SECTION 4

▲ Theodore Roosevelt speaking in New York City

"Teddy" bear ▶

WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

A Bold Leader Takes Control

When Theodore Roosevelt entered the White House, never before had the country had so young a leader. He brought to the presidency tremendous energy, vision, and a willingness to expand presidential power in order to improve American lives. In a rousing speech, he urged some young supporters:

"The principles for which we stand are the principles of fair play and a square deal for every man and every woman in the United States. . . . I wish to see you boys join the Progressive Party, and act in that part and as good citizens in the same way I'd expect any one of you to act in a football game. In other words, don't flinch, don't fold, and hit the line hard."

—Theodore Roosevelt, Address to Boy's Progressive League, 1913

Roosevelt's Square Deal

Objectives

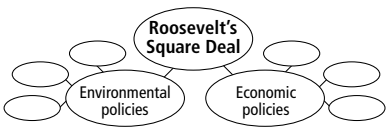
- Discuss Theodore Roosevelt's ideas on the role of government.
- Analyze how Roosevelt changed the government's role in the economy.
- Explain the impact of Roosevelt's actions on natural resources.
- Compare and contrast Taft's policies with Roosevelt's.

Terms and People

Theodore Roosevelt
Square Deal
Hepburn Act
Meat Inspection Act
Pure Food and Drug Act
John Muir
Gifford Pinchot
National Reclamation Act
New Nationalism
Progressive Party

NoteTaking

Reading Skill: Identify Main Ideas As you read this section, use a concept web like the one below to record the main ideas.



Why It Matters In the late 1800s, the United States had several weak and ineffective Presidents. The arrival of Theodore Roosevelt, a charismatic figure who embraced Progressive ideals, ushered in a new era. Roosevelt passed Progressive reforms and expanded the powers of the presidency. He changed the way Americans viewed the roles of the President and the government. **Section Focus Question: What did Roosevelt think government should do for citizens?**

Roosevelt Shapes the Modern Presidency

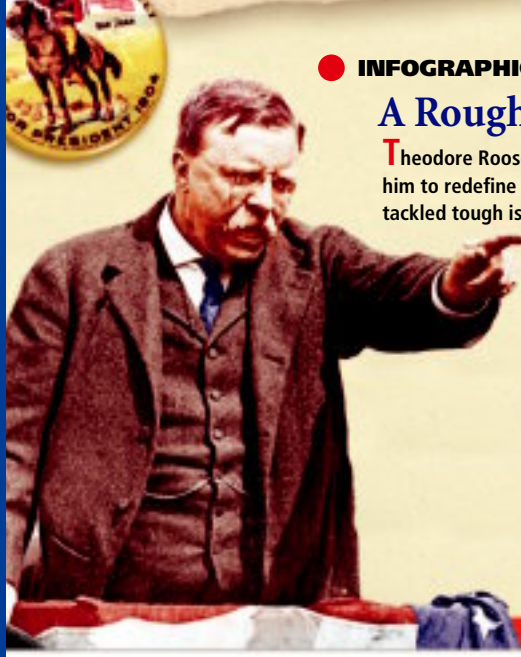
In 1901, when **Theodore Roosevelt** became President of the United States, he was only 43 years old. However, Roosevelt had packed quite a lot into those years, gaining a reputation for being smart, energetic, and opinionated. The sickly child of wealthy parents, he had used his family's resources to develop both his strength and his mind. Observers said he generated so much energy that if you met him, you left the event with bits of his personality "stuck to your clothes."

Roosevelt Rises to the Presidency Roosevelt had graduated with honors from Harvard University in 1880. He spent only a few months studying law at Columbia University before being elected to the New York State Assembly. After three years' service there, and after the deaths of both his mother and his wife, Alice, Roosevelt retired to a ranch in the West. There he developed a love of the wilderness.

INFOGRAPHIC

A Rough Rider in the White House

Theodore Roosevelt's energetic leadership style enabled him to redefine the presidency. He took on industry and tackled tough issues. Roosevelt used his presidential power to bust illegal monopolies, reduce abusive business practices, and make a symbolic statement against segregation.



This 1909 cartoon shows ▶ Roosevelt's differing approaches to "good" and "bad" trusts.

Roosevelt could not remain long out of the spotlight, however. By 1889, he had returned to politics. As president of New York City's Board of Police Commissioners, he gained fame by fighting corruption. President William McKinley noticed him and named him Assistant Secretary of the Navy. When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, Roosevelt resigned the post to form the Rough Riders, a volunteer cavalry unit that became famous during the war.

After the end of the conflict, the young war hero was elected governor of New York, where he pushed for Progressive reforms. His reform efforts annoyed Republican leaders in the state, though. They convinced McKinley to choose Roosevelt as his running mate so Roosevelt would leave New York—and them—alone. McKinley was reelected President in 1900, but within a few months he was assassinated, and Roosevelt became President. Roosevelt soon dominated public attention. Journalists vied for interviews with him and children begged their parents for a teddy bear, the new stuffed animal named for him.

