Kennedy and his vision deeply inspired many Americans, as Roger Landrum, volunteer to Nigeria from 1961 to 1963, remembers:

“. . . when he [Kennedy] announced the Peace Corps idea, I wrote him a letter saying, ‘If you will do it, I will volunteer.’”

“I grew up in rural Michigan and I’d never been overseas before. I was at my mother’s house when the telegram came inviting me to train for Nigeria. I remember my hands were shaking as I opened it. I had never heard of Nigeria but I definitely felt I was participating in history. This was a new era of American participation in the world. Peace Corps volunteers were the front-line people making fresh contact with a whole bunch of newly independent nations. There was a sense of exhilaration about maybe carrying forth democracy and establishing new relations with Asia, Africa, and South America.”

Landrum and thousands of other volunteers went on to make Kennedy’s dream a reality, symbolizing the best of the “New Frontier.”

In his Inaugural Address, President Kennedy proclaimed the purpose of the Peace Corps: “To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves. . . .”

**HISTORY JOURNAL**

Based on what you already know and the picture on page 699, write down your first impressions of the Kennedy and Johnson years and what you think this chapter may be about.
Peace Corps volunteers in Honduras
New Frontier and Great Society

JANUARY 20, 1961: JOHN F. KENNEDY SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT

They stood together on the inaugural platform: the 43-year-old John F. Kennedy, tanned, vigorous, and coatless despite the subfreezing weather, and 70-year-old Dwight D. Eisenhower, wearing a muffler, looking like a tired general. The appearances of the two men, a generation apart in age, symbolized the change of leadership. Kennedy, many voters believed, would get the United States moving again.

Behind Kennedy on the platform were other members of his glamorous family: his beautiful wife, Jackie; his younger brother Robert, soon to be attorney general of the United States; and his parents, Rose and Joseph P. Kennedy, founders of a political dynasty. As Kennedy began his Inaugural Address, his hands chopped at the air in the style that was familiar to those who had seen his campaign appearances on television. His speech promised so much:

Let the word go forth . . . that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace. . . .

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival

Main Idea
The optimistic message of John F. Kennedy helped propel the nation into a new political era of social reform, both under Kennedy and his successor Lyndon B. Johnson.

Vocabulary
► mandate
► coalition
► pragmatist

Read to Find Out . . .
► how the goals and accomplishments of Kennedy and Johnson compared.
► some of the major reform programs of the 1960s.
and the success of liberty. . . . All this will not be finished in the first 100 days. Nor will it be finished in the first 1,000 days . . . But let us begin. . . . And so, my fellow Americans—ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.
—John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address, 1961

The promise John Fitzgerald Kennedy gave the United States was never realized. JFK had scarcely more than 1,000 days himself—1,036 to be exact—before an assassin’s bullet cut him down. Looking back at his brief presidency, from the buoyant, wintry inaugural in January 1961 to the funeral procession through the grief-soaked streets of Washington, D.C., in 1963, what survives is a strong impression of the Kennedy spirit. It was a force that propelled the nation into a new political era.

The Kennedy Years

Kennedy Pursues a New Frontier

In the eyes of most historians, the scattered accomplishments of Kennedy’s abruptly ended term hardly amounted to a finished political record. Compared to the hard-driving presidencies of FDR and Lyndon Johnson, whose first years were packed with new initiatives, Kennedy’s young administration moved slowly. He came into office with the narrowest margin of victory of any modern President—not enough to claim a mandate (a clear endorsement of his ideas) from the American public. In Congress, Kennedy faced a powerful conservative coalition, or temporary alliance with a common purpose. He, therefore, pursued his course with more caution than boldness.

He grew into the job. His days were long, hard, and fast-paced. As his term progressed, his initiatives became bolder, and his handling of Congress became more aggressive and assured.

Gallery of Presidents

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

“Now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle . . . against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself.”

Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961

Background
- Born 1917; Died 1963
- Democrat, Massachusetts
- Served in the navy 1941–1945
- Elected to the House of Representatives 1946
- Elected to the Senate 1952
- Assassinated, November 1963

Achievements in Office
- United States Peace Corps (1961)
- Trade Expansion Act (1961)
- Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (1963)
The New Frontier

Kennedy may not be remembered as a President who accomplished sweeping domestic legislation. He may stand, however, as one who instilled Americans with renewed idealism.

We stand today on the edge of a new frontier—
the frontier of the 1960s, a frontier of unknown opportunities and paths, a frontier of unfulfilled hopes and threats. . . . The new frontier of which I speak is not a set of promises—it is a set of challenges.

—John F. Kennedy, Presidential nomination acceptance speech, 1960

The New Frontier became the label for Kennedy’s vision of progress at home. It was not an organized set of legislative initiatives for economic change, like Roosevelt’s New Deal or Johnson’s Great Society, which was yet to come. Kennedy often reacted to events—such as civil rights disturbances and the Cuban missile crisis—instead of blazing new trails. The New Frontier, then, was more a personal vision of Kennedy’s, a progressive ideology but by no means a radical one.

As Kennedy began the campaign that had ushered him into office, many liberals had become complacent. Although in 1960 the economy was sluggish, the country still enjoyed the post-war prosperity. Issues that had consumed the liberals of the New Deal era—economic inequalities and the overhaul of large corporations—no longer seemed so critical. As economist John Kenneth Galbraith said in a 1958 study, “[Capitalism] works, and in the years since World War II, quite brilliantly.”

