

LESSON 9

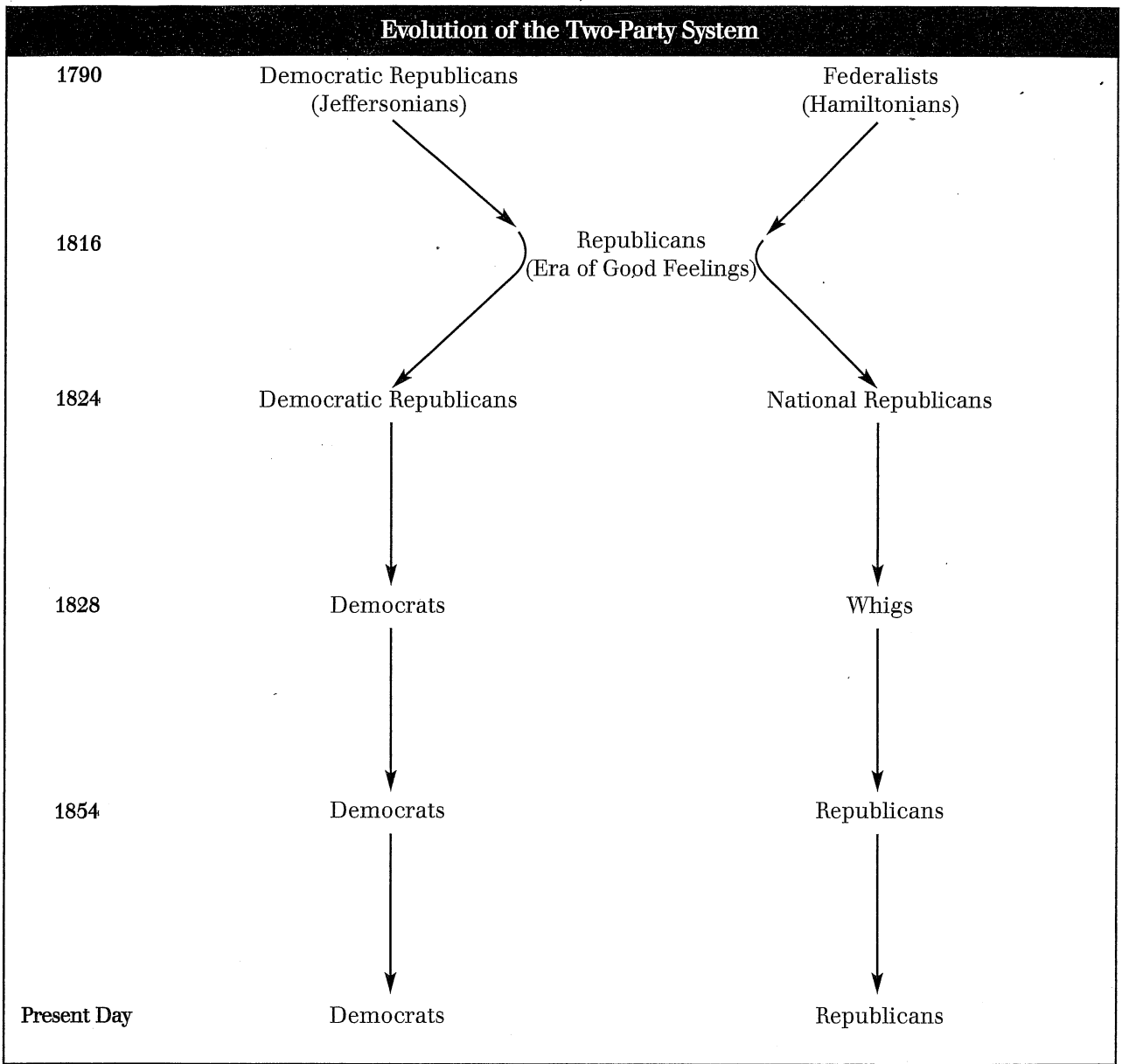
Political Parties in the Nineteenth Century

The founding fathers dreaded the formation of political parties in America. They feared that factions would corrupt and compromise the integrity of the government. Men such as James Madison and George Washington believed that political parties would undermine the foundation of a successful republic—the virtue of the people.

