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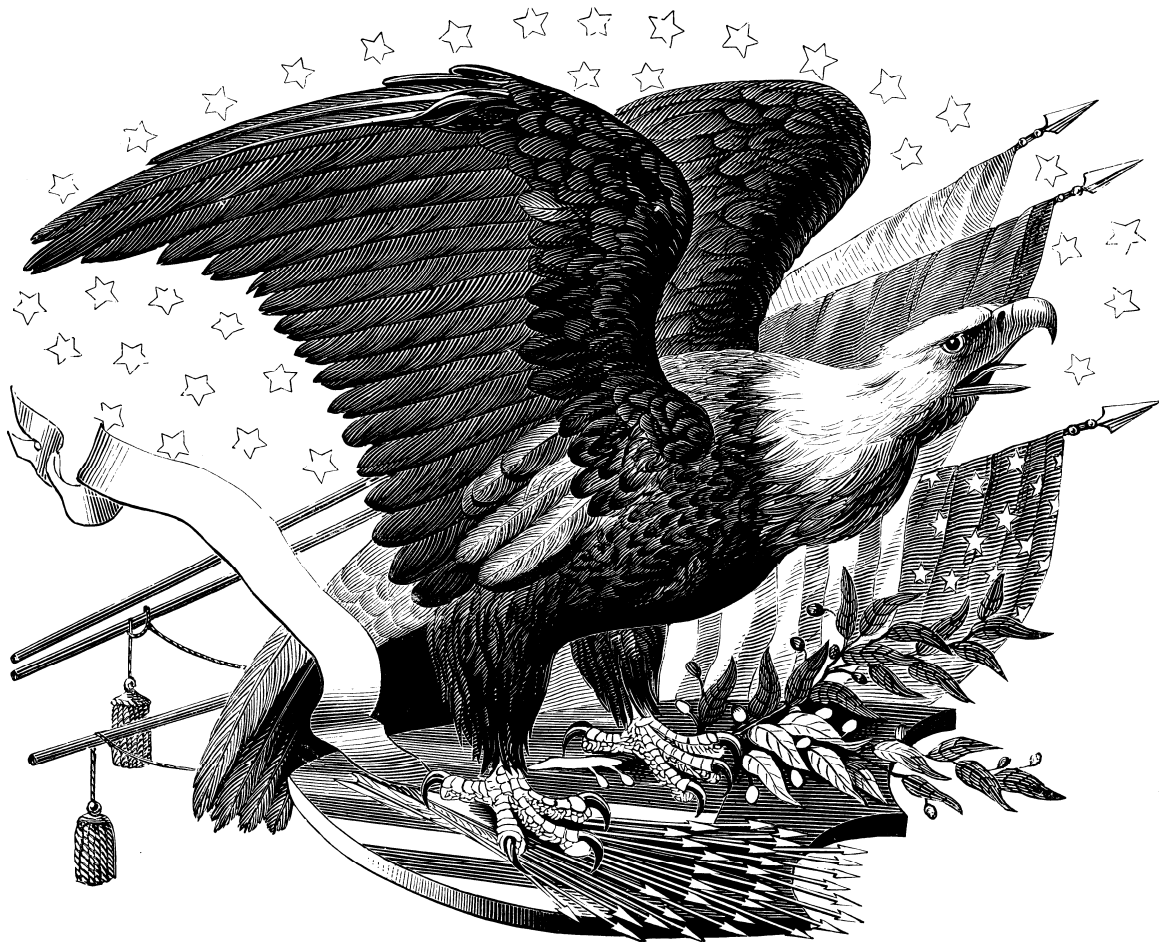
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Decisions

U.S. History

1776-1900



Stevens & Shea Publishers

Teacher's Guide

SS93

The short descriptions of key issues are designed to encourage students to think about issues and to train students to use certain decision-making techniques. They can be used to introduce appropriate units in U.S. History courses. While the events are historical, most of them involve situations that are still issues in American life.

The readings are short and simple so that all students can be involved in the decision making process, including students who have difficulty reading. However, some of the vocabulary and concepts will require explanation.

Most of the readings carry a statement about how the issue is still important today. Students can be asked to apply the same decision-making techniques to these problems as well.

Students can compare their decisions with what actually happened.

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U.S. Decisions, Set 1 1776-1900

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Decisions in U.S. History, Set 1

by Lawrence Stevens

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Procedure

The issue summaries are short and take little time to read. More time should be spent on the decision-making process. Students should make their initial decision individually. Then they should be put in small groups of four or five to compare decisions and make a collective decision. The small groups should then present their ideas to the whole class and the entire class should come to a consensus about what is the best course of action.

Students should be asked to apply certain techniques to making a decision. The techniques should be taught at the beginning. Students should apply each of the techniques for practice. They can do this individually, in small groups or as an entire class. The teacher can reproduce the class contributions on the blackboard or overhead.

A brief description of the techniques

1. Good points/bad points. Students can list the good points and bad points of each choice.
2. Consequences. Students can list the possible consequences of each choice.
3. Evaluation matrix. Solutions to problems can be evaluated according to agreed upon criteria. In short, the criteria are goals; what you want to accomplish by taking an action.
4. Benefits/Losses. In political decisions who benefits and who loses in a decision is an important calculation made by political leaders. Students could list the groups that would benefit and be harmed by a choice.
5. Characteristics lists. Students can break the problem down and list the parts. They then can discuss how the parts connect together.

