Study Guide

Chapter 8, Section 2

For use with textbook pages 273–277

A CHANGING CULTURE

KEY TERMS AND NAMES

nativism   feelings of hostility toward foreigners *(page 274)*

Know-Nothings   a nativist political party *(page 275)*

Second Great Awakening   a movement in the early 1800s to revive Americans' commitment to religion *(page 275)*

Charles Grandison Finney   a preacher of the Second Great Awakening *(page 275)*

Joseph Smith   founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints *(page 276)*

romanticism   a movement that advocated feeling over reason and the individual above society *(page 276)*

transcendentalism   a philosophy that urged people to overcome the limits of their minds and to embrace the beauty of the universe *(page 276)*

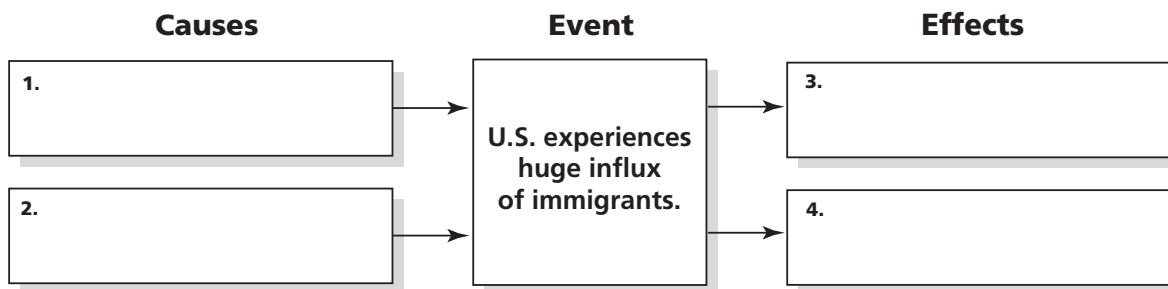**utopia**   an ideal society *(page 277)*

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Imagine that you are asked to establish an ideal community. What kind of community would you create? What kinds of places would your community include?

The last section discussed the issues that faced President Jackson's administration. This section discusses the social and cultural changes the nation experienced during the early and mid-1800s.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the diagram below to help you take notes. In the mid-1800s, the United States experienced a huge influx of immigrants. In the diagram, list the causes and the effects of this influx.

Causes	Event	Effects
1.		3.
2.	U.S. experiences huge influx of immigrants.	4.

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READ TO LEARN

• The New Wave of Immigrants *(page 273)*

Between 1815 and 1860, more than 5 million immigrants arrived in the United States. Almost 2 million of these immigrants came from Ireland. The Irish came because in 1845 a fungus destroyed much of the nation's potato crop, causing a widespread famine. They generally settled in the cities of the Northeast, where they worked as unskilled laborers. Germans made up the second largest immigrant group, with more than 1.5 million arriving. Most settled in the Midwest, where they became farmers or started businesses.

Some immigrants faced discrimination in America. The presence of people with different languages and religions produced a feeling of **nativism,** or hostility toward foreigners. Many Americans were anti-Catholic, and the arrival of millions of Catholic Irish and German immigrants led to the start of several nativist groups. These groups promised never to vote for a Catholic and supported laws that banned immigrants from holding public office. In 1854 members from these groups formed the American Party. Membership in the party was secret, and members were told to answer, "I know nothing," when questioned. The party was nicknamed the **Know-Nothings** and built a large following in the 1850s.

5. Why did many Irish immigrants arrive in the United States after 1845?

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• A Religious Revival *(page 275)*

The United States experienced a change in religious life. In the 1800s, religious leaders organized a movement to revive Americans' commitment to religion. This movement came to be known as the **Second Great Awakening.** Ministers attracted thousands of followers in revival meetings, where they urged people to readmit God in their lives. **Charles Grandison Finney,** a Presbyterian minister, was an important promoter of the Second Great Awakening. His revivals attracted many followers.

A number of new religions flourished during the mid-1800s. Among these were the Unitarians and Universalists. New Englander **Joseph Smith** founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, whose followers are commonly known as Mormons. After being harassed in New England for their beliefs, the Mormons moved west. Brigham Young became the leader of the Mormons after Joseph Smith was murdered.

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6. What new religions started in the United States in the mid-1800s?

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• A Literary Renaissance *(page 276)*

In the 1800s, a movement known as **romanticism** influenced philosophers and writers of the day. Romanticism advocated feeling over reason and nature over environments created by humans. One group of New England writers and philosophers who promoted romanticism in their work followed the philosophy of **transcendentalism.** It urged people to transcend, or overcome, the limits of their minds and to let their souls take in the beauty of the universe.

The most influential transcendentalist was Ralph Waldo Emerson. He wrote that people who wanted fulfillment should work for union with the natural world. Another transcendentalist writer, Henry David Thoreau, wrote that people should fight the pressure to conform.

Other writers also created uniquely American works. These writers included Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Edgar Allan Poe. The most-famous female poet of the time was Emily Dickinson.

During the early 1800s, more Americans learned to read and more men gained voting rights. Publishers began producing inexpensive newspapers, which reported on crime, gossip, politics and local news—the kind of news most people liked. These newspapers became very successful. General interest magazines, such as *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's Weekly* also started around this time.

7. What movement influenced many writers in the 1800s?

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• Utopian Communities *(page 277)*

The movements that influenced religion and art in the mid-1800s—optimism about human nature—led to the creation of new communities. The people who started these communities believed that society corrupted human nature, and the best way to prevent this from happening was to separate people from society. These people wanted to form their own **utopia,** or ideal

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society. These communities promoted cooperative living and no private property. Several utopian communities started during the mid-1800s. These included Brook Farm in Massachusetts and several small utopian communities established by a religious group known as the Shakers.

8. Why did some people in the mid-1800s establish utopian communities?

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