

# How democratic was andrew jackson? assignment

[History](#)



Jackson felt strongly that the common man was the power behind the government, which is why he extended the vote to the common man. In light of this extension of democracy however, Jackson's legacy is tainted by many controversial decisions that seemed rooted in self-interest and not the people. Jackson also dealt poorly with Native Americans and their removal from their lands. Although Jackson was democratic by extending the vote to more of the population, he did not listen to the will of the people, selfishly abused his presidential powers, and mistreated the Native Americans.

Jackson was democratic because he extended voting rights and encouraged participation in the government to different classes. In 1824, six states in the United States elected presidential electors by legislature (Doc 1). By 1832, only one state elected presidential electors by legislature which can be credited to Jackson and a new spirit that he brought to politics. Many state legislatures had been dominated by the wealthy and elite. Jackson presented more equality in voting by granting lower class people the ability to vote.

Some describe the election of 1828 as a political revolution because, "Jackson's victory accelerated the transfer of national power from the country house to the farmhouse," (Doc 2). Because of Jackson, there was a major shift in power and for the first time less prosperous classes in society felt connected to the government. Jackson was democratic in this sense because he did extend voting rights and attracted more diversity when it came to government and politics. Though Jackson was democratic by expanding voting rights, he made many intervention decisions that reflected self-interest and not the common man.

Many of Jackson's critics believed that he ignored the separation of powers and abused his powers as president (Doc 3). In response to Andrew Jackson's Bank Veto Message, Daniel Webster explained that, "(President Jackson's message) extends the grasp of (the chief executive) over every power of the government..." (Doc 5). Jackson crushed the majority vote Of Congress by the use of the presidential veto. He selfishly broadened his power as president and disregarded the majority desires.

Because Jackson caused the fall of the National Bank, the United States struggled to manage money and loans and this consequently led to the Panic of 1837. In Andrew Jackson's letter to Congress, he asks for their consideration of, "(a) law which limits appointments to four years," (Doc 6). Jackson wanted to rotate government officials so that he could implement spoils system. Though he said that it would give more people an opportunity to participate in government, it was a selfish, undemocratic claim because Jackson wanted to appoint his porters and would give little to no consideration to other candidates.

Jackson's spoils system would humiliate him when his newly appointed collector of the Port of New York, " Squawroot absconded with \$1 It was a monumental theft... Jackson was mortified," (Doc 7). Martin Van Burden specifically advised Jackson not to appoint Squawroot because he had criminal tendencies and would be dealing with large amounts of money. Jackson ignored Van Burden and would be humiliated for his selfish decision. Jackson made many poor decisions in his own self-interest that were

undemocratic and put a blemish on his presidency. Jackson mistreated and harmed the Native Americans which was oppressive and undemocratic.

In Andrew Jackson's message to Congress, he lied when he stated that, "This emigration should be voluntary... (but) if they remain within the limits of the states they must be subject to their laws," (Doc 8). The Native Americans had adapted and begun to resemble a civilized society with town meetings, public education, and an alphabet. Less than six months later, Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act and would soon take military force to SSH the Native Americans west into a reserved territory for them in what is present day Oklahoma (Doc 10).

It was very undemocratic of Jackson to lie to the Native Americans and oppress them by forcefully moving them to the reserved Indian Territory. The Cherokee however, did not give up easily and took their case to the US Supreme Court. Their plea to remain on the land of their ancestors without interruption was upheld and clarified that the Cherokee had the right to establish their own nation within the state of Georgia (Doc 9). Jackson ignored the ruling of the Supreme Court and ultimately pressured the Cherokee into ceding their land and moving west.

He treated the Cherokee unfairly and undemocratically by pressuring them to move west to the reserved Indian Territory. The Trail of Tears was a very tough journey for the Native Americans to relocate as more than four thousand Cherokee died (Doc 11). Not only did many die on the Trail of Tears, but many died when they arrived at the new territory because of illness and it lacked water and food. Jackson treated the Native Americans

disgustfully by oppressing them and forcing them to move west to the Indian Territory.

Although Jackson was democratic because he expanded voting rights to the common man, he made many controversial decisions, abused his presidential powers, and mistreated the Native Americans. He attracted lower classes to politics and government and claimed he sparked nationalism by trying to create equality, though he did not exemplify the rights of equality nicely by using spoils system and removing the Indians. Jackson is one of the most debated presidents as he sometimes seemed to be two faced and was unclear with his intent because his actions did not always reflect his verbal thoughts.