Decisions: U.S. History Set 2 (1900-1981)

Grade 7 & Up

Students must make key decisions faced by presidents, from Teddy Roosevelt to Jimmy Carter. These are decisions that shaped American history. A brief text describes the problem and a lists possible courses of action. Each decision is on one reproducible page. These are useful introductions to American history units. Students can compare their decisions with what actually happened. The Teacher's Guide includes a variety of decision making techniques. 25 decisions. **SS92**

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The Whiskey Rebellion

Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the treasury, had a number of difficult problems to deal with. In the beginning the United States had very little money and many debts to repay. Hamilton needed a tax to raise money. In 1791 Congress passed a tax on whiskey: 25% of the net price for a gallon of whiskey.

Farmers in western Pennsylvania did not like the tax. They thought it was unfair. They claimed that the government should raise money by taxing imports. Hamilton did not want to do this because he did not want anything to interfere with trade with other countries. A tax on imports would hurt businessmen and manufacturers in the eastern states. The farmers thought Hamilton was “playing favorites.”

The farmers grew grain. It was too expensive to move it long distances. The farmers converted their grain to whiskey which was much easier to move. In addition, whiskey was used as money in their part of the country. The farmers refused to pay the tax.

Farmers beat up tax collectors. They forced the small number of U.S. soldiers in the area to surrender. George Washington had to decide what to do.



Decision

If you were Washington, what action would you take?

- A.** Ask Congress to repeal the whiskey tax.
- B.** Work out a compromise with the farmers, reducing the whiskey tax and increasing the tax on imported goods.
- C.** Send an army to the area and force the farmers to pay the tax.

Current Issue

The issue of taxation is always a problem in the United States. Today we rely upon the income tax to support the Federal government. Who should be taxed and how much should they be taxed? Should the rich pay a higher percentage of their income in taxes? Should everyone pay the same percentage? Should the poor pay any tax at all? Should corporations pay taxes on the money they make?

What do you think is a fair system of taxation?

Avoid Foreign Entanglements

In 1789 George Washington became president and the French Revolution began. In 1793 war broke out between France and Great Britain. France had a treaty with the United States dating back to 1778. Technically, the treaty was in force. France helped the United States win its freedom from England. Now, the French Revolution did away with the king and made France a republic more like the United States.

Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson, were very sympathetic to France. France hoped for the help of the United States in its war with England. It hoped its ships could use American ports.

The United States continued to have trouble with Great Britain. The Revolutionary War ended with a peace treaty signed in 1783. Under that treaty Great Britain promised to leave the Northwest Territory. However, Britain refused to take its troops out of the area claiming the United States had violated the treaty by taking the property of Tories (people who took Britain's side during the Revolution) and not paying debts to British merchants. In this way Britain still controlled the profitable fur trade.

In 1793 Britain began to interfere with American ships trading with France. Jefferson said that we should not buy British goods shipped to this country. Alexander Hamilton, Washington's Secretary of the Treasury, wanted Washington to seek a compromise with Britain.



Decision

What should Washington do?

- A.** Help France fight Britain by allowing it to use American ports.
- B.** Seek a compromise with Great Britain.

Current Issue

Today, the United States is a world power. The question is how much should we involve ourselves in the affairs of other countries?

Should we send our navy to stop countries such as Iran and Libya from interfering with shipping in international waters? Should we help people in other countries overthrow dictatorships or communist governments?

What do you think?

The XYZ Affair

John Marshall and Elbridge Gerry were sent to France in 1798 in an attempt to reconcile differences between the United States and France. France had broken off diplomatic relations with the United States because the United States refused to let France use American ports for its ships in its war with England.

Marshall, Gerry and our ambassador to France, Charles Pinckney, met with three French representatives who were given the code names X, Y and Z in our diplomatic messages. The French indicated that in order to be officially received by the French government the United States would have to pay a bribe to government officials, make a loan to France and formally disavow restrictions that the United States had placed upon the French in America.

When Americans heard this, they became angry. Many wanted to go to war with France. People in John Adams' own party, the Federalists, were demanding war with France. Adams put the country on a war footing. George Washington was appointed commander of the army with Alexander Hamilton second in command.

Hamilton demanded that the U.S. capture New Orleans from the French. There was an undeclared war going on at sea between American and French ships. In France, there was a change in government. Napoleon became the leader of France. The French indicated that they were willing to talk over the differences between the two countries if the United States would send someone to France. President Adams appointed William Vans Murray as our representative. Adams wanted peace, not war.



Federalist leaders were unhappy and said that the Senate would never approve of the selection. The Senate has to confirm such appointments under the Constitution.

Decision

What would you do if you were Adams?

- A.** Yield to Federalist pressure and declare war on France.
- B.** Threaten to resign from the Presidency.

The Louisiana Purchase

New Orleans and the area to the west of the Mississippi River did not belong to the United States. The area was controlled by Spain. American farmers in the west, however, shipped their goods down the Mississippi to New Orleans. It was important for Americans to keep New Orleans open to American shipping.

In 1795 the United States had reached an agreement with Spain that granted Americans the right to ship goods through New Orleans. By 1800, however, Spain transferred ownership of Louisiana to France and in 1802 the Spanish official in charge of New Orleans (the French had not yet sent officials to take control) stopped American goods from going through New Orleans. Jefferson was worried and thought military action might be necessary to protect the right of American goods to be shipped to New Orleans.

