



Invention of Writing



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: 3200–2700 BCE



KEY PLAYERS: Ashurbanipal, Hammurabi



LOCATION: Uruk, in present-day Iraq, in the Fertile Crescent between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers



CAUSE: The first writing systems may have developed to keep track of property and record what goods were bought and sold.



EFFECTS: The invention of writing paved the way for communication in the form of newspapers, letters, books, and record keeping, providing the foundation for modern society.

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Early Democracies



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATE: 6th Century BCE—Athens establishes the first democracy



KEY PLAYERS: Solon, Cleisthenes, Pericles, Aristotle



LOCATIONS: Mainly ancient Greece and early Rome



CAUSE: The domination of the aristocracy in Athens led to corruption and unrest. Eventually, the city-state turned to philosophers and leaders who implemented the “rule of many” (although “the many” meant only free adult males).



EFFECT: Democratic systems of government have changed the world, allowing citizens to have a voice in how their societies are run.

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Development of the Silk Road Trade



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: Around 114 BCE–1450s CE



KEY PLAYERS: Zhang Qian, Kublai Khan



LOCATIONS: China, India, Persia, Europe, Africa, and Arabia



CAUSE: The Silk Road trade formed as a natural response to market economics. India wanted luxurious Chinese silks, and China wanted Indian spices, so trade hubs formed to fulfill these needs and desires.



EFFECTS: The Silk Road contributed significantly not only to the economic development of China and the other nations that participated, but also to political and economic relations between civilizations.

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British Settlement of North America



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: 1607—First British settlers found the Jamestown colony
1620—The Mayflower pilgrims arrive at Cape Cod



KEY PLAYERS: Bartholomew Gosnold, John Smith, John Winthrop



LOCATION: Atlantic coast of North America



CAUSE: Europeans often migrated to the new world for individual liberty and religious freedom.



EFFECTS: These early colonies laid the groundwork for further British settlement and eventually the founding of the United States of America.

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The American Revolution



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATE: July 4, 1776—American Declaration of Independence formally adopted



KEY PLAYERS: George Washington, King George III of England, Marquis de Lafayette



LOCATION: The thirteen colonies along the Atlantic coast of North America



CAUSE: Steadily rising tensions as a result of the British limiting American movement to the West and levying taxes without representation.



EFFECT: The American Revolution was the beginning of the formation of the United States of America.

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The Constitution



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATE: September 17, 1787—signed by the framers



KEY PLAYERS: George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison



LOCATION: Philadelphia, PA



CAUSE: After the colonists won the American Revolution and experimented with a loose confederation, they saw the necessity of a centralized government, the basis of which was the Constitution.



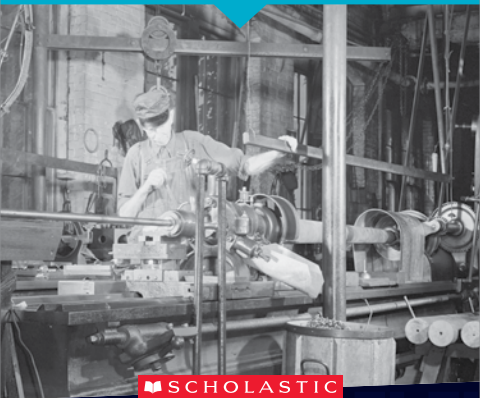
EFFECT: The Constitution provides a sturdy foundation for modern American democracy.

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The Industrial Revolution



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: Mid-1700s–early 1800s



KEY PLAYERS: Richard Arkwright, Samuel F. B. Morse, James Watt, Eli Whitney



LOCATIONS: Britain and the United States



CAUSE: People invented machines to create more material with less effort and energy, but these machines also often led to pollution and dangerous working conditions.



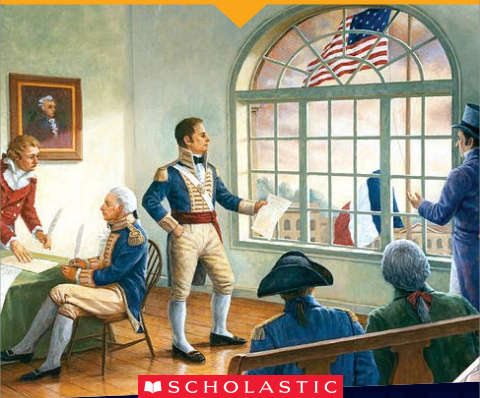
EFFECT: The Industrial Revolution changed businesses from farming to fashion, allowing people to produce more and better products with less effort than ever before.

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The Louisiana Purchase



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATE: April 30, 1803



KEY PLAYERS: Napoleon Bonaparte, President Thomas Jefferson, Sacagawea, William Clark, Meriwether Lewis



LOCATIONS: France and the United States



CAUSE: Napoleon, embattled on all sides, sold Louisiana so he wouldn't have to pay to defend it from the British. The Americans bought it to expand their trading territory and to gain access to the port of New Orleans.



