

Pertinent Questions

THE ROMANTIC IMPULSE (316-322)

1. How was the work of James Fenimore Cooper the culmination of an effort to produce a truly American literature? What did his work suggest about the nation and its people?
2. Why was Whitman called the "poet of American democracy"?
3. Who were the transcendentalists? What was their philosophy, and how did they express it in literature?
4. How were the transcendentalists among the first Americans to anticipate the environmental movement of the twentieth-century?
5. How did the transcendentalists attempt to apply their beliefs to the problems of everyday life at Brook Farm? What was the result?
6. What other utopian schemes were put forth during this period, and how did they propose to reorder society to create a better way of life?
7. How did the utopian communities attempt to redefine the gender roles? Which communities were most active in this effort, and what did they accomplish?
8. Who were the Mormons? What were their origins, what did they believe, and why did they end up in Utah?

REMAKING SOCIETY (322-330)

9. The "philosophy of reform" that shaped this era rose from what two distinct sources?
10. What gave rise to the crusade against drunkenness? What successes and failures resulted from the movement's efforts?
11. What was the biggest problem facing American medicine during this period? What impact did this problem have on health care in the United States?
12. How did efforts to produce a system of universal public education reflect the spirit of the age?
13. What were the problems facing public education, and what types of institutions were created to deal with them?
14. How did the rise of feminism reflect not only the participation of women in social crusades, but also a basic change in the nature of the family?
15. How did feminists benefit from their association with other reform movements, most notably abolitionists, and at the same time suffer as a result?

THE CRUSADE AGAINST SLAVERY (330-336)

16. What was the antislavery philosophy of William Lloyd Garrison? How did he transform abolitionism into a new and "dramatically different phenomenon"?
17. What role did black abolitionists play in the movement? How did their philosophy compare with that of Garrison?
18. Why did many northern whites oppose the abolitionist movement? How did they show this opposition?
19. What divisions existed within the abolitionist movement itself? How did each faction express its position?
20. What efforts did abolitionists make to find political solutions to the question of slavery? How successful were they initially?

21. How did abolitionists attempt to arouse widespread public anger over slavery through the use of propaganda? What was the most significant work to emerge from this effort? Why did it have such an impact?

AMERICA IN THE WORLD (333)

22. How did pressure of world opinion and Enlightenment ideals combine to end the slave trade and slavery in countries other than the United States?
23. How did world opinion and Enlightenment ideals influence the abolition movement in the United States and how, in turn, did American abolitionism help reinforce the movements abroad?

PATTERNS OF POPULAR CULTURE (334-335)

24. Explain how sentimental novels of this era "gave voice to both female hopes and female anxieties."

Identification

Identify each of the following, and explain why it is important within the context of the chapter.

1. Hudson River School
2. "Leatherstocking Tales"
3. Moby Dick
4. "The Raven"
5. "Oversoul"
6. "Resistance to Civil Government"
7. Nathaniel Hawthorne
8. "phalanxes"
9. "Owenites"
10. Oneida "Perfectionists"
11. Shakers
12. The Book of Mormon
13. Charles Grandison Finney
14. "burned-over district"
15. American Society for the Promotion of Temperance
16. Phrenology
17. Horace Mann
18. Dorothea Dix
19. asylums
20. Reservations
21. Sarah and Angelina Grimké
22. Seneca Falls convention
23. Emma Willard and Catharine Beecher
24. Amelia Bloomer

2. Where were most of the efforts to reform and improve education taking place? What connection might there be between this movement and the "literary flowering"?
3. Where were the major utopian communities located? What factors played a part in the choices of location?
4. What region of the country was less involved in the reform movement? What factors contributed to this?