Vocabulary Builder
dominate – (DAHM ih nayt) *v.* to have a commanding place or position in

Roosevelt greatly expanded the power of the President. He used his office and its powers to convince Americans of the need for change and to push through his reform proposals. He called his program the **Square Deal,** and its goals were to keep the wealthy and powerful from taking advantage of small business owners and the poor. His idea of fair government did not mean that everyone would get rich or that the government should take care of the lazy. He compared his Square Deal to a hand of cards.

Primary Source "When I say I believe in a square deal, I do not mean to give every man the best hand. If good cards do not come to any man, or if they do come, and he has not got the power to play them, that is his affair. All I mean is that there shall be no crookedness in the dealing."

—Theodore Roosevelt, 1905

Checkpoint **What did Roosevelt want his Square Deal program to achieve?**

The illustration shows that ▶ in 1901, Booker T. Washington accepted Roosevelt's invitation to dinner. Roosevelt's actions angered those who favored segregation.

◀ "Patent medications" sometimes made fraudulent claims or contained harmful chemicals. Roosevelt helped restore consumer confidence by supporting laws that regulated the food and drug industries.

Thinking Critically

1. **Analyze Visuals** Look at the image of Roosevelt's dinner with Washington. Why would the artist have placed a painting of Abraham Lincoln in the background?
2. **Make Generalizations** Using the information in these visuals, make one generalization about Theodore Roosevelt as President.

Trustbusting and Regulating Industry

Roosevelt often stepped in with the authority and power of the federal government. One example was in 1902, when Pennsylvania coal miners went on strike. The miners wanted a pay raise and a shorter workday. Roosevelt sympathized with the overworked miners, but he knew that a steady supply of coal was needed to keep factories running and homes warm. He wanted the strike ended quickly.

First, Roosevelt tried to get mine owners to listen to workers' concerns. When this failed, he threatened to send federal troops to take control of the mines and to run them with federal employees. His threat forced the mine owners to give the miners a small pay raise and a nine-hour workday. For the first time, the federal government had stepped in to help workers in a labor dispute.

The coal strike was one of many steps Roosevelt took to control the power of corporations. Within a year, Roosevelt convinced Congress to establish the Department of Commerce and Labor to monitor businesses engaged in interstate commerce and to keep capitalists from abusing their power.

Roosevelt Takes on the Railroads The cost of shipping freight on railroads had been an issue since the 1870s. Railroad companies could charge whatever they wanted. The railroads' power was especially troublesome for western farmers. They had no other way to move their products to eastern markets.

In 1887, Congress had created the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to oversee rail charges for shipments that passed through more than one state. The ICC was supposed to make sure that all shippers were charged the same amounts. By 1900, though, the Supreme Court had stripped away most of the ICC's power. So Roosevelt pushed Congress to pass the Elkins Act in 1903, which imposed fines on railroads that gave special rates to favored shippers. In 1906, he got Congress to pass the **Hepburn Act,** which gave the ICC strong enforcement powers. This law gave the government the authority to set and limit shipping costs. The act also set maximum prices for ferries, bridge tolls, and oil pipelines.

Roosevelt Enforces the Sherman Antitrust Act It did not take long for the President and his administration to earn a reputation as "trustbusters." In response to an antitrust suit filed by Roosevelt's attorney general, the Supreme Court ruled in 1904 that the Northern Securities Company—a big railroad company—was an illegal trust. The decision forced the company to split into smaller companies. The next year, the Court found that a beef trust and several powerful agricultural companies broke antitrust laws.

Roosevelt was not interested in bringing down all large companies. He saw a difference between "good trusts" and "bad trusts." Big businesses could often be more efficient than small ones, he believed. Big business was bad, he said, only if it bullied smaller outfits or cheated consumers. So he supported powerful corporations as long as they did business fairly. His supporters called him a "trust-tamer," but some wealthy Progressives criticized his trustbusting.

Regulating Food and Drug Industries In 1906, Upton Sinclair published his novel *The Jungle.* His descriptions of the filthy, unhealthy conditions in meatpacking plants revolted the public and infuriated the President. Roosevelt urged Congress to pass the **Meat Inspection Act** that same year. It provided federal agents to inspect any meat sold across state lines and required federal inspection of meat-processing plants. Today, when we eat lunchmeat or grilled chicken, we trust that federal inspectors have monitored the plant where it is produced. If there is a serious problem, the government can force the meatpacker to pull the product off the shelves before many people become sick. This regulation is one lasting result of Progressives' insistence that the government take responsibility for food safety.

