Teaching the Unit
Unit 9: Reforming New Hampshire, 1800–1850

Unit Summary

During the first half of the 19th century a series of religious revivals known as the Second Great Awakening inspired many Americans to reform the world around them. With the goal of cleansing society of all its ills, they embarked on a number of campaigns to improve the lot of women, children, prisoners, and those suffering from physical and mental disabilities. By doing so, reformers believed they were fulfilling their charge as Christians to create a more just world. Many of the campaigns for social justice that we are familiar with today had their roots in this period, which is sometimes referred to as the Age of Reform. Like many of the other northern states, New Hampshire was greatly impacted by the Second Great Awakening and the reform movements that followed. Although reformers were involved in many different efforts during this period, this unit focuses specifically on two that had a substantial impact on New Hampshire: education and abolition.

Full Educator Overview

The Big Picture

As you learn about this dynamic period in state and national history, when many people believed they had a responsibility to reform society's flaws, keep in mind the following ideas:

- Religious revivals known collectively as the Second Great Awakening swept through the United States, especially the Northeast, in the first half of the 19th century. These revivals promoted the idea that people were responsible for making the world around them a better place. This belief sparked a number of reform movements that impacted almost all aspects of American life.

- The Second Great Awakening led to a dramatic increase in church participation in New Hampshire's dominant faiths (Congregationalists and Presbyterians) and the proliferation of more religious denominations (Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians, Episcopalians, Quakers). Among the new religious groups that emerged during this era were the Shakers, who created two communities in New Hampshire: one at Canterbury and one at Enfield.

- Some of the most prominent reforms in the Northeast during this era were efforts to remake the educational system. New Hampshire had always been well-educated, especially when compared to other parts of the country, but in the first decades of the 19th century, the haphazard efforts to provide education during the colonial period gave way to the establishment of more formal school systems. New Hampshire towns built thousands of one-room schoolhouses in what became known as the common school movement.

- The curriculum that children learned in school was focused on literacy, morality, and patriotism, rather than Biblical literature, which had been the focus during the colonial period. Publishers began to produce books and magazines specifically for children, containing short stories, poetry, songs, and illustrations, many of which were used in schools. These publications reinforced instruction in literacy and history, which were the

main curricular areas at that time. But other subjects were also added to most children's course of study during this period, including the sciences, geography, and mathematics.

- The expansion of education also produced new opportunities for women as teaching became the first respectable female profession. Women became the primary educators for American children, receiving their training in private academies that eventually became normal (or teaching) schools.

- The great reform movement of the day was abolition, or the effort to end slavery in the United States. New Hampshire had a complex history with slavery. Reformers in the Granite State were among the most committed abolitionists of their time, and many made an impact on the movement nationally. But not everyone in New Hampshire was actively opposed to slavery, and many Granite Staters thought the issue of slavery was not their concern as it was a southern institution sanctioned by the U.S. Constitution.

The Second Great Awakening

How did a religious movement spark an expansive effort to reform society?

The Second Great Awakening is a term that covers a series of religious revivals that occurred in the first decades of the 19th century and inspired a number of social reform movements. It was not an organized movement. Rather, people became more interested in religion during this period, especially in the Northeast, because religion offered an ordered view of a world that was changing quickly around them. Due to industrialization, the old ways of living—on farms, in small towns—disappeared for many, replaced by factories and cities. The introduction of industrialization and urbanization marked a profound shift in American life. Religion provided people with a belief system that was familiar to them, as they "awoke" to the importance of maintaining religious and social beliefs in this changing world.

The ideas behind the Second Great Awakening were fairly straightforward. The world seemed to be full of sin—not just immoral behavior but also social injustices like poverty, crime, and discrimination. Ministers preached that good Christians were capable of freeing the world of sin by reforming their own behavior and collectively working to fix society's problems. For converts of the Second Great Awakening, reform was both internal (improving their personal behavior and exercising more self-control) and external (helping those who were less fortunate than themselves or changing institutions that perpetuated injustices). Ultimately, reformers believed in progress—that society could be improved by their efforts and that Americans could in time make the world a better place.

During these early decades of the 19th century, church membership skyrocketed after having declined for much of the 18th century. In the 1770s, there had been about 2,000 ministers in America; by 1845, there were 40,000, a remarkable increase that far outstripped population gains. Although church membership had always been relatively high in New Hampshire compared to other parts of the country, it grew even further during the first half of the 19th century, with religious revivals sweeping through the state on a more or less regular basis. Traveling ministers would move around New Hampshire, holding large camp meetings that drew hundreds of people to hear about how religion could bring a greater sense of purpose to their lives. Although these revivals were all based on the Protestant faith, ministers could recruit converts to almost any denomination.

Methodists and Baptists were most popular, and many Methodist and Baptist congregations in New Hampshire date to this period.

Among the most unique of the new denominations to emerge during this period were the Shakers. Originating in England in the middle of the 18th century, the Shaker faith made inroads into American society in the 19th century with the founding of 20 utopian-style communities, primarily in the Midwest and the Northeast. The Shakers believed in simple, rural living, equality of the sexes, and pacifism. Their name derived from the physical and active nature of their religious ceremonies, which often resulted in people shaking with the strength of their emotions. Shakers were also renowned for their music, craftsmanship, and technological inventiveness. Among their core beliefs, though, was a commitment to celibacy, which meant the Shakers continually struggled to maintain numbers in their communities.

New Hampshire's two Shaker communities at Canterbury and Enfield were founded in the early 1790s, but the movement peaked between 1820 and 1860, both nationally and in the state. At their height, each community contained about 300 people, but each would have its own distinction. The Canterbury community was one of the last active Shaker communities in the country, being open until 1992. The community at Enfield contained the largest Shaker building in the country, known as the Great Stone Dwelling. When the Enfield community closed in 1923, it merged with the Shakers at Canterbury, but the Great Stone Dwelling still stands today. The fact that a state as small as New Hampshire supported two Shaker communities testifies to the faith's popularity here in the mid-19th century.