He sent James Monroe to France with the authority to buy New Orleans and West Florida for \$2 million. He could go as high as \$10 million if necessary. Napoleon, the ruler of France, had had ambitions of setting up an American empire, but he ran into difficulty when he found it impossible to put down a revolt of African slaves on the island of Santo Domingo. He decided that he should put his efforts into fighting his chief enemy England. Selling Louisiana would give him cash to do this.

The French offered to sell not only New Orleans, but the entire Louisiana Territory for \$15 million. The Constitution made no provision for acquiring a territory this large. It would double the size of the United States. Jefferson had always been critical of those who broadly



interpreted the Constitution. He thought we should stick to exactly what the Constitution said.

Jefferson had to decide whether or not to accept the offer, and, if he did accept it, should he have an amendment added to the Constitution allowing the purchase. This would take time and Napoleon might change his mind.

Decision

If you were Jefferson, what would you do?

A. Reject the offer and insist on just buying New Orleans.

B. Have an amendment added to the Constitution.

C. Simply ask the Senate to approve the purchase.

The War of 1812

Because of the continuing war between England and France, the United States found itself in difficulty with both countries. Each country tried to stop the United States from trading with the other. The United States did not want to take sides in the war. It just wanted to trade with both countries. Since England had the larger navy it hurt U.S. shipping more.

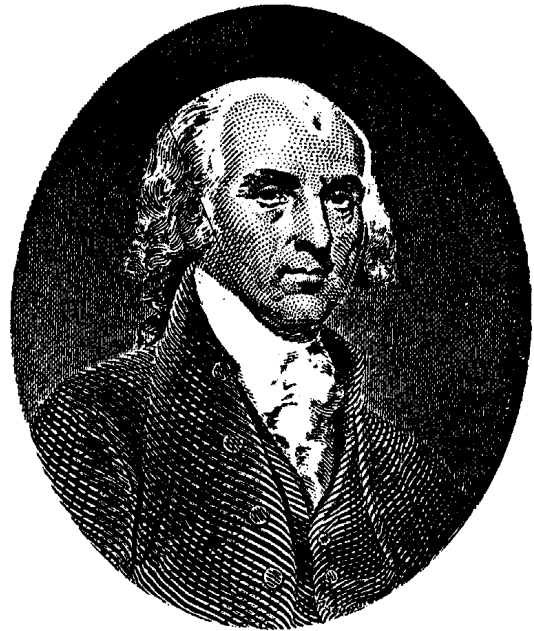
To punish England the United States Congress passed Non-Importation Acts. These acts meant that England could not sell any goods in America. Great Britain began to raid American ships looking for deserters from the English navy.

Jefferson pushed through the Embargo Act in retaliation. The Embargo Act prevented trade with any foreign nation. New England, which depended on trade with other countries, was extremely upset. Jefferson re-opened trade with all nations except England and France.

James Madison took Jefferson's place as president. He continued the policy of not trading with France or Britain. The British continued to raid American ships looking for seamen.

A group of senators from western and southern states called "Warhawks" wanted war with Great Britain. They saw war with Britain as a chance to gain control of Canada.

New Englanders did not like the idea of war. They thought it would be bad for trade. They also knew that the war would be unwise. The United States had no army and Great Britain had the largest navy in the world.



Decision

If you were Madison, what would you do?

A. Support the Warhawks and declare war against Great Britain.

B. Attempt to prevent war between the two countries.

Current Issue

The Constitution says that only Congress is empowered to declare war. During the early days of our history the president often had to resist pressures by Congress to declare war because of attacks by other countries on Americans. Today, the issue is reversed. The issue is how far can a president go in sending American troops and ships to protect American interests before he asks Congress to declare war? Should the president be able to send troops to another country to help it fight communists or other people trying to overthrow the government?

The Bonus Bill

After 1800 more and more people began to move west. The West was isolated from the East Coast where most people lived. They needed canals and roads to ship the goods they produced.

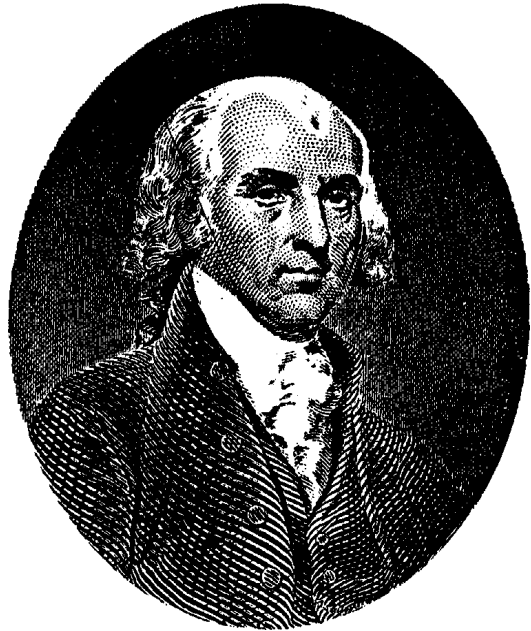
John C. Calhoun of South Carolina and Henry Clay of Kentucky wanted the Federal government to put money into building roads and canals in the West. They believed that the Federal government should have broad powers in helping tie the nation together with a transportation system.

