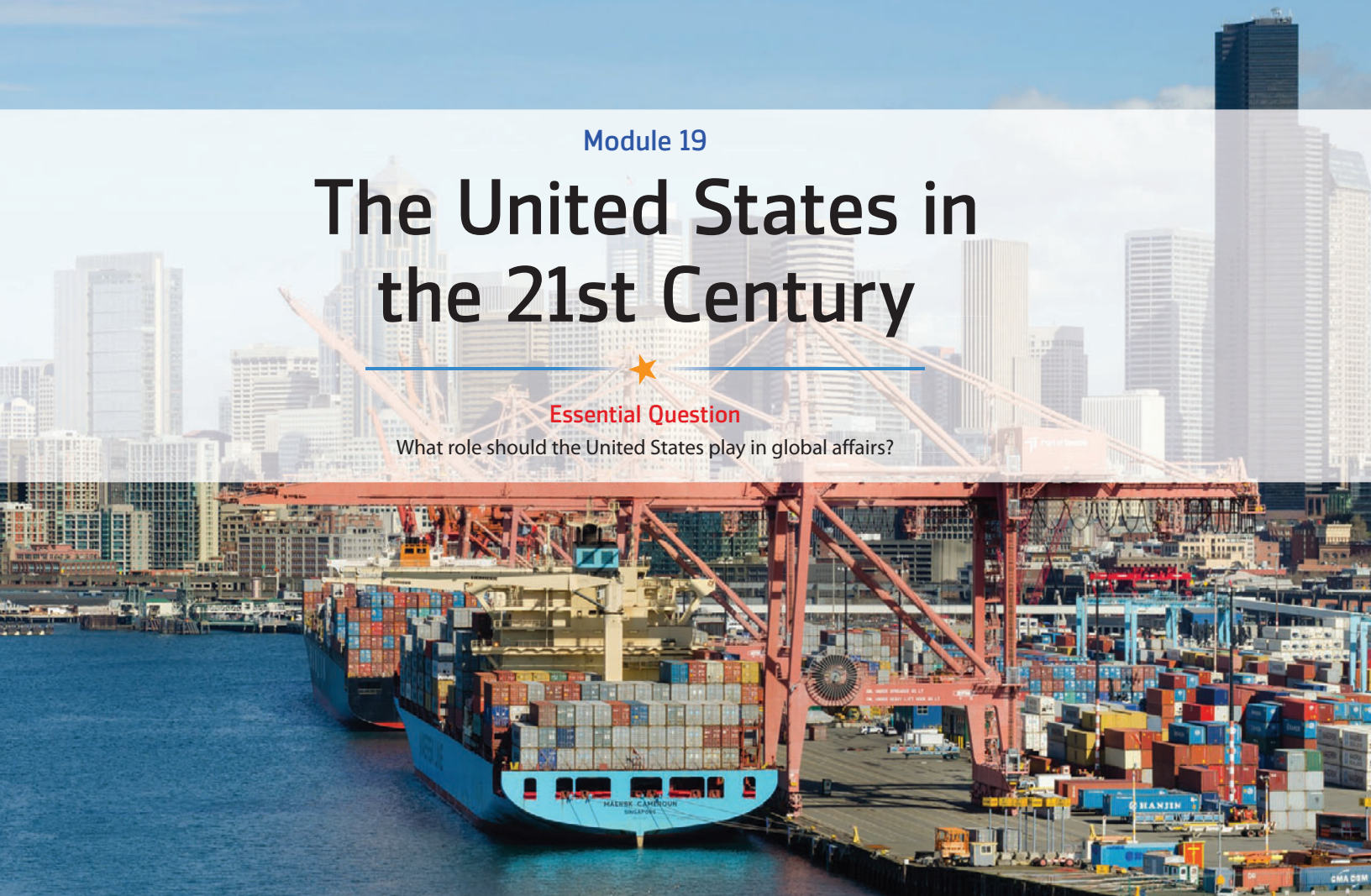


The United States in the 21st Century

Essential Question

What role should the United States play in global affairs?



About the Photograph: The port at Seattle, Washington, is an essential link in U.S. trade with Asian countries.

In this module you will learn about recent changes in U.S. political, social, environmental, and economic culture. You will also be challenged to look toward the future and consider ways that the country can effectively meet the issues that confront us all.

Explore ONLINE!



VIDEOS, including...

- The Faces of America
- The Gun Effect
- A World Without Bees
- Return of the Pirates

- ✓ Document-Based Investigations
- ✓ Graphic Organizers
- ✓ Interactive Games
- ✓ Interactive Map: U.S. Diplomatic Issues Around the World, 2015
- ✓ Image with Hotspots: How Fracking Works

What You Will Learn . . .

Lesson 1: National Security and Public Safety. 932

The Big Idea The U.S. government strives to safeguard the public while preserving individual liberties.

Lesson 2: Foreign Policy. 942

The Big Idea In order to keep the peace whenever possible and safeguard U.S. interests, policymakers engage in a range of relationships with other countries.

Lesson 3: Poverty and Social Concerns 954

The Big Idea Although the United States is often called the richest country in the world, poverty grips millions of Americans, and the middle class is shrinking.

Lesson 4: Conservation and the Environment. 962

The Big Idea Although rich in natural resources, the American environment is being stressed by various factors.

Lesson 5: Education 972

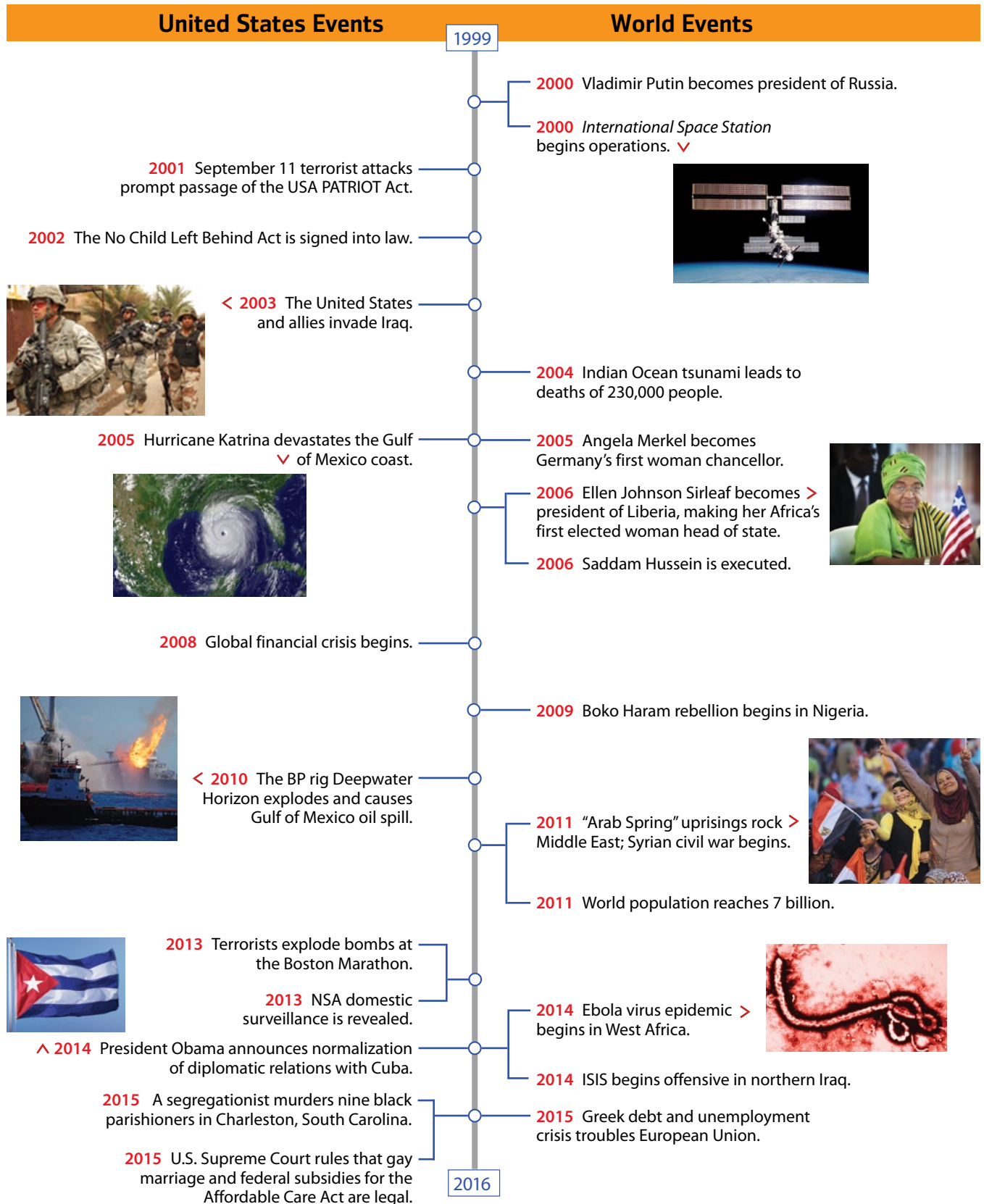
The Big Idea Because resources are limited and American society is extremely diverse, educational institutions struggle to teach all of America's children and young people.

Lesson 6: Globalization and Cultural Diffusion 979

The Big Idea Modern communication and transportation technologies have created an international economic and cultural community.

Timeline of Events 1999–2016

Explore ONLINE!



National Security and Public Safety

The Big Idea

The U.S. government strives to safeguard the public while preserving individual liberties.

Why It Matters Now

As digital technology becomes more pervasive and new threats arise, American citizens must share the responsibility for protecting themselves and the country.

Key Terms and People

drone

National Security Agency (NSA)

racial profiling

human trafficking

One American's Story

Kate Martin was concerned that the need for national security be balanced by protecting individual liberties. An expert in national security topics, she has taught at George Washington University Law School. She also served as general counsel to the National Security Archive, a nongovernmental organization. Martin has often used the courts to fight for open government. As Director of the Center for National Security Studies, Martin testified during the Forum on National Security and the Constitution held in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks.

"While some have cast the terrible situation we find ourselves in today as one in which we must decide what liberties we are willing to sacrifice for an increased measure of safety, I do not believe that is an accurate or helpful analysis. Before asking what trade-offs are constitutional, we must ask what gain in security is accomplished by restrictions on civil liberties."

—Kate Martin, from testimony before the Committee of the Judiciary, House of Representatives, January 24, 2002



Kate Martin testifies before a congressional committee.

New tensions and modern technology increase the difficulty of keeping Americans both safe and free.

Terrorism and Security

The FBI describes terrorism as violent acts intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping. Terrorist acts have targeted Americans on foreign soil and in the United States.

The most deadly act of terrorism occurred on September 11, 2001. More than 3,000 people perished in New York City; Washington, DC; and rural Pennsylvania. In response to these threats, President George W. Bush created the Office of Homeland Security to protect the country from further attacks. The U.S. Congress approved the USA PATRIOT Act. This act gave the government broad powers to monitor Americans' communications and activities. Critics complained that the law posed a threat to basic freedoms. To address these concerns, Congress agreed to let some provisions of the law expire gradually. Since then, certain provisions have been extended repeatedly.

FOREIGN SOURCES OF TERRORISM Ever since the September 11 attacks, Americans have been alert to terrorist threats from abroad, especially from the Middle East. Modern air transportation makes it easier for people from other countries to bring violence to the United States. However, radicals can inspire violence in others without regard for national borders by posting hate-filled videos, manifestos, and recruitment appeals on websites and social media. But not all Internet sources of terrorist ideas come from other countries. Some U.S. citizens have also turned to electronic media to foment terrorism. One such citizen was Anwar al-Awlaki, who was born in New Mexico but was influenced by radical Middle Eastern Islamists. Al-Awlaki's writings and videos were found on the computer owned by Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez, a Kuwaiti-born man who had been raised in the United States. Abdulazeez shot and killed four service members at military installations in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on July 16, 2015. Police officers ended the attack by killing Abdulazeez.

Radical Islamist rhetoric available on the Internet also helped inspire a horrific terrorist act that occurred on April 15, 2013, in Boston, Massachusetts. Brothers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, who had immigrated as



An airport security official inspects a traveler's shoe at a security checkpoint.

Radicals and the Internet

Security officials are facing new challenges in their efforts to keep Americans safe. During a U.S. Senate hearing, the witnesses were asked what keeps them awake at night. Following is FBI Director Robert Mueller's response.

"[I]t is the radicalization of individuals on the Internet, who develop the desire and the will to undertake attacks. They're finding it very difficult to find co-conspirators, others that would join in. But then again, the Internet can facilitate that kind of a meeting/coming together for an attack. And it is the lone wolves that we are principally concerned about."

—Robert Mueller, from testimony before the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 12, 2013

Analyze Historical Sources

How does the Internet affect the spread of radical ideas?

children from Russia and Kyrgyzstan, detonated bombs along the route of the Boston Marathon. (Dzhokhar was a U.S. citizen, but Tamerlan was not.) Their goal was vengeance for U.S. wars in Muslim countries. Three people were killed, and more than 260 were injured. Tamerlan was killed during the search for those responsible. Dzhokhar was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death. Just as the September 11 attacks prompted admiration for the emergency workers who risked their lives to save others, Americans were moved by the courage of Boston victims. Some who had lost limbs in the bombing were determined not just to walk again, but to run in upcoming marathons. The phrase "Boston Strong" declared Bostonians' resolve to go about their daily lives.

DOMESTIC TERRORISM Some terrorist acts on U.S. soil grow from domestic disputes. Americans have committed crimes to intimidate civilians or influence government policy related to a range of issues. For instance, some activists have sabotaged facilities where commercial products were tested on animals. Those events primarily affected property.

Some terrorists choose to attack human targets. Various white supremacist groups have used beatings and murder to intimidate people they find objectionable. Examples of these groups include Aryan Nations, Stormfront, and the Ku Klux Klan. These groups and many others that mimic them share several basic beliefs, although with different emphases. Among those beliefs are the superiority of white people, anti-Semitism, veneration of the Confederacy, opposition to the federal government, and a militant Christian point of view. Antigay, anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, anti-gun control, and neo-Nazi attitudes are also common in many of these groups. One incident inspired by these attitudes occurred in August 2012 at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. A white supremacist with ties to neo-Nazi groups fatally shot six people before killing himself. All of the shooter's victims were members of the Sikh faith.

Reading Check Identify Problems

Which do you think pose more danger to the American public—foreign or domestic terrorists?

Vocabulary

surveillance close observation of an individual, group, or location

The Southern Poverty Law Center maintains a list of organizations it designates as active hate groups. Hate groups are those that have “beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable [unchangeable] characteristics.” In 2014 the SPLC counted 784 such organizations. Some black separatist organizations also appear on the list. Groups on the list do not necessarily advocate violence, although critics accuse them of inspiring others to commit violent acts. Like foreigners who urge violence, these domestic groups often use their websites and social media to spread their message and recruit followers.

Extremists who commit acts of violence and are not affiliated with any particular group are another threat. One such person was Joseph Stack. He flew his single-engine plane into an Austin, Texas, building that housed an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) field office in 2010. Stack’s suicide note expressed his anger toward the IRS. One IRS employee was killed, and 13 other people were injured in the attack. In June 2015 Dylann Storm Roof shot and killed nine African Americans in a historic Charleston, South Carolina, church. According to several sources, he wanted to start a race war. Roof indicated on a social media site that he had found inspiration for his white supremacist views on the Internet. Investigations, however, have not found him to be affiliated with any particular group.

Both foreign and domestic terrorism can threaten the security and safety of the American public. However, many Americans refuse to succumb to fear.

Surveillance and Privacy

While militants of all varieties use the Internet and social media to spread their views and recruit new members, intelligence agencies and law enforcement use technology to track their activities. Ordinary citizens, too, are subject to surveillance by high-tech mechanisms that were unimaginable just a few years ago.

TECHNOLOGY AND SECURITY Several technological innovations make such surveillance possible. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) records what goes on in areas where crimes are more likely, such as airports, banks, casinos, and convenience stores. The popularity of CCTV increased after the September 11 attacks. Some Americans don’t like knowing that their innocent, day-to-day activities can be recorded. Other people are reassured by the cameras. They feel that CCTV can help deter crime or help solve crimes that do happen.