Although anyone could become a religious convert to any of the faiths prevalent during this period, the Second Great Awakening was most popular among young people (under the age of 25) and women. Older men were involved but represented a smaller percentage of participants. In fact, women converted at a rate of 2-to-1 over men. Converts came mostly from the emerging middle class, which contained a large number of women charged with overseeing the care of their families but not responsible for earning wages. In short, the Second Great Awakening was most popular with women who had the economic stability to devote themselves to causes outside of the family.

And there were many causes from which reformers could choose. Through organized church groups or voluntary associations formed around particular efforts, women and men took on the task of curing society's ills. Reformers addressed a wide variety of issues, such as improving prisons, reforming the legal code, providing care for the blind or those suffering from mental illness, promoting temperance and pacifism, ending the delivery of mail on Sundays, re-evaluating gender roles and the institution of marriage, offering relief for the poor, enacting labor reforms, and improving medical care. Reformers were never a majority of the population, or even came close to it, but through their energy and diligence—and with a great deal of attention from the press—they launched a series of campaigns that changed American society in the 19th century in ways that are still recognizable today.

Two of the most important reform movements, both nationally and in New Hampshire, involved changes to the educational system and the abolition of slavery.

Educational Reform

In what ways did education in New Hampshire, and America, change in the first half of the 19th century?

Less controversial than other reform movements of the time, educational reform had a profound and lasting impact on American society. In many ways, some of the changes introduced to schooling during this period can still be seen in classrooms today. These changes revolved around two central ideas: all children (or at least all white children) must be literate to function in modern society, and school was the best vehicle by which to educate children in the ideals of American democracy—ideals that were necessary for a self-governing republic to thrive.

Since colonial days, New England had been the best educated region in America, if not the world. Two of the core beliefs of the Puritans who settled here were based on literacy: first, that members of religious society must be able to read the Bible, and second, that a self-governing people needed to be able to read and understand the laws under which they lived. Massachusetts passed the first school law in America in 1642, mandating that each community provide for children's education. Other colonies followed suit, including New Hampshire, and soon enacted laws that required every community in New England to offer some means for educating their young. The result was the highest literacy rate in the world in the 18th century; nearly every adult colonist in New England could read and write.

But despite this success, schooling was haphazard during the colonial period. Children attended only when they weren't needed at home on the farm, and few received instruction beyond basic literacy. Both girls and boys were taught to read, so in that sense colonial education offered equality between the sexes, but while boys were more likely to learn mathematics and a smattering of other subjects, girls were tasked with learning more domestic skills, like sewing and cooking. These domestic skills were often taught in dame schools run by local women rather than town-supported schools. In most towns, the schoolmaster was also the minister, who was generally the best-educated member of the community. And since the job of schoolmaster did not offer anywhere near full-time employment, it could easily be combined with a minister's other duties, which included religious instruction for the young—hence the merging of the two roles of minister and schoolmaster was a natural fit.

Shortly after the American Revolution, ideas about education began to change. The emphasis on religious instruction had been fading for some time, but the birth of a new nation brought a greater interest in the other educational goal—children must be raised to be good citizens capable of someday governing themselves. They must learn diligence and self-discipline, and they must be instructed in American ideals and the story of America's past. For the sake of the community, republicanism—or the practices, behaviors, and values of living in a self-governing republic—had to be learned by each new generation if the American experiment in democracy was to survive. In some parts of the country, this increased emphasis on education meant creating school systems from scratch, but in New England, it meant replacing the random patchwork of educational efforts in individual towns with a more systemic approach. Schools continued to be operated, and publicly funded, at the local level, but the practice of educating children became more structured in a gradual evolution of local institutions. In a rare example of top-down action in New Hampshire, the state legislature seems to have led the way by passing a series of laws beginning in 1805 that created what became known as the common school system.

Common schools were intended to offer an education to all the potential citizens in the community, even girls as they would one day be responsible for raising the next generation of citizens. (Black people and indigenous people were excluded as they fell outside the bounds of citizenship as it was defined at that time.) Each town was charged with dividing itself into school districts, and each district required its own school. The districts were small, generally 1–3 miles in circumference, because students needed to be able to walk to the school. The poor quality of the roads made traveling greater distances impractical. The small size of each district meant there were a lot of them. In New Boston, for instance, a community of 1,400 people in 1850, there were 18 school districts. By the time of the Civil War, New Hampshire had almost 2,300 school districts spread among its roughly 250 towns. (Changes to the laws later in the century consolidated school districts in New Hampshire, which dropped to just 270 by 1890.)

This was the era of the one-room schoolhouse, as the large number of districts meant that towns could only afford to build very basic school facilities for the small number of children who attended each school. All grades were taught in one space, often with older children assisting the teacher. There were few amenities. Heat was provided by a wood stove, and bathroom facilities were originally the woods surrounding the building. As the century progressed, more and more schools added outhouses, which were used well into the 20th century in many schools. In 1900, nearly 75 percent of New Hampshire schools still used outhouses rather than bathrooms with flushing toilets and running water. There were no playgrounds or lunch rooms or any of the other amenities that are standard in schools today.

