

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read the biography of Andrew Jackson below, then fill in the chart that follows.

The Story of Andrew Jackson

Andrew Jackson: The Orphan

Andrew Jackson was born to Irish immigrants on March 15, 1767, near Lancaster, South Carolina. His father died shortly after he was born, and he was raised by his mother and his two older brothers. The battles of the American Revolutionary War that raged in the Carolinas from 1778 to 1781 had a devastating effect on Jackson's life. Andrew, along with his brothers, joined the patriotic cause and volunteered to fight the British and when he was only 13.

In 1781, Jackson and his brother Robert were captured. During their captivity, a British officer slashed Jackson with his sword after he refused to polish the officer's boots. Both of Jackson's brothers and his mother died during the war, all from contracting illnesses. He had lost his entire immediate family by the age of 14.

In 1784, when he was 17, Jackson decided to become an attorney. After three years, Jackson received his license to practice law in several counties scattered throughout the North Carolina backcountry.

While living in North Carolina, Jackson gained a reputation for being charismatic, wild and ambitious. He loved to dance, entertain, gamble and spend his free time with friends in taverns.

Andrew Jackson: The Military Hero

During the War of 1812 General Andrew Jackson led his troops through enemy territory to victory in several tide-turning battles. In doing so, he greatly aided our nation's victory in the war.

As a general, Andrew Jackson made quick, decisive actions to take the War of 1812 into his own hands, even if his troops were the underdogs. In doing so, he surprisingly defended New Orleans against a full-scale attack by the British, forcing them to withdraw from Louisiana. Despite technically taking place after the war had ended, this unexpected victory launched an enormous sense of national pride as America began to realize its true potential. It also made Jackson the new American hero.

Jackson's toughness and determination reminded his troops of a firmly rooted Hickory tree, and earned him the nickname "Old Hickory."

However, despite his military successes and decision-making skills, Jackson was also recognized as a ruthless leader. Not only were his military campaigns violent, particularly against Native American opponents, but he was also known for being extremely strict towards his troops. On two separate occasions, Jackson prevented mass desertions of his troops by threatening them at gunpoint. However, when his troops reached the end of their terms of service Jackson was compelled to let them go.

Andrew Jackson: The President

President Andrew Jackson firmly established that presidents could be more than just mere executives enforcing laws. Jackson argued that the President is the only position that is elected by the nation as a whole, and is therefore the sole representative of “the people” and, as such, could wield power broadly to carry out their will. By taking this stance, Jackson would enact several policies while president that challenged the traditional- and constitutional- role of the executive branch.

“The People’s President” and the “Spoils System”

Jackson was the first president to invite the public to attend the inauguration ball at the White House, which quickly earned him popularity. Jackson also believed in eliminating property requirements for white male voters; this would allow poor white males to vote, and was seen as an appeal to the “common man”.

After becoming president, Andrew Jackson did not submit to Congress in policy-making and was the first president to assume command with his veto power. While prior presidents rejected only bills they believed unconstitutional, Jackson set a new precedent by wielding the veto pen as a matter of policy.

Still upset at the results of the 1824 election, he believed in giving the power to elect the president and vice president to the American people by recommending eliminating the Electoral College, garnering him the nickname the "**people's president.**" Campaigning against corruption, Jackson became the first president to widely replace officeholders with his supporters, which became known as the “**spoils system.**” Basically, this system gave government and civil servant positions to his close friends and supporters, whether they were qualified or not.

The Fight Against the Second National Bank

Jackson saw the National Bank as a corrupt, elitist institution that manipulated paper money and wielded too much power over the economy. He also feared that the Bank could use its influence to undermine his bid for re-election and cost him his second term. When the Second National Bank was due to be re-chartered (renewed), Jackson vetoed the re-charter because it backed “the advancement of the few at the expense of the many.” Instead, Jackson supported dividing

federal money into **pet banks**, state banks selected by the U.S. Treasury to receive surplus Federal funds.

With the state bank's new charter, many banks were giddy to give away loans. This resulted in the increase of cotton production in the South, and an enormous expansion of land in the West. Also, a boom in industry was taking place in the north. With these came an increase in sales and price of land, which were mainly paid with bank notes. Along with all of this prosperity came inflation, however, and soon the economy collapsed, leading to the Panic of 1837. Because of his stance on the Federal Bank and the economic recession that followed, some argue that Jackson's fiscal policies were among the worst in American history.

Nullification Crisis

Following the passage of federal tariffs in 1828 and 1832 that they believed favored Northern manufacturers at their expense, opponents in South Carolina passed a resolution declaring the measures null and void in the state and even threatened secession.

Although he believed the tariff to be too high, Jackson threatened to use force to enforce federal law in South Carolina. Within weeks, a compromise was passed that included a modest reduction in the tariff along with a provision that empowered the president to use the armed forces if necessary to enforce federal laws. A crisis was averted, but the battle over states' rights and abuse of power of the Federal Government foreshadowed the Civil War three decades later.

Directions: In the chart below, fill in qualities or policies that you find positive, negative, or neutral/both about Andrew Jackson.

Positive Qualities/Policies	Neutral/Both	Negative Qualities/Policies