Liberals in the 1960s reasoned that if the country maintained its current progress, those at the bottom of the economic heap would in time better themselves. The two major issues still to be resolved were civil rights and civil liberties. Other problems, such as inadequate education and poverty, could be solved by fine tuning.

The Kennedy Aura

The Kennedy image captivated the media. “Since the thirty-fifth president and his wife are about the most physically attractive people to have lived in the White House, the urge of the publicists, magazines, networks, and photographers to fuse two American dreams and reveal the White House as the ultimate movie set is irresistible,” Alistair Cooke wrote in 1963. “To put it mildly, the president has yielded to this urge and has manipulated it.”

Many considered JFK a hero. Others distrusted him. Their reasons ranged from dislike of his wealthy father and the threat of a family dynasty to anti-Catholic and anti-Eastern biases. “All that Mozart string music and ballet dancing down there, and all that fox hunting and London clothes,” one congressman said. “He’s too elegant for me.”

Success in Space

In the spacecraft Friendship, John Glenn became the first American to orbit the earth—and the country celebrated! Space was part of the New Frontier; how did Kennedy define the New Frontier in his acceptance speech?
Kennedy's Working Style

The team that Kennedy gathered around him in his administration were, as one journalist noted, “the best and the brightest” of the President’s generation. Most were educated at top Eastern schools, and many were recruited from the executive rooms of big business.

Kennedy and his team were content, on the domestic front, to nudge along economic growth and to strengthen public programs. This is what he meant by “getting the country moving again” and restoring United States prestige abroad. The President’s interests were centered on foreign policy—the cold war and the containment of communism.

In August 1961, Communists built a wall between East Berlin and West Berlin to prevent East Germans from fleeing to the West. Kennedy reaffirmed his support for West Berliners in a speech delivered near the Berlin Wall in 1963. He said, “All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and, therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words, ‘Ich bin ein Berliner.”’

Kennedy saw himself more as a pragmaticist, someone interested in practical solutions to problems, than as a liberal. Most of the nation’s problems “are technical . . . administrative problems,” he explained. “They involve] sophisticated judgments which do not lend themselves to the great sort of ‘passionate movements’ which have stirred this country so often in the past.”

The Space Race

During the early 1960s, a nation’s accomplishments in space became a test of leadership in technology and defense. The Soviet Union gained an edge in the so-called space race when cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin orbited the earth in April 1961. The following month, in 1962. During 1965 and 1966 Project Gemini launched a second series of flights in which two-man teams practiced maneuvering and docking spacecraft while orbiting the earth. The Apollo program, which would accomplish the goal of a moon landing, began in 1968.

Programs at Home and Abroad

Kennedy’s efforts to perk up the economy largely succeeded. Increased spending for defense and for the space program poured billions of dollars into government contracts, which in turn increased employment. The Area Redevelopment Act channeled funds into needy regions. Congress raised the minimum wage from $1 to $1.25 an hour. These measures contributed to an economic upswing that lasted until the early 1970s.

During his administration Kennedy initiated several programs for international development. The Alliance for Progress was a series of aid projects undertaken cooperatively with Latin American countries that agreed to democratic reform. The Peace Corps sent volunteers to developing countries, where they lived among the local people and assisted in education and rural development projects. In its first 34 years, the Peace Corps sent 140,000 volunteers to 100 countries. The popular program continues today.

HISTORY Online

Student Web Activity 21
Visit the American Odyssey Web site at americanodyssey.glencoe.com and click on Chapter 21—Student Web Activities for an activity relating to the Kennedy presidency.
Kennedy’s efforts to pass an education aid bill showed the obstacles he faced in Congress. The coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats feared that increased federal support for education might mean less state control. The issue of aid to parochial schools was a further complication. Kennedy felt that supporting such aid would expose him to the accusation that as a Catholic he favored parochial schools. As negotiations wore on, both Protestants and Catholics became displeased with him. Kennedy was unable to push the education bill through Congress, something that Lyndon Johnson, a Protestant, later managed to do.

Hopes Cut Off
Assassin Kills Kennedy

Many people expected more than they were getting from Kennedy on issues such as civil rights. “I was furious with the administration’s civil rights posture,” recalled Roger Wilkins, a lawyer with the Agency for International Development. “I thought it was slow, lethargic, and unresponsive.”

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who served as special assistant to Kennedy, however, notes that the President “was soon educated by events…. Later in his term, Kennedy seemed to be seizing control of events. He called for a thawing of the cold war with the Soviet Union. Two months later the two nations signed a treaty limiting nuclear testing. As one of his last efforts, Kennedy requested his economic advisers to prepare a plan directed at poverty in the United States. He also promised action on civil rights.

Kennedy’s hope was to achieve a greater mandate for his programs in the 1964 election. With this in mind, in late November 1963 he took a trip to Dallas, Texas, to smooth over party differences and gather electoral support.

Tragedy in Dallas

CBS television news anchor Walter Cronkite cried as he gave the nation the news: President Kennedy had been fatally shot in Dallas while riding in a motorcade. For four days people across the United States sat hunched in front of their television sets, as images of violence and of mourning were etched forever into their minds. They pored over newspaper accounts of the grisly shooting, trying to understand why or how the tragedy could have happened.