Common schools were created to provide education for all white children in a community, beginning at a very young age (anywhere from 4 to 6 years old) and running up to roughly 8th grade. Teaching rudimentary skills in literacy and numeracy, these schools for young students offered what became known as a primary education, necessary for everyone regardless of what they did once they were adults. Only a small segment of the population continued onto secondary school, and initially secondary education was offered only through private institutions, such as Phillips Exeter (founded in 1781), New Ipswich Academy (founded in 1789), Gilmanton Academy (founded in 1794), and Kimball Union Academy (founded in 1813). The first public secondary, or high, school was established in Portsmouth in 1830, but few other communities invested in secondary education to this degree. Manchester, which was emerging as the state's first city in the mid-19th century, opened its high school in 1846. Nevertheless, even with public high school options, secondary school was available only for the few.

The school year was, on average, about 20 weeks long, with one 10-week session in winter and another 10-week session in summer. In the spring and fall seasons, children's labor on the family farm could not be spared. Even in cities this rural school calendar remained in place, although a much smaller percentage of children attended schools in urban areas, and those that did were all from the middle and upper classes. Most immigrant children or children of the poor worked alongside their parents in factories because their families needed their income. These children received little if any schooling, a situation that did not change until a state law in 1910 required compulsory education for all children under the age of 14.

The quality of the schools varied widely from town to town, as did the funding. Then as now, some communities were more committed to education than others. The innovation of local school boards evolved slowly over the course of the 19th century, but briefly in the 1840s, the state employed a commissioner of schools to provide some administrative oversight to the education system. His name was Charles Haddock, and he was a graduate of Dartmouth College and a nephew of famed

U.S. Senator Daniel Webster. Like his counterpart Horace Mann in Massachusetts, Haddock did much to support the common school system, both before he was in office and during his tenure. By the end of the century, the state legislature created a state board of education to support the commissioner.

The structure of schooling was not the only thing that changed during the first half of the 19th century. What children learned and how they were taught were also transformed in these years. In the colonial period, religious instruction was the prime objective of schooling, and the Bible or material based on the Bible were the most common texts from which children learned. In the 1810s and 1820s, material written specifically for children to read, even outside of the schoolroom, began to become available, especially after the publication in 1812 of a German collection of stories called *Children's and Household Tales* (which evolved into *Grimm's Fairy Tales)*. Other fairy tales had been published before and the Grimm brothers' stories went through multiple revisions before they became the versions we know today, but nevertheless, their popularity sparked great interest in publishing works for a young audience.

More books written for children quickly followed, particularly in the United States. They generally contained short stories, poems, and illustrations all geared toward children, meaning simple sentence structures and lots of stories about animals. Nursery rhymes also became popular during this period, with the first collection of Mother Goose's stories appearing in 1833. One of the most popular nursery rhymes, "Mary Had a Little Lamb," was penned by a New Hampshire woman, Sarah Josepha Hale. She published it just a few years before the Mother Goose stories appeared, in her 1830 book *Poems for Our Children*. Hale also wrote extensively for a new type of magazine directed specifically at children called *Juvenile Miscellany*, which contained not only stories but also puzzles, games, and science experiments that children could perform at home. Through these publications, Hale illustrated what was one of her guiding principles—that children were not merely small adults, which was the prevailing view before the 19th century, but that they were *developing* adults and had their own interests, perspectives, and needs due to their age.

At roughly the same time, another new type of book emerged for children that was specifically intended for classroom use—the McGuffey Reader. Frequently revised, the readers included lessons in spelling, vocabulary, grammar, arithmetic, history, and civics. Through the use of stories, essays, poems, and speeches, they promoted moral behavior, good citizenship, and America's "glorious" past, thus embracing education's aim to cultivate responsible, and patriotic, future citizens. McGuffey Readers became the universal textbook for American schools well into the 20th century, and with every (white) child in the country learning from this same source, they created a common culture that cultivated a shared American story for generations of young people.

How did educational reform bring more opportunities for women?

American schools underwent even more change with the rise of the female teacher, who replaced the local minister as schoolmaster and became the standard in the 19th century. The development of the common school movement and its commitment to universal education for most Americans resulted in an expansion of the number of schools and therefore the need for more teachers. Women, particularly young unmarried women, filled this need nicely, making teaching one of the first professions open to women in the United States. The shift to female teachers was gradual but steady. In 1850, the split between male and female teachers in the United States was about 60/40. By 1890, that ratio had shifted to 10/90 in favor of women.

Women had long been recognized as the primary caregivers for young children, and therefore it seemed natural that they would become the "village school mistress." Sarah Josepha Hale even published an essay with this title, no doubt basing it on her own experiences. In the late 1820s in Boston, she started what was called an infant school, although we would know it today as a kindergarten. Inspired by a similar school in Britain, Hale is sometimes credited with running the first kindergarten in America. She sought to teach very young children the basics, such as the alphabet and how to count, and how to behave in a school setting. She also promoted the idea that children should be allowed to work at their own pace and that corporal punishment was inappropriate in schools, both ideas being rather unconventional for the time.

Hale was also a vocal proponent of women's education, even at the college level, arguing that women needed real knowledge and skills, not just fashionable accomplishments. In the magazines for which she wrote or edited, she often featured stories about the opportunities offered by girls' schools, which were a new educational development. Two such schools in New Hampshire were the Adams Female Academy in Derry (which eventually merged with Pinkerton Academy) and Miss Fiske's Young Ladies Seminary in Keene, where Sarah Josepha Hale sent her own daughters. These schools covered a wide range of subjects including the sciences, mathematics, languages, music, and art, and many of their graduates went on to become teachers in their own right.

Formal training for teachers was a new idea in the early 19th century, likely prompted by all the people entering the teaching profession. Educators—male and female—needed guidance, although the curriculum for trainees focused more on what to teach than how to teach it. In 1823, a teaching school opened in Concord, the first one in the state, and more soon followed in places like Plymouth, Meredith, Keene, and Merrimack. These institutions accepted both men and women, preparing them for the classroom. They were often known as normal schools, and many of them around the country evolved into major universities and colleges that still exist today.