Summary

By the 1820s America was caught up in the spirit of a new age, and Americans, who had never been shy in proclaiming their nation's promise and potential, concluded that the time for action had come. Excited by the nation's technological advances and territorial expansion, many set as their goal the creation of a society worthy to be part of it all. What resulted was an outpouring of reform movements, the like of which had not been seen before. Unrestrained by entrenched conservative institutions and attitudes, these reformers attacked society's ills wherever they found them, producing in the process a list of evils so long that many were convinced that a complete reorganization of society was necessary. Most, however, were content to concentrate on their own particular cause; thus, at least at first, the movements were many and varied. But in time, most reformers seemed to focus on one evil that stood out above the rest. The "peculiar institution," slavery, denied all the Enlightenment ideals for which they stood—equality, opportunity, and, above all, freedom. With world opinion on their side, Slavery became the supreme cause.

Review Questions

These questions are to be answered with essays. This will allow you to explore relationships between individuals, events, and attitudes of the period under review.

1. During this period, how did American intellectuals create a national culture committed to the liberation of the human spirit? How do their efforts relate to the efforts of social reformers?
2. What role did religion and religious leaders play in the reform movement described in this chapter?
3. Who were the major critics of slavery? On what grounds did they attack the institution, and what means to end it did they propose?
4. How did the reform movement affect the status of women? What role did women play in these efforts to change society, and what were they able to accomplish?

Chapter Self Test

After you have read the chapter in the text and done the exercises in the Study Guide, take the following self test to see if you understand the material you have covered. Answers appear at the end of the Study Guide.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Circle the letter of the response that best answers the question or completes the statement.

1. The reform movements of the first half of the nineteenth century reflected which of the following impulses:
 - a. an optimistic faith in human nature.
 - b. a rational view of man and his ability.

- c. a desire for control and order.
 - d. a. and c.
2. The first great American novelist was:
- a. Walt Whitman.
 - b. James Fenimore Cooper.
 - c. Herman Melville.
 - d. Ralph Waldo Emerson.
3. Transcendentalists believed that:
- a. "understanding" was more important than "reason."
 - b. man should repress instinct and strive for externally imposed learning.
 - c. each individual should strive to "transcend" the limits of intellect and allow emotions to create an "original relation to the universe."
 - d. individuals should avoid anything that would bring one too close to the natural world.
4. In his essay "Resistance to Civil Government," Henry David Thoreau claimed an individual should:
- a. not pay poll taxes.
 - b. refuse to obey unjust laws.
 - c. live in isolation and as simply as possible.
 - d. reject the artificial constraints of government.
5. The Oneida Community:
- a. advocated "free love" to redefine gender roles.
 - b. called for celibacy and attracted members of conversion.
 - c. believed it liberated women from the demands of male "lust" and from traditional bonds of family.
 - d. was widely accepted and had almost no critics.
6. Like other experiments in social organization of this era, Mormonism reflected:
- a. a strong antislavery bias.
 - b. a celebration of individual liberty.
 - c. a desire to improve the status of women.
 - d. a belief in human perfectibility.
7. Evangelical Protestantism added major strength to which of the following reforms:
- a. temperance.
 - b. education and rehabilitation.
 - c. women's rights.
 - d. peace.
8. The emphasis on educational reform was consistent with the spirit of the age because it:
- a. focused on the unleashing of individual talents.
 - b. stressed educational equality.
 - c. focused on external learning.
 - d. stressed the importance of community.
9. As women in various reform movements confronted the problems they faced in a male-dominated society, they responded by:
- a. withdrawing from the movements.

