



TEKS 5A, 5D, 5E, 14A, 14B,  
22B, 23C

### What You Will Learn...

#### Main Ideas

1. Violations of U.S. neutrality led Congress to enact a ban on trade.
2. Native Americans, Great Britain, and the United States came into conflict in the West.
3. The War Hawks led a growing call for war with Great Britain.

#### The Big Idea

Challenges at home and abroad led the United States to declare war on Great Britain.

#### Key Terms and People

USS *Constitution*, p. 278  
 impressment, p. 279  
 embargo, p. 279  
 Embargo Act, p. 279  
 Non-Intercourse Act, p. 280  
 Tecumseh, p. 280  
 Battle of Tippecanoe, p. 282  
 War Hawks, p. 282  
 James Madison, p. 283



#### TAKING NOTES

Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on the challenges that led the United States to declare war on Great Britain.

# The Coming of War

## If YOU were there...

You are a tea merchant in Boston in 1807, but right now a new law forbids trading with European nations. Boston Harbor is full of empty ships. It seems to you that the law is hurting American merchants more than European ones! You know that some are breaking the law and smuggling goods, just to stay in business.

**Would you obey the law or smuggle?**

**BUILDING BACKGROUND** The United States tried to stay neutral in the conflicts between France and Great Britain, but it was impossible to avoid getting involved. French and British ships interfered with American trade across the Atlantic. The British also caused trouble along the western frontier. Many Americans began to urge war with Great Britain.

## Violations of Neutrality

During the late 1700s and early 1800s, American merchant ships fanned out across the oceans. The overseas trade, while profitable, was also risky. Ships had to travel vast distances, often through violent storms. Merchant ships sailing in the Mediterranean risked capture by pirates from the Barbary States of North Africa, who would steal cargo and hold ships' crews for ransom. The young United States had no formal navy to protect these ships. Congress provided money for just six ships, but the ships were designed to compete against the largest navies in the world. Attacks continued until the United States sent the **USS Constitution**, a large warship, to end them.

The Barbary pirates were a serious problem, but an even larger threat soon loomed. When Great Britain and France went to war in 1803, each country wanted to stop the United States from supplying goods to the other. Each government passed laws designed to prevent American merchants from trading with the other. In addition, the British and French navies captured many American merchant ships searching for war supplies.

The real trouble, however, started when Britain began stopping and searching American ships for sailors who had run away from the British navy, forcing the sailors to return to British ships. Sometimes U.S. citizens were captured by accident and pressed into

## The USS Constitution

### CONNECT TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In the early years of the republic, foreign trade was critical to the nation's survival. In 1797 Congress decided to create a navy to protect American merchant ships. The powerful warship *USS Constitution* was a key part of the new navy and was undefeated in battle. It is the oldest commissioned warship in the world.

The main mast is 220 feet high.

Copper sheathing supplied by Paul Revere protected the hull.

People on the spar, or top, deck were exposed to enemy fire.

### ANALYSIS SKILL ANALYZING DIAGRAMS

1. Why do you think gunpowder was stored on the bottom deck?
2. What was the purpose of the copper sheathing?

The crew slept and ate on the berth deck.

Most of the ship's cannons were located on the gun deck.

Boys called "powder monkeys" carried gunpowder from the orlop, or lowest, deck up to the gunners.

service. This **impressment**, or the practice of forcing people to serve in the army or navy, continued despite American protests.

Soon Britain was even targeting American navy ships. In June 1807, for example, the British ship *Leopard* stopped the U.S. Navy ship *Chesapeake* and tried to remove sailors. When the captain of the *Chesapeake* refused, the British took the sailors by force. The brazen attack on the *Chesapeake* stunned Americans.

### The Embargo Act

Great Britain's violations of U.S. neutrality sparked intense debate in America about how to respond. Some people wanted to go to war.