There was no accreditation process for educators, though, so anyone could serve as the village school mistress or master. Those lacking formal training probably relied on a teaching manual like the *Scholar's Review* or the *Teacher's Daily Assistant*, both published by New Hampshire's Dudley Leavitt beginning in 1811. A scientist, newspaper publisher, and teacher, Leavitt had already established a national reputation with his publication of *Leavitt's Farmers Almanack* (also called the *New England Calendar*) beginning in 1797, making it one of the oldest farmer's almanacs in the country. In addition, he published numerous student textbooks in the first half of the 19th century, mostly on scientific topics. Leavitt's teaching manuals offered both "general and scientific knowledge," covering everything from grammar and poetry to music, mathematics, and geography. His books were widely used in New Hampshire and beyond, offering a baseline of information that was taught throughout the country.

During and after the Civil War, many northern states, including New Hampshire, increased their commitment to education, expanding the number of subjects taught to emphasize science more and providing new opportunities for advanced instruction through the college and university system. Dartmouth College had been established in 1769 and for many years was the only institution offering college degrees in the state. In 1866, the New Hampshire College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts was founded in Durham to provide instruction in agriculture, applied sciences, and engineering. (This institution would eventually become the University of New Hampshire.) Twenty years later, Saint Anselm College in Manchester was founded as a Catholic liberal arts school. Between these colleges and universities, and the various teachers colleges and

private secondary academies, New Hampshire offered a full range of educational opportunities by the second half of the 19th century.

Ending Slavery

What was slavery, and what was its role in New Hampshire?

Far more controversial than the common school movement, the effort to abolish, or end, slavery in the United States had profound consequences for the country, ending in a civil war that claimed more than 800,000 American lives. But although abolition had an enormous political, economic, and social impact on the United States, it began as a small reform movement, sparked by the Second Great Awakening and led by a handful of dedicated activists. Some of them hailed from the Granite State.

Throughout America's early history, most Black people who lived here did so as enslaved people. They, or their ancestors, were forcibly brought to North America by white traders who then sold them into what was generally a life of hard labor. Enslaved people were deprived of their freedom to live as they chose; in fact, most white Americans did not see them as people at all but rather as property. They were bought and sold as their white "owners" saw fit, with no regards to family connections or their own wishes. Despite these challenges, enslaved people formed communities and created new traditions and culture, which amalgamated the heritage of the various African cultures they had left behind with their own experiences in America. Many enslaved people ran away to the North or to Canada (which is now sometimes referred to as "self-emancipating"), and some tried to secure their freedom by rebelling directly against white authority, although such challenges were always met with violence in response.

Because enslaved people were most profitably employed in agricultural work, the majority lived in the South, growing labor-intensive crops like tobacco, rice, and cotton. Slavery was a controversial system of labor throughout the country, though, and many Americans both before and after the American Revolution disliked it. Nevertheless, slavery had an enormous economic impact on America, from southern slaveholders to northern shipowners and merchants, and these economic interests did much to defend slavery. Nevertheless, northern states gradually outlawed slavery in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and more and more enslaved people became free, establishing communities of free Black people, who still faced substantial discrimination and inequalities. By the eve of the Civil War in 1860, there were nearly 4 million enslaved people living in the South, with another 500,000 free Black people located mostly in the North.

New Hampshire had a complicated history with slavery. At its height right before the American Revolution, just over 650 enslaved people lived here, most of them in communities near the seacoast. By 1790, that number was down to 158, and it dropped even further by 1800 when the census recorded just 8 enslaved people living in New Hampshire. (For more about slavery in colonial New Hampshire, see Unit 4: Building a Colony.) By tradition, the last enslaved person in the state was a woman named Aggie who lived in Hollis and died in 1840 at the age of 100 years old. The state legislature did not outlaw slavery until 1857, making New Hampshire one of the last northern states to ban it, although the practice had already died out when the law was passed.

Throughout the 19th century, the population of free Blacks living in New Hampshire held steady at an average of about 700 people, or roughly 0.5% of the state's population. Although the number of Black people living in New Hampshire has historically been small, their experiences are unique and,

until recently, largely ignored in the study of state history. Recent efforts by groups like the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire have sought to uncover more of this history and share it with the public. As scholarship in this area increases, we will learn more about Black people in the Granite State, enslaved and free, and their contributions to New Hampshire's past.

For most New Hampshirites in the 19th century, slavery was a distant concept, especially with such small numbers of enslaved people living here. The state's growing textile industry was highly dependent on southern cotton, though, just as 100 years earlier New Hampshire's merchant class had been dependent on the trans-Atlantic slave trade to make their fortunes. Therefore, the slave system had a direct financial impact on many Granite Staters, even if they had little contact with enslaved people.

In New Hampshire, attitudes toward slavery were mixed. Few if any Granite Staters supported the institution, but many thought the issue had little to do with them. Instead, they believed it was a matter of states' rights and political expediency. Knowing that the southern states would not tolerate abolition, many people in New Hampshire believed that slavery was a necessary concession to the South that enabled the union between the states to endure. Furthermore, they argued that slavery had been sanctioned by the U.S. Constitution, which explicitly acknowledges it, and therefore should be protected from northern or federal interference. Most people wanted slavery contained in the states where it already existed and hoped that in time the institution would gradually die out, much as it had in New Hampshire, but they weren't willing to actively get involved in hastening its demise.

What abolitionist sentiment was there in New Hampshire?

But not everyone in New Hampshire shared these beliefs. For those who had been swept up in the Second Great Awakening, slavery was viewed as America's great national sin—a moral failing that tainted everything America stood for. Eradicating it became the most important cause of the day, the reform movement to which they committed themselves above all others. Much like in other northern states, the number of abolitionists in New Hampshire was small—at most, a few thousand people—but these activists were deeply committed, well financed, and adept at getting their efforts publicized in the press. In short, the influence of this relatively small group extended far beyond their numbers. Abolitionist sentiment was strongest in Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio, but New Hampshire's antislavery movement also had an impact nationally, both because of the prominence of New Hampshire reformers and the events that happened here.