Drones, also known as unmanned aerial vehicles, are aircraft operated by pilots on the ground. Because drones can carry cameras, they have a range of uses. Drones can be used for movie-making, detecting forest fires, or inspecting power lines. Law enforcement can also use them for surveillance. Police departments may fly drones to keep an eye on crowded public events from above. The Department of Homeland Security flies drones along the Rio Grande to find immigrants crossing illegally from Mexico into Texas. Not all Americans are comfortable with this new technology. For example, residents



In the photo on the left, a closed-circuit TV camera provides security personnel with a wide view of a New York City street. In the photo on the right, a French surveillance official pilots a drone.

of Seattle, Washington, objected so strongly to their police force using drones that the city's mayor scrapped the plan.

Another surveillance tool may be in your pocket or backpack—the camera on your smartphone. In 2015 an estimated 64 percent of American adults owned a smartphone, up from 35 percent just four years earlier. Most people use them for ordinary tasks. Some people use their phones inappropriately, however, by taking photos or video of others without the subjects' knowledge. Using the stolen images for blackmail or other illegal purposes is a crime that law enforcement now must fight. Surveillance by camera phone can also solve crimes, however. In public places, suspicious activity attracts the attention—and cameras—of bystanders. There is even an app that allows the person filming a crime as it happens to send the video directly to the police.

KEEPING TABS ON AMERICANS Americans may be taking thousands of pictures of each other—legally or illegally—but the federal government can access a great deal more information on U.S. citizens. The **National Security Agency (NSA)** is an intelligence-gathering organization within the U.S. government. It was founded in 1952 during the Cold War. Although originally a highly secret department, more of the NSA's activities have come to light in recent decades. Investigations showed that the NSA has a history of monitoring civilian communications it considers suspect. More recently, the threat of terrorism increased the NSA's interception or monitoring of electronic communications.

Beginning in June 2013 the media exposed the extent of those actions, shocking many Americans. A series of top secret internal NSA documents revealed that the agency routinely collected telephone information on millions of people worldwide. Many of these people were never suspected of criminal activities. The documents also showed the web that connected the NSA, foreign intelligence agencies, and big telecommunications companies.

Reading Check
Analyze Effects
How has modern
technology affected
surveillance?

Edward Snowden, a contractor for the NSA, admitted that he was responsible for downloading the classified documents and making them available to journalists. Snowden maintained that he examined the documents carefully before sharing them to ensure that doing so was in the public interest. Some Americans called Snowden a heroic whistleblower for revealing government wrongdoing. Others said he was a traitor for endangering national security. The media also came under fire for sensationalizing the documents' revelations. While Snowden was in Hong Kong, the U.S. Department of Justice charged him with two counts of espionage and theft of government property. Since then, Snowden has not returned to the United States. As of 2015 he was living in Russia.

The NSA was in the headlines again in May and June of 2015. A federal appeals court ruled that the USA PATRIOT Act does not allow the program that the agency uses to gather millions of phone records. Since the act was not written to be permanent, the provisions that allowed bulk collection of data expired at the end of May. Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, a libertarian popular with the tea party, halted the USA PATRIOT Act's extension in Congress. Some liberals agreed with Paul. However, early in June Congress passed a new bill that eliminated the NSA's bulk phone-records collection program. Instead, phone records would stay in the hands of phone companies. Other aspects of the government's surveillance program remained intact.

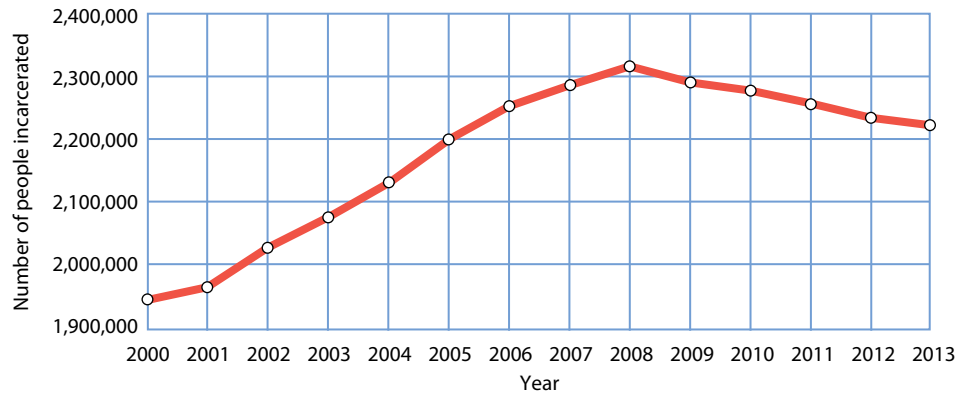
Many Americans feel conflicted about such surveillance activities. The NSA and other government agencies can indeed uncover vital information that leads to saving lives and property. The cost can be high, though, as individual rights and privacy may erode. Modern technology provides those hoping to do harm new outlets for their message. It also offers governments new methods for gathering information on criminal intentions. As a result, Americans will continue to struggle with the need to balance national security and individual rights. The tension between national security and civil liberties is not a new one, however. Benjamin Franklin offered his opinion on the topic long ago, when he said, "Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety."

Crime and Public Safety

Although sensational acts of violence grab headlines, violent crime has actually decreased in the United States since the early 1990s. Certain issues related to crime and law enforcement reflect changes in society, however, and require a close look.

INCARCERATION AND DRUG LAWS One way that Americans have sought to battle crime is by putting more people in prison. The federal government and many states have "three strikes" laws on the books. Under these laws, any person found guilty of two previous crimes receives a stiff sentence of 20 to 30 years after conviction for a third. While many applaud this get-tough policy, others claim that it suffers from a serious problem: racial bias. African Americans represent just 12 percent of the U.S. population and about

U.S. Incarcerated Population



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2013*

Interpret Graphs

What trend does the graph show for the last five years listed?

13 percent of those who reported using illegal drugs on a monthly basis. Yet three-fourths of all prison sentences for possession of drugs involve African Americans.

The number of incarcerated Americans is huge—some 2.3 million people in jail or prison. Of all the world's countries, the United States jails the largest percentage of its people. Advocates of severe sentences say that incarceration deters people from committing crimes by warning them of the consequences. Critics of the U.S. prison situation say that incarceration just turns many nonviolent offenders into hardened criminals. They also point out that a large percentage of inmates are serving time for nonviolent drug offenses. In 2011 drug sentences accounted for almost half of the inmates in U.S. jails and prisons.

The issue of incarceration for drug crimes is one factor in the loosening of laws against the use of marijuana. Use for medical reasons was legal in about half of the U.S. states by 2015. Even laws against recreational use are changing. In 2012 the state of Colorado legalized the personal, private use of marijuana by adults. Alaska, Oregon, Washington, and the District of Columbia loosened their marijuana laws not long after. Proposals for legalization are active in several other states.

LAW ENFORCEMENT UNDER SCRUTINY Just as laws are changing, law enforcement is also transforming. Police forces are concentrating on community outreach. Digital technology has given police new tools for locating offenders and solving crimes. However, some police have been accused of inappropriate responses to public disturbances. Sometimes digital technology, in the form of a bystander's smartphone or a reporter's video, records those events.

In August 2014 the spotlight of public attention shone harshly on Ferguson, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. A young African American man, Michael Brown, robbed a convenience store. In a later confrontation, a police

officer shot and killed Brown, although he was unarmed. The Ferguson community erupted in protests, both peaceful and violent. Many media reports labeled the police response to those protests as racist and overly militarized. Another case, in New York City, also caused outrage. During the arrest of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man, police used a controversial hold while Garner protested that he couldn't breathe. Garner died soon after. A third incident, this one in Baltimore, Maryland, involved Freddie Gray, whose neck and spine were injured while he was in police custody. After Gray died, charges were filed against the officers involved in the incident.

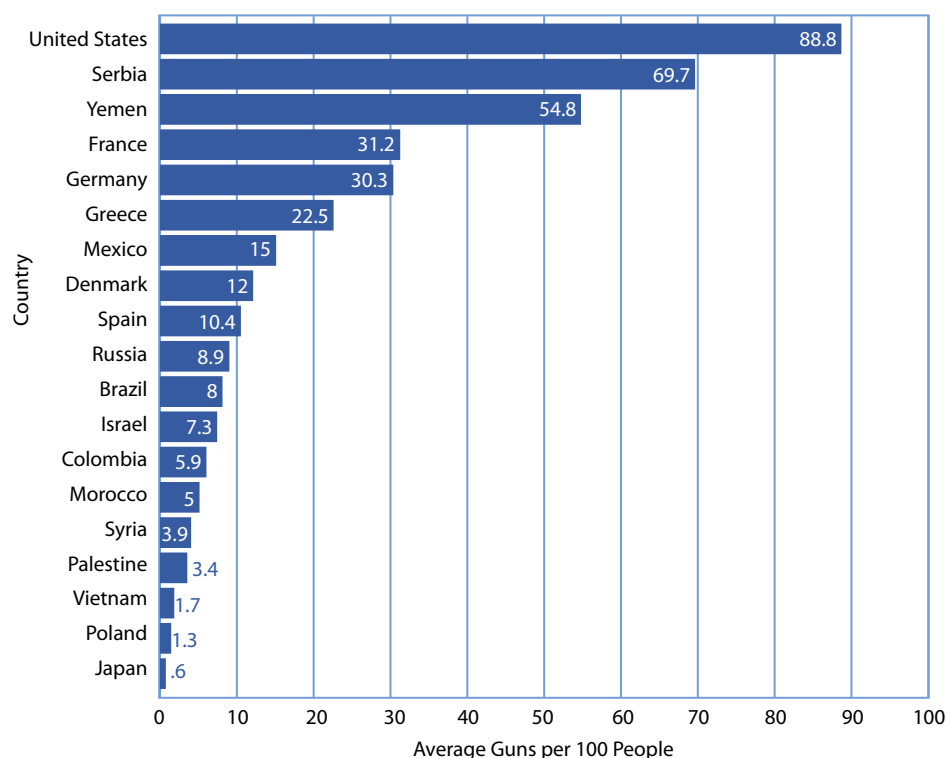
These events renewed scrutiny of how police relate to minorities, particularly young, urban, African American men. Civil rights advocates have presented case after case of what they characterize as racial profiling by law enforcement. **Racial profiling** is the act of suspecting or targeting a person simply on the basis of his or her race or ethnic background. These advocates also say that police are more apt to shoot or kill black and Hispanic suspects than whites. A study of police records and media reports by the *Washington Post* revealed that, just in the first five months of 2015, U.S. police killed 399 people. Most of the victims were armed, but 45 had no weapon. Although about half of the 399 victims were white, two-thirds of the unarmed victims were black or Hispanic. Some readers labeled the report as biased against police. Others said that police brutality statistics are actually underreported. In response to this increased focus on law enforcement, many police departments now require that their officers wear body cameras so that the circumstances of police actions are recorded.

GUNS AND AMERICAN SOCIETY Another issue that commands daily headlines is gun violence. The statistics are alarming. In 2013 alone, more than 11,200 people were killed by gunfire. In 2014 gunfire killed almost 3,000 children and teenagers. Sales of firearms, including automatic weapons, have soared. Efforts to expand gun-owners' rights have also increased. Several states have passed "open carry" laws. These laws allow gun owners to carry their weapons outside their clothing while in public. Details of these laws vary from state to state.

At the center of the gun-control issue lies a long-standing constitutional debate. The Second Amendment to the Constitution states: "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." The National Rifle Association (NRA) is an organization that supports gun ownership. It argues that gun-control laws violate this right to bear arms. Others contend that the amendment was not intended to guarantee a right to personal weapons. Rather, its purpose is to protect the states' right to maintain military units, such as National Guard forces. However, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that individuals do have the right to own firearms.

There may be no topic in American society that is more contentious than gun control. Besides the Second Amendment issue, gun-rights backers maintain that owning weapons enables them to protect themselves, their families, and their property. Gun control supporters cite the large number of accidental shootings, often the result of irresponsible gun ownership, in addition to

Gun Ownership Rates of Selected Countries



Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; Small Arms Survey, 2007

Interpret Graphs

1. Based on the graph, how does gun ownership in the United States compare to other countries?
2. How do the European countries represented on the graph compare to the two South American countries shown?

the large number of intentional firearm deaths. Those who want stricter gun laws also accuse the NRA of encouraging gun ownership while taking large sums of money from gun manufacturers.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING One crime that has recently drawn U.S. media attention is the practice known as **human trafficking**, in which people are brought into the United States against their will and in violation of the law. This cruel trade traps people—mostly women and children—into working for little or no money, with no hope of freedom from their captors. According to the U.S. Justice Department, more than 17,000 people are trafficked into the United States every year. The number may be higher, though, because finding and prosecuting the perpetrators is difficult. If the victims are afraid of punishment or deportation, some of them even side with their oppressors.

Poverty is a root cause of human trafficking. Some parents sell their children to traffickers. They do so hoping that their children will have a better life in the United States, not knowing that they will be abused. Adults desperate for work are lured into the trade with promises of employment, only



Many American teenagers who run away from home become victims of human traffickers. The National Runaway Switchboard helps teens break free from their captors. In this photo, switchboard personnel take calls from runaways in the Chicago area.

Reading Check

Summarize

What are some recent developments affecting law enforcement?

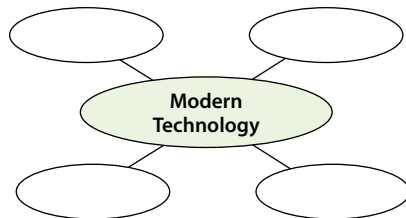
to find that the “jobs” are brutal physical labor or forced prostitution. The regions from which most trafficked persons come are South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Central America. Not all of the victims of human trafficking are foreigners, though. Some U.S. citizens are also trapped in the trade. Runaway teenagers are particularly vulnerable to being forced into sexual slavery.

States with several ports of entry and large immigrant populations are the main destinations. As a result, California, Texas, and Florida have had to focus law enforcement efforts on traffickers. Both the federal and state governments have passed laws to stop human trafficking and to bring the offenders to justice. Nonprofit organizations also seek to end the trade and help the victims. Unfortunately,

human trafficking in the United States will probably continue for some time. Economic globalization plays a part in its survival. As global trade increases, so does the demand for cheap labor. The need for labor in turn encourages illegal immigration and a framework for trafficking. In addition, modern communication technology allows traffickers to operate on a worldwide scale.

Lesson 1 Assessment

- 1. Organize Information** Create a web to show how modern technology affects national security and public safety. Add more branches as necessary.



- 2. Key Terms and People** For each key term in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- 3. Evaluate** Why might some perceive Edward Snowden as heroic while others might view him as a traitor?

Think About:

- the need for national security
- the right to privacy
- Americans' right to know about government actions

- 4. Analyze Causes** What is the connection between terrorism and the USA PATRIOT Act?
- 5. Draw Conclusions** Do you think that actions taken to address the causes of continuing urban tensions and violence have been effective? Why or why not?

Foreign Policy

The Big Idea

In order to keep the peace whenever possible and safeguard U.S. interests, policymakers engage in a range of relationships with other countries.

Why It Matters Now

Relationships between our country and others can affect us directly, so we need to stay vigilant in our efforts to keep those relationships peaceful.

Key Terms and People

national interest

Vladimir Putin

ISIS

Boko Haram

One American's Story

Marco Rubio, a U.S. senator from Florida, is a Miami native of Cuban American descent. Throughout his political career he has been a staunch advocate for a strong national defense. Rubio has served as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee and as co-chair of the Senate National Security Working Group. In a speech to the Concerned Veterans for America, Rubio compared the global situation during the period of the Barbary Wars to today's world. The Barbary Wars was a series of conflicts during the early 1800s when the United States fought pirates off the coast of North Africa.

"America was dealt a hard lesson through this affair: we must be prepared for threats wherever they arise, because our nation is never isolated from the world. Tremors in global affairs can fracture the foundations of our domestic economy. This was true then, when our connection to the world was limited to a slow procession of merchant ships. It is even truer today. . . . Never before have our people and our economy been so connected to the world. What happens across the planet can have a greater impact on your family than what happens down the street."



Senator Marco Rubio

—Marco Rubio, from a speech to Concerned Veterans for America, September 17, 2014

The complex web that connects the world's countries does indeed present new challenges for U.S. foreign policy.

Vocabulary
altruistic selfless,
concerned with the
welfare of others

The United States as a World Leader

After World War II, much of Europe and East Asia was in shambles. Two major powers remained to face off in the coming decades—the Soviet Union and the United States. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States became the world’s most powerful country. Much of the world still looks to the United States as a beacon of freedom, prosperity, and hope. However, some people in other regions resent the country’s power and influence.

POLITICAL, MILITARY, AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS Although altruistic intentions can influence U.S. foreign policy, **national interest** is the guiding force in determining our relationships with other countries. National interest refers to a country’s goals and ambitions. To further its interests, the U.S. government maintains complex diplomatic relations around the world. It also spends vast amounts of money on foreign aid for various purposes.

