Americans in the 1960s sought to remake their society. African Americans protested for civil rights and social equality and were soon joined by women’s groups, Hispanics, Native Americans, and the disabled, all of whom demanded more equal treatment. At the same time, the federal government launched several new programs, including Medicare, designed to end poverty; and the Supreme Court took a more active role in society, issuing important rulings on civil rights.
Demonstrators block the entrance to the House of Representatives as part of the “May Day” protest against the Vietnam War, 1971.
The New Frontier and the Great Society
1961–1968

SECTION 1  The New Frontier
SECTION 2  JFK and the Cold War
SECTION 3  The Great Society

1961
- Bay of Pigs invasion
- Peace Corps is created

Kennedy 1961–1963

1961
- Construction of Berlin Wall begins

1963
- Kennedy is assassinated; Johnson becomes president

Nov. 1963

1964
- South Africa's Nelson Mandela sentenced to life in prison

Future President John F. Kennedy waves to a crowd while campaigning, January 1960.
MAKING CONNECTIONS

Can Government Fix Society?

President John F. Kennedy and President Lyndon B. Johnson supported programs intended to end poverty and racism at home and promote democracy abroad. The War on Poverty and the Great Society programs marked the greatest increase in the federal government’s role in society since the New Deal. Kennedy’s aid programs for developing nations also marked a dramatic shift in American foreign policy towards promoting economic development abroad.

- How do you think Presidents Kennedy and Johnson changed American society? What programs from the 1960s still exist today?

Categorizing Information

Make a Four-Door Book Foldable listing the various programs of Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society. Sort the programs into these four categories: War on Poverty, Health and Welfare, Education, and Consumer and Environmental Protection. As you read the chapter, list programs inside your Foldable under the four major categories.

1965
- Congress establishes Medicare and Medicaid

1966
- Congress passes the Child Nutrition Act
- Indira Gandhi becomes prime minister of India

1968
- Lyndon Johnson decides not to run for reelection
- Student riots paralyze France

Visit glencoe.com to preview Chapter 17.
In the presidential election campaign of 1960, John F. Kennedy promised to move the nation into “the New Frontier.” After narrowly winning the election, Kennedy succeeded in getting only part of his agenda enacted.

The Election of 1960

In 1960 a youthful John F. Kennedy narrowly defeated Richard M. Nixon in the presidential election.

HISTORY AND YOU Have you ever watched a televised political debate? Did you pay attention to the candidates’ looks and mannerisms? Read on to learn how television changed people’s perception of candidates.

On September 26, 1960, at 9:30 P.M. Eastern Standard Time, an estimated 75 million people sat indoors, focused on their television sets, watching the first televised presidential debate. The debate marked a new era of television politics.

During the 1960 presidential race, both parties made substantial use of television. The Democrats spent more than $6 million on television and radio spots, while the Republicans spent more than $7.5 million. Not everyone was happy with this new style of campaigning. Television news commentator Eric Sevareid complained that the candidates had become “packaged products” and declared, “the Processed Politician has finally arrived.”

The candidates in the first televised debate differed in many ways. The Democratic nominee, John F. Kennedy, was a Catholic from a wealthy and influential Massachusetts family. Richard M. Nixon, the Republican nominee and Eisenhower’s vice-president, was a Quaker from California; he had grown up in a family that struggled financially. Kennedy seemed outgoing and relaxed, while Nixon struck many as formal and even stiff in manner.

The campaign centered on the economy and the Cold War. Although the candidates presented different styles, they differed little on these two issues. Both promised to boost the economy, and both portrayed themselves as “Cold Warriors,” determined to stop the forces of communism. Kennedy expressed concern about a suspected “missile gap,” claiming the United States lagged behind the Soviets in weaponry. Nixon warned that the Democrats’ fiscal policies would boost inflation, and that only he had the necessary foreign policy experience to guide the nation.