They saw the pictures of Kennedy waving to cheering crowds as his open limousine wove through the streets of Dallas shortly before noon on November 22. As the motorcade approached an expressway, shots rang out and Kennedy slumped forward in his seat. Jackie Kennedy cradled her dying husband’s head in her lap as the limousine raced to nearby Parkland Hospital. Kennedy was pronounced dead at 1:00 P.M. Vice President Lyndon Johnson was sworn in almost immediately as President.
Police determined that the shots had been fired from a warehouse that overlooked the route of the motorcade. They arrested Lee Harvey Oswald, a 24-year-old warehouse worker, and charged him with the murder. Two days later Oswald was transferred from the city jail to the county jail. Television cameras covered the event live. As viewers across the country watched in disbelief, a Dallas nightclub owner, Jack Ruby, pushed through a circle of police officers and journalists and shot and killed Oswald at point-blank range.

The death of Oswald hampered investigations of the assassination. The Warren Commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, however, concluded in 1964 that Oswald had acted alone and not in a conspiracy of any kind. Critics of the Warren Commission maintain that the investigations were hastily concluded and that some group whose identity is as yet unknown most likely aided Oswald.

The Nation Mourns

The answer to the question, “Where were you when Kennedy was shot?” became frozen in people’s memories. “I was in social studies class at Woodlands High School,” said Bonnie Steinboch of White Plains, New York. “In the corridor, I saw Mr. Courtney, the art teacher, sobbing against the wall, and I was astonished that a grown-up, a teacher, would be so openly upset. Kennedy was the most important person in my life to die. . . . Months after he died, I realized one night in bed that I would never hear his voice again, and I sobbed for a long time.”

Americans cried as they saw three-year-old John F. Kennedy, Jr., salute his father’s funeral procession, and they stared at the riderless horse in the procession, a symbol of the fallen hero. The nation grieved as much for the President that John F. Kennedy might have become had he lived, as for the leader he had been. Commentator

A Change of Leaders Vice President Lyndon Johnson takes the oath of office aboard Air Force One almost immediately after the assassination of President Kennedy. What part did Jack Ruby play in the events surrounding the Kennedy assassination?
Richard Neustadt wrote, “He left a broken promise, that ‘the torch has been passed to a new generation,’ and the youngsters who identified with him felt cheated as the promise, like the glamour, disappeared.”

His widow compared the Kennedy years in the White House to Camelot, the site of the legendary King Arthur’s court, about which a popular musical was written in the 1960s. The romantic hero and heroine, the battle between good and evil, a time of great happiness forever lost—all these images were more commonly applied to ballads and to myths than to political figures.

Johnson’s Great Society
Johnson Pushes Social Reform

Johnson’s administration began in the tragedy of Kennedy’s assassination and ended in the tragedy of the disastrous war in Vietnam. In between Johnson carried forward Kennedy’s dream of a New Frontier, then went beyond Kennedy’s domestic programs to launch his own vision of the Great Society.

In the days following Kennedy’s assassination, Johnson took several steps to reassure the world that he would carry on in the same tradition as Kennedy. In his first speech following his succession to office, he said, “All I have, I would have given gladly not to be standing here today,” and asked for the nation’s prayers and support. Looking back on those days, Johnson told his biographer, Doris Kearns Goodwin:

We were all spinning around and around, trying to come to grips with what had happened, but the more we tried to understand it, the more confused we got. We were like a bunch of cattle caught in the swamp, unable to move in either direction, simply circling ‘round and ‘round. I understood that; I knew what had to be done. There is but one way to get the cattle out of the swamp. And that is for the man on the horse to take the lead, to assume command, to provide direction. In the period of confusion after the assassination, I was that man.

—Doris Kearns Goodwin, Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream, 1976

The differences between the two men, Kennedy and Johnson, were striking. Whereas Kennedy was handsome, sophisticated, and well-educated, Johnson could be crude and intimidating. Politeness and polish were not
among Johnson’s attributes; but he was, as he said, the man for the job. He had been an apt student of politics. A member of the House in 1937 at age 29, he advanced to the Senate in 1949 and rose quickly to the powerful position of Senate majority leader in 1955.

Johnson was a genius at building coalitions. “Let us reason together,” he would say, with a touch of understatement. He then used what those who received it called “the Treatment.”

Johnson’s method was to find out everything he could about the person he was talking to—family, friends, strengths, weaknesses, special interests. Then Johnson would proceed to flatter, cajole, promise, threaten, all the while suggesting that the other person’s decision was going to make the difference between success or failure. “Lyndon got me by the lapels and put his face on top of mine and he talked and talked,” a colleague said. “I figured [the choice] was getting drowned or joining.”

**Fashioning a Legacy**

President Johnson had boundless confidence in himself, and he knew what he wanted to do. He promised to realize the Kennedy vision, and he did—perhaps better than Kennedy ever could have.

In 1963 Kennedy’s program for social change was only an emerging vision. His liberalism was cautious and uncertain. Johnson had no such uncertainties. He was a man determined to do great things, and now he had the power to change the country. What then needed changing?

The answer depended on where you looked. In the suburban shopping malls that were springing up around...
the country, the United States looked robust. Measured in auto sales and economic indicators, the country hummed with prosperity. This was the nation that television viewers watched on *The Lucy Show* and other situation comedies, where everyday problems were solvable within a 22-minute show.

There was, of course, another America, as Michael Harrington revealed in his book, *The Other America*. He described a country within a country, where people were hungry when they went to bed, if in fact they had a bed. Chronic joblessness, unbudged by the New Deal or the postwar economic boom, was set like cement in rural towns and big-city slums. During the 1960s a vision of this other America slowly revealed itself to public consciousness. Strangely enough, it was Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ), the wheeling-dealing politician and friend of the rich, who understood the problem.