Some national interests are political. One political goal of U.S. foreign policy is to support the growth of democracy in new and developing countries. While fighting communism was an important priority throughout the Cold War, the focus has shifted with the development of regional conflicts. People in some other countries have seen their personal freedoms limited by their own governments. For example, during the so-called Arab Spring of 2010–2012, citizens of several Middle Eastern and North African countries rose up against their oppressive governments in mass demonstrations. Many Americans cheered the uprisings. In a speech at the U.S. Department of State, President Obama praised the demonstrators for their courage in demanding reforms. Extremists also crush dreams of freedom by committing violent acts against people of their own country. The U.S. government uses diplomacy to confront those forces also. One example is the promise that President Obama made to the newly elected, pro-democracy president of Nigeria. He promised to provide information-gathering expertise that will help in the fight against radical Islamists plaguing that country.

Military strength is also a major concern of U.S. policymakers. In the wake of the September 11 attacks and other dangers, halting the efforts of terrorists and preventing other threats to homeland security have become key goals of U.S. military policy. In 2015 the budget for the U.S. Department of Defense was about \$575 billion—approximately 20 percent of the entire federal budget. Those dollars fund personnel, personnel benefits, weapons, other equipment, fuel, construction, and building maintenance, among various specialized programs. The United States also provides many countries with sophisticated weapons to keep military strength in balance. Much of the military’s budget goes toward bases, research establishments, air fields, and other facilities in foreign countries, such as Germany, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, South Korea, and the United Kingdom. Germany alone hosts 37 U.S. Army installations. This military presence reminds neighboring powers that the United States will defend its interests and those of the host countries against aggression. Military installations in other countries may also assist the host countries in their efforts to reduce internal conflicts.

The UN General Assembly in session



Officials who guide U.S. foreign policy also try to maintain the country's economic advantages. They often enter into agreements and treaties that stimulate global trade. In addition, the U.S. Department of Commerce has employees in more than 80 countries who work to protect American commercial interests. The International Trade Administration is an office within the Department of Commerce. It provides information to help Americans do business overseas, ensures that Americans have access to international markets, and safeguards U.S. businesses from unfair competition.

WORKING WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS In the 21st century, the United States is widely involved in world affairs. Many of those interactions occur in the context of international organizations.

Since the creation of the United Nations (UN) in 1945, the United States has been a key member of that organization. As one of the victors of World War II, it is a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Despite its important role, U.S.-UN relations have often been strained. As a global organization, the UN tries to protect the interests of all nations. As a result, its efforts can sometimes run counter to American interests. The United States also owes dues money to the UN. Estimates range from several hundred million dollars to more than a billion. Opinions about the UN vary among Americans. Although many Americans support the UN, some want the United States to withdraw completely. Others want to change the organization to bring it into closer alignment with U.S. foreign policy.

The United Nations continues to embrace ambitious goals. In 2000 about 150 world leaders gathered in New York City for a Millennium Summit. The topic was the role of the United Nations in the 21st century. Following the summit, policymakers wrote eight Millennium Development Goals to achieve by the year 2015. The goals aimed to solve a range of human misfortunes, including poverty, hunger, and disease.

Some countries have made dramatic progress toward fulfilling these goals. For example, in 2015 the UN reported that the world's hungry had dropped to 795 million people from more than a billion. In China alone, 170 million fewer people live in poverty than did before the summit.

United Nations Millennium Development Goals

1. to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. to achieve universal primary education
3. to promote gender equality
4. to reduce child mortality
5. to improve maternal health
6. to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. to ensure environmental sustainability
8. to develop a global partnership for development

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is another organization important to U.S. foreign affairs. Founded in 1949, NATO's original purpose was to unite Western Europe and the United States in a military alliance against the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies. The Soviet Union's decline changed the organization's mission. Some former members of the Soviet bloc have even joined NATO. Recently, various hot spots have demanded NATO's attention and occasional military intervention. One was in Bosnia and Herzegovina. U.S. forces operated under NATO's command to end violence toward civilians. Attacks on civilians in nearby Kosovo also

drew NATO's intervention. Although the worst violence ended in 1999, NATO deployed peacekeeping forces to the region. After the September 11 attacks on the United States, NATO members assisted in antiterrorist measures in the Middle East. In 2009 NATO sent warships to protect the shipping lanes in the western Indian Ocean. Pirates based in Somalia were hijacking ships and holding them for ransom. Two years later NATO intervened in the civil war raging in Libya.

Some U.S. officials have expressed frustration that other NATO members seem reluctant to take on as much financial and military responsibility as the United States does during NATO actions. Before he retired in 2011, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates rebuked some of America's NATO allies in a stinging speech.

"The blunt reality is that there will be dwindling appetite and patience in the U.S. Congress, and in the American body politic writ large, to expend increasingly precious funds on behalf of nations that are apparently unwilling to devote the necessary resources . . . to be serious and capable partners in their own defense."

—Robert M. Gates, from a speech before the NATO Council,
June 10, 2011

As new problems arise or old hostilities calm, the United States will have to manage evolving relationships with the UN, NATO, and the member nations of those and other international organizations.

HUMANITARIAN AID The United States often steps in to provide humanitarian aid when people in other nations suffer. Humanitarian aid comes from private sources, nonprofit organizations, and governments. The United States sends tons of food, fresh water, medical supplies, temporary shelter, and other items to people in need. Along with supplies go doctors, nurses, scientists, and many other aid workers. These aid workers respond to natural disasters,



Responding to the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti, a U.S. military helicopter delivers needed food and other supplies.

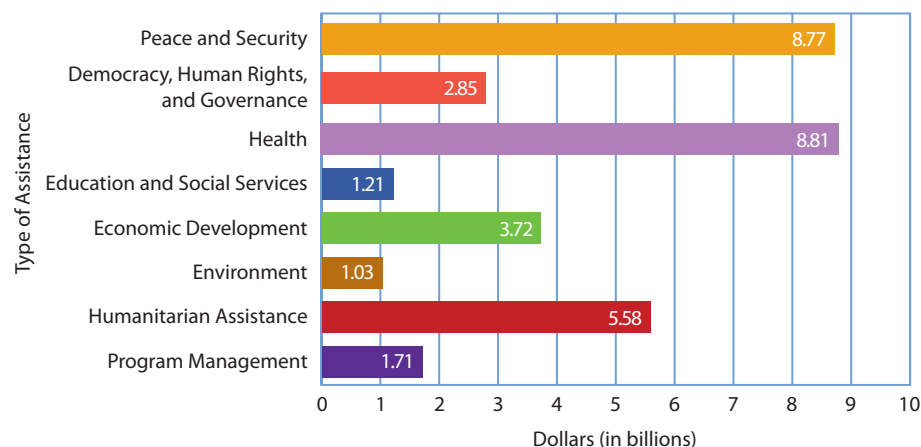
such as floods or earthquakes, and man-made disasters, mainly refugee crises and other effects of war. Many crises are the result of natural disasters combined with human calamities.

The main U.S. government division responsible for providing humanitarian aid is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Created in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, the agency's mission is to "partner to end extreme poverty and to promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity." Promoting economic prosperity, improving global health, furthering education, and helping people recover from conflicts are among USAID's specific goals. One percent of the federal budget goes to USAID.

Global health care is among the agency's many targets. USAID reports that in 2013, 6.3 million of the world's children died before they turned five years old. Malnutrition, cholera, tuberculosis, and other conditions still kill millions of people every year. However, great strides have been made in some areas. For example, although malaria, a disease spread by mosquitoes, still claims thousands of victims annually, the World Health Organization reports that deaths from the illness have fallen. Preventive measures, such as the widespread use of mosquito nets treated with insecticide, have proven highly effective. USAID has supported these measures.

Another aid effort that has seen success is the President's Emerging Plan for AIDS Relief. This effort was designed to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and to help the people already infected with the disease. Started by President George W. Bush, the program provides education on prevention and makes medication available to many patients. One 2009 study determined that the program had saved a million lives in Africa. Critics of the program, however, say it places too much emphasis on sexual abstinence. In addition, some detractors say the program does not take a realistic view of intravenous drug use as a means of spreading infection.

U.S. Foreign Assistance Planned, 2016



Source: USAID Foreign Assistance Dashboard

Interpret Graphs

What U.S. foreign assistance priorities does the graph show for 2016?

As long as there are global problems, the United States will continue to provide humanitarian aid. Many people are particularly concerned about the possible impact of global climate change. If many of the predictions related to global climate change prove true, rising sea levels, wildly fluctuating temperatures, and more severe weather events will take an especially heavy toll on the world's most vulnerable people. Political conflicts will be worsened by dwindling supplies of food and water. Humanitarian aid organizations will be called upon to do even more to alleviate suffering.

HUMAN RIGHTS The United States also intercedes when other countries violate their citizens' human rights. Although definitions of the term "human rights" vary, most agree that everyone has certain fundamental rights, no matter who they are or where they live. Common among the definitions are the right to life; freedom from torture; freedom from slavery; the right to a fair trial; and freedom of speech, thought, conscience, religion, and movement. Some definitions add the right to education or gender equality. The Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor is the government agency that leads U.S. efforts to promote human rights around the world. Among the tools that U.S. policymakers use to fulfill those goals are foreign aid money, media exposure, and, when necessary, economic penalties.

The United States has an uneven history when it comes to promoting human rights abroad. Often America calls on repressive governments to end their human rights abuses. For example, during the 1980s, the U.S. government expressed disapproval of South Africa's racist apartheid government by passing travel restrictions to that country. Major U.S. universities also withdrew their investments in South Africa. The Department of State continually pressures China to account for the victims of the government's violent suppression of the 1989 demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Conversely, the U.S. government supports, under certain circumstances, some regimes with questionable human rights records. One example is Saudi Arabia, where the ruling royal family squelches opposition, demands religious uniformity, and severely restricts women's freedom. However, Saudi Arabia controls immense oil reserves. Moreover, it has been called a stabilizing force in the Middle East. For these reasons, among others, the country's poor human rights record does not severely affect its status as a U.S. ally.

Reading Check
Analyze Causes
Why does the United States spend large sums of money on foreign aid?

Regional Policies

The Department of State is responsible for U.S. international relations. It has a difficult job trying to keep the peace, protect U.S. international business interests, and further global cooperation. U.S. foreign policies differ from region to region and from country to country.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE On our own continent, the United States has a close ally in Canada. Our two countries share the world's longest international border. A common language and a shared British heritage contribute

to friendly relations. Each country is the other's greatest trading partner. Cross-border tourism is lively for both countries. Canada occasionally objects to U.S. actions, however. Notable examples include Canadians' negative views of the Iraq War and some of the actions taken by the United States to combat terrorism.

U.S. relationships with Mexico and some Central American countries are complicated by two main issues. The issues are the drug trade and the large number of immigrants who enter the United States illegally. Complaints that the Latin American countries don't do enough to restrict the drug trade and its violence are met with the argument that if U.S. users didn't want the drugs, the trade would end. In a similar vein is the contention that if U.S. employers would not hire undocumented workers, fewer Latin Americans would risk the trip north to reach the United States. Disagreements notwithstanding, economic connections remain strong.

In the Caribbean region, a major change in diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba's Communist government is underway. Official relations broke in 1961, when Cuba was under the influence of the Soviet Union. Then in 2015 President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raúl Castro announced that their countries would reestablish diplomatic relations. Embassies reopened in Washington, DC, and Havana, and some travel and trade restrictions were lifted.

Farther south, U.S. connections to the countries of South America have fluctuated over the years. Many of those nations have experienced dramatic changes in their own governments. Relations with Brazil, the continent's largest country, have gone through phases. They cooled over recent allegations of U.S. surveillance programs but were soon repaired. The United States has especially warm relations with Argentina, partly because Argentina's navy assisted in the 1991 Gulf War. Chile is a close ally since its people returned the country to democracy after a long dictatorship. In contrast, relations with Venezuela have been rocky for many years. They worsened when the United States protested the Venezuelan government's violent treatment of peaceful protesters.

EUROPE AND RUSSIA Many ties bind the United States and the countries of Europe. A majority of Americans trace at least part of their heritage to a European country. In general, Europeans enjoy individual liberties and have a high standard of living. Trade between the United States and the region is brisk, as is tourism. But with the formation of the European Union (EU), the European countries gained more clout in dealing with the United States. Disagreements are not uncommon. For example, the EU restricts the importation of genetically modified foods, which angers U.S. agricultural businesses. Another example relates to the death penalty. All EU members have abolished the practice, while the United States has not. As a result, EU member countries will not extradite a criminal suspect to the United States unless a guarantee is made that the death penalty will not be imposed upon conviction.

In eastern Europe and Asia is Russia, where the diplomatic situation is more critical. Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, relations with Russia eased. Many of the Russian people hoped, along with

Americans, that their country would become truly democratic. Those hopes dimmed with the rise to power of **Vladimir Putin**, a former agent of the KGB, the Soviet Union's spy agency. Since 1999 Putin has held one of the country's two top offices. In 2012 he was elected to his third term as president. Putin has imprisoned potential rivals, suppressed dissent, and stifled democratic reforms. As a result, Russia's relations with the United States chilled.

An especially volatile crisis began in early 2014. The people of Ukraine, formerly part of the Soviet Union, demanded governmental reforms and a closer connection to the European Union. Within weeks, Putin sent Russian troops into Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, where ethnic Russians were in the majority. Crimea voted to join with Russia, and Russia annexed the region. Western leaders, including President Obama, called the referendum illegal and corrupted by Russian military pressure. Unrest continued to spread in eastern Ukraine. Russian troops moved freely among the Russian-speaking populace. In response to Russia's intervention, the United States, the European Union, and several other countries approved sanctions against Russia. An example of the sanctions is a ban against doing business with Russian banks, energy companies, and defense industries. Relations with Russia remain very tense.

EAST ASIA The giant power in East Asia is, of course, the People's Republic of China. Its connection to the United States has evolved. Although relations with China froze in 1949, President Nixon's trip to China in 1972 helped relations begin to thaw. As China's economy becomes more market oriented, the United States has engaged with China more actively. The country's Communist government continues to violate basic human rights, however, so U.S. policy toward China remains cautious.

At times China flexes its muscle, and the rest of the world has to take notice. For example, in 2009 China began to claim control over the Spratly Islands, a chain of tiny islands in the South China Sea. However, several other countries in the region claim control of the islands. The region is strategically sensitive, as some \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade crosses the sea each year. In addition, each of the claimants would like the rights to fishing off the islands' shores. China has built artificial islands in the area, an action that many countries protest. In 2015 satellite imagery showed that China was building an airfield on a reef within the Spratly group. The Chinese navy warned the U.S. military to stay away. The region will, no doubt, draw global attention for some time to come.

China has grown in economic strength. Today, the East Asian giant is a commercial powerhouse. In 2010 China became the world's largest exporter. Since then, China surpassed the United States when its economy ranked as the largest in the world. China also holds more of the U.S. public debt, some \$1.26 trillion, than any other entity. The United States also has a huge trade deficit with China. That is, we buy much more from the Chinese than they buy from us. However, what these facts do not reveal is that the average American is much richer than the average Chinese person. Low wages, harsh working conditions, and limited personal freedoms are still the norm for millions of Chinese citizens.

China is not the only East Asian country with which the United States has complex relations. U.S. forces are still stationed in South Korea. They are there mainly to protect our democratic ally from its militarily strong Communist neighbor, North Korea. Most South Koreans are strongly pro-America. In general, the Japanese people also think highly of the United States, and the two countries have strong diplomatic and economic ties. Some Japanese, however, resent the presence of U.S. military forces stationed within Japan's borders.

In Southeast Asia, diplomatic relations between the United States and Communist Vietnam have been normalized. The country is a popular tourist destination. Indonesia, with the world's fourth-largest population, is on good terms with the United States, with which it has strong economic and strategic ties. Causing concern, though, is a violent Islamist terrorist group, Jemaah Islamiyah. This group originated in Indonesia but has cells in other Asian countries.

SOUTH ASIA The largest countries of South Asia are India and Pakistan. India is the world's most populous democracy. Many American businesses rely on its high-tech industries. As a growing economic force, India also balances the growing power of China. Relations between India and the United States, as a result, are generally quite warm.

Relations with Pakistan, however, are worse. After many years of good relations, they soured when the United States accused Pakistan of protecting Taliban fighters who crossed the border from Afghanistan. The CIA had

Document-Based Investigation Historical Source

An East Asian Threat

Kim Jong Un rules North Korea as a militaristic dictatorship. The people there have few freedoms, and many struggle to survive. Yet North Korea—also known as the DPRK, or Democratic People's Republic of Korea—has a huge and powerful military program, as described by the CIA.