Over the years Republicans such as James Madison and Thomas Jefferson had argued that the Constitution provided only limited powers to the Federal government and what were called “implied” powers should not be allowed. There was nothing in the Constitution that said that the Federal government should build roads and canals.

Alexander Hamilton, a Federalist, on the other hand, believed that the Constitution should be interpreted. Hamilton believed that you could “read things into the Constitution.” These were called “implied” powers.

Both Jefferson and Madison, while president, used the “implied” powers approach. Jefferson bought Louisiana even though the Constitution said nothing about buying territory. Madison signed a bill creating a new Bank of the United States even though the Constitution said nothing about that either.

Calhoun and Clay wanted to spend \$1,500,000 which was to be paid by the Bank of the United States for the construction of roads and canals to connect the West with the East.



Decision

If you were James Madison, what would you do?

- A.** Sign the bill.
- B.** Veto the bill.

The Monroe Doctrine

A great revolutionary movement swept Latin America from 1810 onward. Latin American countries declared themselves independent from Spain. In 1822 at the Congress of Verona, it was decided to restore the power of King Ferdinand in Spain. France was allowed to invade Spain to help do this. France also requested that they be allowed to intervene in Latin America.

The British were upset. They did not want to see any increase in Spanish or French power in Latin America. The British asked the United States if they would be interested in preventing Spanish or French intervention in Latin America.

President Monroe wanted to ask the British to recognize the new governments in Latin America. They United States already had done so.

Former President Madison recommended that Monroe ask the European countries to recognize Greece's new independent government.

John Quincy Adams advised that Monroe say nothing about European affairs and speak only to American interests.



Decision

If you were President Monroe, what would you decide?

A. That the United States should not interfere with European affairs.

B. That the United States should speak out about European affairs such as Greek independence.

C. That the United States and Great Britain should jointly declare that European countries should not interfere with American affairs.

D. That the United States alone should declare that European countries should be allowed to interfere with American affairs.

Public Improvements

When John Quincy Adams became president, he had many ideas about what the Federal government should do. He was a Federalist. Republicans believed that the Federal government should do little. If the Constitution didn't say specifically that the Federal government should do it, then it shouldn't be done.

Adams wanted to bring the country together by building a system of highways and canals. He wanted, in a humane and civilized way, to remove the Indians to the west of the Mississippi River. He would also conserve public resources. He would pay for these improvements by selling public lands.

He also wanted a national university, a national astronomical observatory, a naval academy, national sponsorship of research and exploration, a national uniform bankruptcy act, a uniform system of weights and measures, a new patent law to encourage invention and a new Department of the Interior.

Members of his cabinet were critical of his ideas. They thought that some would never pass Congress and that he should not bother to even propose them.



Decision

If you were Adams, which proposals, if any, would you drop?

Current Issue

Today, the government does a great many things including most of the things that Adams proposed. There are many people who think the Federal government does too much, especially programs that cost money. Some people are worried that the Federal government has too much power.

Should the Federal government spend money on public works projects that help only a part of the country or a part of the population?

What do you think?

Can you think of anything the Federal government should be doing that it is not doing now?

National Bank

The National Bank was created to help regulate banking and currency. It provided a central bank which other banks could use for loans. It was privately owned by stockholders, most of which lived in eastern states and in England. The bank was located in Philadelphia and had branches throughout the country. Even though it was privately owned it was given a monopoly by the Federal government to serve as a central bank.

As a central bank it helped businesses expand and control inflation.

People, particularly in the west, where there were very few shareholders, thought the bank benefitted wealthy eastern businessmen. The shareholders made profits from the bank by loaning money to businesses. The United States government put all of its money in the bank.

The government's charter for the bank came up for renewal in 1832. It easily passed through Congress and went to President Jackson for his signature. Andrew Jackson was from the west.



Decision

Should President Jackson sign the bank's charter?

A. Yes

B. No

The Cherokees

General Andrew Jackson led the fight against the southern Indians in 1814. He defeated the Indians and signed a treaty with them. The Indians kept the peace. The Cherokees in Georgia had made remarkable progress in adopting the ways of the white man.

The Cherokees had adopted a written constitution, set up a court system, had their own newspaper, had farms and factories. They were prosperous and civilized in the sense that the white man understood the term.

Gold had been discovered on Cherokee land and increasing numbers of whites were moving onto Cherokee land. The whites were demanding that the Cherokees be removed from the land and sent beyond the Mississippi.

The state of Georgia had already passed a law annexing Cherokee lands to the state of Georgia. This was in violation of several treaties that the Federal government had signed with the Cherokees including a treaty that Jackson had signed with the Cherokees. The treaties promised that the Indians could keep their land.

The Cherokees insisted that Jackson, as president, uphold the treaties and declare the Georgia law unconstitutional. Whites in Georgia wanted Jackson to remove the Indians from the state.

The whites argued that it was in the best interests of the Cherokees to move. They claimed that as more whites moved to Georgia eventually there would be fighting and the Indians would be killed.



Decision

If you were Jackson, what would you do?

- A.** Uphold the treaties and protect the Indians' land.
- B.** Move the Indians beyond the Mississippi River.

Current Issue

The relationship between Indians and the government is still an issue. Several Indian groups claim the U.S. government is not respecting treaties with the Indians. In some places it is the question of hunting and fishing rights. According to the treaties, the Indians have the right to hunt at any time and kill as much game as they want. Modern hunting laws require a license, restrict hunting to certain times of the year and set limits on how much can be killed.