Nevertheless, parties formed quickly. Disagreements over Hamilton’s financial plan, the nature of the Constitution, and the French-English conflict of the 1790s gave rise to the Federalist and Republican Parties. Thus, despite the fears of some leaders, by 1800 the United States had developed a full-fledged political party system.

The charts on the following two pages present the principles of the political parties and trace their evolution during the nineteenth century. Because the parties divided themselves into conservative and liberal positions, these materials should be used in conjunction with the chart on liberal and conservative beliefs from 1790 to 1940. As you study these materials, think about the political issues that have consistently divided Americans over the years, and consider whether parties serve any useful function in our political system.

1. A farmer who opposed the creation of the National Bank in the 1790s would likely join the
 - (A) Democratic Republican Party
 - (B) Democratic Party
 - (C) Free Soil Party
 - (D) Whig Party
 - (E) Federalist Party
2. The Federalist Party, the Whig Party, and the Republican Party of the 1850s all supported
 - (A) government assistance to end slavery
 - (B) government assistance to business interests
 - (C) strict construction of the Constitution
 - (D) an expansionistic foreign policy
 - (E) an end to the spoils system
3. A businessman in the 1840s who sought government assistance in building a road through his state would support the policies of the
 - (A) Democratic Republican Party
 - (B) Federalist Party
 - (C) Populist Party
 - (D) Whig Party
 - (E) Democratic Party



Democratic Republicans (1790–1810)	Federalists (1790–1810)
<p>Leader: Thomas Jefferson</p> <p>Weak central government</p> <p>Protect states' rights</p> <p>Strict view of Constitution</p> <p>Agrarian oriented (pro-farmer)</p> <p>Low taxes</p> <p>Weak military</p> <p>Anti-National Bank</p> <p>Pro-French</p>	<p>Leader: Alexander Hamilton</p> <p>Strong central government</p> <p>Reduce states' rights</p> <p>Loose view of Constitution</p> <p>Business and commerce oriented</p> <p>High taxes</p> <p>Strong military</p> <p>Pro-National Bank</p> <p>Pro-British</p>
Jacksonian Democrats (1828–1848)	Whigs (1832–1852)
<p>Jeffersonian traditions/ideas</p> <p>Supporters: small farmers and mechanics</p> <p>Anti-National Bank</p> <p>States control/building of roads and canals</p> <p>Proslavery</p> <p>Pro-Mexican War</p> <p>Strong executive</p> <p><i>Laissez-faire</i></p>	<p>Hamiltonian traditions/ideas</p> <p>Mercantile/business interests</p> <p>Pro-National Bank</p> <p>National government control/building of roads and canals (American System)</p> <p>Opposed spread of slavery</p> <p>Anti-Mexican War</p> <p>Weak executive</p> <p>Energetic national government</p>
Democrats (1850–1900)	Republicans (1854–1900)
<p>Proslavery</p> <p>Favored secession from Union</p> <p>Blamed for Civil War (Bloody Shirt Issue)</p> <p>States' rights (especially on civil rights)</p> <p>Agrarian oriented</p> <p>Feared strong central government</p> <p>Opposed gold standard (usually)</p> <p>Used Spoils System</p> <p>Supported lowering tariff (1887)</p> <p>Reduced government role in railroad building</p> <p>In 1890s opposed imperialism</p>	<p>Opposed the spread of slavery</p> <p>Opposed secession</p> <p>Whig influence/pro-business</p> <p>Briefly championed civil rights</p> <p>Business oriented</p> <p>Supported active national government</p> <p>Supported gold standard</p> <p>Used Spoils System but made some reforms</p> <p>Supported high tariffs</p> <p>Government support in building railroads</p> <p>In 1890s favored imperialism</p>