AP EDITION · DBQ + LEQ · CLASSROOM

1816

James Monroe vs Rufus King

A 105-minute lesson on the 1816 U.S. presidential election. Includes lesson plan, DBQ pairing, student worksheet, answer key, and discussion prompts.

ERA First Party System	ELECTORAL VOTES 217 total
WINNER James Monroe (Democratic-Republican) · 183 EV	RUNNER-UP Rufus King (Federalist) · 34 EV
KEY ISSUE Post-war nationalism; decline of the Federalist Party	TURNOUT 23.5%

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1. Cover
2. Lesson plan (105 min) + framework alignment
3. Background: vocabulary + primary source A
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7. Answer key + discussion

1816: James Monroe vs Rufus King

AP framework alignment

AP US History · Period varies by cycle · Reasoning skills: contextualization, comparison, causation, sourcing. CCSS · CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 (central ideas), RH.11-12.6 (point of view), RH.11-12.7 (multiple sources). NCSS · D2.His.5.9-12, D2.His.14.9-12, D2.His.16.9-12.

Timing

5 min	**Warm-up**	Identify two structural features of the U.S. political system by 1816 that would have made a one-party period inevitable regardless of the specific Federalist candidate. For each, identify the specific 1814-1816 development most responsible.
15 min	**Reading + vocab**	The 1816 election is the structural inflection point between the First Party System (1791-1816) and the one-party Era of Good Feelings (1817-1825). It was the last U.S. presidential election in which the Federalist Party fielded a candidate, and the first in which the Democratic-Republican coalition's structural dominance produced a result that was uncontested at the level of policy commitment. The Federalist Party's formal collapse opened a twelve-year interregnum during which all major political competition occurred within the Democratic-Republican coalition rather than between two parties. The structural conditions had been building since 1800. The Federalist Party's 1800 loss had cost it the presidency, Congress, and most state offices. The 1801-1803 Republican repeals of Federalist legislation had dismantled most of its policy agenda. The 1804 New England Essex Junto secession plot had embarrassed the party nationally. Hamilton's 1804 death had eliminated its organizing genius. The 1808 Embargo Act produced a regional Federalist recovery in New England but no national resurgence. The 1812 Federalist support for the Democratic-Republican defector DeWitt Clinton showed the party had no national candidate viable in its own right. The December 1814 Hartford Convention - in which New England Federalists secretly considered secession over the War of 1812 just as the Treaty of Ghent reached the U.S. - destroyed the party's claim to patriotic legitimacy. The Democratic-Republican Party, meanwhile, had absorbed the structural elements of the Federalist program. The April 1816 chartering of the Second Bank of the United States adopted Hamilton's 1791 First Bank design. The 1816 Tariff was the first explicitly protective U.S. tariff, shielding domestic industries that had grown during the wartime blockade. The federal program of internal improvements (the National Road, the Erie Canal's initial federal authorization) implemented Hamilton's 1791 Report on Manufactures vision through Democratic-Republican legislation. The Republican absorption of formerly Federalist policies was so complete that John Quincy Adams (a former Federalist who had switched parties in 1808) was Madison's Secretary of

State and would be Monroe's.

The Democratic-Republican congressional caucus met in Washington on March 16, 1816 to nominate the 1816 candidate. The leading contenders were Secretary of State James Monroe and Secretary of War William H. Crawford of Georgia. Crawford represented Southern resistance to the Virginia Dynasty's continued grip on the presidency; he was 44 (the youngest serious presidential candidate to that point) and widely regarded as the party's future. The caucus nominated Monroe by 65-54 - a margin much narrower than expected. The narrow margin reflected genuine intra-party tension that would resurface in the 1824 four-way election. Daniel D. Tompkins of New York was selected as Monroe's running mate.

Monroe was 58 and had the most accomplished resume of any U.S. presidential candidate. He had been a Revolutionary War officer (wounded crossing the Delaware with Washington in December 1776 and present at Valley Forge), three-term Continental Congressman, two-term U.S. senator, four-term governor of Virginia, U.S. minister to France (during which he negotiated the Louisiana Purchase), U.S. minister to Britain (during which he negotiated the failed 1807 Monroe-Pinkney Treaty), Secretary of State (1811-17), and briefly Secretary of War (1814-15, during the British burning of Washington and the Battle of New Orleans). He was the last member of the founding generation to seek the presidency. His political style was distinctively non-confrontational: he had spent his presidency-preparation years building cross-factional alliances rather than ideological positions.

The Federalist Party nominated Rufus King of New York, 61. King had been a Constitutional Convention delegate, two-term Federalist senator, U.S. minister to Britain, and the party's vice presidential candidate in both 1804 and 1808. King's 1816 nomination was a formality. The Federalist Party had no national organization. King privately doubted he could win and conducted essentially no campaign. He would return to the Senate after 1816 and serve until 1825.