"After decades of economic mismanagement and resource misallocation [misuse], the DPRK since the mid-1990s has relied heavily on international aid to feed its population. The DPRK began to ease restrictions to allow semi-private markets, starting in 2002, but then sought to roll back the scale of economic reforms in 2005 and 2009. North Korea's history of regional military provocations; proliferation of military-related items; long-range missile development; WMD programs including tests of nuclear devices in 2006, 2009, and 2013; and massive conventional armed forces are of major concern to the international community. The regime in 2013 announced a new policy calling for the simultaneous development of the North's nuclear weapons program and its economy."

—Central Intelligence Agency, from *The World Factbook*, 2015

Analyze Historical Sources

What special problems does North Korea present for U.S. diplomacy?

suspected that Pakistani officials knew Osama bin Laden was hiding in their country when he was killed in 2011. Even with these issues, the United States sends much economic and military aid to Pakistan.

MIDDLE EAST For years, U.S. policy in the Middle East has been troubled by wars, terrorism, and mutual lack of trust. The situation is complicated by U.S. dependence on foreign oil, much of it imported from the region. Several Middle Eastern countries present particularly dangerous situations, both for the people who live there and for people in other countries.



Since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, the United States has given \$4.5 billion in humanitarian assistance. Shown here are hundreds of Syrian refugees leaving Budapest, Hungary.

In Syria, a civil war began in 2011 between the ruling party loyal to President Bashar al-Assad and those who wanted to end his brutal rule. Since then, the country has fallen into constant warfare, with various factions getting encouragement from outside interests. It has been a deadly conflict. By April 2015 an estimate put the death toll at 310,000 people. Millions of Syrians have been displaced, either fleeing to nearby countries or becoming refugees within their own country.

From this chaos rose a new and frightening terrorist enemy, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, often abbreviated as **ISIS**. This radical group's goal is to establish a strict new Islamic state ruled by religious authorities. ISIS has taken over large tracts of territory in both Iraq and Syria. ISIS uses publicized beheadings, mass executions, kidnappings, rape, and enslavement to intimidate local people. In its efforts to destroy anything they consider a threat to their religious beliefs, ISIS militants have also demolished ancient monuments built by pre-Islamic or non-Islamic cultures. Many Muslims have criticized ISIS

severely, as have Western governments. Yet ISIS has been remarkably successful in recruiting fighters—some 20,000 from other countries by 2015. Even some women have been lured to its ranks by its very active Internet and social media presence. Observers are worried that ISIS will take more territory and spread its violent message even farther, inspiring others to take up its terrorist cause.

Iraq, too, remains in turmoil after the war that began there in 2003 and the subsequent withdrawal of U.S. troops. Sectarian violence has disrupted the economy and driven countless civilians from their homes. ISIS has taken over land in northern Iraq, spreading more fear and death. The U.S. Department of State supports the Iraqi government's efforts to fight ISIS and stabilize the country, but distrust of the West remains widespread.

The United States does not maintain formal diplomatic relations with Iran. Connections with that country broke when the U.S.-supported shah was overthrown in 1979 and an Islamic theocracy took over. The United States imposed an embargo on Iranian trade in 1995. Most Americans view Iran

Vocabulary
sectarian based on
religious differences

unfavorably. In contrast, Iranians have a generally positive view of the American people, although not of the U.S. government. Iranian sentiments may become more positive, however, if the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action takes effect and is successful. The 2015 agreement among Iran, the United States, and other major Western powers requires Iran to reduce its nuclear program dramatically in exchange for the easing of punitive sanctions.

The United States does have some firm allies in the Middle East. Although Israel and the United States occasionally disagree over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the two countries remain connected economically, diplomatically, and militarily. In fact, U.S. military aid to Israel totaled \$3.9 billion in 2014. Israelis in general have a positive view of the United States. Turkey, the only NATO member in the Middle East, is another major ally, though Turkey protested the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. The influence of Islamist factions in the government could also complicate U.S. diplomatic relations with Turkey.

AFRICA In Africa a cultural divide separates the northern from the sub-Saharan countries. Islamic culture dominates the countries of North Africa, including the large, important nations of Libya and Egypt. Both countries experienced upheavals in recent years. Demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of Egyptians brought down the longtime president. Since then, Islamists, the military, and secularists have jockeyed for power. Relations between Egypt and the United States remain peaceful but guarded. Egyptian distrust of the United States is widespread. A 2014 poll showed that 85 percent of Egyptians viewed the United States unfavorably. Libya presents a very different situation. In 2011 the United States helped rebels oust leader Muammar Gaddafi, who had sponsored terrorist acts. A majority of Libyans approved of U.S. assistance. Relations between Libya and the United States remain friendly and cooperative.

Islam also influences some areas of West Africa, where a new threat has developed. A terrorist group known as **Boko Haram** is centered in Nigeria



Angered by Boko Haram's kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls in 2014, Nigerians marched to demand the girls' return.

Reading Check

Compare and Contrast What are some countries or regions where interactions have created a positive image of the American people? a negative image?

but is also active in bordering countries. The name is usually translated as “Western education is forbidden.” Boko Haram is allied with ISIS. Like ISIS, it seeks to establish an Islamic state under strict religious law. Boko Haram uses kidnapping as a major tactic. In April 2014 Boko Haram fighters kidnapped 276 primarily Christian schoolgirls. The Boko Haram leader admitted to kidnapping the girls and selling them into sexual slavery. He claimed that doing so was in line with his religion and that the girls should have been married and at home, not in school. Reports of the girls’ fate included rape and murder. The United States sent assistance to search for the girls.

Relations between the United States and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa are generally good. U.S. connections with South Africa have been shaky at times. For example, the U.S. government refused to support South Africa’s racist apartheid policy, but relations have improved dramatically. Now the countries have close economic and diplomatic ties. Kenya is another good friend in the sub-Saharan region. U.S. aid to Kenya includes help with fighting disease, improving human rights, and opposing terrorism. A 2012 poll reported that 69 percent of Kenyans view U.S. influence as a good thing.

Lesson 2 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Create a table to describe a major issue that negatively affects U.S. foreign policy toward the listed country or region.

| | |
|----------|--|
| Mexico | |
| Europe | |
| Russia | |
| China | |
| Pakistan | |
| Iraq | |
| Iran | |

2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

3. **Evaluate** What are some factors that contribute to U.S. foreign policy decisions?

Think About:

- strategic locations
- economic competition
- military concerns
- dependence on foreign oil

4. **Form Opinions** Should the United States be stricter about other countries’ human rights abuses? Why or why not?
5. **Make Inferences** What do you think are the most effective methods for developing peaceful relations, alliances, and global agreements with other nations?

Poverty and Social Concerns

The Big Idea

Although the United States is often called the richest country in the world, poverty grips millions of Americans, and the middle class is shrinking.

Why It Matters Now

A thriving middle class is essential to continuing the American way of life.

Key Terms and People

minimum wage

income gap

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission

political action committee (PAC)

One American's Story

In 2014 the U.S. Department of Agriculture published interviews with some of the people who receive public assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), sometimes called food stamps. Among the interview topics were the recipients' circumstances and how they coped with their situations. The man quoted below explained how important Social Security payments were for his elderly mother and aunt. He also talked about how essential the network of friends and family was to his own survival. Many low-income Americans, however, have no such network and must depend on the government to fill their basic needs.

"I went to my aunt. I asked her for help, cause like my mom, she gets her Social Security . . . so—she helps when she can. She also knows—like she'll try to find people in the neighborhood to give me odd jobs to try to help me earn it myself. . . . I'll just mow their lawns, wash their cars. If . . . they'll say, 'We need some help to clean the basement,' I'll do that. It doesn't matter. I'm just trying to do something."

—Male respondent, 30 years old, quoted in *Examining the Growth of the Zero-Income SNAP Caseload*, Vol. II



A man looking for work reads job postings.

This young man is one of the many “working poor” who are desperate for any kind of job. If they do find work, the wages are often not enough for self-sufficiency.

Poverty in America

Many societies have strict rules, perhaps unwritten or unacknowledged, about social class. In those societies, one's family ties, religion, and occupation can determine a person's social status. The United States does not have a hierarchy of that sort. A person of remarkable ability can still rise from nothing to achieve wealth and fame. American social class is, instead, defined primarily by one's wealth or lack thereof. Our country's riches are the wonder and envy of millions of the world's people, but beneath the glitter lies a chronic problem—poverty.

For 2015 the poverty threshold for a family of four was an annual income of \$24,250. Poverty has hit children particularly hard. Nearly half of the Americans needing food stamps are children. More than half of U.S. school kids qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch. One of five children in the United States lives in a family with income below the official poverty level.

SOME CAUSES OF POVERTY Experts agree that there are many causes of poverty. Illness, natural disasters, and economic downturns can cause people to struggle. Lack of skills keeps many welfare recipients from finding or keeping jobs. Many observers insist that these people need not just skills training, but also training in work habits.

Another factor that keeps people in poverty is limited access to child care. Parents may eke out a living combining paid work with some outside support, such as food stamps. But a parent that leaves the welfare system and takes a full-time minimum-wage job would see his or her income decline by having to pay for quality child care.

For millions of Americans, the U.S. public education system has failed to provide the tools necessary for climbing out of poverty. Anne Lewis, an education writer, points out that “three-fourths of all welfare/food stamp recipients perform at the lowest levels of literacy.” In turn, she notes, low levels of literacy generally lead to low employment rates and lower wages.

Another factor contributing to poverty has been discrimination against racial minorities. Statistics highlight how much more prevalent poverty is among minorities. In 2010 the poverty rate among non-Hispanic whites was 9.9 percent. Among Hispanics and African Americans it was 26.6 percent and 27.4 percent, respectively.

EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND HOMELESSNESS It may be tempting to think that if only poor people could get jobs, then poverty would end. The truth, though, is that many adults who live below the poverty line do work. In fact, 2012 census data show that 23 percent of people in poverty spend 27 weeks or more in a year either working or looking for work. Known as the working poor, these Americans hold low-wage jobs with few benefits and almost never any health insurance.

Some analysts say that in order for low-income workers to advance, the **minimum wage** should be raised. The minimum wage is the lowest wage that employers can legally pay their workers. In 2009 the federal government set a minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. In 2014 Congress debated a bill raising

In many American cities, homeless men and women stand on street corners offering work in exchange for a meal. Others simply ask for a handout.



the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 over two years, but the bill did not pass. Most states also have minimum wage laws. Several states have approved increases above the federal minimum that will go into effect in coming years. Individual cities, too, have approved higher minimums. Los Angeles residents, for example, voted to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2020.

Polls indicate that a majority of Americans favor raising the minimum wage. Many economists agree, saying that purchasing power has not kept pace with inflation. Proponents—more Democrats than Republicans—argue that an increase would boost buying power. This, in turn, would have a ripple effect across the economy, creating more jobs. Opponents claim that raising the minimum wage would kill jobs, hurt small businesses, and benefit only teenagers. However, most states actually saw job growth after recently raising their wage minimums. In addition, two-thirds of minimum-wage workers are employed by large corporations—many in the leisure and hospitality industries. About half of the low-wage earners are over 25 years old.

Perhaps the most visible sign of poverty in America is the many poor people who are homeless. During the 1980s, cuts in welfare and food stamp benefits brought the problem of homelessness to national attention. In addition, a move to close large mental health facilities resulted in many people with mental illness having nowhere to live but the streets. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), about 750,000 Americans are without shelter on any given night. To illustrate the problem, consider Jim, a 55-year-old painter by trade, who retreats each night to a Boston homeless shelter. He spends his days doing any work he can find, but it's never enough to provide him with a roof over his head. Too many of the jobs available, he says, "pay only the minimum wage or a bit higher, and they cannot cover the rent and other bills." Jim never imagined he would find himself homeless. "I never thought it could happen to me," he says. In addition to homeless adults like Jim, more than 250,000 children are homeless.

Many experts say that the lack of housing is simply a symptom of larger problems. These include unemployment, low-wage jobs, and high housing costs. In many cases, personal problems such as substance abuse or mental illness contribute to chronic homelessness.

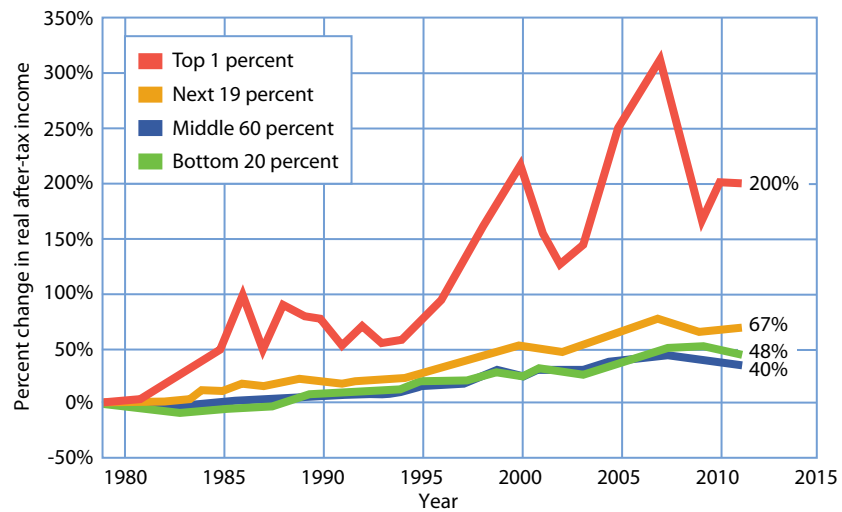
THE WIDENING INCOME GAP A troubling aspect of 21st-century social issues is the growing **income gap** between America's rich and poor. That is, the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, and the middle class is shrinking as a percentage of the population. Of all the democracies in the developed world, U.S. income inequality, or income gap, is surpassed only by Chile's. The income gap has been growing in the last several decades. To state the difference in dollar amounts, if income distribution today were the same as it was in the late 1970s, the average family would be making an additional \$11,000 or so more per year.

Economists and politicians have listed various causes of the widening income gap.

- Tax policies have changed in recent decades to favor the rich.
- Difficulty affording health care, child care, and higher education keeps people of lower incomes from getting better jobs.

Income Growth of American Households, 1979–2011

American Households (by percentage of wealth)



Sources: Congressional Budget Office; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Interpret Graphs

1. Which group's income has increased by 200 percent since 1979?
2. What percentage of American households experienced only a 40 percent increase?

- The decline of labor unions has led to lower incomes and less political influence for blue-collar workers.
- The global economy puts low-wage American workers in competition with workers in other countries.
- High technology has put many employees in traditional manufacturing fields out of work but rewards tech innovators with extremely high pay.
- Corporate CEOs receive huge salaries that are hundreds of times larger than their lowest-paid employees' salaries. Competition among businesses keeps those salaries high.

Listing the possible causes of income inequality, however, is easier than solving the problem. Why is income inequality an issue? Slower economic growth, general economic instability, high levels of personal debt, and fewer opportunities to advance one's own economic condition all result from income inequality. This also has implications for U.S. democracy. Income inequality can lead to distrust in government in general and, consequently, less interest in participating in government. It is not just the poor and middle class that see the income gap as a problem. A recent study showed that even 47 percent of American millionaires saw income inequality as a major concern. Wealthy individuals, however, spend a smaller percentage of their incomes than those who make less money. As a result, less money flows through the system. Financial manager William H. Gross pointed out that both the rich and the poor will suffer if the situation continues. He commented, "If Main Street is unemployed and undercompensated [underpaid], capital can only travel so far down Prosperity Road."

Reading Check
Summarize Why is the widening income gap a problem?

Money and Influence

As many Americans struggle financially, their situation contrasts with the vast sums of money spent on political campaigns. During the presidential election of 2012, each candidate—Barack Obama and Mitt Romney—raised and spent a billion dollars. Although small, individual donations counted for part of that sum, multi-million dollar contributions played a major role. Statewide campaigns also pull in millions of dollars. Even candidates in local races may seek huge donations from supporters. Observers may wonder what donors hope to receive from winning candidates in return for their money. Today, special interests representing viewpoints all along the political spectrum continue to seek and gain influence.