Kennedy’s Catholic faith became an issue, as Al Smith’s Catholicism had in 1928. The United States had never had a Catholic president, and many Protestants had concerns about Kennedy. Kennedy decided to confront this issue openly in a speech.
“I believe in an America where the separation of the church and state is absolute,” he said, “where no Catholic prelate would tell the president, should he be a Catholic, how to act.”

The four televised debates influenced the election’s outcome, one of the closest in American history. Kennedy won the popular vote by 119,000 out of 68 million votes cast, and the Electoral College by 303 votes to 219.

Despite his narrow victory, John F. Kennedy captured the imagination of the American public as few presidents had before him. During the campaign, many had been taken with Kennedy’s youth and optimism, and his Inaugural Address reinforced this impression.

In the speech, the new president declared that “the torch has been passed to a new generation” and called on citizens to take a more active role in making the nation better. “My fellow Americans,” he exclaimed, “ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.”

Identifying What were the two main issues of the 1960 presidential election?
Southern Democrats—who were a large part of the Democratic majority in Congress—viewed the New Frontier as too expensive and, together with Republicans, were able to defeat many of Kennedy’s proposals. Senator Everett Dirksen, Republican minority leader from Illinois, claimed that Kennedy’s efforts to increase the power of the federal government would push the nation down an ominous path.

**Successes and Setbacks**

Kennedy did achieve some victories, particularly in his efforts to improve the economy. Although the economy had soared through much of the 1950s, it had slowed by the end of the decade. In an effort to increase economic growth and create more jobs, Kennedy advocated deficit spending. The new president convinced Congress to invest more funds in defense and space exploration. Such spending did indeed create more jobs and stimulate economic growth.

In addition, Kennedy asked businesses to hold down prices and labor leaders to hold down pay increases. The labor unions in the steel industry agreed to reduce their demands for higher wages, but several steel companies raised prices sharply. In response, Kennedy threatened to have the Department of Defense buy cheaper foreign steel, and instructed the Justice Department to investigate whether the steel industry was fixing prices. The steel companies backed down and cut their prices, but the victory had strained the president’s relations with the business community.

Kennedy also pushed for a cut in tax rates. When opponents argued that a tax cut would help only the wealthy, Kennedy asserted that lower taxes meant businesses would have more money to expand, which would create new jobs and benefit everybody. “A rising tide lifts all boats,” Kennedy explained to illustrate how tax cuts would help all Americans.

Congress refused to pass the tax cut because of fears that it would cause inflation. Congress also blocked his plans for health insurance for senior citizens and federal aid to education. However, they did agree to Kennedy’s request to raise the minimum wage and his proposal for an Area Redevelopment Act and a Housing Act. These acts helped to create jobs and build low-income housing in poor areas.

**Expanding Women’s Rights**

The issue of women’s rights also received attention during the Kennedy administration. In 1961 Kennedy created the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women. The commission called for federal action against gender discrimination and affirmed the right of women to equally paid employment. The commission proposed the Equal Pay Act, which Kennedy signed in 1963. The commission also inspired the creation of similar groups on the state level to study the status of women.

Although he never appointed a woman to his cabinet, a number of women worked in prominent positions in the Kennedy administration, including Esther Peterson, assistant secretary of labor and director of the Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor.

**A New View of the Disabled**

In 1961 Kennedy convened the President’s Panel on Mental Retardation. The panel’s first report, containing 112 recommendations, called for funding of research into developmental disabilities and educational and vocational programs for people with developmental disabilities; a greater reliance on residential—as opposed to institutional—treatment centers; and grants to provide prenatal services to women in low-income groups to promote healthy pregnancies.

Responding to the report, Congress enacted the Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act of 1963. This legislation provided grants for construction of research centers; funds to train educational personnel to work with people with developmental disabilities; and grants to states for construction of mental health centers.

In 1962 Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the president’s sister, began a day camp at her home for children with developmental disabilities. Camp Shriver, as it was first known, offered people with disabilities a chance to be physically competitive. That effort later grew into the Special Olympics program. The first Special Olympics Games were held in Chicago in 1968.