- b. accepting the notion that men and women were assigned separate "spheres" in society.
 - c. focusing their attention on religious matters.
 - d. setting in motion the first important feminist movement.
10. Which of the following groups was most involved in the feminist movement?
- a. Baptists.
 - b. Quakers.
 - c. Mormons.
 - d. Shakers.
11. The "burned-over district" was a region of upstate New York prone to religious revivals because of:
- a. efficient transportation provided by the Erie Canal for traveling evangelists.
 - b. the disorientation of residents caused by profound social and economic changes.
 - c. the significant number of utopian communities in the vicinity.
 - d. the location there of the headquarters for the Mormon Church.
12. Educational reformers intended public schools to perform all of the following roles except to:
- a. extend and protect democracy.
 - b. raise questions and criticisms of authority.
 - c. expand individual opportunities.
 - d. inculcate values of thrift, order, discipline, and punctuality.
13. After 1830, which of the following reform movements began to overshadow the others?
- a. antislavery.
 - b. women's rights.
 - c. temperance.
 - d. education.
14. The most noted black abolitionist of the day was:
- a. Ralph Waldo Emerson.
 - b. William Lloyd Garrison.
 - c. Frederick Douglass.
 - d. Joseph Smith.
15. Opponents of abolitionism in the North believed:
- a. abolitionists were dangerous radicals.
 - b. the movement would lead to a war between North and South.
 - c. the movement would lead to a great influx of free blacks into the North.
 - d. all the above.
16. "Immediate abolition gradually accomplished" was the slogan of:
- a. moderate antislavery forces.
 - b. Garrison and his followers.
 - c. southern antislavery planters.
 - d. black abolitionists.
17. Personal liberty laws:
- a. allowed masters to claim slaves who ran away to the North.

- b. freed slaves who escaped to states in the Old Northwest.
 - c. forbade state officials to assist in the capture and return of runaways.
 - d. outlawed the interstate slave trade.
18. The movement that advocated keeping slavery out of the territories was known as the:
- a. "personal liberty" movement.
 - b. "free-soil" movement.
 - c. John Brown Brigade.
 - d. Garrison solution.
19. Throughout the North, black Americans:
- a. enjoyed full access to education and most career opportunities.
 - b. voted and held government jobs proportionate to their numbers.
 - c. defended their freedom and responded eagerly to the cause of abolitionism.
 - d. earned a decent standard of living.
20. The creation of "asylums" for social deviants was an effort to:
- a. punish the inmates.
 - b. get the deviants out of society.
 - c. reform and rehabilitate the inmates.
 - d. cut down the cost of crime and punishment.

TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

Read each statement carefully. Mark true statements "T" and false statements "F."

1. American intellectuals were pleased with the high regard in which their culture was held by Europeans.
2. Thoreau believed that a government which required an individual to violate his or her own morality had no legitimate authority.
3. Unlike most writers of his era, Herman Melville believed that the human spirit was a troubled, often self-destructive, force.
4. Because transcendentalism was at heart an individualistic philosophy, its followers did not take part in communal living experiments.
5. The philosophy of reform in America drew heavily from Protestant revivalism.
6. Brooke Farm was the most successful of the utopian experiments.
7. The Shakers were able to prosper because of their high birth rate.
8. At the beginning of the Civil War, the United States had one of the highest literacy rates in the world.
9. The idea of asylums for social deviants was not simply an effort to curb the abuses of the old system, but also an attempt to reform and rehabilitate the inmates.
10. Early feminists made their point by drawing a parallel between the plight of women and the plight of slaves.
11. The American Colonization Society failed because it challenged both property rights and southern sensibilities.
12. The man who transformed the antislavery movement was Ralph Waldo Emerson.
13. Although there was opposition to abolitionism in the North, it was generally peaceful.

14. Radical abolitionists attacked slavery and the Constitution which seemed to sanction it.
15. Abolitionists were also pacifists and, therefore, did not advocate violence to free the slaves.
16. Antislavery and abolition were different words for the same thing.
17. Although it sold well, the novel Uncle Tom's Cabin had little impact on American antislavery attitudes.
18. Only a relatively small number of people before the Civil War ever accepted the abolitionist position that slavery must be entirely eliminated in a single stroke.
19. The women's rights movement patterned its "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" after the Declaration of Independence.
20. "Free soil" was more popular than abolition in the North because it was a more moderate approach to the problem of slavery.