The **Pure Food and Drug Act** placed the same controls on other foods and on medicines. It also banned the interstate shipment of impure food and the mislabeling of food and drugs. Today, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) still enforces this law and others. The FDA monitors companies to make sure people are not hurt by dangerous substances or dishonest labels. For example, before a drug can be sold, it must be tested and approved by the FDA.

✓ **Checkpoint** **What impact did Roosevelt's actions have on the government's role in the economy?**

The Government Manages the Environment

Roosevelt's deep reverence for nature also shaped his policies. The books he published on hunting and the rugged West reflected his fascination with the competition between humans and the wilderness. He was pleased that the federal government had established Yellowstone National Park in 1872 to protect wildlife, and he admired California naturalist **John Muir,** whose efforts had led Congress to create Yosemite National Park in 1890.

Should National Forests Be Conserved or Preserved? In 1891, Congress had given the President the power to protect timberlands by setting aside land as federal forests. Following Muir's advice, Roosevelt closed off more than 100 million acres of forestland. However, the President did not agree with Muir that all wild areas should be preserved, or left untouched. Some wild lands held valuable resources, and Roosevelt thought those resources were meant to be used. This view became clear in his forest policy. In typical Progressive style, he called on experts to draw up plans for both conserving and using the forests.

Roosevelt drew on the "rational use" ideas of **Gifford Pinchot,** who led the Division of Forestry in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Pinchot recommended a different approach—that forests be preserved for public use. By this, he meant

Vocabulary Builder
rational – (RASH uhn uhl) *adj.* relating to or based on reason; reasonable

National Land Conservation

Geography Interactive
For: Interactive map
Web Code: nep-0407

In 1892, John Muir helped found the Sierra Club to help people enjoy California's wild places and to lobby for protection of natural resources.

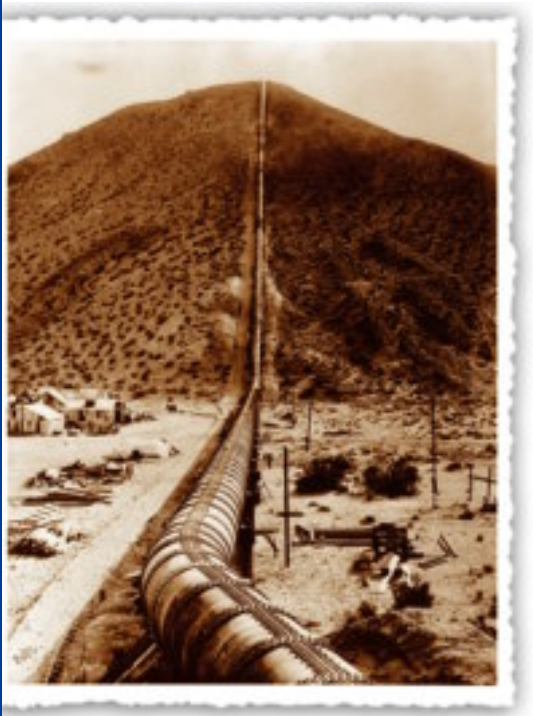
Primary Source "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings, Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves. As age comes on, one source of enjoyment after another is closed, but nature's sources never fail."

—John Muir, *Our National Parks,* 1901

Map Skills The land conservation movement of the Progressive Era led to the conservation of millions of acres of United States land.

1. **Human-Environment Interaction** How does preserving land for national parks and forests benefit people?
2. **Regions** What region of the country has the greatest area of conservation lands? Why do you think this is so?

President Theodore Roosevelt and conservationist John Muir at California's Yosemite National Park in 1903



Los Angeles Aqueduct
Massive water projects carry water from reservoirs and lakes to distant cities and farmland. *Why would some people oppose redirecting water in such ways?*

that forests should be protected so that trees would have time to mature into good lumber. Then, the protected areas should be logged for wood to build houses and new areas placed under protection. "The object of our forest policy," explained Pinchot, "is not to preserve the forests because they are refuges for the wild creatures of the wilderness, but rather they are the making of prosperous homes." Pinchot's views came to dominate American policies toward natural resources.

Roosevelt Changes Water Policy A highly controversial natural resource issue was water. Over centuries, Native Americans had used various irrigation methods to bring water to the arid Southwest. The situation changed in the late 1800s, when prospectors began mining and farming in Utah, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, and California. Mining machinery required a great deal of water, and systems of sharing water used by Mexican Americans were fought by people and businesses moving into these states. Private irrigation companies came to the area, staked claims to sections of riverbeds and redirected the water so farmers could revive—or "reclaim"—dried-up fields. Bitter fights developed over who should own water rights and how the water should be shared.