Others favored an **embargo**, or the banning of trade, against Britain. Without a strong navy, many feared that the young nation would be unable to defend its independence in a fight against the largest navy in the world.

Jefferson, who had easily won re-election in 1804, supported an embargo. At his urging, in late 1807 Congress passed the **Embargo Act**. The law essentially banned trade with all foreign countries. American ships could not sail to foreign ports. American ports were also closed to British ships. Congress hoped that the embargo would punish Britain and France and protect American merchant ships from capture.

The effect of the law was devastating to American merchants. Without foreign trade,

they lost enormous amounts of money. Northern states that relied heavily on trade were especially hard hit by the embargo. Congressman Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts, in a speech before Congress, described the situation. "All the business of the nation is in disorder. All the nation's industry is at a standstill," he said. The free enterprise system of economics was becoming more important to the financial well-being of merchants and other Americans, and many did not want government policies to interfere with trade.

The embargo damaged Jefferson's popularity and strengthened the Federalist Party. Angry merchants sent Jefferson hundreds of petitions demanding the Embargo Act's repeal. One New Englander said the embargo was like "cutting one's throat to stop the nose-bleed." Even worse, the embargo had little effect on Britain and France.

### Non-Intercourse Act

In 1809 Congress tried to revive the nation's trade by replacing the unpopular act with the **Non-Intercourse Act**. This new law banned trade only with Britain, France, and their colonies. It also stated that the United States would resume trading with the first side that stopped violating U.S. neutrality. In time, however, the law was no more successful than the Embargo Act.

#### READING CHECK Comparing and Contrasting

In what ways were the Embargo Act and the Non-Intercourse Act similar and different?

## Conflict in the West

Disagreements between Great Britain and the United States went beyond the neutrality issue. In the West, the British and Native Americans again clashed with American settlers over land.

### The Conflict over Land

In the early 1800s, Native Americans in the old Northwest Territory continued to lose land as thousands of settlers poured into the region. The United States had gained this land in the Treaty of Greenville, but Indian leaders who had not agreed to the treaty protested the settlers' arrival. Frustrated Indian groups considered what to do. In the meantime, Britain saw an opportunity to slow America's westward growth. British agents from Canada began to arm Native Americans who were living along the western frontier. Rumors of British activity in the old Northwest Territory quickly spread, filling American settlers with fear and anger.

### Tecumseh Resists U.S. Settlers

Soon an Indian leader emerged who seemed more than capable of halting the American settlers. **Tecumseh** (tuh-KUHM-suh), a Shawnee chief, had watched angrily as Native Americans were pushed off their land. A brilliant speaker, he warned other Indians about the dangers they faced from settlers. He believed that the Native Americans had to do what white Americans had done: unite.

## Time Line

### America's Road to War

**June 22, 1807** The British navy takes sailors from the U.S. Navy ship *Chesapeake*.

1807

**December 22, 1807**  
The United States responds to Impressment by passing the Embargo Act.

1809

**January 9, 1809**  
Congress passes the Non-Intercourse Act.



**Primary Source**

**POLITICAL CARTOON**  
**The Embargo Act**

The unpopularity of the Embargo Act prompted political cartoonists to show visually how the act was hurting American trade.

What do you think the turtle represents?

What is the turtle preventing this man from doing?



What is "ograbme" spelled backward?

**ANALYSIS SKILL** ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

How does the cartoonist emphasize the unpopularity of the Embargo Act?

Tecumseh hoped to unite the Native Americans of the northwestern frontier, the South, and the eastern Mississippi Valley. He was helped by his brother, a religious leader called the Prophet. They founded a village called Prophetstown near the Wabash and Tippecanoe rivers for their followers.

**The Battle of Tippecanoe**

The governor of the Indiana Territory, William Henry Harrison, watched Tecumseh's activities with alarm. Harrison called him "one of those uncommon geniuses which spring up occasionally to . . . overturn the

established order." The governor was convinced that Tecumseh had British backing. If true, Tecumseh could be a serious threat to American power in the West.