Since the American Revolution, New Hampshirites had wrestled with the issue of slavery, and the sharp drop in the number of enslaved people in the state in the years after the revolution is proof that many were uncomfortable with it. Perhaps the Freedom Petition written by 20 enslaved Black men in Portsmouth in 1779 prompted a crisis of conscience, even if the petition was ignored by the state legislature at the time. (For more on the Freedom Petition, see Unit 5: New Hampshire and the American Revolution.)

In the 1790s, the issue of slavery became prominent again when an enslaved woman named Ona Judge arrived in Portsmouth. She had fled by ship from Philadelphia where she had been "owned" by First Lady Martha Washington. The Washingtons tried repeatedly to reclaim Ona Judge, but New Hampshire officials refused to assist the president in his efforts, even though some of those officials were Washington's friends. Ona Judge was welcomed by the state's free Black community,

and she remained in New Hampshire for the rest of her life, but her status was always ambivalent: she lived as a free woman who could be returned to slavery at any time.

It was not until the early 1830s that the issue of slavery once more garnered attention in New Hampshire, at the same time that abolition became the main reform effort throughout the North. By then, it was apparent that slavery was not going to simply die out in the South. In fact, it looked more likely that slavery would be extended into new territories and states. This recognition that slavery was becoming more entrenched in American life, combined with the reformist zeal sparked by the Second Great Awakening, ignited the abolitionist movement throughout much of the North.

Inspired by the efforts of abolitionists like Massachusetts' William Lloyd Garrison, Granite Staters became increasingly interested in abolitionism, especially as agents of the American Anti-Slavery Society arrived in the state to whip up public opinion. Fewer agents spoke in New Hampshire than the rest of New England—a curious omission from the regional lecture circuit—but the people of the state responded anyway. The first antislavery society in New Hampshire was founded in Plymouth in 1833, calling for the immediate emancipation of all enslaved people in the United States. The group welcomed men only; women formed their own antislavery society in Plymouth a few months later. Within just a few years, 20 towns formed local chapters. operating under the umbrella of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society, which had been founded in Concord in 1834. At the movement's pinnacle in New Hampshire, there were 62 local antislavery societies. A dozen of them had more than 100 members, which was quite an accomplishment for the time. Most of these groups were separated by gender, although there were a few that combined men and women in one organization. For women, involvement in the abolitionist movement brought opportunities to become political active in a social cause.

The activities of these groups focused on two areas: sponsoring speakers at public lectures in an effort to convince Granite Staters of the righteousness of their cause and gathering signatures on petitions to send to the U.S. Congress demanding the end of slavery.

Abolitionist Speakers. It's unclear how successful abolitionist lecturers were in promoting their cause, but the public lectures held in towns all over New Hampshire usually brought controversy—and attention—in their wake. By sharing stories about the horrors of southern slavery and invoking the moral responsibility of Christians to fight against social injustice, abolitionists hoped to convince the public through a tactic known as "moral suasion." Featuring lecturers who were often nationally known abolitionists, these talks drew hundreds of people wherever they were held.

Overwhelmingly, abolitionist speakers were white men, many of whom had no personal experience with slavery. It was not socially acceptable for women, who were the foot soldiers of the abolition movement, to speak in a public forum, although a few women shocked the public and their fellow reformers by challenging this convention. In addition, Black men were not particularly welcomed as speakers either. The recently self-emancipated Frederick Douglass became the most famous Black reformer of this generation in the early 1840s, and he lectured in New Hampshire on several occasions beginning with a trip to Pittsfield in 1841. But he was not always warmly received by his abolitionist hosts, many of whom opposed slavery but were ambivalent, or even hostile, to racial equality. Douglass spoke in nearly 20 New Hampshire towns, detailing the way enslaved people were treated in the South. He also wrote at least part of his famous autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, while visiting a friend in Weare, New Hampshire.

Abolitionist speakers, Black and white, often encountered violence from a public generally suspicious of the antislavery movement, which viewed with suspicion abolitionism's potential to disrupt traditional norms of race and gender. Most of the public considered abolitionists to be social deviants who were dangerously radical, with ideas that challenged the political, economic, and social status quo. This violence against abolitionists seemed to peak in New Hampshire in 1835, with riots in Dover, Portsmouth, and Concord. In Concord, rioters chased the two abolitionist speakers through the town, forcing them to hide in supporters' houses and gardens until they could safely slip out of town, without having delivered the public lecture they had planned.

The violence against antislavery speakers often worked in the abolitionists' favor, though. Granite Staters may have rejected the radicalism of the reformers, but they also defended their right to speak freely and hold meetings without fearing for their lives. Angry mobs bent on silencing free speech sometimes made the public more sympathetic to abolitionists, while also keeping the antislavery cause in the newspapers and in the public mind.

Petitions against Slavery. The petition campaign was less controversial, although it too challenged traditional social and political mores. Throughout the North, an army of mostly women abolitionists went door-to-door in their communities asking people to sign petitions addressed to their congressmen to end slavery. It was an overtly political act; women did not have the right to vote but still felt empowered to petition their representatives. These women reformers were almost all white and middle class. One of the few exceptions was Nancy Herbert, a mixed-race woman who lived in Concord. She had been sold into slavery to a New Hampshire family when she was still a child, but the family had eventually granted her freedom. Herbert chose to remain with them for the rest of her life, living as a family member, not a servant. She became active in a number of reform causes, including abolition as a member of the Concord Female Anti-Slavery Society. She likely took part in the petition campaign of the 1830s as one of the few Black women who were involved.