The electoral count was 183 Monroe to 34 King. Monroe carried 16 of 19 states; King carried Connecticut (9), Delaware (4), Massachusetts (22) - 35 EV minus one electoral vote that was not cast due to elector death. The 1816 result was the formal death of the Federalist Party as a national force. They would never field another presidential candidate. Monroe was inaugurated March 4, 1817 outdoors at the East Portico of the U.S. Capitol - the first presidential inauguration held outdoors and the first held at the East Portico (the customary location for the next century until John F. Kennedy's 1961 inauguration).

Monroe's 1820 re-election would produce one of the most one-sided results in U.S. history: 231 electoral votes to 1 (New Hampshire elector William Plumer voted for John Quincy Adams). The 1820 result confirmed what 1816 had begun: the one-party Era of Good Feelings. The Era's political conflicts (the 1819-21 Missouri Compromise crisis over slavery extension, the 1819 Panic, the 1822 Denmark

		Vesey slave conspiracy, the tariff debates of 1820 and 1824, the 1819 McCulloch v. Maryland decision upholding the Second Bank's constitutionality) all occurred within the Democratic-Republican coalition rather than between competing parties. Historians treat the 1816 result as the formal terminus of the First Party System. The structural reasons for the one-party period that followed were three. First, the Federalist Party had no organizational footprint in the trans-Appalachian West, where most population growth was occurring. Second, the Federalist policy platform had been absorbed by the Democratic-Republican coalition, leaving no policy ground for the Federalists to occupy. Third, the Hartford Convention's timing had branded the Federalists as unpatriotic in ways that no postwar communication strategy could undo. The party system's reemergence in 1828 (with the new Democratic Party of Jackson facing the National Republican Party of John Quincy Adams) confirmed that two-party competition was the structural norm of American politics - but the structural reasons for its reemergence (Jackson's populist mobilization, the corrupt bargain of 1824, the explicit division over expanding suffrage) were entirely new rather than continuations of the First Party System.
20 min	**Source A**	Read aloud once; students annotate individually for tone, evidence, and audience.
20 min	**Source B**	Compare/contrast against Source A. Pair-share on the DBQ comparison question.
20 min	**Worksheet**	Eight questions: 5 short-answer, 2 stimulus-based MCQ, 1 long-essay framing.
20 min	**LEQ planning**	Students sketch a thesis + outline for the LEQ comparison prompt. Submit for next-day full essay.
5 min	**Closure**	Exit ticket: one sentence summarizing the comparison.

Background

Before the worksheet, review the key terms below and then read the primary source carefully. The two source-analysis questions on the worksheet (questions 6 and 7) ask you to quote from the excerpt.

Key terms

Era of Good Feelings

The 1817-1825 period of one-party Democratic-Republican government following the Federalist collapse. James Monroe was president the entire time. Phrase coined by a Boston newspaper in 1817. The "good feelings" referred to the absence of formal two-party competition rather than to actual political agreement; serious disputes over banking, tariffs, slavery extension, and internal improvements emerged throughout the period.

Virginia Dynasty

The 1801-1825 succession of Virginia-born Democratic-Republican presidents: Jefferson, Madison, Monroe. The longest single-state presidential run in U.S. history. Monroe's 1816 caucus contest (65-54 over Crawford) reflected Southern resistance to its continuation.

Tariff of 1816

The first explicitly protective U.S. tariff. Raised duties on imported manufactured goods to protect domestic industries that had grown during the wartime British blockade. Supported by Henry Clay's American System framework. Adoption of formerly Federalist economic policy by the Democratic-Republican Congress.

Missouri Compromise

The 1820 federal law admitting Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, and banning slavery in remaining Louisiana Purchase territory north of 36°30' (Missouri's southern boundary). The first explicit sectional compromise over slavery extension. Foreshadowed the 1850s breakdown.

Corrupt Bargain

The 1824-1825 episode in which the House of Representatives chose John Quincy Adams as president despite

Hartford Convention

The December 15, 1814 - January 5, 1815 secret New England Federalist meeting in Hartford, Connecticut. Considered secession over the War of 1812; demanded constitutional amendments restricting federal war powers and limiting the Virginia Dynasty. Destroyed the Federalist Party as a national force just before the war ended victoriously.

Second Bank of the United States

The federal national bank chartered April 10, 1816 by President Madison's Democratic-Republican Congress. Modeled directly on Hamilton's 1791 First Bank, which Jefferson and Madison had originally opposed on strict-construction grounds. A signal of Democratic-Republican adoption of formerly Federalist economic policies.