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, a 2010 Supreme Court case, affected campaign spending by organizations. Citizens United is a conservative nonprofit organization. During the 2008 presidential campaign season, the organization wanted to show a film critical of Hillary Clinton on national TV. A previous court ruling declared that the Federal Election Commission (FEC) had the right to prohibit the broadcasting of political films made or sold by corporations. After reviewing that case, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Citizens United. The court said that the First Amendment could not restrict political expenditures by nonprofit corporations. For-profit corporations, labor unions, and other associations have also been freed from the previous restrictions by the decision. The court's ruling meant that organizations could spend money to advocate for candidates of their choice through methods such as TV ads. Corporations were still prohibited from donating directly to candidates. In his dissent to the majority opinion, Justice Stevens took a grim view of how the *Citizens United* ruling could affect future elections.

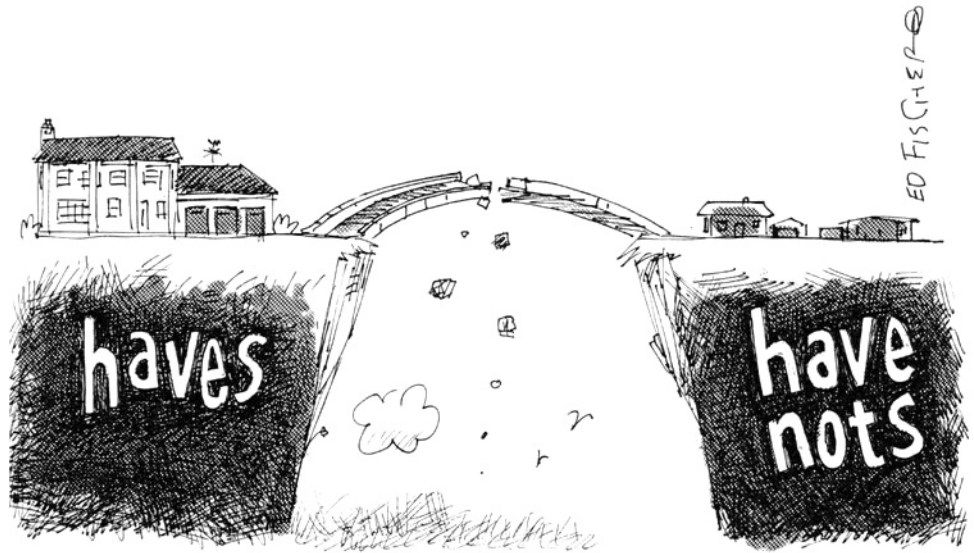
“A democracy cannot function effectively when its constituent members believe laws are being bought and sold.”

—John Paul Stevens, from his opinion in
Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, 2010

The *Citizens United* ruling influenced another development related to the role of money in politics—the growth of the **political action committee (PAC)**. A PAC is an organization that merges campaign contributions from members. It uses the merged funds to campaign for or against candidates or legislation. Businesses, labor unions, or groups that stand for a certain issue can all sponsor PACs. The amount of money that a PAC can collect from donors and contribute directly to federal campaigns is limited by law. However, PACs can spend as much money as they want if they campaign on their own. For example, a PAC organized to fight a proposed environmental regulation can fund a TV ad about the damage such a rule could do to the economy. However, the PAC cannot contribute huge sums to the senatorial candidate fighting the regulation.

In a 2010 ruling, the FEC allowed the expansion of PACs. As a result, so-called Super PACs can collect unlimited amounts of money from

Another deteriorating bridge...



The phrase “the haves and the have nots” is often used to informally describe the gap between the rich and the poor.

Reading Check
Analyze Causes
How did the *Citizens United* decision affect political campaigns?

corporations, unions, and individuals. They can also spend unlimited amounts on ads for or against candidates. Super PACs are not allowed to coordinate directly with candidates’ campaign staffs, however. Nor can Super PACs contribute directly to candidates. Still, the power of Super PACs to influence public opinion can be immense. Groups on both ends of the political spectrum have formed Super PACs. Many conservative Super PACs fund probusiness causes. Liberal Super PACs support prochoice, conservation, arts, and labor activists.

The Role of Government

To varying degrees, the U.S. government has always taken on some responsibility for the welfare of its people. Subsistence programs—those that provide just the necessities of life—are often controversial.

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST During the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a Democrat, pushed through New Deal programs to create jobs for the unemployed. Many Republicans argued that the costly programs would increase the size of government and the country’s debt. They feared a larger central government would rob people of their freedoms. Years later, President Lyndon Johnson proposed Great Society programs to eliminate poverty and racism. Republican objections echoed some of the same arguments used earlier against Roosevelt’s New Deal.

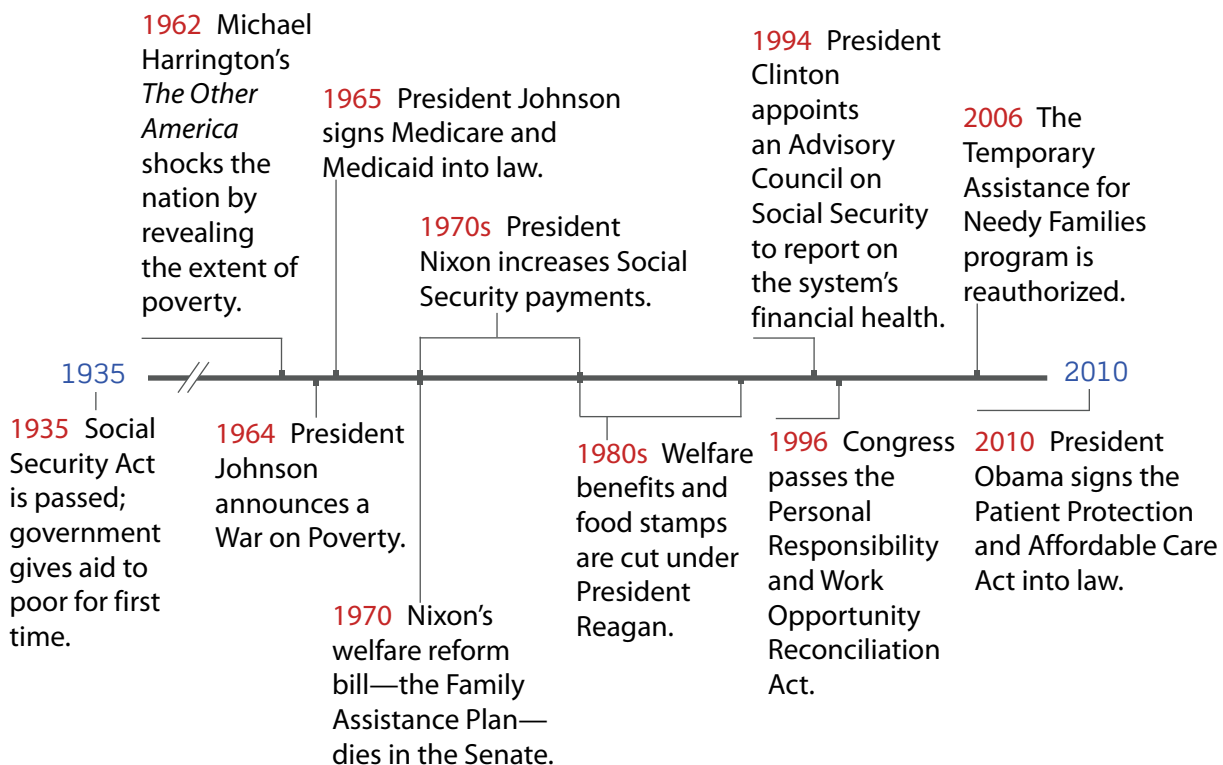
With each new administration, leaders across the political spectrum propose and enact different approaches to public services to alleviate poverty, fund health care, and offer financial support for retirees. Some leaders advocate for government to play an expanded role in people’s lives. They create government programs that redistribute income to provide benefits.

Others believe that government should take a more limited approach, to keep people from becoming dependent on the government. This stance emphasizes allowing state and local programs to solve problems, often with the support of nongovernmental agencies.

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS Ever since the New Deal, the federal government's main arm for providing basic needs to citizens has been the Social Security Administration. Funds for the agency come from a tax paid by almost all working Americans. The agency supports several programs. The main one is Social Security, which pays retirees monthly. Medicare funds health care for Americans with disabilities and those over the age of 65. Medicaid helps low-income Americans afford quality health care. There is also a health insurance program for children and temporary assistance to families in need. Payments to retirees form the largest Social Security Administration expenditure. Because retired people are now living longer, the ratio of contributions to Social Security to expenditures is shrinking. At some point, the system must be reformed to ensure that in coming years retirees will still receive benefits.

Medicare is also in danger of running out of funds, due to some of the same issues that threaten Social Security. By some estimates, Medicare's hospital insurance fund could run out of money before 2030. While rising numbers of elderly drive up the cost of Medicare, the revenues targeted to pay for it are not keeping pace. As the population ages, fewer people will work and pay the taxes that fund Medicare. In addition, elderly people tend to have higher medical costs. What is to be done? Among the proposals are placing more restrictions on Medicare benefits, raising the age of eligibility, or increasing the share to be paid by the elderly.

U. S. Government and Poverty





Citizens in favor of protecting Social Security rally on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol.

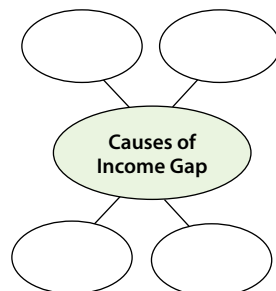
Reading Check
Analyze Problems
 What basic challenge regarding Social Security and Medicare must be solved?

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is the most recent major federal effort to improve Americans' health care. Signed into law by President Obama in 2010, the act's primary goal was to increase the accessibility and affordability of health insurance. By March 2015 the number of uninsured Americans had dropped by 11.4 million people.

As the federal government struggles to provide a safety net for its most vulnerable citizens, cities and states sometimes take the lead in solving at least some symptoms of poverty. Several cities are attacking homelessness in particular, some with remarkable success. One example is New Orleans, which settled more than 200 homeless veterans in permanent homes a year ahead of its 2015 goal. The idea of "Housing First" in Utah is about finding apartments where the previously homeless can live permanently, no strings attached. This has helped the state decrease its homeless population by 91 percent. Several other governments are taking the same approach.

Lesson 3 Assessment

- 1. Organize Information** Create an idea web to identify the causes of the growing income gap in the United States. Add more ovals as needed.



- 2. Key Terms and People** For each key term in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- 3. Evaluate** Why is simply getting and holding a job not a sure way to end poverty for an individual?

Think About:

- access to child care
- the minimum wage
- skills needed for advancement

- 4. Predict** What role do you think PACs and Super PACs will play in future elections? Explain.

- 5. Form Opinions** What role do you think the federal government should have in solving social issues such as poverty? Support your opinion.

- 6. Form Generalizations** Do you think the U.S. government has been effective in addressing Americans' welfare and limiting poverty? Why or why not?

Conservation and the Environment

The Big Idea

Although rich in natural resources, the American environment is being stressed by various factors.

Why It Matters Now

If we fail to protect our environment for the enjoyment, health, security, and prosperity of later generations, the country's future is bleak.

Key Terms and People

global climate change

fracking

biodiversity

One American's Story

Brenda Dardar Robichaux was principal chief of the 17,000-member United Houma Nation. For generations, this Native American group has made their living on the coastal lands of southeastern Louisiana. After watching the oil and seafood industries encroach on their land and water, Robichaux was further dismayed when she saw the damage done by the April 2010 explosion of a BP oil well in the Gulf of Mexico. The disaster took several lives and leaked millions of gallons of oil into the gulf waters and onto the shore.

"We have seen small canals turn into large bayous; we have watched hundreds of acres of wetlands wash away; we have seen freshwater bayous turn into saltwater. . . . When the oil spill happened, I was hopeful that all the attention it was bringing might finally wake people up. I was optimistic. I was thinking if we're ever going to get vision for coastal restoration off the ground, now is the time. But I don't see that happening. . . . Louisiana is paying a grave price for what the rest of the country is enjoying. . . ."

—Brenda Dardar Robichaux, quoted in *Deep Water: The Gulf Oil Disaster and the Future of Offshore Drilling*



Oil from the 2010 disaster fouled this Gulf of Mexico beach.

In 1989 the tanker *Exxon Valdez* spilled millions of gallons of crude oil into Alaska's Prince William Sound. Since then, it has become apparent that oil spills are just one of many threats to our environment.

The American Environment

Perception is a significant factor in evaluating our nation's environmental condition and future. We look at the world through the lens of our own history, hopes, fears, needs, and wants. For example, someone from an industrial city might see the Alaskan wilderness as a haven that should remain untouched forever. A lumber company executive, in contrast, might look out over the same landscape and see profits, jobs, and progress. Hunters, oil industry workers, biologists, and real estate developers all might perceive the Alaskan backcountry differently. Meanwhile, the Yupik, Aleut, Tlingit, Haida, and other Native Americans whose ancestors came to the area thousands of years ago may see changes in the environment in yet another way. Balancing all these viewpoints is essential to our country's future.

Business is deeply tied to resource development. As the world's population grows, so do the demands for housing materials, food, and other commodities. Increased population growth causes strain on the environment as people and businesses compete for and deplete resources. As businesses use resources to meet demands, ecosystems are altered. Increased demand for natural resources continues to drive the debate between environmentalists and industrialists. The discussion is about how to use resources effectively while also safeguarding our air, land, water, forests, and wildlife.

THE STATE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT The United States is blessed with a large array of natural resources and beautiful vistas. Numerous creeks, rivers, and lakes shimmer across the landscape. In much of the country, one can take deep breaths of clean air. Tourists from densely populated countries marvel at our wide-open spaces and vast forests.

Valuable though they are, our natural resources are not distributed evenly. Farmers in one county may grow their crops in rich, deep soil. A farmer a few miles away struggles with thin, rocky dirt. Rivers in one part of the country may flood after heavy rainfall as rivers in other areas go dry. People do not always settle where resources match their needs, and some cities struggle



Hikers enjoying Arches National Park in eastern Utah

to keep water flowing from the taps. Conflicts can arise because of unequal resource distribution. For example, during periods of drought, rice farmers in southeast Texas clash with cities upstream over the amount of Colorado River water released by the river authority.

Our environment is fragile and under threat. As the population expands, our water supply shrinks. Making the water situation worse are regional droughts that have killed crops, livestock, and millions of trees. The air quality of some cities, such as Los Angeles, can be so poor that it damages hearts and lungs. Industrial pollutants can seep into the water and the land. One such event happened in January 2014. Some 10,000 gallons of a harmful chemical used in coal mining spilled into the Elk River, polluting the water supply of Charleston, West Virginia.

Other threats to the environment and its inhabitants include illegal logging on protected lands, which hurts our forests. A coal-mining technique known as mountain-top removal slices tons of rock and soil off the tops of mountains. The resultant debris damages surrounding environments. Many native animal species suffer from habitat loss, pollutants, and over-hunting. Plant life faces problems, too. Invasive species choke out native plants. People who live in the American South, for instance, know that kudzu can overwhelm forests. Invasive animal species are also causing havoc. One such species is the Burmese python. Thousands of these snakes have devastated the native mammal and bird populations of the Everglades.

LAW AND THE ENVIRONMENT The federal government has responded to environmental threats. Lawmakers have enacted legislation and created federal agencies connected to conservation and resource management. Business interests often argue that these agencies overstep their authority and unfairly limit access to the resources needed to support the growing population. Individuals, too, sometimes protest that their property rights are violated when legislation affects their land. Property owners may also protest when the federal government legally attempts to take over land. In the late 1800s the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government can take land for purposes that serve the public good. That process is called eminent domain. However, the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires that the owner receive appropriate compensation. Two examples of places where eminent domain has been used for environmental conservation are Florida's Everglades National Park and New Mexico's Valles Caldera National Preserve.

The U.S. government took steps in the 1800s toward conservation of our natural environment. The issue again became a focus of legislation in the 1960s and 1970s. President Lyndon Johnson signed one of the first major modern environmental laws, the Clean Air Act of 1963. This law established a program to control air pollution. The act has been amended many times since then to expand its scope. In 1970 President Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address environmental issues surrounding pollution. The agency was charged with strengthening and enforcing laws that govern water and air quality. It also monitors the creation and emissions of toxic substances. In 1972 Congress passed the Clean Water Act, the main federal law addressing water pollution.

Reading Check
Analyze Causes
Why might laws
and rules about
environmental issues
be a source
of conflict?

In addition to protecting the air and water, Congress has passed laws to protect plants and animals. In 1966 Congress passed the Endangered Species Preservation Act. Its purpose was to list threatened species as endangered and to protect their habitats to prevent their extinction. In 1973 Congress passed the Endangered Species Act. This act expanded protections for threatened and endangered wildlife. These acts have been instrumental in saving species once on the brink of extinction, including bald eagles, wolves, and the California condor. Congress has continued to amend this act as specific needs for conservation have grown and changed.

