Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Explain the economic situation of the new country and its inhabitants and note the factors that influenced the economy during this era.
2. Outline the beliefs and policies of Jefferson and note the impact these had on the nation at large.
3. Identify key issues within Jefferson’s term of office and note the resolution and impact of these issues.
4. Identify the Louisiana Purchase and describe its impact on early America.
5. List the causes of the War of 1812, outline its progression, and identify both the economic and political consequences of the war.
7. Address both the causes and the effects of western migration.
8. Discuss the evolving southern society and identify points such as the economy, its dependence on slave labor, and the impact the slave system had on all elements of southern society.
9. Outline the development of the slave community and elements that existed within that community and thus the lives of slaves.
10. Note the various means slaves employed to resist the institution of slavery, and assess the impact of growing Northern abolitionist views on the “slave society” of the South.

Unit Summary

Unit V is composed of Chapters 9 and 10. This unit looks into what were truly the early years of America: a time of social, economical, and religious questions. It focuses on exactly what the political processes of revolutionary America brought to the nation, while also highlighting new conflicts with Europe and the natives at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 9 discusses the age of Jefferson, the social issues consumed by the rise of the Republican beliefs, and the lasting legacy of the Federalist views onto the American life. The rise of industry, the growth of the urban society, and the continued problems with the economic disparity of the agricultural society all factor into this look at what America had become in such a short time. One of the key issues here is how important the early leadership of Washington was, and how quickly one political feud could be repaired within a nation.

The issue of slavery in the South reappears as a key part of American society in this section. The change in worldwide philosophy against the practice started in Europe near the end of the American War for Independence, but new
technologies like the Cotton Gin reinvigorated the economic importance of many common cash crops throughout the American South leading to a new boom in the plantation economy and a boost in the importance of cheap labor.

This boom, led by “King Cotton,” became a staple of the Southern economy and once again slavery would be considered an untouchable institution.

With the Plantation culture also came the installation of a new slave culture, one of their own design based on the home that they knew and longed for and displayed in song, story, and faith. From these plantations would come a new and influential voice of America, one that would evolve into an essential element of the fabric of the modern American philosophy.

This unit addresses the factors that led to the growth of the new nation. Soon, this growth and especially its causes will become a topic that divides the new nation and pits brother against brother.