

Reagan and the New Conservatism

TOPIC SUMMARY

In the 1980s, there was a resurgence of conservatism, as mainstream society reacted to the social upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s. Republican Ronald Reagan was elected President in 1980. For some, he symbolized the simplicity, confidence and traditional religious values of an older America. The 1980s was also a period of economic growth, tax cuts, and cuts in social welfare spending. Because Reagan also spent huge amounts on a military build-up, however, the government budget deficit had climbed to about \$200 billion by the time he left office.

Chronicling Major Events



Layered-Look Book

Have students research the foreign policy record of Presidents Ronald Reagan. Ask students to focus on policies for different countries discussed in their textbook, such as Iran, Central America, and the Soviet Union. Students should summarize their findings in a Layered Foldable, briefly describing the policy for each nation and describing its impact.

Materials Needed: two sheets of 8.5" x 11" paper, stapler.

Analyzing Information

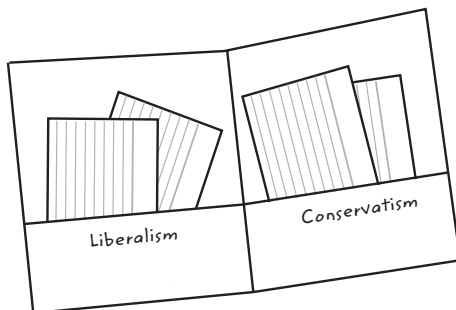
The Reagan Revolution	Before Reagan	Reagan Era	After Reagan
Domestic Policy			
Foreign Policy			

Folded Chart

Ask students to create a Folded Chart to reflect the changes in American government under President Ronald Reagan. The students' Foldables should list domestic and foreign policy for three eras: the decade or so before the Reagan era, the Reagan administration, and the post-Reagan years.

Materials Needed: one sheet of 11" x 17" paper.

Identifying Ideologies



Two-Pocket Book

Students can come to a quicker understanding of political ideology by creating this Foldable. Have students take notes on the ideas and values of liberalism and conservatism. Students should be as specific as possible, giving examples that relate to different areas of life, that is, the political, the economic, and the social. These characteristics can be listed on 3" x 5" cards and organized in a Three-Pocket Foldable.

Materials Needed: 3" x 5" note cards, one sheet of 11" x 17" paper, glue.