Many states have enacted their own environmental reforms. California, for instance, has some of the nation's strictest air-pollution control laws. They have helped to provide the Golden State with much cleaner air. Individual cities, too, pass ordinances to protect the environment. For example, dozens of cities have banned single-use plastic bags to control litter and reduce landfill waste. Nonprofit groups such as the Nature Conservancy and local land trusts have also been instrumental in improving the environment. These groups and others have raised money to purchase forest and watershed lands and keep them pristine. In Texas, for example, when the original owner of Fossil Rim Wildlife Ranch, a sanctuary for endangered species, faced financial ruin, the animals' fates were in question. Other conservationists stepped in to save the sanctuary. Now the Fossil Rim Wildlife Center shelters about 50 animal species.

Opinions about the reach of environmental laws can become heated. An Oregon logger provides an example. Bill Haire hung an ornament on the mirror of his truck—a tiny owl with an arrow through its head. Haire was angry about the federal government's decision to declare millions of acres of forest off limits to loggers in order to protect the spotted owl. "If it comes down to my family or that bird," said Haire, "that bird's going to suffer." The battle between loggers and environmentalists over the fate of the spotted owl is just one example of the nation's ongoing struggle to balance conservation with industrial progress.



Populations of wolves and California condors have increased after strenuous efforts by conservationists to save these species from extinction.

History of Conservation in the United States

- 1903** President Theodore Roosevelt establishes the first federal wildlife refuge.
- 1933** President Franklin Roosevelt creates the Civilian Conservation Corps.
- 1962** Rachel Carson publishes *Silent Spring*.
- 1968** President Johnson signs the National Wild and Scenic River Act.
- 1970** President Nixon establishes the Environmental Protection Agency. Congress passes a new Clean Air Act.
- 1972** Congress overrides President Nixon's veto of the Clean Water Act.
- 1973** Congress passes the Endangered Species Act.
- 1976** Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.
- 1990** Congress amends the Clean Air Act to address new environmental problems, including acid rain and ozone depletion.
- 2005** The Kyoto Protocol, which commits countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, takes effect.
- 2010** The BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico sparks protests.
- 2014** A chemical spill pollutes the Elk River in West Virginia. Removal of dams on the Elwha River in Washington is completed.
- 2015** Pope Francis calls for global action to fight climate change.

Interpret Tables

Do you think real progress is being made in protecting the environment? Why or why not?

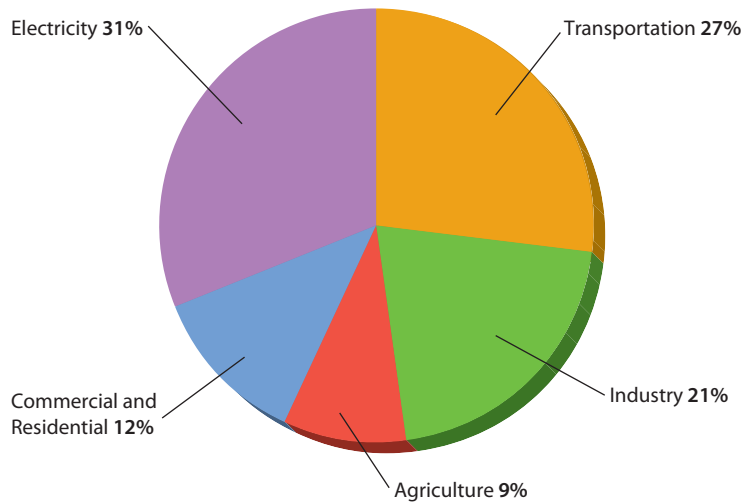
Challenges for Today and Tomorrow

As the U.S. population and economy continue to grow in the 21st century, so do environmental challenges. Increased needs for energy and productive land have required that Americans find ways to balance the desire for growth with the need for conservation.

A GLOBAL CONCERN The use of fossil fuels—oil, natural gas, and coal—is a basic issue. Fossil fuels drive our vehicles, factories, and offices. They cool and heat our buildings and create the electricity that operates appliances and electronic devices in our homes. Industries that depend on fossil fuels employ many thousands of Americans. As a result, the use of fossil fuels has become a central feature of 21st-century American society. Unfortunately, fossil fuels also cause problems.

Most scientists agree that the carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide released by burning fossil fuels are building up in the atmosphere. Without these gases, heat would escape into space, leaving Earth very cold. The gasses occur naturally in the atmosphere, but the burning of fossil fuels and other human activities add to their level. The gasses build up, trapping more and more heat, and the planet's average temperature increases. This so-called greenhouse effect has led to global warming and **global climate change**. The climate change is characterized by high temperatures and extreme weather

U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Source, 2013



Source: EPA, U.S. Greenhouse Inventory Report: 1990–2013

Interpret Graphs

What two sources accounted for almost 60 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2013?

events, such as droughts and floods. By reducing these greenhouse gasses, the negative effects of climate change may be offset or reduced. Differing opinions about climate change, including whether or not humans are causing it, have made it difficult to reach a consensus on what should be done. Meanwhile, there are signs that global climate change is affecting our planet. Average temperatures have risen and extreme weather events are occurring more often. Many glaciers and ice shelves are shrinking, and sea levels have risen.

A DRILLING ISSUE As people continue to consume nonrenewable fossil fuels for their energy needs, they try to find additional sources of these fuels. One method for obtaining fossil fuels has generated controversy. Hydraulic fracturing, or **fracking** as it is often called, is a drilling process for extracting oil and natural gas. Pressurized liquid made of water, sand, and chemicals break up the rock. This process allows drillers to reach and extract oil and gas deposits that were not easily accessible before. However, the environmental impact of fracking is hotly debated. That a single fracked well requires millions of gallons of water over its lifetime is a primary concern. In some regions, farmers and well drillers must compete for limited water resources. Groundwater can become polluted by the chemicals injected into the well. Methane, which contributes to the greenhouse effect, can escape from fracked wells. Some fracked wells have exploded, throwing harmful chemicals onto the surrounding land.

Fracking has also been associated with an increase in earthquakes in areas where they were very rare or had never before been detected. Most of the scientific evidence indicates that the first stage of fracking is not to blame. However, when wastewater from fracked wells is injected back into the ground, the instability may lead to a quake. Additional research may clarify the role of fracking in earthquakes.

As fracking becomes more common, controversies over its use generate more media coverage. Environmentalists' opinions clash with those of oil and gas industry representatives. Even in the 1980s, though, EPA scientists were warning that fracking could pollute groundwater. Some EPA employees reported later that Reagan administration officials downplayed the hazard. Public scrutiny will probably increase as extracting oil and gas becomes more difficult.

BIODIVERSITY AND BEES Not all of our country's environmental challenges are related to fossil fuels. Another issue is the increasing lack of **biodiversity**—the entirety of a region's genes, species, and ecosystems. One example of a biodiverse ecosystem is a forest with many different kinds of trees and other plants, along with various microbe, insect, reptile, amphibian, and mammal species. Ecosystems that have biodiversity are generally healthier, can withstand stress better, and can recover more quickly from disruptions. Biodiversity of food crops is particularly vital. As certain agricultural plant species and varieties have been bred for qualities such as providing high yields, other qualities, such as disease resistance, have been lost. This situation could become critical if disease wiped out a key crop. Scientists recommend that U.S. agriculture include more biodiversity so that other plant varieties can fill gaps left by damaged crops.

The decline of the honeybee population is another puzzling environmental issue that may affect our food supply. By some accounts we have lost 40 percent of the bee colonies in the country. Honeybees are critical to the pollination of dozens of food crops, the value of which totals some \$30 billion. It is feared that many staple crops, from apples to onions to tomatoes, may be lost if bee populations continue to decline.

Some scientists theorize that bees are suffering due to loss of habitat and food supply. In previous centuries, the United States had vast wild meadowlands. Wildflowers and bees were numerous. As the United States grew, farmers fenced and cultivated the prairies to plant crops. The loss of uncultivated



An Oregon State University bee researcher collects a sample of bees. Analysis of bee blood will help scientists determine the effects of pesticides on bees' immune systems.

Reading Check
Analyze Effects Of the environmental effects described, which do you think is the most problematic?

meadows to agriculture or suburban development means fewer wildflowers, which means less food for bees. Other theories regarding the honeybee decline include disease, inherited disorders, harsh weather, and parasites. In addition, the long-term effect of pesticides on bees is uncertain. The Obama administration created the Pollinator Task Force to research this problem in hopes of a solution. The group proposed ways to restore habitat. They also suggested additional investigation into the effects of pesticides and investment in further research and education.

Some Changes for the Better

Despite these problems, there are many ways in which the American environment is improving. Advances in research, coupled with the speed and reach of communications, have enabled people to be far more aware of environmental issues than they once were. Americans recycle millions of tons of trash every year, which saves energy and limited resources. Alternative energy sources, including solar and wind energy, are becoming more common. Many harmful pesticides and industrial chemicals have been banned. These are but a few examples that show progress in Americans' efforts to improve the environment.

One area where public awareness has led to change is our wetlands, which include swamps and marshes. Scientific studies show that wetlands are valuable resources because they shelter myriad aquatic and bird species,

Alternative-Fuel Vehicles



Carl Bielenberg of Calais, Vermont, holds a container of seeds of the jatropha plant. He runs his compact car on vegetable oil that is made from the seed.



A solar-powered car built by high school students from Saginaw, Michigan, makes its way through busy traffic.

Looking Back, Looking Forward

Journalist Elizabeth Kolbert reviewed the times in Earth's history when vast numbers of species were wiped out. She sees human beings as the cause of the next cataclysm. Yet she also sees hope.

Analyze Historical Sources

What gives Elizabeth Kolbert hope for America's future?

"Certainly humans can be destructive and shortsighted; they can also be forward-thinking and altruistic. Time and time again, people have demonstrated that they care about what Rachel Carson called 'the problem of sharing our earth with other creatures,' and that they're willing to make sacrifices on those creatures' behalf. . . . John Muir wrote about the damage being done in the mountains of California, and this led to the creation of Yosemite National Park. Silent Spring exposed the dangers posed by synthetic pesticides, and within a decade, most use of DDT had been prohibited. (The fact that there are still bald eagles in the U.S.—indeed the numbers are growing—is one of the many happy consequences of this development.)"

—Elizabeth Kolbert, from *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*

help control pollution, and limit damage done by floods. Agriculture and development, however, have claimed more than half of the wetlands that the country had 200 years ago. Some federal laws are aimed at reversing the trend. For example, the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 includes a program that provides funds for converting croplands back to wetlands. Most states oversee wetlands conservation in some way. Private individuals and organizations, such as Ducks Unlimited and the Nature Conservancy, have also been instrumental in saving wetlands. As a result of these private efforts, more than 12 million acres of wetlands have been saved.

Another positive change is occurring on some American rivers. As the country grew, engineers built dams across countless waterways. The dams have produced many benefits. The benefits include hydroelectric power, flood control, and reservoirs for reliable water supplies. Dams and the reservoirs they create have also had negative effects. They can interrupt fish migration and their spawning patterns, overwhelm entire ecosystems, and displace people. In response to these problems, some dams are being removed and the rivers returned to a more natural condition. To date, the largest such project removed dams on the Elwha River in Washington state. After the demolition of two dams, native salmon and trout are migrating up the river again. The return of these species has had a positive cascading effect on other aspects of the local environment. For example, the fishes' return provided food for other species, such as wolves and bald eagles.

To reduce air pollution and dependence on foreign oil, Americans are buying more energy-efficient vehicles. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency requires that certain gas mileage and emission standards be met by



Community efforts cleaned up the junkyard that used to occupy this area in northeastern Ohio. Now Cuyahoga Valley National Park allows visitors to experience a wetland and the wide range of plants and animals it supports.

Reading Check

Draw Conclusions

What is one conclusion you can draw from the description of these projects?

carmakers. Once rare, hybrid vehicles that capture otherwise unused energy, leading to improved mileage and lower emissions, are becoming more common. Entrepreneurs in transportation, such as Elon Musk at Tesla Motors, are building fully electric cars that produce no tailpipe emissions. Depending on what kind of fuel is used to generate the electricity for the car's battery, electric cars can also cut down on oil consumption. Even cars powered by solar energy or vegetable oil are making headlines.

Gardens and green spaces are also receiving more attention. Community gardens, where residents can rent space to raise fruits and vegetables, are thriving. Boston, Massachusetts, alone has about 190 community gardens. Children are learning about both nutrition and the role of plants in the environment by growing vegetables on school

grounds. Cities are requiring that developers set aside a certain amount of parkland as part of their building projects. A surprising place for new green spaces is on abandoned freeways and railroads. New York City's High Line Park is a ribbon of parkland more than a mile long on what was once an elevated section of a railroad line. Philadelphia residents want to turn the Reading Viaduct, also an abandoned railway, into a park that would bring greenery and recreation facilities to densely populated neighborhoods. These green spaces also scrub pollutants from the air and generate oxygen.

Lesson 4 Assessment

- Organize Information** Create an idea web to identify some ways that governments, nonprofit organizations, and property owners may respond to threats to the environment.



- Key Terms and People** For each key term in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Analyze Effects** What are two effects of population growth and distribution on the physical environment?

Think About:

- energy use
- supply and demand of natural resources

- Evaluate** How can individual decisions and business actions affect the environment?
- Analyze Issues** Is it possible for political leaders to address issues of conservation and balance economic progress at the same time? Support your answer.

Education

The Big Idea

Because resources are limited and American society is extremely diverse, educational institutions struggle to teach all of America's children and young people.

Why It Matters Now

A nation's success depends to a large extent on an educated populace.

Key Terms and People

flipped classroom

school vouchers

Individuals with Disabilities
Education Act (IDEA)

One American's Story

Education has long been important to Michelle Obama. While a student at Princeton University, she ran a day care center and helped with after-school tutoring. She finished college and went on to earn a law degree at Harvard University. Her education allowed her to pursue a career as an attorney, as an administrator for the city of Chicago, and later as a community outreach worker. As first lady, Obama advocated for military families, healthy eating habits, the arts, physical activity, and education in general. In 2013 she gave a talk to students in Washington, DC, emphasizing the need for post-secondary education.

"[W]hen the year 2020 rolls around, nearly two-thirds of all jobs in this country are going to require some form of training beyond high school. That means whether it's a vocational program, community college, a four-year university, you all are going to need some form of higher education in order to build the kind of lives that you want for yourselves, good careers, to be able to provide for your family."

—Michelle Obama, from remarks at Bell Multicultural High School,
November 12, 2013



First Lady Michelle Obama at a gathering with Texas students

Achieving an education that fulfills those goals can be a challenge for many of America's youth.

The Changing Classroom

Teachers and administrators have seen many educational innovations come and go over the years. The digital revolution, however, has thoroughly transformed education. These changes are occurring around the world but are most evident in schools of developed countries. For example, students in the Australian Outback no longer have to depend on the radio for their lessons. Instead, they can submit homework and receive rapid feedback via the Internet.

In the United States, most classrooms now provide Internet access. Students are as likely to read assignments on electronic tablets or smart phones as they are to read from a printed book. Interactivity has also transformed classwork. As students complete assignments on digital devices, they get immediate feedback on their progress. Teachers can easily track the work of individual students or entire classes. For these reasons and others, e-learning has become standard in many U.S. schools. E-learning is the use of electronic technology in education. However, some school districts still prefer printed books and traditional teaching methods. They have determined that those approaches are best for their students.

E-learning is an important component of a recent innovation that may further transform conventional teaching methods. The **flipped classroom** is a strategy that reverses the traditional approach of delivering instructional content. With a flipped approach, content is delivered outside of the classroom, often online. Class time is reserved for research, group collaboration, discussion, individualized instruction, or other forms of active learning. The flipped classroom has raised test scores, graduation rates, and college attendance figures in some schools. However, critics note that students from poor families may not have ready access to the technology needed for the online lessons. Also, many students lack the self-direction that the flipped classroom demands. Teachers, too, may balk at the extra preparation time that online delivery of content might require.

Reading Check
Summarize What are two ways that American classrooms are changing?



E-learning is now standard in many U.S. classrooms.

Challenges for Education

The English colonies' first public school was established in 1635. Ever since, American educators have faced difficulties in their efforts to teach basic knowledge and skills to the country's children. Many of those issues, including how education should be funded, how to reach all students, and how best to teach them, remain with us today and will for the foreseeable future.