McCulloch v. Maryland

The 1819 Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of the Second Bank of the United States and rejecting state taxation of federal institutions. Chief Justice Marshall's opinion endorsed Hamilton's 1791 loose-construction theory of federal implied powers - a complete reversal of Jefferson's 1791 strict-construction position.

Monroe Doctrine

The December 2, 1823 announcement (in Monroe's annual message to Congress) declaring the Western Hemisphere closed to further European colonization. Drafted primarily by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams. The first U.S. claim of regional hemispheric leadership.

Andrew Jackson having won pluralities of both popular and electoral votes. Henry Clay (who had been eliminated in the House contingent election) became Adams's Secretary of State - widely perceived as the "corrupt bargain" that mobilized the Jacksonian movement.

First Inaugural Address

JAMES MONROE, MARCH 4, 1817

Monroe took the oath outdoors at the East Portico of the U.S. Capitol - the first presidential inauguration held outdoors and the first held at the East Portico (the customary location for the next 144 years). The address was strikingly nationalist and confident. Monroe positioned the United States as a successful constitutional experiment that had matured into a stable republic. The "flourished beyond example" framing claimed structural success that the Federalist remnant could not credibly contest. The contrast with Madison's wartime 1813 Second Inaugural was deliberate.

> *"During a period fraught with difficulties and marked by very extraordinary events the United States have flourished beyond example. Their citizens individually have been happy, and the nation prosperous. Under this Constitution our commerce has been wisely regulated with foreign nations and between the States. New States have been admitted into our Union. Our territory has been enlarged by fair and honorable treaty, and with great advantage to the original States; the States, respectively protected by the National Government under a mild paternal system against foreign dangers, and enjoying within their separate spheres, by a wise partition of power, a just proportion of the sovereignty."*

Monroe, "First Inaugural Address" (Washington, DC, March 4, 1817). Public domain.

Document-based question

Source A is on the Background page; Source B is below. Use both as evidence for the worksheet's source-analysis questions and the LEQ.

SOURCE A

First Inaugural Address

JAMES MONROE, MARCH 4, 1817

"During a period fraught with difficulties and marked by very extraordinary events the United States have flourished beyond example. Their citizens individually have been happy, and the nation prosperous. Under this Constitution our commerce has been wisely regulated with foreign nations and between the States. New States have been admitted into our Union. Our territory has been enlarged by fair and honorable treaty, and with great advantage to the original States; the States, respectively protected by the National Government under a mild paternal system against foreign dangers, and enjoying within their separate spheres, by a wise partition of power, a just proportion of the sovereignty."

Monroe, "First Inaugural Address" (Washington, DC, March 4, 1817). Public domain.

SOURCE B

Monroe Doctrine (Annual Message to Congress)

JAMES MONROE, DECEMBER 2, 1823

"The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States."

Monroe, "Seventh Annual Message" (Washington, DC, December 2, 1823). Public domain.

The 1816 Election

Answer the eight questions below. Source A is on the Background page; Source B is on the DBQ Pair page.

QUESTION 1 · SHORT-ANSWER

Identify the key phrase in Source A (Monroe's 1817 Inaugural) that claims structural success for the U.S. constitutional experiment. Quote it verbatim.

QUESTION 2 · SHORT-ANSWER

Identify the key phrase in Source B (Monroe Doctrine) that excludes European powers from further colonization in the Americas. Quote it verbatim.

QUESTION 3 · SHORT-ANSWER

Both sources frame the United States as successful and stable, but they make different claims about the country's relationship to the rest of the world. Identify the specific claim each source makes.

QUESTION 4 · SHORT-ANSWER

Source A was delivered at the start of the Era of Good Feelings (March 1817); Source B at the end (December 1823). What does the temporal gap tell you about how the political character of the Era evolved across its arc?

QUESTION 5 · SHORT-ANSWER

Source B is now treated as the founding text of U.S. hemispheric foreign policy. Identify one specific 1819-1823 international development that made the Doctrine's declaration politically credible.

QUESTION 6 · MULTIPLE-CHOICE

Which 1819 Supreme Court decision upheld the constitutionality of the Second Bank of the United States?

( ) A. Marbury v. Madison
( ) B. McCulloch v. Maryland
( ) C. Gibbons v. Ogden
( ) D. Dartmouth College v. Woodward

QUESTION 7 · MULTIPLE-CHOICE

The 1820 federal law admitting Missouri as a slave state, Maine as a free state, and banning slavery in remaining Louisiana Purchase territory north of 36°30' was the:

( ) A. Compromise of 1850
( ) B. Missouri Compromise
( ) C. Northwest Ordinance
( ) D. Kansas-Nebraska Act

QUESTION 8 · SHORT-ANSWER

Sketch your thesis sentence for the LEQ (next page). State your position: was the Era of Good Feelings consolidation, interregnum, or imperial beginning? Identify one piece of evidence from each source you will use.