The petition campaign was a remarkably successful effort, although not in the way abolitionists intended. Thousands of people, men and women, signed antislavery petitions in New Hampshire—and elsewhere in the North—during the 1830s, in some communities representing 20 or 30 percent of the townspeople. But New Hampshire's congressmen were not receptive to their efforts. In fact, the state's congressional delegation, which included a young Franklin Pierce, refused to present the petitions to Congress. New Hampshire abolitionists had to send their petitions to a Massachusetts congressman, who introduced them on the floor of the House on their behalf. More petitions flooded into Congress from other states, but Congress continued to balk at taking up the issue of slavery. Instead, it took the controversial step of tabling the petitions without hearing them, a procedural maneuver that became known as the Gag Rule. Many in the North objected to the Gag Rule, as it interfered with Americans' right to petition their own representatives. This realization—that a political minority devoted to preserving slavery was beginning to limit the rights of Americans everywhere—eventually made many people more sympathetic to the abolitionist cause.

But before this shift in public opinion, abolition continued to spark great passion and equally great outrage, especially when the cause of ending slavery began to include an effort to promote equal rights.

The Noyes Riot. While the petition campaign was in full swing and abolitionist speakers were fending off angry mobs, another effort was underway to offer white and Black students equal opportunities to gain an education. Prominent abolitionists in New England joined together to open

a mixed-race school in Canaan, New Hampshire, in the summer of 1835. The school was called the Noyes Academy, and its founders hoped it would serve as a model for interracial education throughout the North. The white students mainly came from the surrounding communities, but the school's Black students hailed from all over the North, drawn to the educational opportunities offered there—and nowhere else—for them. Among the student body was Henry Highland Garnett, who would later become a nationally renowned clergyman and the first Black minister to deliver a sermon to the U.S. Congress. In 1835, though, he was a young man from New York who traveled to New Hampshire to receive an education.

The local population was alarmed by the school, particularly its promise of racial equality. Fueled by rumors that large numbers of Black people were planning to move to Canaan and take over the town, the townspeople voted in an emergency town meeting to close the school. Shortly thereafter, a mob attacked the school on a blistering hot August day, using ropes and and a team of nearly 100 oxen to literally pull the building off its foundations. Although some newspapers claimed the townspeople had acted in an orderly fashion, there were numerous accounts that the crowd had actually been hostile and threatening. Many of the school's Black students feared for their lives, although in the end damage was limited to the building. Word of the so-called Noyes Riot spread far and wide, marking a setback for interracial education throughout the North.

The New Hampshire Radicals. For one New Hampshire abolitionist, the Noyes Riot only spurred him to further action in the antislavery cause. Nathaniel P. Rogers was a trustee of the Noyes Academy, as well as a passionate antislavery writer. He eventually became the editor of a fiery abolitionist newspaper called the *Herald of Freedom*, which had a wide readership in New England, similar to William Lloyd Garrison's famed newspaper *The Liberator*. The two men were friends more than competitors, and between them they did much to publicize the abolitionist cause to Northern audiences. Rogers often worked in conjunction with two other well-known New Hampshire abolitionists: Parker Pillsbury and Stephen Foster. Together, the trio became known nationally as the New Hampshire Radicals, both for their committed support for abolition and for their adoption of other ultra-progressive social reform movements, particularly ones that challenged existing ideas about gender roles. The New Hampshire Radicals were at the heart of the abolitionist movement in New England.

Hutchinson Family Singers. Another New Hampshire contribution to the abolitionist effort was the Hutchinson Family Singers. A family of 11 sons and 2 daughters, they hailed from Milford, and in the 1840s they became the most popular singing group in America, renowned for their use of four-part harmony. Traveling extensively throughout the North and the Midwest, the group's songs touched upon many reform causes of the day, including temperance (the movement to curb or eliminate the influence of alcohol) and women's rights. Antislavery was one of their most common themes, with songs like "The Slave's Appeal" and "Right over Wrong." In the 1840s and 1850s, the Hutchinson Family Singers often performed in support of antislavery causes, an early example of edutainment.

Underground Railroad. The entertaining songs of abolition could not hide the fact that slavery was a life-and-death matter for nearly 4 million enslaved people in the South by the 1850s. Fugitive or runaway slaves (now referred to as "self-emancipated") faced terrible hardships, beatings and whippings, and sometimes even death as they made their bid for freedom. Although some enslaved people lived precariously as free Blacks in the North, most found refuge in Canada, particularly once the federal government began to strictly enforce fugitive slave laws in the 1850s in an effort to appease the South. Increasingly disgusted by the horrors of slavery, sympathetic

northerners helped establish a network of safe houses to help runaways on their journeys. It became known as the underground railroad, although it had nothing to do with trains or rail lines. Guides helped fugitives move from one safe house to another, while each safe house provided food, clothing, and temporary shelter. The routes changed continuously, and safe houses were shifted constantly in an effort to keep the authorities at bay. This flexibility and the secretive nature of the underground railroad make it impossible now to trace the various paths to freedom.

Enslaved people certainly passed through New Hampshire on the underground railroad as they moved north, although the locations of the safe houses will probably never be fully known. A few locations have been identified as frequent stops on the underground railroad, though. One was the Concord home of Nathaniel and Armenia White. The Whites were prominent social reformers and wealthy, well-connected members of New Hampshire society in the 1850s. Although they were committed to abolition, both Whites would actually become better known for their involvement in other reform movements. Nathaniel became the temperance candidate for governor in 1874, while Armenia was the guiding force behind New Hampshire's women's suffrage movement in the second half of the 19th century. Among their many properties, they maintained two Concord homes: a luxurious mansion across the street from the state house and a farm on Clinton Street. The farm often served as a safe house on the underground railroad. The number of enslaved people who stayed there is unknown, but letters and diary entries suggest that many did pass through the Whites' farm. Another established stop on the underground railroad was the home of Ann Bamford of Manchester. The Irish widow and her family reputedly helped more than 40 fugitives hide from the authorities as they moved north through New Hampshire. Undoubtedly, many other Granite Staters also opened their homes to those fleeing from bondage in the South.