The amount of tax money available can affect the equipment and supplies available to students. This science lab, in a well-funded district, provides students with what they need to succeed. Districts that receive less revenue in property taxes may struggle to update their facilities and resources.

FUNDING PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION In most states public school funding relies on local property taxes. Those taxes are paid on the value of real estate in a town or city. When schools are funded primarily by property taxes, however, schools in poorer areas receive less money than those in wealthier communities. The properties in poorer areas are assessed at lower rates. The disparity in funding between rich and poor districts varies across the country. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the state of Pennsylvania has the widest difference in funding between low- and high-income schools. A study reports that Pennsylvania's poor districts receive 33 percent less state and local funding than their richest districts. Court cases have raised legal challenges to unequal school funding in more than 20 states.

School districts where property taxes don't produce high revenues are more likely to cut back on art, music, and other coursework. These subjects are sometimes viewed as less essential than math, reading, and science. Poor districts may also have higher student-to-teacher ratios; outdated facilities; or fewer support personnel, such as nurses. The impact of spending disparities is debatable, however. Some graduates from schools in low-income districts go on to excel at top universities. Also, attendance at a well-funded school is no guarantee of high achievement.

Although more than 90 percent of American children attend public schools, others attend private secular or religious schools or receive instruction at home. Most parents whose children pay tuition for private schools also pay the property taxes that help fund public schools. Some of these parents feel they should receive funding from the state to ease the load. These parents and their supporters back **school vouchers**. Vouchers are subsidies given directly to parents for tuition at any school, public or private. Proponents of the voucher system say that it increases competition among schools and gives low-performing schools an incentive to improve. Supporters cite studies that show public schools improved when nearby private schools were eligible to accept voucher students. On the other side of the argument, opponents say that the voucher system deprives public schools of much-needed funds. They also point out that private schools can pick and choose their pupils, skewing their statistics to the positive. Public schools must accept all students, including those with special needs or troubled histories. Opponents also claim that the voucher system is an attempt to fund religious schools at taxpayers' expense. Thus it violates the separation of church and state.

TEACHING ALL OF AMERICA'S KIDS Family income can be a powerful factor in a student's success. Although economic status is not a sure indicator, it is more likely that low-income students have untreated medical problems and

less quiet time for completing assignments at home. These students may also have fewer opportunities for cultural enrichment activities, such as music lessons or museum visits. Federal data show that just over half of all students in U.S. public schools qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. This is the gauge that schools use to measure students' economic level. The percentage climbed from 38 percent in 2000 to 51 percent in 2013. The figures on low-income students differ from state to state. For the 2012–2013 school year in Mississippi, the number was 71 percent of all public school students. New Hampshire had the lowest figure, at 27 percent. Some states, such as California, are placing renewed emphasis on increasing funding to poor districts. The federal government is also focusing on supporting low-income students.

Economic status is just one of many ways that student populations differ. Students in U.S. schools also come from dozens of different ethnic backgrounds. This diversity is apparent in public school enrollments. The percentage of public school students who participate in programs for English language learners (ELL) has been increasing steadily. In the 2002–2003 school year, the national figure was 8.7 percent ELL students. By 2011–2012 it was 9.1 percent. The figures for 2011–2012 vary widely by state. In California, more than 23 percent of the students qualified for ELL instruction. In contrast, West Virginia's ELL students totaled only 0.7 percent of the school population. For those districts with high percentages of ELL students, additional resources are needed for their education. Resources such as specially trained teachers, modified materials, and teacher's aids can put a strain on budgets.



Jessica Riley, a hearing-impaired volunteer teacher, helps a hearing-impaired second grader with his reading.

Public schools also face the challenge of educating students with special needs, including emotional, psychological, developmental, and physical needs. The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** requires that students with a disability are provided with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that is tailored to their individual needs. Those needs may be for physical accommodations or extra instruction delivered in nontraditional ways. Students might also need psychological counseling or other specialized approaches.

Although educating all these varied populations can be costly in terms of funds and human resources, the benefits spread far beyond the students themselves. ELL students become more able to participate fully in American society, which requires fluency in English. Students whose special needs have been filled become more self-sufficient. This lessens their need for public support. If all students were encouraged to explore their unique skills or talents, we may all profit from the inventions, discoveries, or artistic achievements that result.

LEARNING AND TESTING In the winter of 2001, Paul Vallas, former head of the Chicago public school system, received some discouraging news. A three-year study found “little significant change” in the city’s ailing public

high schools. This was despite six years of intense reform efforts. “The issue is that the problem is tougher than we thought it was,” the head of the study reported, “and we have to find more intense ways of improving what we’ve been doing.” In response to the study, Vallas echoed those sentiments. “We still have a long way to go,” he said.

Chicago’s plight is far from unique. Across the country, many administrators review their graduation statistics with dismay. But proposals for improving American education have been touted for decades. Some people say that discipline is the problem. Others fault teachers’ unions for failing to oust bad teachers. One can find many lists of what schools should do to improve performance. Suggestions range from more interdisciplinary study to longer school days to allowing more time to make up missed assignments. Many reforms involve standardized testing—either more tests or fewer.

In 2002 President Bush signed into law his education program, No Child Left Behind (NCLB). A cornerstone of the program was using results from national annual reading and math assessments to hold schools accountable for student performance. Schools that failed to show enough yearly progress could lose students to other schools, be forced to change staff, or even be closed. A few years after NCLB’s passage, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reported that achievement on state reading and math tests was rising. Critics found fault with the NAEP findings, however. They contended that positive aspects of the data were emphasized while negative

Document-Based Investigation Historical Source

Evaluating American Education

In a speech introducing his Race to the Top program, President Obama reviewed some of the problems facing the American educational system.

“In an economy where knowledge is the most valuable commodity a person and a country have to offer, the best jobs will go to the best educated—whether they live in the United States or India or China. In a world where countries that out-educate us today will out-compete us tomorrow, the future belongs to the nation that best educates its people. . . . But we also know that today, our education system is falling short. . . . The United States, a country that has always led the way in innovation, is now being

outpaced in math and science education. African American, Latino students are lagging behind white classmates in one subject after another—an achievement gap that, by one estimate, costs us hundreds of billions of dollars in wages that will not be earned, jobs that will not be done, and purchases that will not be made. And most employers raise doubts about the qualifications of future employees, rating high school graduates’ basic skills as only ‘fair’ or ‘poor.’”

—Barack Obama, from a speech at the U.S. Department of Education, July 24, 2009

Analyze Historical Sources

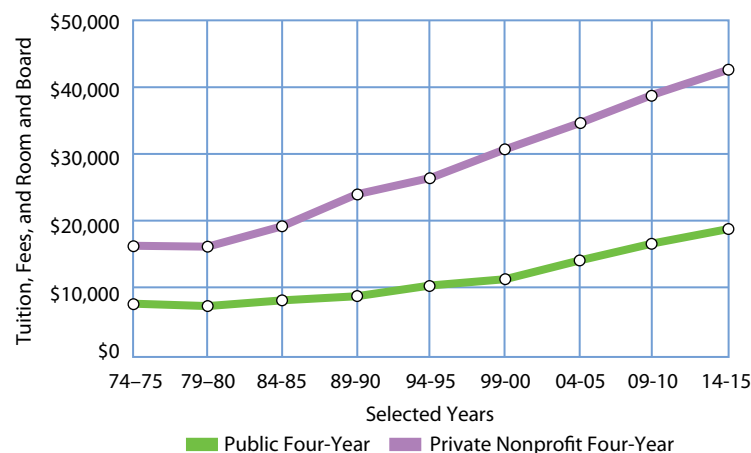
Do you think President Obama’s assessment is accurate? Why or why not?

elements were downplayed. NCLB itself has also drawn criticism. Among the problems cited is the claim that schools neglect subjects other than reading and math. Also, testing special education students along with at-level students unfairly distorted results. Other critics have complained that Congress has never funded the act to the level that would produce the hoped-for results. Many ideas for refining NCLB have been proposed. In 2009 President Obama proposed his own education plan, called Race to the Top (RTT). The plan focuses on rewarding schools for progress rather than punishing them for failure. RTT has earned its own share of criticism from both ends of the political spectrum. Some conservatives, for example, object to the federal government's close involvement in the program.

THE COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION The cost of attending a college or university has soared. Between 2001–2002 and 2011–2012, prices for undergraduate tuition, room, and board at public institutions rose 40 percent. The cost increase at private nonprofit institutions was close behind, at 28 percent. Increases in tuition and required fees account for most of the change.

Analysts have different views of why college tuition has risen so rapidly. Some contend that state legislatures have not allocated funds to public universities at the rate they once did. Others dispute that charge, saying that legislatures have actually increased their funding levels. The technology demands of some disciplines may also contribute to the problem. High-tech fields including engineering, computer science, and medicine require that students and faculty have access to the latest groundbreaking devices, equipment, and software to learn and conduct research. Some analysts say the problem lies with the universities. Some schools have expanded their nonteaching staffs, have embarked on ambitious building projects, or have tried to out-bid each other by offering high salaries to the most prestigious professors.

Average U.S. College Costs Since 1974



Interpret Graphs

In what five-year span did the cost for public institutions show the largest increase?

Reading Check
Identify Problems
What are some issues
facing students today?

The increased cost of higher education makes it difficult for many students of moderate means to finance their education. Even with part-time jobs and scholarships, most students take out loans to help pay for their education. In fact, some two-thirds of students earning bachelor's degrees have borrowed money to attend college. The amount of money that U.S. students owe collectively is immense. By 2012 it exceeded \$1 trillion.

The fear of incurring debt can keep many students from even attempting a college degree. Many observers feel that if the United States wants to have an educated work force, policymakers should focus on finding ways to make higher education affordable again. They should also provide relief to those already shouldering heavy debts. One officeholder intent on relieving student debt is Elizabeth Warren, a U.S. senator from Massachusetts. Senator Warren has proposed that loans to new student borrowers incur only 0.75 percent interest instead of the current 3.4 percent rate. Warren is proposing the same rate that banks pay to borrow money from the federal government.

Lesson 5 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Create a table to describe some factors that are affecting U.S. education in the 21st century.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| technology | |
| funding | |
| standardized testing | |
| vouchers | |

2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

3. **Analyze Effects** Some of America's children and young people may not get the public education they need and deserve. What challenges face students in various circumstances?

Think About:

- students without access to high technology
- English language learners
- students with special needs
- college students of moderate means

4. **Analyze Causes** How is worldwide access to education and educational practices changing?

Globalization and Cultural Diffusion

The Big Idea

Modern communication and transportation technologies have created an international economic and cultural community.

Why It Matters Now

To be good citizens of the world, Americans must learn to enhance the positive and reduce the negative aspects of globalization.

Key Terms and People

globalization

free trade

comparative advantage

Kyoto Protocol

cultural diffusion

popular culture

One American's Story

Thomas Friedman is an American economist, journalist, and author. After earning a master's degree in Middle Eastern studies, Friedman went to Lebanon and Israel to report on conflicts there. Since then, Friedman has traveled to many other regions and written about his experiences. He has won a Pulitzer Prize three times. In his book *The World Is Flat*, Friedman proposes that the historical and geographic factors that once separated countries are becoming irrelevant. Even so, people and places can still maintain their uniqueness. In the quote that follows, he reflects on the role of technology in that process.

“Uploading makes possible ‘the globalization of the local.’ The fact that so many people worldwide now have the tools to create and upload their own content—their own news reports, their own opinions, their own music, their own videos, their own photos, their own software, their own encyclopedias, their own dictionaries—is a very powerful force for the preservation and enhancement of cultural autonomy and particularity.”



Thomas Friedman

—Thomas Friedman, from *The World Is Flat*

It is indeed a different world than was imaginable just a few years ago.

The Global Economic Community

In previous centuries, the United States went through periods when economic isolationism was a popular sentiment. In the 21st century, isolationism is no longer an option. Instead, expanded and improved transportation, communication, and technology systems mean that internationalism is the way of the world for the distribution of goods, services, and ideas. These forces are summarized by the word **globalization**. Globalization can be defined as the process of international integration resulting from the interchange of worldviews, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture. Globalization has opened up traditional marketplaces for acquiring raw materials. Businesses can choose more diverse geographic locations to source the different aspects of production and distribution. Stronger transportation systems and instantaneous communication systems allow access to these goods more quickly and economically. Many barriers that existed in the past have been removed. Modern global communications networks also enable entrepreneurs to reach out to funding sources and markets not available before.

With each change come costs as well as benefits. Some Americans are concerned that multinational corporations operating in a global context crowd out smaller businesses. Another concern is job loss as domestic companies move their factories and hire workers abroad to take advantage of lower wages and costs. In contrast, others feel globalization creates jobs as new international markets increase exports, and new workers are needed to create products.

TECHNOLOGY AND GLOBAL TRADE A key driver of economic globalization is the technology revolution. The industries related to computerization—from chip manufacturing to web design—are themselves big players in the global marketplace. Few industries have not been transformed by the products and services these industries produce.

Computers have changed not just industries but also the lives of individual workers. Technology has given people access to far more information than ever before. This access has improved productivity in many industries. Workers share information through computer networks. Laptops and

cell phones have enabled increasing numbers of people to work at home or in multiple locations. Communication and technology advances allow many large companies to outsource various tasks such as support services. For example, a company in Florida may outsource customer technology support to telephone operators in India.

A KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF FREE TRADE Globalization is inextricably linked to free trade. **Free trade** is the policy in international markets in which governments do not restrict imports or exports. Many economists believe that a key to the success of free trade is a concept known as comparative advantage.



Globalization connects economies and cultures around the world.

Comparative advantage is the idea that a nation will specialize in what it can produce at a lower opportunity cost, or trade-off, than any other nation. Examining a possible trade situation involving China and Australia provides an example. Both countries produce iron ore and steel. Suppose that every week, Australia produces 5,000 tons of iron ore. From that iron ore, 1,000 tons of steel are produced. In the same period of time, and with the same amount of labor, China produces 2,700 tons of iron ore and 900 tons of steel. Australia's production ratio of steel is 1:5. In other words, Australia's opportunity cost for one ton of steel is five tons of iron ore. China's production ratio of steel to iron ore is 1:3. Its opportunity cost for one ton of steel is three tons of iron ore. So, in the production of steel, China has a comparative advantage. Australia would benefit by trading for Chinese steel. If the two nations establish a trade ratio of 1:4, both countries win. China trades one ton of its steel for four tons of iron ore. China now gets four tons of iron ore, instead of three, for a ton of steel. Also, one ton of steel now costs Australia only four tons of iron ore, when before it cost five.

PARTNERS AND COMPETITORS Globalization does not mean that international trade is without conflict. Competition for resources, trade routes, and markets is fierce. To improve their chances of economic success, countries form trading blocs, or alliances. These alliances reduce trade barriers, such as tariffs, among their members. To promote economic growth, the United States is allied with Canada and Mexico in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The United States is also a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Group of Eight (G8), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Among the United States' economic competitors is the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Except for members Ecuador and Venezuela, all OPEC countries are in Africa or the Middle East. Saudi Arabia controls about one-third of OPEC's total oil reserves and takes a leading role in the organization. OPEC exerts a great deal of control over the supply of oil and oil prices on world markets. Oil availability and prices can, in turn, affect prices of other products that depend on oil. For example, if OPEC allows the price of oil to rise dramatically, the price of fuel for farm machinery also rises. As a result, the price of wheat may increase. In recent decades, however, OPEC lost some of its influence as the United States increased domestic oil production. In fact, a 2014 analysis reported that since 2008, U.S. oil imports from OPEC nations have declined by 50 percent.

Members of another competitive trade alliance, the European Union (EU), are also among the strongest political allies of the United States. The EU consists of 28 member countries; several other countries are candidates for membership. Citizens of EU countries can move freely among the member nations, as can goods, services, and economic capital. A majority of the member countries use the same currency, the euro. The member countries work as a single economic unit in trade negotiations instead of competing against each other. As a result of this cooperation, the EU has become an immensely powerful trading bloc. In fact, according to some measures, in 2014 the EU had the largest economy in the world.

Reading Check
Summarize What are three factors that have increased economic globalization?

World Trading Blocs, 2013



Interpret Maps

1. What are some factors that affect how countries organize into trading blocs?
2. Why might the APEC countries be more concerned by piracy on the high seas than the SADC member countries?

Challenges of Globalization

Like most other changes that affect millions of people, globalization has its benefits and costs. Foremost among the costs are negative impacts on some workers and on the environment.