**Evaluating** Why did Kennedy have difficulty getting his agenda enacted?
Background of the Cases

Although many more Americans were living in urban areas, most states had not redrawn their political districts to reflect this shift. This gave rural voters more political influence than urban voters. In *Baker v. Carr*, the Supreme Court ruled on whether federal courts had jurisdiction in lawsuits seeking to force states to redraw their electoral districts. In *Reynolds v. Sims*, the court decided whether uneven electoral districts violated the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

How the Court Ruled

In *Baker v. Carr*, the Supreme Court ruled that federal courts can hear lawsuits seeking to force state authorities to redraw electoral districts. In *Reynolds v. Sims*, the Court ruled that the inequality of representation in the Alabama legislature did violate the equal protection clause. These rulings forced states to reapportion their political districts according to the principle of “one person, one vote.”

**Primary Source**

**The Court’s Opinion**

“Legislators represent people, not trees or acres. Legislators are elected by voters, not farms or cities or economic interests. As long as ours is a representative form of government . . . the right to elect legislators in a free and unimpaired fashion is a bedrock of our political system . . . .

And, if a State should provide that the votes of citizens in one part of the State should be given two times, or five times, or 10 times the weight of votes of citizens in another part of the State, it could hardly be contended that the right to vote of those residing in the disfavored areas had not been effectively diluted.

—Justice William Brennan, Jr., writing for the court in *Reynolds v. Sims*

**Dissenting Views**

“As of 1961, the Constitutions of all but 11 States . . . recognized bases of apportionment other than geographic spread of population. . . . The consequence of today’s decision is that . . . state courts, are given blanket authority and the constitutional duty to supervise apportionment. . . . It is difficult to imagine a more intolerable and inappropriate interference by the judiciary with the independent legislatures of the States. . . . [The Court] says only that ‘legislators represent people, not trees or acres,’ . . . . But it is surely equally obvious . . . that legislators can represent their electors only by speaking for their interests—economic, social, political—many of which do reflect the place where the electors live. . . . These decisions also cut deeply into the fabric of our federalism.”

—Justice John Marshall Harlan dissenting in *Reynolds v. Sims*

**DBQ Document-Based Questions**

1. **Summarizing**  What is the main idea of the majority decision in *Reynolds v. Sims*?
2. **Explaining**  Why does Justice Harlan disagree with the majority in *Reynolds v. Sims*?
3. **Making Inferences**  How do you think reapportionment according to “one person, one vote” changed state politics?
Warren Court Reforms

**MAIN Idea** Under Chief Justice Earl Warren, the Supreme Court issued a number of decisions that altered the voting system, expanded due process, and reinterpreted aspects of the First Amendment.

**HISTORY AND YOU** Do you ever watch cop shows in which police officers read suspects their “Miranda rights”? Read on to learn about the origin of this process.

In 1953 President Eisenhower nominated Earl Warren, governor of California, to be Chief Justice of the United States. Under Warren’s leadership, the Supreme Court issued several rulings that dramatically reshaped American politics and society.

### “One Man, One Vote”

Some of the Warren Court’s more notable decisions concerned **reapportionment**, or the way in which states draw up political districts based on changes in population. By 1960, many more Americans resided in cities and suburbs than in rural areas. Yet many states had failed to change their electoral districts to reflect that population shift.

In Tennessee, for example, a rural county with only 2,340 voters had one representative in the state assembly, while an urban county with 133 times more voters had only seven. Thus, rural voters had far more political influence than urban voters. Some Tennessee voters took the matter to court and their case wound up in the Supreme Court. In *Baker v. Carr* (1962), the Court ruled that the federal courts had jurisdiction to hear lawsuits seeking to force states to redraw electoral districts.