The abolition movement in New Hampshire was characterized by both hardworking, ordinary people who forwarded the cause at the local level and a handful of extraordinary individuals who made their marks nationally. Through their efforts, abolitionists made an enormous accomplishment for a small band of radical reformers—they changed public opinion. Their campaign of moral suasion gradually began to gain ground in the 1840s. Slowly but inexorably, antislavery sentiment began to become respectable, particularly as national affairs like the annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War began to divide Americans like never before. New Hampshire's political representatives were right in the middle of this tension between those who tolerated slavery and those who found it increasingly intolerable. The state even boasted the first abolitionist senator when John P. Hale of Dover entered the U.S. Senate in 1846. (For more on the political tension in New Hampshire in the years leading up to the Civil War, see Unit 10: New Hampshire and the Civil War.)

Harriet Wilson. Although the people of New Hampshire may have gradually come to stand against slavery, most of them did not, by any measure, support racial equality, as the Noyes Riot showed. To do so would have been truly revolutionary at this time, as even many ardent abolitionists did not champion the idea that whites and Blacks were equal or deserved equal treatment. The Black writer Harriet Wilson of Milford provided living proof of this prejudice. As a young girl in the 1830s and 1840s, she served as an indentured servant in a Milford household (ironically, the household of one of the Hutchinson family's cousins). In 1859, Wilson published an autobiographical novel of her experiences, recounting the hardships of her servitude and emphasizing the ways in which her treatment as a servant mirrored slavery. *Our Nig: Or Sketches from the Life of a Free Black* was the first novel published by a Black person, let alone a Black woman, in the United States. The novel received little attention when it was published, and eventually it was forgotten. Only in 1982

was it rediscovered by Harvard historian Henry Louis Gates Jr., who republished it and did much to ensure it received the recognition it deserved. Today, there is a statue to Harriet Wilson in Milford.

The Age of Reform brought many important changes to society. One of the most important consequences of this period was the subtle shift in focus among both Granite Staters and Americans. Whereas in the 18th century most people had focused on their towns, during the first half of the 19th century, people began to look beyond the borders of their local communities to the larger world around them. They built relationships with others around causes rather than location. They insisted on the idea that the government should be responsive to the will of the people, even as the people's will evolved into new and unprecedent areas. And ultimately they began to recognize their place within a larger society, one that did not always look and live like they did, or share their views on the things that were important to them. Increasingly, Americans began to recognize that they were all part of one, interconnected and complex nation, even as a dangerous and growing divide threatened to tear that nation apart.

Course Essential Questions

Essential questions are designed to be answered repeatedly throughout the entire curriculum. This unit particularly addresses the following essential questions:

- How has New Hampshire come to be the way it is?
- How has New Hampshire been shaped by many voices?
- How has New Hampshire impacted the nation?

Unit Focus Questions

Lessons in this unit are geared towards students answering the unit focus questions comprehensively through a variety of methods. This unit's focus questions are:

1. How did the education reform of the 19th century impact New Hampshire's people?
2. What was life like for Black Americans in the years before the Civil War?
3. How did people in New Hampshire and the nation fight against slavery?

Lesson Plans

In this unit, lesson 1 explores what children learned in common schools and how they learned it. The second and third lessons introduce students to conditions as an enslaved person in the United States in the 19th century and the methods and tactics abolitionists used to convince people that slavery must end.

Lesson Plan 1: A Citizen's Primer

Students compare school in the 19th century with school today and then create their own educational primer that celebrates their country or another community.

Lesson Plan 2: DBQ on Black Americans before the Civil War

By analyzing primary and secondary sources to gather evidence, students explore the lives of enslaved people in the 19th century.

Lesson Plan 3: The Fight Against Slavery

Students look at the abolitionists newspapers and use unit knowledge in order to construct their own newspapers to highlight the different ways abolitionists tried to change people's minds about slavery.

Unit Vocabulary

abolition	(noun) The action of getting rid of something, specifically ending slavery during the 19th century

abolitionist	(noun) A person who works to get rid of something, especially slavery during the 19th century
antislavery	(noun) Someone or something that is against slavery
common school movement	(noun) An effort in the 19th century to make public schools available to more children than ever before
dame school	(noun) An informal school run by a local woman for young children in a village or town
disabilities	(noun) A physical or mental challenge that makes it hard to complete everyday tasks
emancipated	(adjective) To be free of something
Emancipation Proclamation	(noun) A document signed by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, that freed all enslaved people who lived in Confederate states and territories
head	(noun) A designation awarded to a student leader in American classrooms in the 18th and 19th centuries
minister	(noun) A religious leader, usually of a local church
moral responsibility	(noun) A job or task that people do because they want to make other people's lives better
moral suasion	(noun) An effort to convince people that something is the right thing to do
petition	(noun) A document that asks the government for something
plantation	(noun) A large estate that focuses on growing crops for money
primer	(noun) A type of book used in the 18th and 19th centuries that teaches the basics of reading, writing, and math
reform	(noun) A change made to improve something
reformers	(noun) People who work to change and improve something
reform movement	(noun) An effort or campaign to change and improve something
revivals	(noun) A campaign to make something popular again
sampler	(noun) A piece of needlework made to show sewing skills
Second Great Awakening	(noun) A time in the early 1800s when people were inspired by religion to try to make society better through reforms
slavery	(noun) When human beings are treated as property, lose their freedom, and are made to work for nothing
social problems	(noun) Anything that has a negative impact on large numbers of people
textiles	(noun) Types of cloth or fabric
volunteer	(noun) Someone who does something for free, without being paid

Using the Student Content Readings

The student content for this curriculum is designed to be used in many ways. Here are suggestions for reading activities and strategies that support independent and guided reading at different stages of each unit. Please note that some lessons in this unit use the student content in their learning activities.

