

Andrew Jackson



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What do you know about the Continental Army?
2. What was Jackson known for before he became the seventh president of the United States?
3. What do you know about the War of 1812?
4. What does the term "Founding Father" mean?
5. How was Andrew Jackson different from the presidents who came before him?

B. Brainstorming

Write at least two points under each heading in the chart below.

Things I know about Andrew Jackson	Things I want to know about Andrew Jackson

Pre-Reading cont.

C. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 3.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| ___ 1. capture | a) lawfully |
| ___ 2. shine | b) someone who represents ordinary people |
| ___ 3. strike | c) a shameful event or action that draws a lot of public attention |
| ___ 4. deep | d) causing disagreement or debate |
| ___ 5. legally | e) to take by force, to make a prisoner |
| ___ 6. scandal | f) to go against, to contradict |
| ___ 7. symbol | g) a representation of something |
| ___ 8. tough | h) to hit with something |
| ___ 9. counter | i) to brighten up |
| ___ 10. found | j) strong, able to withstand difficulties |
| ___ 11. controversial | k) intense, long-held |
| ___ 12. populist | l) to establish (start) an organization or event |

*“There are no necessary evils in the government.
Its evils exist only in its abuses.”*

—Andrew Jackson

Reading

1. Andrew Jackson was the seventh president of the United States. He was born in 1767, somewhere near the border of North and South Carolina. Jackson's family was poor and his life was not easy. His father died before he was born and his mother died when he was 14 years old.
2. When Jackson was 13 years old, he and his brother joined the Continental Army. British soldiers **captured** the brothers. While he was a prisoner, a British officer ordered him to **shine** the officer's boots. When the boy refused, the officer **struck** him with a sword. The blow cut Jackson's face and hand. After that, Jackson carried the physical scars and a **deep** hatred for the British for the rest of his life.
3. As a child, Jackson did not attend school regularly. He was very smart, however, and studied law while he was still a teenager. He became a lawyer at age 20. Jackson moved to Tennessee and began to practice law. In 1791, he married a young divorcée named Rachel. Problems soon followed. The Jacksons learned that Rachel's first husband had never **legally** divorced her. In 1794, Rachel's divorce finally came through, but the **scandal** caused problems for the Jacksons for the rest of their lives.
4. In Tennessee, Jackson had a very successful legal career. He also entered politics and was elected to the US House of Representatives and the Senate. Jackson was a very popular politician in his time. He became even more popular as a general in the War of 1812. When the war ended, the news didn't reach the US in time to stop the Battle of New Orleans. Jackson led a small army of pirates, slaves, ex-slaves, and frontier soldiers against the British. Jackson's ragtag army beat the British. The Battle of New Orleans became a **symbol** of the American spirit and Jackson became a national hero.
5. In 1828, Andrew Jackson was elected president. The **tough** frontier lawyer and military commander wanted the president to have much more power than Congress. This idea ran **counter** to the Founding Fathers' ideas. Jackson also wanted to give ordinary people much more political power. To that end, he and his supporters **founded** the Democratic Party. During his presidency, Jackson also fought hard against the political influence of huge banks and corporations. To that end, he destroyed the Bank of the United States, which he called a "hydra-headed monster."
6. Although President Jackson was called a "man of the people," he didn't respect the rights of all people. Jackson owned slaves and he wasn't ashamed of it. He was, in fact, a strong supporter of the institution of slavery. Jackson didn't respect the rights of Native Americans either, especially when it came to Native land that white farmers wanted. In fact, Jackson's attitudes and policies laid the groundwork for the Indian Removal Act and, later, for the "Trail of Tears," one of the cruelest events in American history.
7. Many historians consider Jackson a **controversial** president. In spite of the contradictions in his beliefs and actions, Andrew Jackson is remembered as a populist president who fought for the political rights of the ordinary citizen.

Comprehension

A. True or False?

Write T if the statement is true. If the statement is false, write F, and then correct the information in your notebook.

- _____ 1. Andrew Jackson's father died when Andrew was fourteen years old.
- _____ 2. Andrew Jackson came from a poor family.
- _____ 3. Jackson struck a British officer in the face with a sword.
- _____ 4. Jackson was elected to the House and the Senate.
- _____ 5. Pirates helped General Jackson fight the British.
- _____ 6. Jackson was a strong advocate of Native American rights.

B. Ask & Answer

Answer the following questions in complete sentences in your notebook. Then compare your answers to a partner's answers.

1. How old was Andrew Jackson when he joined the Continental Army?
2. What happened to Andrew Jackson after he joined the army?
3. How old was Jackson when he became a lawyer?
4. Why did scandal and rumors surround the Jackson marriage?
5. Why was the Battle of New Orleans important for Americans?
6. How did Andrew Jackson feel about slavery?
7. Why did Andrew Jackson want to put the Bank of the United States out of business?
8. What did Andrew Jackson want to change about the presidency?