Should Indians be required to follow modern hunting laws?

Nullification

The “Tariff of Abominations” went into effect in 1828. This put high taxes on certain goods imported into this country. The southern states grew cotton which they sold to Britain. In return, they received goods made in Britain. The tariff raised the price of goods sent from Britain. The southern states did not like the tariff.

Senator John C. Calhoun from South Carolina argued that a state had the power to “nullify” a law passed by Congress if it didn’t like it. Calhoun said the tariff was unfair. The tariff helped the northern states which manufactured goods. It hurt the southern states which imported goods from other countries in return for exporting cotton. Since the Federal law helped some states and hurt others, it was unconstitutional and the states did not have to follow it.

In an attempt to make the South happier, a new tariff law was passed in 1832 which lowered tariffs.

South Carolina, instead, held a state convention. It adopted an ordinance “nullifying” the tariffs of 1828 and 1832. It prohibited the collection of the tariff in South Carolina and claimed that the use of force by the Federal government would be grounds for secession. The state legislature authorized the creation of an army and provided money for guns.

Privately, President Jackson felt that the actions of South Carolina were “treason.” Publicly, he had to deal with the problem. What should he do? He could use force and make South Carolina follow the law. He could try to pacify South Carolina by calling for a further reduction in tariffs. Or, he could use a combination of the two. Attempt to pacify them and, if that didn’t work, use force.



Decision

Which would you chose?

- A.** Use force.
- B.** Lower the tariffs
- C.** Do both.

War With Mexico

When President Polk took office he declared that he wanted California to be part of the United States. California, and the Southwest, was ruled by Mexico. He sent John Slidell to Mexico to buy Mexico's territory above the Rio Grande River for as much as \$25 million. Mexico refused to sell.

Mexico had very little control over its territories north of the Rio Grande. Hispanics in New Mexico and California felt that they owed little to the government in Mexico. The Apache Indians had kept the Hispanics out of most of Arizona.

Part of the area between Texas and Mexico was disputed territory. Mexico claimed the boundary between the two countries was the Nueces River. The United States said it was the Rio Grande River further to the south.

To Polk and many Americans it made sense that the United States should control all the territory north of the Rio Grande. Polk had to figure out how to get it.

Current Issues

There are still issues that stem from the Mexican American War. One is bi-lingual election ballots and bi-lingual education. The treaty that ended the war said that the culture of Mexicans should be respected. California passed a law stating that English is the official language of the state. This may prohibit ballots printed in Spanish. Is this law a violation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo?

The other problem is immigration from Mexico. Should immigration from Mexico be restricted?



Decision

If you were Polk what would you do?

A. Continue to try to buy the territory from Mexico by increasing the price or waiting for the government in Mexico to change, as it often did.

B. Provoke Mexico into a war by sending soldiers to the Rio Grande River – into territory that both Mexico and the United States claimed.

Compromise of 1850

The United States defeated Mexico and won all the territory north of the Rio Grande River. Both the free states and the slave states were determined to keep their power in Congress. That balance had been kept with the Missouri Compromise of 1820. With the addition of new territory, it was time to strike a new balance.

Henry Clay, who created the Missouri Compromise, offered a series of compromise proposals. California would be admitted as a free state, New Mexico and Utah territories would allow slavery, there would be a Fugitive Slave Act which would return escaped slaves living in free states to their owners.

Many Whigs from the North did not like the compromise. They thought it allowed slavery to expand. They wanted to stop the expansion of slavery. Southern Democrats also opposed it. They wanted a constitutional amendment to protect slavery. In addition, President Taylor also opposed the compromise. He was suspicious of the South. He didn't want to do anything that would help them and slavery.

President Taylor suddenly died and Millard Fillmore became president. If the president lent his support to the compromise it might pass. If he did not, it would probably fail.



Decision

If you were Fillmore what stand would you take on the compromise?

- A.** Support the compromise.
- B.** Do not support the compromise.

Japan

By 1850 the United States stretched to the Pacific Ocean. The United States had become a power in the Pacific Ocean. Its trade with China was flourishing. It took a steamship only 18 days to travel across the Pacific. Steamships, however, required coal and places were they could get coal.

Japan did not allow foreigners to visit the country. They would not trade with other countries. If a foreign ship was wrecked and the sailors washed up on the Japanese shore they would be badly treated, possibly killed.

The United States was primarily interested in promoting trade with China. They needed a place for their ships to get coal. Japan was the perfect place. It had coal and was on the way to China. Secondly, the United States wanted protection for sailors who were shipwrecked in Japan. Third, the United States was interested in starting trade with Japan.

There were two approaches to dealing with Japan. One was the use of diplomacy: ask the Japanese Emperor to enter into a treaty with the United States. The second approach was to use force. Japan did not have a modern navy or army.

In 1846, an American expedition visited Japan and the Emperor refused to deal with the United States. Millard Fillmore decided to send another expedition to Japan. Should he use force or diplomacy?



Decision

If you were Fillmore, what would you do?

- A.** Use diplomacy.
- B.** Use force.

Current Issue

Today, Japan and the United States are allies. However, Japan engages in "unfair" trading practices against the United States. We allow them to sell goods in this country, yet they make it difficult to sell our goods in their country. Sometimes they will sell goods below cost in the United States to put American companies out of business.