- Introducing Units: Preview the student content before diving into lesson plans and activities. Ask students to skim the text by looking for key design elements. What are the headings? What do they tell us about the big ideas of the unit? Look for words in bold. What are the important vocabulary words used in this unit? Which are familiar? Which are not? What kinds of graphics or images are used in this content? Which important ideas do they illustrate?
- Developing Understanding: Some lesson plans direct you to specific sections of the student content, but the student content should be revisited throughout completion of a unit. Students can create visual representations of specific sections, summarize paragraphs, or complete jigsaw chunking and present their section summaries to other students.
- Reviewing Concepts: After lessons, return to the student content to look for evidence of the concept explored in the lesson. Students can create timelines, cause and effect charts, mind maps, and Venn diagrams using the information provided in each section.
- Extending Comprehension: Students can develop a review quiz for fellow students by writing their own questions about the information in each section. Translating the content into data that can be displayed on a map or graph is another way to extend comprehension of the text.

Additional Resources

Format: Book
Title: *American Education: A History*
Author/Creator: Wayne J. Urban and Jennings L. Wagoner Jr.
Audience: For Educators.
Description: Explores the ideas behind the creation of an educational system in the United States, spanning from colonial times to the present

Format: Book
Title: *American Education: The National Experience, 1783–1876*
Author/Creator: Lawrence A. Cremin
Audience: For Educators.
Description: Provides a survey of educational efforts in America during this period and the social and cultural values that informed them

Format: Book
Title: *Black Portsmouth: Three Centuries of African-American Heritage*
Author/Creator: Mark J. Sammons and Valerie Cunningham
Audience: For Educators.
Description: A thought-provoking look at New Hampshire's Black heritage that shares the stories of individual Black people and sets them in context

Format: Video
Title: *"I was a Slave Even here in New Hampshire": Concord Black Heritage Tour*
Author/Creator: David Watters and the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire
Audience: For Educators.
Description: A video lecture filmed at various locations around Concord, New Hampshire, recounting the city's history with slavery
Website: www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhNu6mWn4xI

Format: Book
Title: *Lady Editor: Sarah Josepha Hale and the Making of the Modern American Woman*
Author/Creator: Melanie Kirkpatrick
Audience: For Educators.
Description: A biography of one of the most influential women in American history, Sarah Josepha Hale, who was born in New Hampshire. Hale edited the most popular women's magazine of the 19th century and set the trends in white wedding dresses, Christmas trees, and defining American culture, particularly women's education

Format: Book
Title: *Never Caught, The Story of Ona Judge: George and Martha Washington's Courageous Slave Who Dared to Run Away; Young Readers Edition*
Author/Creator: Erica Armstrong Dunbar
Audience: For Students.
Description: Written for a middle-school audience, this book is based on Dunbar's award-winning study of Ona Judge of the same name

Format: Book
Title: *A New Order of Things: How the Textile Industry Transformed New England*
Author/Creator: Paul E. Rivard
Audience: For Educators.
Description: An overview of the textile industry and the many changes it brought to all aspects of New England

Format: Book
Title: *Ona Judge Outwits the Washingtons*
Author/Creator: Gwendolyn Hooks
Audience: For Students.
Description: Ona Judge's story written for an elementary audience

Format: Book
Title: *One-Room Schoolhouses of New Hampshire: Primers, Penmanship, and Pot-Belly Stoves*
Author/Creator: Bruce D. Heald
Audience: For Educators.
Description: Overview of education in New Hampshire from colonial times up to the early 20th century, with photographs and excerpts from state laws, local school boards, and educational texts of the time

Format: Website and Videos
Title: "One-Room Schools of the Past"
Author/Creator: Susan Fineman
Audience: For Students and Educators.
Description: Website explores the schoolhouse in District #1 in Nashua, New Hampshire, including two videos, one on the District #1 schoolhouse and one on schoolhouses in general
Website: https://www.nashuaschoolhouse.com/

Format: Book
Title: *Runaway: The Daring Escape of Ona Judge*
Author/Creator: Ray Anthony Shepard
Audience: For Students.
Description: Ona Judge's story told as a poem for elementary students

Format: Master's Thesis
Title: "Slavery in New Hampshire: Profitable Godliness to Racial Consciousness"
Author/Creator: Jody R. Fernald
Audience: For Educators.
Description: Easily accessible online, this well-written master's thesis from a UNH student provides an overview of slavery in New Hampshire and discusses its enduring impact on the state
Website: https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1067&context=thesis

Format: Website
Title: "Slavery in the North"
Author/Creator: Douglas Harper
Audience: For Educators.
Description: A state-by-state overview of slavery in the northern states
Website: http://slavenorth.com/

Format: Podcast
Title: Teaching Hard History, Seasons 1 and 2: American Slavery
Author/Creator: Learning for Justice
Audience: For Educators.
Description: Series of podcasts discussing best practices for educators teaching about American slavery; some episodes are specifically aimed for elementary educators. In the first season, see episodes 1.3, 1.4, 1.10, and 1.18 (starting, oddly, with 1.18). In the second season, see episodes 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.12 (episodes 2.5 and 2.6 focus on teaching about slavery through children's literature)
Website: www.learningforjustice.org/podcasts/teaching-hard-history