Johnson’s homespun tales of his rag-poor past may have stretched the truth a bit, but he certainly knew hard times as a child growing up in central Texas. Later, as a teacher of the rural poor in his home state, he felt a great empathy for people living in grinding, persistent poverty.

LBJ cared about the poor, and he cared about his place in history. He felt he could become the first President to create a just society that all but eliminated chronic poverty and hardship in the United States.

Johnson told Congress on March 16, 1964, that “in the past we have often been called upon to wage war against foreign enemies which threaten our freedom today. Now, we are asked to declare a war on a domestic enemy which threatens the strength of our nation and the welfare of our people.”

That enemy, of course, was poverty. LBJ’s ambitious war on poverty would be the cornerstone of his Great Society.

**The Great Society**

Johnson moved quickly to push Kennedy initiatives, including the Civil Rights Act, through Congress. He launched his war on poverty with the Economic Opportunity Act, the most ambitious attempt to aid the poor in the nation’s history. It established Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), a kind of domestic peace corps of citizens working in poor neighborhoods. The act also funded Project Head Start, to give preschoolers from disadvantaged families a leg up on elementary education.

The mood of the country, still affected by the shock of Kennedy’s assassination, worked in Johnson’s favor during the 1964 presidential election. Johnson overwhelmingly defeated Arizona senator Barry Goldwater and seized the mandate to introduce his own program of reform.

The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice . . . [It] is a place where every child can find knowledge to enrich his mind . . . where the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands for commerce, but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community.

—Lyndon B. Johnson, University of Michigan commencement address, 1964

The President knew that what he called the “honeymoon” of his election would not last for long. “You’ve got to give it all you can that first year,” he said. The result was the most comprehensive reform package to pass through Congress since the New Deal reforms of 1935.

Among the most significant pieces of legislation were Medicare, federally funded health care for the elderly, and Medicaid, its companion program for the needy who were too young to qualify for Medicare. These programs were the first to make health care available to those who could not afford it. The Voting Rights
Act of 1965 put teeth into the Fifteenth Amendment by providing for federal supervision of voter registration. Cities benefited from the Model Cities Act, which encouraged slum rehabilitation. A new department of Housing and Urban Development was created; its secretary, Robert Weaver, became the first African American to serve in a presidential cabinet.

Immigration legislation did away with a quota system that had existed for more than 50 years. As a result, people from a variety of cultures entered the United States, creating considerable variety in the ethnic mix of the population.

**Successes and Limitations**

Johnson’s Great Society program of social and political reform is often compared with FDR’s New Deal. The goals of the two were somewhat different. The New Deal sought social reforms in some areas—the creation of the Social Security system is an example. Its main goals, however, were to provide relief for the unemployed and the poor and to stimulate economic recovery.

The Great Society was more successful in creating legislative programs than in implementing them. It was underfunded, partly because the financing of the Vietnam War claimed a greater and greater proportion of the tax dollar. Still, the percentage of impoverished Americans, as measured by government standards, dropped from 22 percent in 1959 to 12 percent in 1969. The civil rights acts of 1964 and 1965 were landmark achievements of the Johnson presidency. Perhaps the greatest weakness in the Great Society program was that it promised so much that, despite its successes, critics could always point to problems yet unresolved.

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**Section Assessment**

1. Use a chart like this one to show how Johnson fulfilled—and in many cases went beyond—Kennedy’s idealistic vision for America.

| Fulfilling a Vision | Kennedy’s Vision | Johnson Programs |

2. Define: mandate, coalition, pragmatist.

3. How was Kennedy’s pragmatism reflected in his approach to legislative reforms?

4. How did the Great Society differ from the New Deal?

5. Making Comparisons Compare the political styles of Kennedy and Johnson.
Television

For decades people in the United States had learned about the world through newspapers, radio, or newsreels. That changed, however, when television came on the scene—bringing comedy, education, social issues, politics, and violence right into viewers’ living rooms. By 1960 more than 45 million households had TV sets.

**COMEDY**
The 1962–63 top-rated comedy, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, featured a mountain family that struck oil and moved to Beverly Hills, yet remained unaffected by the posh surroundings.

**TELEVISION HIGHLIGHTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1920s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
</tr>
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| **PHILO FARNSWORTH**
invents the first electronic television system. | **COLOR TELEVISION**
is demonstrated in the United States for the first time in 1940. Today 90 percent of households have a color set. | **REMOTE CONTROL**
is invented by Robert Adler and introduced by Zenith in 1955. Today at least 66 million households have remote-control devices. |
TELEVISION PROGRESS

Research one of the developments in television listed on the time line. Describe the innovation and explain its effect on society. Include photographs and other graphic aids. Share your findings with your classmates, and place your written report in your portfolio.

1960s

**TELESTAR**, a communications satellite, launches international television broadcasting in 1962 by linking the United States and Europe for up to 20 minutes.

1980s

**CABLE SYSTEMS** are connected to 30 percent of homes in the United States. By 1987, half of United States households have cable.

1990s

**PORTABLE VIDEO CAMERAS** and videotapes let families record their own activities to play back on television. *America’s Funniest Home Videos* is a hit.

VIOLENCE AND MOURNING

Across the nation viewers watched in profound sadness and near-disbelief as John F. Kennedy, Jr., saluted the casket carrying his assassinated father, President John F. Kennedy.