In 1810 Tecumseh met face to face with Harrison. The governor urged him to follow the Treaty of Greenville that had been signed in 1795. Tecumseh replied, "The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because the Indians had it first." No single chief, he insisted, could sell land belonging to all American Indians who used it. In response, Harrison warned Tecumseh not to resist the power of the United States.



**VIDEO**  
War of 1812:  
Madison  
Declares War  
[hmsocialstudies.com](http://hmsocialstudies.com)

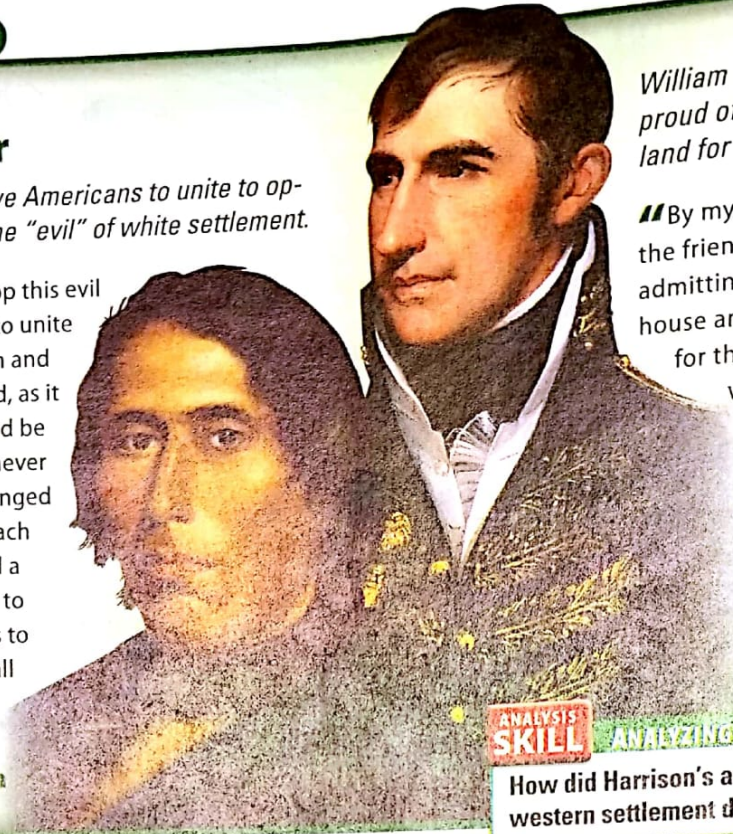
## Primary Source

### POINTS OF VIEW Views of War

*Tecumseh urged Native Americans to unite to oppose what he called the "evil" of white settlement.*

"The only way to stop this evil is for all the red men to unite in claiming a common and equal right to the land, as it was at first, and should be yet. Before, the land never was divided, but belonged to all, for the use of each person. No group had a right to sell, not even to each other, much less to strangers who want all and will not do with less."

—Tecumseh



*William Henry Harrison was proud of his efforts to obtain land for settlers.*

"By my own exertions in securing the friendship of the chiefs... by admitting them at all times to my house and table, my propositions for the purchase of their lands were successful beyond my... hopes... In the course of seven years the Indian title was extinguished to the amount of fifty millions of acres."

—William Henry Harrison

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING POINTS OF VIEW

How did Harrison's and Tecumseh's views on western settlement differ?

Tecumseh traveled south to ask the Creek nation to join his forces. In his absence, Harrison attacked. Harrison raised an army and marched his troops close to Prophetstown. Fighting broke out when the Prophet ordered an attack on Harrison's camp on November 7, 1811.

