrew Jackson, with an intense belief of true democracy, was inaugurated as the President of the United States.

Continuing his quest to create a strong national government ruled by the people and their needs, Jackson instituted a so-called “spoils system.” A spoils system is the practice of rewarding supporters with government jobs. Jackson replaced an estimated 10% of government officials with his supporters, regardless of their experience in the government. He even appointed many inexperienced supporters with Cabinet positions. According to Jackson, he wanted to provide ordinary citizens with the opportunity to take part in the government.

Jackson had always opposed the National Bank, even before he became President. He believed that the National Bank was unconstitutional and that it only benefitted the wealthy, including the bank’s president, Nicholas Biddle. The National Bank was first chartered [*given official, legal permission to open*] under Washington, and its charter was renewed under Madison. The bank’s charter was up for renewal again as Jackson was running for re-election. Although many supporters of the bank believed that Jackson would approve the renewal in order to ensure his re-election, Jackson vetoed the bank bill and closed the National Bank. The bank veto was the first presidential veto utilized on a government law/action that had not been deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Under Washington, the National Bank was proven constitutional as part of the Elastic Clause (Necessary and Proper Clause). As a result, many supporters of the National Bank view Jackson’s veto as an abuse of his presidential powers.

In addition to the controversy that surrounded the bank veto, Jackson’s use of power was also criticized in 1830 with his approval of the Indian Removal Act. For years, Native Americans had been displaced from the lands they inhabited. Despite territory treaties signed between Americans and Native Americans, Americans felt entitled to the land. Many Native American tribes living in newly acquired Florida attempted to resist displacement from their land and their resistance was even supported by the Supreme Court. In 1828, the Supreme Court decided that the Native Americans’ right to stay in their land was protected under the Constitution. This case was known as *Worcester vs. Georgia*:

The Cherokee nation... is a[n] [individual] community, occupying its own territory... in which the laws of Georgia have no force [to make the tribe leave].... The [actions] of Georgia are [disgusting] to the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the United States. They interfere forcibly with the relations established between the United States and the Cherokee Nation, the regulation of which according to the settled principles of our Constitution, are committed exclusively to the government of the [United States of America].

~Chief Justice Marshall, Opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States, 31 U.S. 515

Despite this Supreme Court ruling, Andrew Jackson was determined to provide American farmers with more economic opportunity (land) and force the Native Americans out. In 1830, with Jackson's approval, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, which forced Native Americans to relocate to designated territory west of the Mississippi River. Native American tribes, including the Cherokee, refused to comply with the Indian Removal Act because of the support of the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, in 1838 Jackson sent the military to Florida to forcefully remove the Cherokee from Florida. The forced removal of over 15,000 Cherokee west of the Mississippi River became known as the "Trail of Tears," because thousands of Cherokee died throughout the journey west. Critics of Jackson considered the Indian Removal Act to be an abuse of power by Jackson because he went directly against a decision made by the Supreme Court.

[Remember to write your answers IN COMPLETE SENTENCES and to restate the question in your answer.]

Why was Andrew Jackson also known as "Old Hickory" and the "Common Man?"

Andrew Jackson was known as the "Common Man" because... _____

What was it about Andrew Jackson that encouraged more people to vote in the presidential election?

Define spoils system and explain why it is both a good and bad practice.

Why did Andrew Jackson oppose the National Bank?

What presidential power did Jackson use to close the National Bank?

What did the *Worcester vs. Georgia* Supreme Court decision say?

What did the Indian Removal Act say/do?

Why was the trail the Native Americans followed called the “Trail of Tears?”

Why were Jackson’s actions toward the *Worcester vs. Georgia* Supreme Court decision and Indian Removal Act so controversial?