RACIAL UNREST

The often violent treatment of nonviolent civil rights protesters in the 1960s was brought to the public eye. Coverage such as this of a protester taking part in a 1963 sit-in in Greensboro, North Carolina, swung public sympathy to the side of the civil rights movement.

EDUCATIONAL INROADS

Since its debut in 1969, *Sesame Street* has demonstrated the power of television as an educational tool—with characters such as Big Bird helping with the lessons.

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

ALPERT/INSTITUTE
Learning the Skill

A computerized database program can help you organize and manage a large amount of information. Once you enter data in a database table, you can quickly locate information according to key criteria. For example, if you start your own business collecting newspaper, plastic, and glass from businesses to recycle, you could have the program list all of your clients that live in a particular area. You could also identify all clients that need you to collect their recyclables on Saturdays.

Building a Database

An electronic database is a collection of facts that are stored in a file on the computer. The information is organized into different fields. For example, one field may be the names of your clients. Another field may be the street addresses of your clients.

A database can be organized and reorganized in any way that is useful to you. You give commands to the computer telling it what to do with the information, and it follows your commands. When you want to retrieve information, the computer searches through the records, finds the information, and displays it on the screen. By using a database management system (DBMS)—special software developed for record keeping—you can easily add, delete, change, or update information.

Practicing the Skill

This chapter mentions many landmark Supreme Court cases. Follow these steps to build a database on landmark Supreme Court cases and their significance.

1. Determine what facts you want to include in your database and research to collect that information. For example, besides the case titles, what information is important in summarizing the cases? Should you include the year, the name of the chief justice at the time, and the topic of each case? Should you list the outcome and its significance in a special field?

2. Follow the instructions in the DBMS that you are using to set up fields. Then enter each item of data in its assigned field. Take as much time as you need to complete this step. Inaccurately placed data is difficult to retrieve.

3. Determine how you want to organize the facts in the database—chronologically by the date of the case, or alphabetically by the title of the case.

4. Follow the instructions in your computer program to sort the information into order of importance.

5. Check that all the information in your database is correct. If necessary, add, delete, or change information or fields.

Applying the Skill

Research and build a database that organizes information on some other aspect of the Supreme Court. For example, you may wish to examine Supreme Court cases that have to do with the Bill of Rights or cases dealing directly with presidential powers. Build your database and explain to a partner why the database is organized the way it is and how it might be used in this class.

Additional Practice

For additional practice, see Reinforcing Skills on page 721.
Clarence Earl Gideon was a man beaten down by life’s circumstances and by his own foolish mistakes. In 1962 he was an inmate of the Florida state prison, serving time for breaking into a poolroom and stealing money. He was a frail man, 51 years old, though he looked 10 years older. His face was gray and wrinkled and his lower lip continually trembled.

Prison life was not new to Gideon. He had served 4 previous jail terms. Poverty was also no stranger, since he had been a runaway at age 14; but now he wanted out. He worried about his family; his wife had started drinking, and his children were in foster homes.

He insisted he was convicted in an unfair trial for a crime he did not commit.

So Gideon wrote the Supreme Court a letter. In pencil, on lined prison paper, he petitioned the Court to release him on the grounds that the state had denied him his rights. At the time of his trial, with no money for a lawyer, he had asked the lower court to provide him with one, but the court had refused. Gideon had conducted his own defense.

Fourteen months after Gideon mailed off his plea to the Supreme Court, his conviction was overturned. The Gideon v. Wainwright ruling reversed an earlier
decision and declared that, according to the Sixth Amendment, if a defendant cannot afford a lawyer, the court must supply one. The appeal to the Supreme Court by Gideon, a poor man with few resources, made legal history.

The Court’s Authority
The Supreme Court Expands Its Boundaries

The Supreme Court, the branch of government that Alexander Hamilton called “the weakest of the three departments of power,” has become mighty throughout its history. In its earliest days, the Court simply ruled on whether laws had been broken. In 1803 the Court expanded its powers by taking on the role of judging the validity, or constitutionality, of laws. That step sent shock waves through the young government. Presidents from Jefferson to Lincoln briddled at the expansion of judicial power that followed—but there was much more to come.

A further question remained, and it was one that would touch the lives of politicians, families, minorities, and children in modern times: Should the Court have a hand in making the country a better, safer, fairer place? That is, when legislatures are failing to bring about reform in social, economic, and political systems, should the Court step in? At issue was whether Court rulings should merely take into account precedents and laws, or consider the needs of the country.

Dwight Eisenhower did not realize it, but when he appointed Earl Warren as chief justice of the United States, he was answering these questions for some time to come. No Supreme Court in United States history went further in making reform its business than the Warren Court of the 1950s and the 1960s.

The Warren Court
The Warren Court Supports Social Reform

When Earl Warren came to Washington, D.C., in 1953, most Americans saw their country as a place of prosperity, liberty, and justice. The Warren Court, however, saw a place where equal justice under the law was elusive if you happened to be an African American, a poor person, an accused criminal, an immigrant, or a city dweller. When Warren finished his historic 16-year term as chief justice in 1969, the Court had taken direct, far-reaching action to correct what it saw as the nation’s social ills. In doing so, the reform-minded Court wielded more power and made a bigger impact on the country than had many Presidents.

President Eisenhower appointed Warren to head the nation’s highest court, following Warren’s years as a crime-fighting district attorney and then as governor of California. Despite his conservative image, Warren’s beliefs grew more liberal over the years. The chief justice’s written opinions were sometimes a reversal of positions he had taken as a governor.