Should we use "force" to stop these practices? Force in this case means taxing Japanese goods coming to the United States, or should we use diplomacy—talking to them and trying to persuade them?

Kansas Nebraska Act

Senator Stephen Douglas sponsored the Kansas Nebraska Act. It repealed the Missouri Compromise. It allowed the people of Kansas to decide whether or not their state would allow slavery.

Bitter fighting broke out in Kansas between pro and anti-slavery groups. Both sides sent people to Kansas in an attempt to get more votes for their side. Both sides set up their own governments. Congress could not agree what to do about Kansas. When the House of Representatives voted to admit Kansas as a free state, the Senate opposed it.

President Buchanan wanted to cure the Kansas problem. Buchanan appointed a pro-slavery Mississippian, Robert J. Walker, as territorial governor. Walker was fair minded and was determined that there should be a fair vote on the slavery issue.

The proslavery people wrote a constitution at the town of Lecompton. It did not allow for a fair vote on the slavery question. Robert Walker advised President Buchanan the Lecompton constitution was unfair.



Decision

If you were President Buchanan, what would you do?

A. Recommend to Congress that the Lecompton constitution be accepted and Kansas be admitted as a slave state.

B. Follow Walker's recommendation and support Walker in obtaining a fair election.

Secession

Telegraph wires on the night of November 6, 1860, carried the news that Abraham Lincoln was elected president. Lincoln won only 39% of the vote but won a majority of the electoral votes. There were four candidates. Immediately, several states of the Deep South began steps to drop out of (or secede) from the United States.

Lincoln would not take office until the following April. Meanwhile, James Buchanan had to cope with the problem of the states leaving the Union. South Carolina was the leader in secession. Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas were also thinking about secession. Virginia and the border states were not.

Buchanan could, on one hand, take a tough stand, warning that any state threatening to secede from the Union would be crushed with military force. To back this up he could have reinforced United States forts in the South with soldiers from the North.

On the other hand, he could ask Congress for help in dealing with the problem. The U.S. Constitution does not say anything about a state wanting to drop out of the United States.



Decision

If you were Buchanan, which would you do?

- A.** Threaten the South with the use of force.
- B.** Ask Congress for help.

Secession

Lincoln was not an abolitionist. He thought, as did many southerners, that the slaves should be freed eventually and be allowed to return to Africa. He was opposed to the extension of slavery into new territory.

By the time Lincoln reached Washington for his inauguration as president in April 1861, seven states had seceded from the Union over the slavery issue. Lincoln felt that the Union must be preserved; that the states must not be allowed to secede. The slavery issue appeared to be tearing the country apart.

In many of the seceding states U.S. military installations and equipment had been seized. Federal forces were under siege by South Carolinians at Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor.

Senator John J. Crittenden offered a “peace” resolution in Congress. It would have recognized slavery in territories south of the 36th parallel.



Decision

What would you do if you were Lincoln?

- A.** Accept Crittenden's resolution in order to make peace with the southern states.
- B.** Attempt to take back Federal property that had already been seized by the seceding states.
- C.** Attempt to protect Federal property, such as Fort Sumter, that had still not been seized.

Emancipation

As fighting continued during the Civil War, the question of the slaves had to be addressed. Many left their plantations and found their way to Union army camps. Congress began to deal with the problem. It passed laws that declared that slaves whose owners were hostile to the United States who found their way to Union lines were free. It prohibited the use of armed force to return slaves who had escaped. It repealed the Fugitive Slave Act.

The problem of slavery was complicated by the fact that slavery existed in states that were supporting the Union such as Kentucky, Missouri, and West Virginia. Lincoln did not want to lose the support of these border states. Also, in the Confederacy there were a few slaveowners who supported the United States.

Abolitionists wanted Lincoln to take a strong stand on slavery. They wanted him to abolish it in all states immediately. Others, such as William Seward, Secretary of State, wanted Lincoln to wait. The United States had not won a clear victory over the Confederacy. Some did not want the slaves freed in the states supporting the United States fearing the states would switch to the Confederacy.



Decision

What should Lincoln do?

- A.** Free all the slaves in all states immediately.
- B.** Free only the slaves in the Confederate states.
- C.** Wait until the United States was clearly winning the war.

Reconstruction

Before the Civil War was over Congress and President Lincoln were divided over what to do about the South after the Civil War. Lincoln proposed that as soon as 10% of the voters of a Confederate state swore loyalty to the United States the state government should be recognized as legal. Lincoln believed that the states had never really seceded from the Union, only individuals had.

Radical Republicans did not like this approach. They wanted to be much tougher on the South. Congress passed a bill requiring that a majority of the voters declare themselves loyal before the state is allowed to rejoin the Union. Lincoln vetoed it.

The Radical Republicans believed that the Confederate states should be treated as conquered territories and admitted as new states. They would be under military rule until they were readmitted to the United States. They wanted the states to let African-Americans vote, ratify the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, have state conventions elected by both black and white to create new state governments before the states could rejoin the United States.

Lincoln believed that such an approach was too harsh. He wanted to reconcile the differences between North and South.

Lincoln was assassinated and Andrew Johnson became president. Should Johnson follow Lincoln's path to Reconstruction or that of Congress?



Decision

What should Johnson do?