The Supreme Court subsequently ruled, in *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964), that the current reapportionment system in most states was unconstitutional. The Warren Court required states to reapportion electoral districts along the principle of “one man, one vote,” so that all citizens’ votes would have equal weight. The decision was a momentous one, for it shifted political

### What Were the Major Decisions of the Warren Court?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil Rights</th>
<th>Declared segregation in public schools unconstitutional</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Brown v. Board of Education</em> (1954)</td>
<td>Established that federal courts can hear lawsuits seeking to force state authorities to redraw electoral districts</td>
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<td><em>Baker v. Carr</em> (1962)</td>
<td>Mandated that state legislative districts be approximately equal in population</td>
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<td><em>Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States</em> (1964)</td>
<td>Forbade state bans on interracial marriage</td>
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<td><em>Loving v. Virginia</em> (1967)</td>
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<th>Due Process</th>
<th>Ruled that unlawfully seized evidence cannot be used in a trial</th>
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<td><em>Mapp v. Ohio</em> (1961)</td>
<td>Established suspects’ right to a court-appointed attorney if suspects were unable to afford one</td>
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<td><em>Gideon v. Wainwright</em> (1963)</td>
<td>Affirmed right of the accused to an attorney during police questioning</td>
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<td><em>Escobedo v. Illinois</em> (1964)</td>
<td>Required police to inform suspects of their rights during the arrest process</td>
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<tr>
<th>Freedom of Speech and Religion</th>
<th>Banned state-mandated prayer in public schools</th>
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<td><em>Engel v. Vitale</em> (1962)</td>
<td>Banned state-mandated Bible reading in public schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Abington School District v. Schempp</em> (1963)</td>
<td>Restricted circumstances in which celebrities could sue the media</td>
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### Analyzing VISUALS

1. **Interpreting** How did *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Reynolds v. Sims* affect the nation?
2. **Summarizing** What three major policy areas did the Warren Court’s decisions affect?
power from rural and often conservative areas to urban areas, where more liberal voters resided. The Court’s decision also boosted the political power of African Americans and Hispanics, who often lived in cities.

**Extending Due Process**

In a series of rulings, the Supreme Court began to use the Fourteenth Amendment to apply the Bill of Rights to the states. Originally, the Bill of Rights applied only to the federal government. Many states had their own bills of rights, but some federal rights did not exist at the state level. The Fourteenth Amendment states that “no state shall . . . deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.” Due process means that the law may not treat individuals unfairly, arbitrarily, or unreasonably, and that courts must follow proper procedures when trying cases. Due process is meant to ensure that all people are treated the same by the legal system. The Court ruled in several cases that due process meant applying the federal bill of rights to the states.

In 1961 the Supreme Court ruled in *Mapp v. Ohio* that state courts could not consider evidence obtained in violation of the federal Constitution. In *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963), the Court ruled that a defendant in a state court had the right to a lawyer, regardless of his or her ability to pay. The following year, in *Escobedo v. Illinois*, the justices ruled that suspects must be allowed access to a lawyer and must be informed of their right to remain silent before being questioned by the police. *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966) went even further, requiring that authorities immediately inform suspects that they have the right to remain silent; that anything they say can and will be used against them in court; that they have a right to a lawyer; and that, if they cannot afford a lawyer, the court will appoint one for them. Today these warnings are known as the Miranda rights.

**Prayer and Privacy**

The Supreme Court also handed down decisions that reaffirmed the separation of church and state. The Court applied the First Amendment to the states in *Engel v. Vitale* (1962). In this ruling, the Court decided that states could not compose official prayers and require those prayers to be recited in public schools. The following year, in *Abington School District v. Schempp*, it ruled against state-mandated Bible readings in public schools. Weighing in on another issue, the Court ruled in *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) that prohibiting the sale and use of birth-control devices violated citizens’ constitutional right to privacy.

As with most rulings of the Warren Court, these decisions delighted some and deeply disturbed others. What most people did agree upon, however, was the Court’s pivotal role in shaping national policy. The Warren Court, wrote *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis, “has brought about more social change than most Congresses and most Presidents.”

**Examining** What was the significance of the “One Man, One Vote” ruling?