The Warren Court era of liberal activism was launched with the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision on school desegregation. Critics from Joseph McCarthy to more moderate thinkers said the Court was stepping far beyond its limits—infringing on the rights of state and local governments, intruding on family life, and threatening the moral fabric of the United States.

Calls for the chief justice’s impeachment were heard periodically throughout his tenure. “Impeach Earl Warren” billboards and pamphlets appeared throughout the South and even at Earl Warren High School in Downey, California. The movement, to which Warren gave little heed, heated up when the Court entered its most active period of reform in the early 1960s.

The Warren Court, 1965
These Supreme Court justices were instrumental in one of the most extensive periods of social reform the country had ever known. What did critics say about this reform-minded Court?
In 1962 changes in the makeup of the Supreme Court gave Warren a clear majority of judges who were likely to side with him on most issues. In the 1960s the Court handed down a series of historic decisions affecting the nation’s political process, the civil liberties of individuals, and the operation of the criminal justice system. The chart on this page highlights some of those decisions.

**One Person, One Vote**

Warren called *Baker v. Carr* “the most important case of my tenure on the Court.” He was referring to one of a series of cases from 1962 to 1964 that redistributed political power in the United States.

The old methods by which states carved up voting districts were devised when this was a nation of country dwellers. When twentieth-century industrialization drew more and more people to cities, however, the size and shape of districts did not change to reflect the shifts in population.

For example, 6 million people lived in Los Angeles County in 1960. Yet, 1 state legislator, whose vote carried the same weight as the legislator from a rural district of 14,000 people, represented the city.

This, in effect, made the vote of each citizen in Los Angeles County worth less than the vote of a resident of that rural district. Farm groups and others who wished to preserve their voting power opposed a reapportionment proposal—a plan changing the number of legislative seats assigned to each district. The plan was defeated with the help of the governor of California at the time, Earl Warren.

In 1962, however, Chief Justice Earl Warren had a new constituency—the nation. In many places legislative districts were drawn in ways that favored a particular political party, a practice known as gerrymandering.

Throughout the nation, there was a need for a redrawning of political districts according to a “one person, one vote” principle of equal representation.

In Florida, for example, one-fifth of the population lived in Dade County, where Miami is located, but Dade County residents elected only 4 of Florida’s 133 state legislators. Traditionally, the Supreme Court had left such political matters as apportionment up to the state legislatures. Some citizens, however, frustrated when the legislatures did not take action, brought suits against state officials. In time, these suits came before the Supreme Court on appeal.

In the *Baker v. Carr* suit, the residents of Memphis, Tennessee, complained that their votes were worth less than the votes of rural residents. The Supreme Court ruled that the federal courts, which had originally declined to hear the case, should decide it. The Court’s 1962 decision opened the door for the lower courts to involve themselves with reapportionment. “Never in American history has a single judicial decision opened the gates for such a massive change in the nation’s political structure,” printed the *Washington Post*.

Subsequent cases went further in forcing states to reorganize their voting systems. In 1964 the Court

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### Warren Court Decisions on Key Issues of the 1960s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reapportionment</th>
<th>School Prayer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Outlawed racial gerrymandering in case involving the city limits of Tuskegee, Alabama</td>
<td>Ruled unconstitutional a nondenominational prayer drafted by the State of New York and read voluntarily in school classrooms; the decision banned prayer in public schools</td>
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<td>Established federal authority to oversee that state voting districts ensure equal representation for all citizens; the ruling opened the door to Supreme Court involvement in what previously had been seen as a “political” issue outside the Court’s jurisdiction</td>
<td>Banned Bible reading and other religious exercises in public schools, saying this constituted the government establishment of religion</td>
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<td><em>Wesberry v. Sanders</em>, 1964</td>
<td>Rights of the Accused</td>
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<td>Required that states redraw their voting districts for the United States Congress according to population; each district had to have roughly the same number of people, so every citizen’s vote carried the same weight, according to the “one person, one vote” principle</td>
<td><em>Gideon v. Wainwright</em>, 1963</td>
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<td><em>Reynolds v. Sims</em>, 1964</td>
<td>Established that people accused of a crime have the right to a lawyer, even if they cannot afford one</td>
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<td>Applied the “one person, one vote” standard to their state legislatures, requiring state elective districts to be reapportioned; the ruling also demanded the apportionment by population of both houses of a bicameral state legislature</td>
<td><em>Escobedo v. Illinois</em>, 1964</td>
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<td>Ruled that people have the right to a lawyer from the time of arrest or when they become the subject of a criminal investigation</td>
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<td><em>Miranda v. Arizona</em>, 1966</td>
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<td>Required that accused people be informed of their right to a lawyer and their right not to testify against themselves</td>
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The Warren Court extended the reach of the Supreme Court. *What were some areas the Warren Court dealt with in its historic decisions of the 1960s?*
demanded that states redraw their voting districts—for representation to state legislatures as well as to Congress—to make them roughly equal in population. The Court also directed that in state legislatures with two houses, both should be apportioned according to population. Warren wrote the majority opinion:

Legislators represent people, not trees or acres. Legislators are elected by voters, not farms or cities or economic interests. As long as ours is a representative form of government, and our legislatures are those instruments of government elected directly by and directly representative of the people, the right to elect legislators in a free and unimpaired fashion is a bedrock of our political system.

—Reynolds v. Sims, 1964

The 1964 reapportionment rulings and the cases grouped with them affected one-third of the nation’s states. In time all 50 states reshaped their legislatures.