- A.** Adopt Congress' "hard" Reconstruction program.
- B.** Adopt Lincoln's "soft" Reconstruction program.

Current Issue

You have to ask the question, "If Reconstruction had been different, would the condition of many African-Americans today be different?" Many African-Americans who left the South for northern cities have never made it. They are still out of the mainstream of American society.

The question today is, what can be done, if anything, to help African-Americans living in poverty in large cities.

Tenure of Office Act

President Andrew Johnson and Congress did not like each other. They disagreed about Reconstruction. On January 22, 1867, Congress met in special session and passed a bill taking command of the army away from the president; and another bill, the Tenure-of-Office Act, which prevented the president from removing officials that the president appointed with the consent of the Senate.

President Johnson vetoed the Tenure-of-Office Act and Congress' Reconstruction Act. Congress voted to override Johnson's vetoes and its bills became law.

President Johnson learned the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, had been working against his Reconstruction program. He also learned that Stanton had withheld a recommendation for clemency for Mary Surratt who was involved in Lincoln's assassination plot. Johnson felt that he had been tricked into signing the woman's death warrant.

President Johnson had to decide what to do. The Tenure-of-Office Act made it illegal for the president to remove Stanton. Johnson believed the law was unconstitutional in that it took away powers that the president has under the Constitution.



Decision

What should the president do?

- A.** Ask Stanton to resign.
- B.** Do nothing.

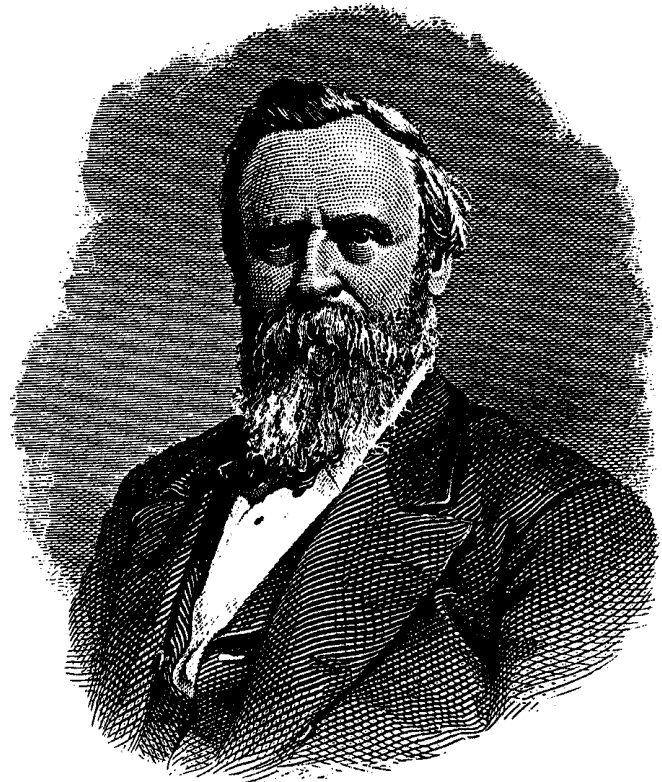
End of Reconstruction

Rutherford Hayes, the Republican candidate, lost the election of 1876. The Republicans, however, challenged the election results in three states, South Carolina, Louisiana and Florida, which the Democrats had won. The Republicans charged that there was fraud; that Democrats had forced African-Americans to vote Democratic and some had voted more than once.

The Republican Party had controlled the South since the end of the Civil War. The major way they controlled it was through the African-American vote. Most African-Americans were Republicans, most whites were Democrats. By 1876 Democrats had become increasingly powerful. The Republicans still held onto most state positions. They held control of the state election commissions that had to “certify” that the election results were honest.

The Republican election commissions determined that fraud had been used and threw out many Democratic votes. The Republicans claimed that Hayes won and the Democrats claimed that the Democratic candidate, Tilden, won. The Republicans privately recognized that they had committed as much fraud as the Democrats in Florida and the Democrats had actually won the election there. In order for Hayes to become president, he would have to win all three states. Congress had to decide. Congress created an election commission to decide the election. The commission voted 8 to 7 that Hayes won. The Democrats claimed that one member of the commission had been bribed.

Northern Democrats decided that they could “filibuster” to prevent Congress from accepting the results. Southern Democrats offered Hayes a deal. If Hayes would promise to take Federal troops out of the South and end



Reconstruction, they would not support the filibuster. In effect, it meant that the rights of African-Americans would be ignored.

Decision

If you were Hayes, would you make the deal?

- A.** Accept the deal.
- B.** Accept the deal, but insist that the rights of African-Americans be protected.
- C.** Allow the Democrats to win the election.

Civil Service Act

Politics after the Civil War was dishonest and corrupt. Businessmen bribed politicians to get the laws they wanted passed. People elected to executive positions appointed their friends and supporters to jobs regardless of whether or not they could do the jobs. This was called the “spoils” system.

This is how Arthur became customs collector for the Port of New York, the biggest port in the country. The customs collector collected taxes on goods brought into the country. Arthur got the job because he was a strong supporter of the Republican Party boss of New York, Roscoe Conkling. The job allowed Arthur to appoint many Republicans to jobs.

Many of the people Arthur appointed were crooks or incompetent. In 1877 an investigation was conducted by President Hayes. Arthur was fired the following year.