The Indians broke through army lines, but Harrison kept a "calm, cool, and collected" manner, according to one observer. During the all-day battle, Harrison's soldiers forced the Indian warriors to retreat and then destroyed Tecumseh's village. Said Chief Shabbona, "With the smoke of that town and loss of that battle, I lost all hope." Although Tecumseh was safe, U.S. forces defeated Tecumseh and his followers in the **Battle of Tippecanoe**. The defeat destroyed Tecumseh's dream of a great Indian confederation. He fled to Canada. The Prophet was removed from power for ordering the failed attack.

**READING CHECK** Finding Main Ideas Why were U.S. officials worried about Tecumseh's actions?

## Call for War

The evidence of British support for Tecumseh further inflamed Americans. A Democratic-Republican newspaper declared, "The war on the Wabash [River] is purely BRITISH." Many Americans felt that Britain had encouraged Tecumseh to attack settlers in the West.

## The War Hawks

Several young members of Congress—called **War Hawks** by their opponents—took the lead in calling for war against Britain. These legislators, most of whom were from the South and West, were led by Henry Clay of Kentucky, John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, and Felix Grundy of Tennessee. They saw war as the only answer to British insults. "If we submit," Calhoun warned, "the independence of this nation is lost." Calls for war grew. The War Hawks wanted to put a stop to British influence among Native Americans and enforce national security. They also wanted to invade Canada and

### FOCUS ON READING

What generalization can you make about the views on going to war?

gain more land for settlement. Others were angered by British trade restrictions that hurt southern planters and western farmers. War Hawks gave emotional speeches urging Americans to stand up to Great Britain.

### The Opposition

The strongest opponents of the War Hawks were New England Federalists. British trade restrictions and impressment had hurt New England's economy. People there wanted to renew friendly business ties with Britain instead of fighting another war.

Other politicians argued that war with Great Britain would be foolish. They feared that the United States was not yet ready to fight powerful Britain. America's army and navy were small and poorly equipped compared to Britain's military. In addition, Americans could produce only a fraction of the military supplies Britain could. Senator Obadiah German of New York pleaded with the War Hawks to be patient: "Prior to any declaration of war . . . my plan would be, and my first wish is, to prepare for it—to put the country in complete armor."

### Declaring War

Republican **James Madison** was elected president in 1808. He faced the difficulty of continuing an unpopular trade war begun by Jefferson. He also felt growing pressure from the War Hawks. By 1812 he decided that Congress must vote on war. Speaking to Congress, Madison blasted Great Britain's conduct. He asked Congress to decide how the nation should respond.

When Congress voted a few days later, the War Hawks won. For the first time in the nation's brief history, Congress had declared war. Months later, Americans elected Madison to a second term. He would serve as commander in chief during the War of 1812.

**READING CHECK** Summarizing Why did the United States declare war in 1812?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** Conflicts on the frontier and with Great Britain dominated U.S. foreign policy under Jefferson and Madison. In the next section you will read about the War of 1812.

## Section 3 Assessment



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ONLINE QUIZ

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- Describe** In what ways did the war between France and Britain cause problems for the United States?
  - Make Inferences** What were the reasons for the failure of the **Embargo Act**?
  - Elaborate** Why do you think Jefferson's foreign policy of **embargoes** against Britain and France failed?
- Describe** What was **Tecumseh's** goal?
  - Explain** What role did Great Britain play in the conflict between the United States and American Indians on the western frontier?
  - Identify** How was the conflict between Native Americans and western settlers resolved?
- Identify** Who were the **War Hawks**? Why did they support war with Britain?
  - Elaborate** Would you have supported going to war against Great Britain? Explain your answer.

### Critical Thinking

- Categorizing** Review your notes on the causes that led to the War of 1812. Were most challenges foreign or domestic? Categorize them in a chart like the one below.

Foreign	Domestic

### FOCUS ON WRITING

my WriteSmart

- Taking Notes** Take notes about any of Jefferson's actions and character traits you can identify during the buildup to war with Britain. Save this information for the top-ten list you will create at the end of the chapter.