LABOR ISSUES Globalization has been largely beneficial to the countries that participate in free trade. Countries such as India and Bangladesh, once mired in poverty, have grown their economies. However, the effect on individual workers is not necessarily positive. Many of the new jobs made possible by economic globalization pay low wages and do not offer long-term, stable employment. Working conditions are often hazardous, hot, and crowded.

Some factory owners employ child workers in conditions similar to slavery. For example, children in Pakistan and India have been forced to sew soccer balls, to be sold on the international market, for 10 to 12 hours a day. Some of the children were chained to their workstations. International businesses that subcontract work to local employers are particularly at risk of profiting from such exploitative conditions, whether or not they are aware of them. When such abuses are publicized in international media, consumers may be challenged to examine their buying habits.

Economic globalization also affects workers in the United States. Even before it became as common as it is today, some opponents of globalization suggested that it would negatively affect the United States. For example, third-party candidate Ross Perot sounded an alarm during the 1992 presidential election. He warned that American jobs would be lost if NAFTA were approved. As trade barriers came down, many U.S. jobs were indeed lost to other countries where wages are lower. In particular, the number of U.S. factory jobs has declined. Union membership has declined along with the number of manufacturing jobs. However, many American businesses have also seen growth and success due to globalization.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS Just as many other countries allow poor working conditions and low wages, some may also have lax environmental regulations. As manufacturing increases in these countries, so do pollution and threats to the environment. Such problems have led some world leaders to propose aggressive plans to protect the air and water.

Document-Based Investigation Historical Source

Evaluating Globalization

Joseph Stiglitz has been the chief economist for the World Bank and chair of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers. He has studied the issues resulting from globalization, including resulting environmental damage and the impact on many poor workers. In the quote below, Stiglitz addresses the question of how to solve these dilemmas.

"To some, there is an easy answer: Abandon globalization. That is neither feasible nor desirable. . . . [G]lobalization has also brought huge benefits—East Asia's success was based on globalization, especially on the opportunities for trade, and increased access to markets and technology. Globalization has brought better health, as well as an active global civil society fighting for more democracy and greater social justice. The problem is not with globalization,

but with how it has been managed. Part of the problem lies with the international economic institutions . . . which help set the rules of the game. They have done so in ways that, all too often, have served the interests of the more advanced industrialized countries—and particular interests within those countries—rather than those of the developing world."

—Joseph E. Stiglitz, from
Globalization and Its Discontents

Analyze Historical Sources

What responsibility does the American public have for making globalization a force that helps rich and poor alike?



Students in Beijing, China, show their support for the Kyoto Protocol.

The most significant of these proposals is the **Kyoto Protocol**, an international treaty that seeks to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. The agreement is connected to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997. It went into effect in February 2005. Under the Protocol, countries' emissions of greenhouse gases have to be recorded and revealed in annual reports.

Many Americans who see global warming as affected by human activity feel that the Kyoto Protocol is a necessary step in the right direction. Some critics of the Protocol do not like the idea of American industries being monitored by an international organization. Other critics complain that the Protocol doesn't come down hard enough on fast-developing countries such as China and India. The United States is a signatory, or signer, of the treaty, but so far has declined to ratify it. This failure to ratify the Protocol is seen by some Americans as evidence that the fossil fuel industries wield too much power in the U.S. government.

A follow-up to the Kyoto treaty is the Copenhagen Accord, an international treaty that calls for a continuation of the Kyoto Protocol. It also encourages a strengthening of worldwide efforts to combat climate change. Like the Kyoto Protocol, the Accord stresses that dramatic cuts in greenhouse gas emissions are necessary to slow the effects of climate change. The Accord set an initial deadline of January 31, 2010, for countries to submit their goals for reducing emissions. The goal is to significantly reduce emissions by 2020. In the United States, support for the Accord is divided along similar lines as support for the Kyoto Protocol.

ETHICAL ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS Multinational companies must deal with issues that arise from doing business in countries where laws and accepted practices are very different from those in the United States. Companies that do business on a global scale must confront several ethical questions—those that deal with right and wrong. They must decide how those issues affect their public image as much as their bottom line.

Parent companies that subcontract some tasks to local managers are particularly susceptible to using questionable practices, perhaps without their

Reading Check
Analyze Effects
How have lax labor
and environmental
laws affected people
in some developing
countries?

knowledge. Subcontractors whose employees work in sweatshop conditions without protection from hazardous chemicals may not be breaking any local laws. However, buyers may refuse to purchase the company's products when they hit U.S. shelves.

Some big companies hire workers in countries with poor human rights records. One can argue that giving people work is a way to improve that country's conditions from within. An opposing argument was used against U.S. companies that operated in South Africa during the apartheid era. Some argue that investment by foreign companies helps support repressive governments by boosting their economies.

Corruption is another situation that can trip up international businesses. In some countries, gifts to people who can help "seal the deal" are common and accepted. For example, in the 1970s a prominent U.S. aircraft manufacturer paid Japanese agents and government officials \$12.5 million to secure sales of their jets to a leading airline. The company was operating on the assumption that such bribes were an accepted way of doing business in Japan. That assumption was woefully wrong, however. The scandal outraged the Japanese public. Those who had taken the bribes suffered for doing so.

Environmental issues overlap with ethical questions when a country's environmental laws are much weaker than U.S. regulations. A corrupt government may ignore environmental damage to keep from disrupting a profitable business. One example comes from Nigeria, where an oil multinational was criticized for polluting the air and water. Criticism also pointed to the failure to invest profits back into the impoverished communities from where the oil was extracted. In addition, the company was accused of conspiring with Nigeria's police force to put down demonstrations against widespread pollution. The resulting violence took the lives of dozens of Nigerian villagers. People who manage or invest in companies in situations like this must grapple with the extent of their responsibility.

Congress has passed several laws aimed at ending such abuses. However, effective enforcement requires more cooperation in the countries where they occur.

Diffusion on a Global Scale

Just as globalization has affected economies as countries interact through business, it has also affected international politics. Ideas about justice and democracy can spread around the world by means of blogs and social media. Technology makes these outlets powerful forces in the hands of discontented people whose governments try to limit dissent. A 2011 rebellion in Egypt, for example, depended on the Internet to organize activities. It was also the means to tell the world what was going on.

Globalization also affects cultures. In our global marketplace, citizens interact more frequently with one another. This interaction influences beliefs, behaviors, and actions. The result is **cultural diffusion**, which describes the way cultural practices spread from one community to another. It is also how cultures borrow traits such as beliefs, ideas, and material objects from one

another. With increased contact comes increased diffusion. In today's world of instantaneous communication, cultural diffusion is constant.

Cultural diffusion is not a new concept. People of various cultures have interacted with each other for centuries as people have traveled and traded around the world. The United States has always drawn merchants, immigrants, and tourists from other lands. In the process, people have brought and shared their foods, languages, traditions, and values. So today you can find Ethiopian, Chinese, Brazilian, and French restaurants in the United States. Likewise, American fast-food restaurants can be found from Australia to Zambia. For example, McDonald's has restaurants in more than 100 countries, and Starbucks has coffee shops in over 65 countries.

SHARING CULTURE **Popular culture** is a collection of ideas, attitudes, and images that are part of a mainstream culture heavily influenced by and spread through the media. Pop culture can include movies, television, music, fashion, and even values that are current in a particular culture.



Women from around the world have come to Senegal, on Africa's west coast, to learn traditional dances. Modern telecommunications make advertising such opportunities possible.

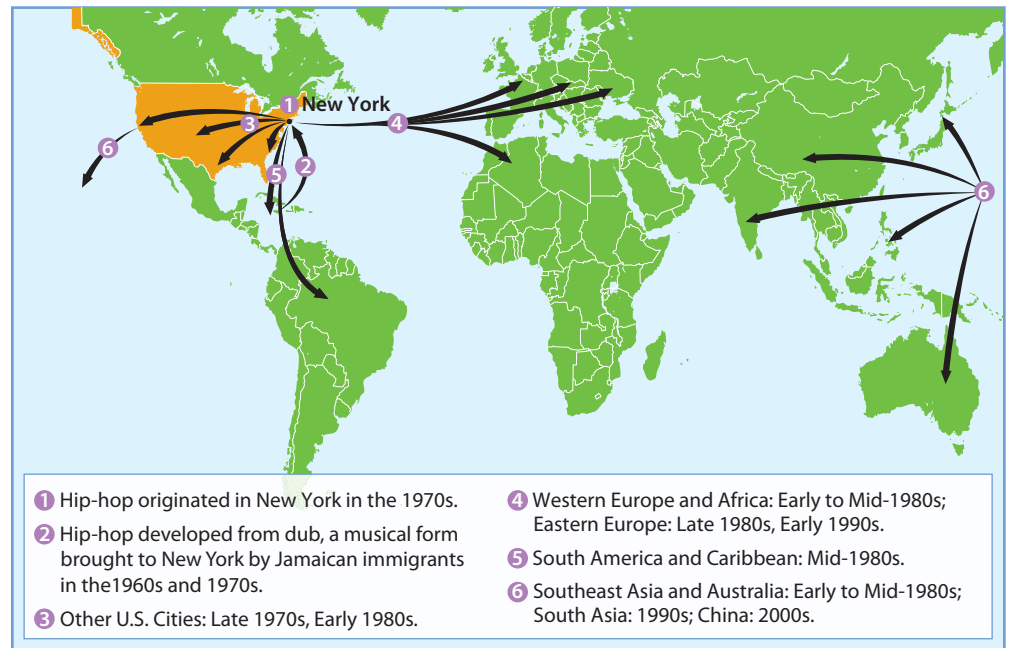
Technology has made the spread of pop culture more dramatic. In the 1920s new media such as radio and movies were able to reach a growing share of the nation's population. Increasingly, people all across the country were sharing the same information and enjoying the same pastimes, creating a shared culture. Today, the Internet, movies, and television are the driving forces spreading popular culture on a global scale. People around the world can hear the same news and listen to the same music. They can hear the same advertisements and buy the same products. Movies are made, seen, and distributed around the world. This provides viewers the opportunity to experience different cultures and to have a shared global experience. Not only can individuals receive the information, but they can help create and share it as well.

Thanks to these new technologies, American pop culture has spread like wildfire. Young people around the world listen to American music, watch American movies, and adopt American fashion fads. However, just as advances in communication, trade, transportation, and technology can spread cultural features around the world and make them more similar, those forces can also help maintain traditional cultures. A teacher of ancient dances can use social media to recruit more students, who will then keep the traditions alive. Shared videos of folkloric musical performances bring in new fans who want to learn the music for themselves. Global trade networks can introduce new buyers to the handicrafts of artisans who once had limited access to markets. This access encourages them to continue practicing their time-honored skills.

AN EXAMPLE OF CULTURAL DIFFUSION To look at how cultural diffusion can permeate the global market, examine the spread of hip-hop. Originating in New York City in the 1970s, hip-hop culture usually includes rap music, deejaying, graffiti painting, and hip-hop dancing.

Hip-hop quickly took hold of popular American culture in New York City and spread throughout the country. Globalization allowed hip-hop culture to spread even farther. Youth around the world identified with the themes and styles. American movies such as *Wild Style* introduced people as far away as

THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF HIP-HOP



Japan to the new style of dance and music in the 1980s. In the 1990s global media companies saw an opportunity and began marketing hip-hop-related items to other countries. These included music, movies, clothing, and dance. Soon, the hip-hop culture had become popular on six continents.

As hip-hop spread, youth combined elements of American hip-hop culture with their own traditions. For example, in Japan, hip-hop fashion incorporated the Japanese language and symbols representing samurai. Lyrics often referred to Japanese food and other cultural elements.

Today, hip-hop is still popular, and the Internet draws the hip-hop community even more closely together. A website focusing on hip-hop allows people from around the world to share their thoughts about current trends or to sell hip-hop-related goods and services. Video-sharing websites, blogs, and social media remove any international barriers in the hip-hop community.

Reading Check

Analyze Causes
Why is cultural diffusion likely to increase?

Lesson 6 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Create a graphic organizer to describe some benefits and costs of globalization.

| Costs | Benefits |
|-------|----------|
| | |
| | |
| | |

2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

3. **Predict** How do you think technology will affect globalization in the future?

Think About:

- the global work force
- entrepreneurship
- computer network security

4. **Analyze Issues** What responsibility do you think the government has in addressing issues, such as worker exploitation and air pollution, that arise from globalization?

5. **Develop Historical Perspective** How has the European Union's role in global economics evolved?

Module 19 Assessment

Key Terms and People

For each term or person below, write a sentence explaining its significance during the early 21st century.

1. National Security Agency (NSA)
2. racial profiling
3. ISIS
4. income gap
5. political action committee (PAC)
6. fracking
7. school vouchers
8. globalization
9. Kyoto Protocol
10. popular culture

Main Ideas

Use your notes and the information in the module to answer the following questions.

National Security and Public Safety

1. How has terrorism affected government policies?
2. Why do you think the USA PATRIOT Act has been renewed continually?
3. Why is there tension between protecting both individual liberty and national security?

Foreign Policy

4. In general terms, what are the UN's Millennium Development Goals trying to achieve?
5. How have concerns about homeland security affected U.S. foreign policy?
6. What impact have the UN and NATO had in recent years? How has their relationship with the United States changed over time?
7. Why might the United States try to maintain good relations with China?
8. What role has the United States played in international health care issues, including HIV/AIDS? Why are those efforts controversial?

Poverty and Social Concerns

9. What usually determines social class in the United States?
10. What are some causes of poverty?
11. What are some criticisms of federal subsistence programs? Where do the two main political parties usually stand on the issues?
12. How does a widening income gap affect individuals and society?

Conservation and the Environment

13. How does perception affect how people see environmental issues? What is the result?
14. What are some positive and negative events affecting American rivers?
15. Why do fossil fuels incite conflict?
16. How are advances in transportation helping the environment?

Education

17. Why might the flipped classroom not be suitable for all students or teachers?
18. What is the basic problem with using property taxes to fund public education?

Globalization and Cultural Diffusion

19. Which countries or organizations are usually U.S. trade partners? competitors?
20. What are some ethical issues that international companies face?
21. How can globalization both diminish and preserve traditional cultures?

Critical Thinking

1. **Categorize** Use a graphic organizer to draw conclusions about the economic, political, and social impacts of new and emerging technologies on individuals and countries.

| | Individuals | Countries |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Economic | | |
| Political | | |
| Social | | |

Module 19 Assessment, continued

2. **Evaluate** Can the average citizen assess the effectiveness of U.S. actions to prevent terrorism? Why or why not?
3. **Analyze Causes** How has terrorism affected Americans' way of life?
4. **Draw Conclusions** Do you think the government has been effective in balancing the rights of the individual against the need for national security? Why or why not?
5. **Synthesize** How might political, military, and economic interests combine or conflict to affect U.S. diplomatic relationships?
6. **Analyze Issues** What are some ways that modern media affect public policy?
7. **Predict** Why might access to water and food continue to cause conflicts?
8. **Analyze Causes** How has U.S. dependence on foreign oil affected foreign policy?
9. **Analyze Effects** Has social legislation been effective in ending poverty? Explain.
10. **Compare** Why might nonprofits sometimes be more effective in protecting the environment than the federal government?
11. **Evaluate** How can decisions and actions by governments and businesses affect the environment?

Engage with History

Imagine that you are the president's chief economic advisor. He or she has asked you for your thoughts on solving the widening income gap. What advice will you provide? Consider how various public policies affect poverty in the United States and the arguments for and against them. Will you advise the more conservative, usually Republican, view or the more liberal, usually Democratic, approach? How do those views compare and contrast? Compile the major points you would make to the president in an essay or multimedia presentation.

Focus on Writing

Compose a persuasive essay on an issue related to 21st-century policies. Narrow your topic to a specific aspect of the general subject. Incorporate local or regional examples or applications to illustrate your point. Justify your position with a reasoned argument based upon historical antecedents and precedents and core democratic values or constitutional principles.

Multimedia Activity

The U.S. government has earned praise and criticism for policies and actions to support countries struggling for various reasons. The class should be organized into five groups. Each group should research a different topic: how U.S. government actions have supported the democratic growth of developing nations; U.S. attempts to support economic growth, also in developing countries; examples of the U.S. government providing humanitarian assistance during natural disasters; U.S. humanitarian aid to countries in other times of crisis; and U.S. efforts to support human rights. All groups should conduct research on their topics and evaluate the effectiveness of U.S. actions. You should also examine how other nations viewed U.S. efforts. Then work with other groups to examine situations when democratic and economic growth, natural and human-made disasters, and other crises intersected or overlapped. Each group should create a multimedia presentation to share your work with the class.

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