At the Republican National Convention in 1880 Conkling and Arthur supported the nomination of President Grant. Grant had a bad reputation for running a corrupt government. He wasn't nominated. James Garfield was. Garfield offered Arthur the vice presidency to make the Grant supporters happy. Shortly after taking office, Garfield was assassinated and Arthur became president.

Conkling and other Republicans wanted Arthur to follow the old ways, appoint Republicans to jobs in the government whether they could do the job or not, whether they were honest or not.

Arthur had to decide whether or not he would continue the usual pattern of appointing incompetent and dishonest people to government jobs. Reform Republicans who wanted people who could do the work honestly did not



like Arthur. He had a bad reputation. His only supporters were the followers of Roscoe Conkling who wanted to follow the “spoils” system.

Reform Republicans and Democrats wanted to change the ‘spoils’ system. They wanted a “civil service” system. Congress proposed a law that would create a civil service system. Should Chester Arthur support it? Arthur wanted to be renominated by his party to serve a second term as president.

Decision

If you were Arthur, should you support the spoils system or the civil service system?

A. Support the spoils system because it will help you get elected to a second term.

B. Support the civil service system to get honest, competent people to do the job, but risk losing the nomination for presidency.

Sherman Silver Purchase Act

During the years after the Civil War America grew and prospered. The supply of money did not. The law said that paper money had to be redeemable in metal. If you had a one dollar bill you could turn it into the bank and get one dollar's worth of gold. Since the amount of gold was limited the amount of paper money printed also had to be limited.

Bankers liked this. They loaned money to people. If the value of money never changed, they would get back dollars of the same value that they had loaned. Farmers who had to borrow money to farm did not like it. People who need to borrow money want the value of the money to go down. When they pay the money back the dollars will be worth less than the dollars they borrowed.

During the 1880's prices began to fall. Since more things were produced and there were more people buying them and the supply of money had not changed, prices had to go down. This hurt the farmers. They had trouble paying back their loans. They had to pay their loans in dollars that were worth much more than the dollars they borrowed. They wanted the law changed.

Farmers joined together with silver miners. Silver miners wanted the government to buy silver, which is much more plentiful than gold, and use it to back paper money. This was called the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. This would allow the government to print more money. Prices would hopefully go up. Farmers would be helped and silver miners would be helped.



Decision

President Cleveland had to decide whether to sign the bill or veto it. What should he do?

- A.** Approve it.
- B.** Veto it.

Intervene in Cuba

Cuba was ruled by Spain. In 1895 Cubans revolted against Spanish rule. The Spanish were not good rulers. Hurting Cubans even more was the fact that the United States had put a tax on sugar grown in Cuba and imported into the United States. This meant that they could not sell as much sugar and it put Cubans out of work.

The war was vicious. Cuban rebels burned the sugar fields and attempted to drive the people into the cities. The Spanish put Cubans into unhealthy concentration camps.

American newspapers were critical of the Spanish. They described them as cruel and brutal. A U.S. battleship, visiting Havana, Cuba, was blown up. Newspapers blamed the Spanish for the destruction of the *Maine*. Newspapers called for war against Spain.

President McKinley had sent a representative to Spain in an attempt to seek peace. Spain was willing to send money to Cuba to help the Cubans and end the policy of putting Cubans into concentration camps. They were willing to help the U.S. find out why the *Maine* blew up.

President McKinley was being pressured by newspapers, the public and Congress to declare war against Spain. Spain would not agree to stop fighting against the rebels.

McKinley prepared a message to Congress to ask for a declaration of war. Finally, Spain indicated that it would be willing to stop fighting the rebels.



Decision

What should McKinley do?

- A.** Ask Congress to declare war.
- B.** Tell Congress not to declare war and let Spain have a chance to work things out with the rebels.

Payne-Aldrich Tariff

The tariff had been an important problem for 100 years. A tariff is a tax on goods imported into the country. This raises the price of goods and hurts the people who buy them. Tariffs also protect American businesses that produce the same goods. For a long time it was the United States government's main means of raising income. There was no income tax.

Tariffs had been high since the Civil War. The tariffs protected growing American industries. By 1900 the United States had become a leading industrial power in the world. In 1908 the Republican Party platform promised a lowering of the tariff. The Republican candidate for president, William Howard Taft, said that he would support the lowering of tariffs.

Lowering the tariffs was not easy. Many Republican legislators were closely tied to businesses that wanted to keep high tariffs. Senators Payne and Aldrich introduced a tariff bill that raised tariffs on most goods.

Democrats and Progressive Republicans were opposed to raising tariffs. Taft had promised that he would lower tariffs. Republicans in Congress wanted to raise tariffs. Taft had to decide what to do. He could join in the fight against higher tariffs, he could support higher tariffs or he could offer a compromise.

One of the compromises was the income tax. The tariff was a major means of the government to raise money. The income tax could eventually replace the tariff. The income tax was controversial. Republican businessmen didn't want it.



Decision

If you were Taft, what would you do?

- A.** Support high tariffs.
- B.** Join the Democrats and fight high tariffs.
- C.** Support high tariffs, but only if the idea of the income tax is included in the tariff package.

Current Issue

When the U.S. was growing in the late 19th Century, the tariff was used to protect industry from foreign competition and was an important means of raising money. Today, we have industries that are threatened by foreign competition and want higher tariffs for protection.

Should tariffs be raised to protect American industries and jobs?