Vocabulary Review

Choose the answer with the same meaning as the underlined word in the original sentence.

1. The British soldier told Andrew to shine his boots.
 - a) The sun shines more in the summertime.
 - b) Make sure to polish the table until it shines.
 - c) Betty is so talented that she shines at whatever she does.
2. The officer struck Andrew in the face with his sword.
 - a) The workers will strike for better working conditions.
 - b) Lightning strikes high places, like trees and church steeples.
 - c) That decision doesn't strike me as fair.
3. The blow left a deep cut on Andrew's forehead and hand.
 - a) The boxer received a hard blow to the jaw.
 - b) The wind blows hard across the prairie.
 - c) You should use a tissue when you blow your nose.
4. Jackson had a deep hatred for the British for most of his life.
 - a) In some cultures, there is a deep respect for old traditions.
 - b) This pool has a deep end and a shallow end.
 - c) His eyes are a deep blue.
5. Jackson was a tough military commander.
 - a) This steak is too tough to eat.
 - b) My aunt is a tough lady who is not afraid of anybody.
 - c) That was a really tough math test, but I passed.
6. Jackson studied law while he was still a teenager.
 - a) My great-grandfather built a still when he was a teenager.
 - b) Hold your hand still while you thread the needle.
 - c) Is Nancy still going out with Jim?
7. The news about the end of the war didn't reach the army in New Orleans.
 - a) I'm not tall enough to reach the top shelf.
 - b) I couldn't reach Nancy because her phone is dead.
 - c) It took the companies a few weeks to reach an agreement.
8. Nobody expected Jackson's small army to beat the well-trained British forces.
 - a) You have to beat the eggs well before you add the onions.
 - b) The woman was arrested for beating her dog.
 - c) I usually beat my husband at checkers and chess.

Discussion

Discuss a few of these questions as a class, or choose one and write a paragraph about it. You could also record a selfie video response.

1. Why was Andrew Jackson called a populist?
2. How does Jackson compare to the current president?
3. Why do you think that some politicians called Jackson “King Andrew?”
4. How was Jackson’s Democratic Party different from other political parties of the time?
5. Some history sources cite this quote by President Jackson. However, some historians don’t think these are his words. Do some research to find out what these words are about. Share your findings with your classmates. Do you think President Jackson said this?

*“You are a den of vipers and thieves.
I have determined to rout you out
and, by the Eternal, I will rout you out.”*

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students read a bio about the seventh president, Andrew Jackson. They also discuss how Jackson compares to the current president.

LEVEL: High Int

TIME: 1.5 hours

TAGS: Andrew Jackson, Jackson, president, politics, American, US, Native American, Continental Army

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Answers will vary.

1. The Continental Army was the American army during the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783). George Washington was the commander of the Continental Army.
2. Jackson was a well-known lawyer and politician. He was elected to Congress (to the House of Representatives to the Senate).
3. The War of 1812 (1812–15) was fought between the British and the Americans. The treaty to end the war was signed in 1814, but the war continued until 1815. The war was fought for a combination of reasons which included British violations of American maritime trading rights, impressment of American sailors, and British interference in conflicts between Americans and certain Native American tribes.
4. The term “Founding Father” means a leader who helps to establish a new country. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and James Madison are some of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America.
5. Andrew Jackson was the first president who had not come from a wealthy, highly-educated, or well-established family.

B. BRAINSTORMING

Allow your students to work in small groups to do this task. If they don’t know anything about Andrew Jackson, you can let them do a few minutes of research on their mobile devices.

C. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

Discuss the quote.

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. e | 3. h | 5. a | 7. g | 9. f | 11. d |
| 2. i | 4. k | 6. c | 8. j | 10. l | 12. b |

Comprehension

A. TRUE OR FALSE?

1. F – His father died before he was born.
His mother died when he was 14 years old.
2. T
3. F – A British officer struck him with a sword in prison after he refused to shine the officer’s shoes.
4. T
5. T
6. F – Jackson didn’t respect the rights of Native Americans. His attitudes and policies laid the groundwork for the Indian Removal Act and the “Trail of Tears,” one of the cruelest events in American history.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Comprehension cont.

B. ASK & ANSWER

1. Jackson was 13 years old when he joined the Continental Army.
2. A British officer struck Jackson in the head (and hand) with a sword because Jackson refused to shine the officer's boots.
3. Jackson was 20 years old when he became a lawyer.
4. Andrew and Rachel Jackson got married before Rachel was legally divorced from her first husband.
5. Jackson's victory at the Battle of New Orleans became a symbol of American spirit and independence.
6. Andrew Jackson, a Southern slave owner, accepted and supported the institution of slavery.
7. Jackson felt that huge banks and corporations had too much economic and political influence and control.
8. Jackson wanted the president to have much more power than Congress.

Vocabulary Review

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. b | 3. a | 5. b | 7. b |
| 2. b | 4. a | 6. c | 8. c |

Discussion

Discuss these questions as a class. Answers will vary.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.