Prayer in Schools

People knew Earl Warren to be a very religious man who read the Bible regularly. Justice Hugo Black had been a Sunday school teacher for 20 years. Yet in 1962 these two justices led the Court in banning prayer in public schools, a decision that was shocking to many Americans.

At issue in Engel v. Vitale was a 22-word nondenominational prayer drafted by the state of New York and recommended to be recited daily by public school children. The prayer read: “Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country.”

Parents of 10 students in Hyde Park, New York, objected to the voluntary readings. The Court agreed with them, saying that even voluntary prayer subjected religious minorities or nonbelievers to “indirect coercive pressure.” Citing the First Amendment provision that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion,” Justice Black wrote in the majority opinion that this “must at least mean that in this country it is no part of the business of government to compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite as a part of a religious program carried on by government.”

In later decisions, the Court also prohibited Bible reading and other religious exercises in the classroom. The rulings disturbed some parents and clergy. Others, including some teachers, atheists, and religious people, were relieved. Legislators tried, and failed, to pass a constitutional amendment permitting school prayer.

The Rights of the Accused

When police arrested Ernesto Miranda at his home on charges of kidnapping and rape, he had no idea that his name would become a shorthand term for the rights of accused criminals and that his case would be a required course of study for every police recruit and law student. In Miranda and other key cases, however, the Warren Court handed down decisions that revolutionized how criminal justice is exercised in this country.

Warren, a former prosecutor, personally showed a great deal of concern for the rights of accused criminals and the conduct of police during the arrest and interrogation of suspects. The Court’s rulings reinforced the right of accused citizens to due process, or the established legal rules and procedures.

The last major criminal justice ruling had come in 1936, when police were barred from torturing suspects in order to obtain confessions from them. The new wave of reform rulings began in 1963 when Clarence Earl Gideon won his appeal to the Supreme Court. The ruling upheld the right of an accused to have an attorney, even when the accused could not afford one. The decision resulted in a new trial for Gideon, in which he was represented by a local attorney and was acquitted.

In the 1964 case of Escobedo v. Illinois, the Court ruled that the right to legal counsel begins at the moment of arrest or as soon as someone becomes the subject of police suspicion. Warren felt, however, that the Court needed to take stronger action to protect accused criminals. This led to one of the most controversial rulings in the Supreme Court’s history.

The case was Miranda v. Arizona, which came before the Court in 1966. Police had ar-
rested Ernesto Miranda for kidnapping and rape. After the police interrogated him for 2 hours, Miranda signed a confession. In a divided 5–4 ruling, the Court set aside his conviction.

Chief Justice Warren gave specific instructions that would sound familiar to anyone who has watched police shows on television: “Prior to any questioning, the person must be warned that he has a right to remain silent, that any statement he does make may be used as evidence against him, and that he has a right to the presence of an attorney, either retained or appointed.”

The “Miranda card” that police departments use today lists instructions to read to suspects at the time of their arrest. Arresting officers must prove that a defendant has waived the right to legal counsel.

Police departments were disturbed by the *Miranda* ruling, saying it restricted them in performing their duties. Richard Nixon used the ruling to boost the “crime in the streets” issue during the 1968 presidential race. On the other hand, a supporter of the ruling quoted Winston Churchill: “The quality of a nation’s civilization can be largely measured by the methods it uses in the enforcement of its criminal law.”
SPORTS: The Harvard/Yale football game is canceled

One Day in History

Friday, November 22, 1963

IN MEMORIAM

- Broadway theaters closed and musical events were canceled.
- Memorial programs preempted regular shows on television networks.
- Holiday lighting was turned off.
- The lights in Times Square were turned off.
- Wall Street stopped business early.
- The conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra led the orchestra in the funeral march from Beethoven’s third symphony. More than 2,600 people stood solemnly with bowed heads.

Heads Bowed These commuters, like most people across the nation, are solemnly focused on details of the Kennedy assassination.

Kennedy Assassinated

The President is shot and killed as he rides in a motorcade in downtown Dallas

DALLAS—President John F. Kennedy was shot and killed shortly after 12:30 P.M. today as he rode in an open Lincoln Continental in a motorcade through downtown Dallas. Kennedy was rushed to Parkland Memorial Hospital. He did not regain consciousness and was declared dead 30 minutes later. Mrs. Kennedy was near her husband at the hospital when he died.

With Kennedy in the limousine were his wife, Jacqueline, and Texas governor and Mrs. John Connally. The governor sustained serious injuries.

Ninety-nine minutes after Kennedy was declared dead, District Judge Sarah T. Hughes, on board Air Force One at Love Field, swore in Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson as the thirty-sixth President of the United States.
NATION: Lee Harvey Oswald, a worker in the Texas School Book Depository, has been charged with the murder of President Kennedy.

Top TV Shows
1. The Beverly Hillbillies
2. Bonanza
3. The Dick Van Dyke Show
4. Petticoat Junction
5. The Andy Griffith Show
6. The Lucy Show
7. Candid Camera
8. The Ed Sullivan Show
9. The Danny Thomas Show
10. My Favorite Martian

MARKET BASKET
Here is where a dollar will go:
- First-class stamp .................. .5¢
- Eggs, one dozen .................. .55¢
- Bacon, one pound .................. .69¢
- Bread, one loaf .................. .19¢
- Coffee, one pound .................. .38¢
- Kodak Brownie camera ........... .$22
- Royalite portable typewriter .......... .$49.95
- Woman’s cardigan sweater .......... .$7.99
- Man’s chambray shirt ................ .1.47
- Movie ticket .................. .75¢
- Flashlight battery .................. .32¢
- Schoolbag .................. .$3
- New York subway token ................ .15¢
- Bicycle .................. .$47.95
- Ford Fastback Coupe .............. .$3,095

DANCE
The Limbo Rock This acrobatic dance became popular in 1963, introduced by Chubby Checker, father of the original twist.