EFFECTS: President Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark (and their guide, Sacagawea) to explore the interior, and thousands of people headed west to explore, settle, and start new lives.

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Slavery in the United States



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: Early 1600s–1865



KEY PLAYERS: Lucretia Mott,
Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman



LOCATIONS: Africa, North America, South America, and the Caribbean



CAUSE: Early Americans transported slaves from Africa in order to farm cash crops, such as sugar cane, tobacco, and cotton, which required great amounts of human labor.



EFFECT: The United States fought a bloody civil war to end slavery. Still, the legacy of slavery continues to impact American society and culture to this day.

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The Emancipation Proclamation





KEY DATE: January 1, 1863



KEY PLAYERS: President Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley



LOCATION: Washington, D.C.



CAUSES: President Lincoln supported freeing the slaves, but also signed the proclamation to undercut the Southern rebellion during the Civil War.



EFFECT: The Emancipation Proclamation set the stage for Congress to pass the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which ended slavery across the United States.

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Women's Rights Movement





KEY DATES: Mid-1800s to the present



KEY PLAYERS: Margaret Sanger, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem



LOCATIONS: The United States and England



CAUSES: Women worked tirelessly to be equal in political, social, and economic status to men, and to gain their rights—to vote, to be in charge of their reproductive health, and then to pass the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.



EFFECTS: Women have made tremendous gains in education and the workplace, as well as in personal and political rights. But much remains to be done, both in the United States and abroad.

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World War I



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: 1914–1918



KEY PLAYERS: Archduke Franz Ferdinand, President Woodrow Wilson, Wilhelm II



LOCATION: Global, but primarily Europe



CAUSE: Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to Austria-Hungary's throne, was assassinated, which led most of the Great Powers to invoke a complicated web of previously constructed alliances, pulling almost every influential nation into the war.



EFFECTS: World War I set the stage for great changes, including revolutions and the collapse of empires, and created conditions that led to World War II.

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The New Deal



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: 1933–1938



KEY PLAYER: President Franklin D. Roosevelt



LOCATION: The United States of America



CAUSE: The Great Depression caused the highest unemployment rate America had ever seen. To help the job market rebound, FDR created a series of domestic programs, focusing on the three Rs: Relief, Recovery, and Reform.



EFFECT: Many of the New Deal programs, such as the Social Security System, are still active today.

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The Holocaust



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: November 9–10, 1938—Kristallnacht
January–May, 1945—Liberation of Jews from
concentration camps



KEY PLAYERS: Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels,
Hermann Goering, Heinrich Himmler



LOCATIONS: Germany, Austria, Poland, the
Soviet Union, and other countries



CAUSE: After World War I, Germany was left
defeated and financially shaky. When Adolf
Hitler rose through the political ranks, he
held up the Jews as convenient scapegoats
for all the problems in Germany.



EFFECTS: The Jewish community continues
to mourn the victims of the Holocaust, and
anti-Semitism persists to this day. Many Jews
moved to British-controlled Palestine and
formed the nation of Israel.

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World War II



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: 1939–1945



KEY PLAYERS: Winston Churchill, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini



LOCATIONS: Global, but primarily Europe, North Africa, East Asia, and the Pacific



CAUSES: Germany, under Adolf Hitler, conquered large swaths of Europe and North Africa, while Japan, under military leaders such as Hideki Tojo, conquered much of East Asia and the Pacific, causing the United States to enter the war in 1941.



EFFECTS: The end of the war elevated the United States to the role of a global leader and ushered in a period of economic prosperity, including a baby boom and increased movement to the suburbs.

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The Atomic Bomb



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATE: July 16, 1945—First atomic bomb successfully tested



KEY PLAYERS: President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Albert Einstein, President Harry S. Truman, General Leslie Groves



LOCATIONS: New Mexico (US); Hiroshima, Nagasaki (Japan)



CAUSE: After the start of World War II, the United States, fearful that the Germans were working on an atomic bomb, launched the Manhattan Project to develop its own bomb.



EFFECTS: After seeing Hiroshima and Nagasaki destroyed, the Soviet Union strove to develop an atomic bomb as well, triggering an arms race and contributing to the onset of the Cold War.

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The Development of Nuclear Power



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: 1945 to the present



KEY PLAYERS: President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Nikita Khrushchev, Dagmar Wilson



LOCATIONS: The United States, Russia, Iran, and North Korea



CAUSE: Nuclear power was originally developed during World War II as a weapon to combat the Axis powers. Later it was also used to produce electricity.