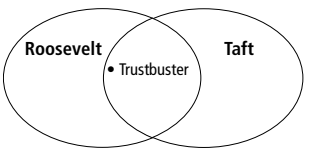
Roosevelt sprang into action on this issue. He listened to Nevada representative Francis Newlands, who wanted the federal government to help western states build huge reservoirs to hold and to conserve water. Roosevelt pushed Congress for a law that would allow it.

In 1902, Congress passed the **National Reclamation Act,** which gave the federal government the power to decide where and how water would be distributed. The government would build and manage dams that would create reservoirs, generate power, and direct water flow. This would make water from one state's rivers and streams available to farmers in other states. The full effect of the Reclamation Act was felt over the next few decades, as water management projects created huge reservoirs and lakes where there had been dry canyons. Examples include the Salt Valley Project in Arizona and the Roosevelt Dam and Hoover Dam on the Colorado River.

✓ **Checkpoint** **How did Roosevelt's policies affect the environment?**

NoteTaking

Reading Skill: Compare and Contrast As you read, fill in the Venn diagram with similarities and differences between Roosevelt and Taft.



Roosevelt and Taft Differ

Roosevelt left the presidency after two terms in office, saying he wished to enjoy private life. He was still a powerful force in the Republican Party, however, and he used that power to help Secretary of War William Howard Taft win the presidency in 1908. Roosevelt expected Taft to continue his programs of managing business and natural resources. Political cartoonists made caricatures of Roosevelt handing over what he called "my policies" to Taft, who seemed to have no ideas of his own.

Taft Takes His Own Course But Taft soon set his own agenda. He approved the Payne-Aldrich Act (1909), which did not lower tariffs as much as Roosevelt had wanted. He also pushed Congress to pass the Mann-Elkins Act (1910), which gave the government control over telephone and telegraph rates. He encouraged Congress to propose an income tax. Perhaps, most importantly,

Taft's Justice Department brought lawsuits against twice as many corporations as Roosevelt's had done. As a result, in 1911, the Supreme Court "busted" the trust built by the Standard Oil Company. But Taft also supported what the Court called its "rule of reason," which relaxed the hard line set by the Sherman Antitrust Act. The rule of reason allowed big monopolies so long as they did not "unreasonably" squeeze out smaller companies. Roosevelt publicly criticized these decisions. Then, Taft's attorney general sued to force U.S. Steel to sell a coal company it had bought. Roosevelt, who had approved the purchase of the company, fumed.

Taft further infuriated Roosevelt and other Progressives in the Republican Party when he fired Gifford Pinchot for publicly criticizing Secretary of the Interior Richard Ballinger. Pinchot charged that Ballinger, who opposed Roosevelt's conservation policies, had worked with business interests to sell federal land rich in coal deposits in Alaska.

Analyzing Political Cartoons

Taft in the White House Theodore Roosevelt looks on as President Taft is entangled in troubles.

1. What details illustrate Taft's troubles?
2. What does the cartoon suggest about Roosevelt's reaction to Taft's situation?

Roosevelt Strikes Back Roosevelt began traveling the country speaking about what he called the **New Nationalism**—a program to restore the government's trustbusting power. (See an excerpt from Roosevelt's New Nationalism speech at the end of this book.) Declaring himself as "strong as a bull moose," Roosevelt vowed to tackle the trusts in a third presidential term. The Taft-Roosevelt battle split the Republican Party as an election neared. Progressives bolted from the Republican party and set up the **Progressive Party.** Reformer Jane Addams nominated Roosevelt as the Progressive Party's candidate for the 1912 presidential election. The Republicans nominated Taft. A bitter election loomed.

✓ **Checkpoint How did William Howard Taft's policies compare with Theodore Roosevelt's?**

SECTION 4 Assessment

Progress Monitoring *Online*
For: Self-test with vocabulary practice
Web Code: nea-0408

Comprehension

1. **Terms** Explain how each of the following acts and policies reflects Progressivism's influence.
   - Square Deal
   - Hepburn Act
   - Meat Inspection Act
   - Pure Food and Drug Act
   - National Reclamation Act
   - New Nationalism
2. **NoteTaking Reading Skill: Identify Main Ideas** Use your concept web to answer the Section Focus Question: What did Roosevelt think government should do for citizens?

Writing About History

3. **Quick Write: Present a Point of View** Choose one of the industries that President Roosevelt regulated. Imagine that you are a worker or business owner in the industry. In one or two paragraphs, describe your reaction to the President's actions. Use details to relate the effect of the government's actions on your work.

Critical Thinking

4. **Recognize Causes** Why might Theodore Roosevelt's push for reforms have angered some political leaders?
5. **Apply Information** How did Roosevelt's use of presidential and federal power differ from that of earlier Presidents? Give two examples.
6. **Analyze** How did Theodore Roosevelt's national forest policy reflect his ideas about conservation and preservation?
7. **Draw Conclusions** Do you think Roosevelt's public criticisms of Taft were justified? Why or why not?