POPULAR FILMS
- Lilies of the Field
- Hud
- The V.I.P.s
- Tom Jones

MUSIC
Beach Boys This clean-cut group from Southern California, with their melodic songs about hot rods and surfing, had 5 hit songs in 1963.
Reviewing Key Terms

On a separate sheet of paper, write the vocabulary term that best completes each sentence below.

mandate re-apportionment
coalition due process
pragmatist liberalism

1. A ______ comes up with practical solutions to individual situations.
2. Through ______, the rights of the accused are protected.
3. People united by a common purpose form a strong ______.
4. Voting power was put in proportion to population by ______.
5. Winning an election by a large margin would indicate a clear ______.

Recalling Facts

1. Why did John Kennedy call himself a pragmatist, not a liberal? Cite an example of his pragmatism.
2. What ideals of the Kennedy years does the establishment of the Peace Corps reflect?
3. What kinds of reforms had Kennedy begun to take action on when he was assassinated?
4. What was the conclusion of the Warren Commission related to the assassination of Kennedy? What have critics said about the commission’s findings?
5. What is a mandate? How were Kennedy’s and Johnson’s abilities to carry out their programs affected by their respective electoral mandates?
6. Explain how the New Frontier differed from the Great Society. Which was more effective? Why?
7. What was the limitation to many Great Society programs?
8. How did gerrymandering affect voters’ rights? How did the Supreme Court address this in the 1960s?
9. What was the Supreme Court’s reasoning for banning prayer and religious exercises in public schools?
10. How were the rights of accused people expanded during the 1960s?

Critical Thinking

1. Making Generalizations Identify a common theme in the various laws and Supreme Court decisions described in this chapter.
2. Making Comparisons Use a chart like this one to compare the public image, political style, and political experience of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Johnson</th>
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<tr>
<td>Public Image</td>
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<td>Political Style</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Experience</td>
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3. Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment Some have argued that expanding the rights of the accused has made it more difficult to prosecute criminals and has been responsible for an increase in crime. Write an essay giving your opinion.
4. Evaluating Information When Johnson became President, he initially kept all of Kennedy’s cabinet appointees—even though there were political differences, and Johnson knew that Kennedy’s appointees might resent him. Why do you think Johnson retained these officials?

Portfolio Project

In Baker v. Carr and subsequent rulings, the Supreme Court made decisions that led to the re-apportionment of state electoral districts. Do library research (books, newspaper stories, magazine articles) to find out how re-apportionment, including recent Supreme Court rulings, has affected your state. Write a summary, and place it in your portfolio.

Cooperative Learning

With a small group, research one of the Kennedy or Johnson reform programs—the Peace Corps, the Alliance for Progress, Project Head Start, or the Job Corps, for example. In addition to using library reference sources, you may also find listings of local program offices in the government listings of your telephone directory. Use your research to answer questions such as these: Did the program achieve its goals? Is it still in existence? Has it expanded or contracted? What problems has it faced or is it facing? Share what you learn with your class. Display visual aids if appropriate.

Reinforcing Skills

Building a Database Prepare a database of Supreme Court rulings in the last six months. Use the resources at your local library to find information on the majority opinions, dissenting opinions, and subjects of the rulings. You may add any other information to your database that you consider appropriate.
In 1964 Georgia had 10 congressional districts; if split up equally, the average population of each was 394,312.

Population of heavily urban Fifth District: 823,680—108% above average district population

Old Fifth District split into two; other more rural districts shrink

Study the maps to answer the following questions:

1. How many congressional districts did Georgia have before reapportionment in 1964? After reapportionment?

2. Before reapportionment, how many state legislative districts were more than 15 percent below average in population? How far above average was the Fifth District?

3. Legislative seats were tied to districts, regardless of the population of the districts. What, therefore, was the political significance of the population differences among districts before reapportionment?

4. What happened to the old Fifth District after reapportionment?

5. After reapportionment, how many districts fell above or below the average in population?

Technology Activity

Using a Word Processor Use library resources or the Internet to locate information about the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy. Use the information you find and your word processor to compose a ballad-type song honoring their memory. Experiment with different fonts, graphics, and borders to create an attractive song sheet.

Standardized Test Practice

1. The New Deal and the Great Society were most alike in that they both

A emphasized expanded civil rights for African Americans.
B had as their main goals relief for the unemployed and economic recovery.
C increased the role of the federal government in people’s lives.
D went into effect despite strong presidential opposition.

Test-Taking Tip: Eliminate answers that do not make sense. For example, both programs came about largely through the efforts of Presidents Roosevelt and Johnson. Therefore, you can rule out answer D.

2. All of the following were effects of rulings by the Warren Court EXCEPT

A involvement of federal courts in the reapportionment of state election districts.
B extended rights for people accused of crimes.
C protection of religious minorities through greater separation of church and state.
D increased state authority at the expense of federal authority.

Test-Taking Tip: This question calls for an answer that does NOT fit the question. The Warren Court expanded individual civil liberties and the power of the judicial branch. Eliminate answers that had either of those effects.