EFFECTS: Nuclear energy provides a share of the modern world's power, but the fact that it can also be used for weapons has contributed to international tensions and instability.

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Vietnam War



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: November 1, 1955–April 29, 1975



KEY PLAYERS: President Lyndon B. Johnson, Ho Chi Minh, Ngo Dinh Diem



LOCATION: Vietnam



CAUSE: When Ngo Dinh Diem, Ho Chi Minh's rival, declared himself president of South Vietnam, conflict between the north and the south increased and the US stepped in with assistance, leading to full-on war.



EFFECTS: Enduring anger persists in Vietnam against foreigners, and Americans see the Vietnam War as a symbol of the disconnect that can exist between the actions of the government and the desires of the people.

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The Civil Rights Movement





KEY DATES: May 17, 1954—*Brown v. Board of Education* legally ends segregation in schools
August 23, 1963—Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech



KEY PLAYERS: Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Rosa Parks



LOCATIONS: Little Rock, AR, and other places in the southern United States



CAUSE: Because southern laws segregated African Americans and kept them from voting, black communities undertook peaceful protests and marches to fight for their rights.



EFFECTS: The Supreme Court overturned segregation laws, and Congress passed new laws outlawing racial discrimination.

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The Assassination of John F. Kennedy



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATE: November 22, 1963



KEY PLAYERS: President John F. Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby



LOCATION: Dallas, Texas



CAUSE: No one knows why Lee Harvey Oswald shot President Kennedy, but there are many conspiracy theories that argue Oswald was paid to commit the murder.



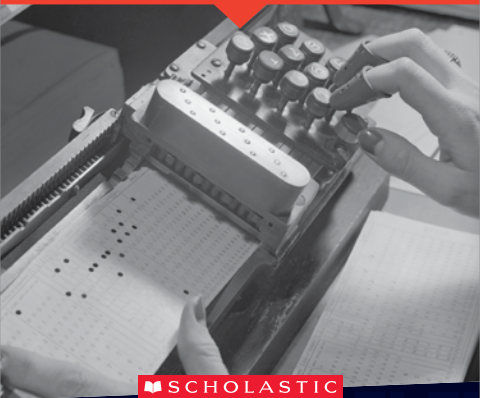
EFFECTS: After the nation mourned for Kennedy, Congress passed his legislative priorities, which had been in trouble until then. Presidential security also became more rigorous.

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Invention of the Internet



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: Mid-1900s to the present



KEY PLAYERS: J. C. R. Licklider,
Lawrence Roberts, Ray Tomlinson



LOCATION: Worldwide



CAUSE: America, in a Cold War technology race with Russia, commissioned academics to create technology for the military. One of the results of that research was a network of computers that could communicate with one another—the Internet.



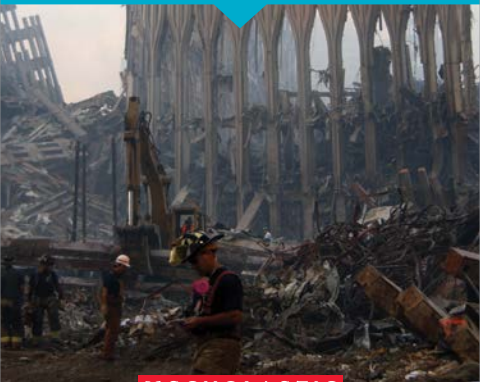
EFFECT: The Internet transformed the world in which we live, providing the opportunity for instant communication to all with a phone or a computer.

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The 9/11 Attacks



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATE: September 11, 2001



KEY PLAYERS: President George W. Bush, Osama bin Laden, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed



LOCATIONS: New York City, Pennsylvania, Virginia



CAUSE: The terrorist group al-Qaeda attacked symbolic targets like the World Trade Center and the Pentagon to spread fear and panic and thus weaken the United States.



EFFECTS: Controversial legislation, increased security measures at airports, and long, costly wars.

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The Great Recession



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: September 2008 to the present



KEY PLAYERS: Warren Buffett,
President George W. Bush, Ben Bernanke



LOCATIONS: The banking crisis epicenter was New York, but effects were felt worldwide.



CAUSES: The 1999 repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act (which had separated consumer and investment banking) paired with a housing bubble and reckless mortgage lending.



EFFECTS: The recession damaged businesses, broke the housing market, and left many unemployed and financially shaky. The long-term effects are still unknown.

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Immigration to America



SCHOLASTIC



KEY DATES: Early 1600s to the present



KEY PLAYERS: John Rolfe, William Tweed, Thomas Nast



LOCATION: The United States, with immigrants coming from countries worldwide



CAUSE: Throughout its history, the United States has drawn immigrants from other lands, seeking better economic, social, and political opportunities.



EFFECTS: The culture and character of the United States have been enriched by its diverse, multiethnic population.

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