Long-essay-question

LEQ PROMPT

Monroe's 1817 First Inaugural (Source A) frames the United States as a successful constitutional experiment that has "flourished beyond example" since 1789. The 1823 Monroe Doctrine (Source B) frames the same United States as a regional hemispheric leader entitled to exclude European powers from the Americas. Using BOTH sources and your knowledge of the 1816-1828 period, evaluate the extent to which the Era of Good Feelings represented (a) the structural consolidation of a stable one-party constitutional democracy, (b) a contingent interregnum produced by the Federalist collapse that would prove unsustainable once the Democratic-Republican coalition split into factions, or (c) the beginning of an American hemispheric-imperial project that the one-party period made politically possible. Defend a clear thesis.

GRADING RUBRIC

Thesis (1 pt): must take a defensible position on the consolidation-vs-interregnum-vs-imperial axis. Contextualization (1 pt): mention at least two of the Missouri Compromise, the Panic of 1819, McCulloch v. Maryland, the Adams-Onis Treaty, the corrupt bargain. Evidence (2 pts): must quote at least one phrase from each source. Analysis (1 pt): must explicitly evaluate the extent rather than treating the three framings as equivalent. Total 5 points.

Answer key

QUESTION 1

Accept any of: "the United States have flourished beyond example", "their citizens individually have been happy, and the nation prosperous", "under this Constitution our commerce has been wisely regulated", "our territory has been enlarged by fair and honorable treaty". The "flourished beyond example" phrase is the cleanest articulation of structural success.

Monroe's framing claimed the U.S. constitutional experiment had succeeded by every available metric. The Federalist remnant could not credibly contest the claim.

QUESTION 2

Accept any of: "the American continents ... are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers", "we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety", "we could not view any interposition ... by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States". The first phrase is the most explicit articulation.

The Monroe Doctrine's no-further-colonization principle remains a foundational text of U.S. foreign policy. AP students should recognize it as a deliberate constitutional claim with structural consequences.

QUESTION 3

Source A claims the U.S. is a successful constitutional democracy that has flourished domestically and acquired territory through legitimate diplomacy. Source B claims the U.S. is a regional hemispheric leader entitled to exclude European powers from further intervention in the Americas. The first framing is inward-facing (constitutional success at home); the second is outward-facing (hemispheric leadership abroad). The two framings are politically compatible but structurally different in scope: Source A defines the U.S. as a successful nation among others; Source B defines the U.S. as a hemispheric power claiming regional exclusivity.

AP students should be able to identify the two framings as scope-distinct rather than ideologically opposed.

QUESTION 4

The 1817-1823 gap covers the 1819 Panic (first major U.S. financial crisis), McCulloch v. Maryland (1819, judicial validation of federal power), the Adams-Onis Treaty (February 1819, acquired Florida), the Missouri Compromise (1820, first explicit sectional slavery compromise), and the 1822 Denmark Vesey slave conspiracy. The temporal gap reveals an Era that became less politically uniform as it progressed. Monroe's 1817 confidence in structural success was tested by the Panic and the Missouri Compromise debates. By 1823 the Doctrine's hemispheric framing was both an external assertion of U.S. power and an internal distraction from the slavery-extension question that the Missouri Compromise had merely postponed.

AP students should recognize the Era's internal political evolution. The 1817 confidence and the 1823 hemispheric assertion bookend a period of significant intra-party conflict.

QUESTION 5

Accept any of: (1) The 1819 Adams-Onis Treaty acquiring Florida from Spain (the Doctrine's no-further-colonization principle excluded any reversal of this acquisition). (2) The 1810-1823 wave of Latin American independence movements (Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, etc.) - the Doctrine protected these new republics. (3) The 1822 French Bourbon restoration and the Quintuple Alliance's consideration of intervention to restore Spanish colonial authority. (4) The 1821 Russian Ukase claiming Pacific Northwest coast to 51°N - the Doctrine's territorial reach addressed this directly. The Latin American independence wave is the strongest contextual driver.

AP students should be able to identify the specific 1819-1823 events that made the Doctrine politically necessary rather than abstract.

QUESTION 6

McCulloch v. Maryland.

The 1819 Supreme Court decision upheld the constitutionality of the Second Bank of the United States and rejected state taxation of federal institutions. Chief Justice Marshall's opinion endorsed Hamilton's 1791 loose-construction theory of federal implied powers - a complete reversal of Jefferson's 1791 strict-construction position.

QUESTION 7

Missouri Compromise.

The 1820 federal law admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, and banned slavery in remaining Louisiana Purchase territory north of 36°30' (Missouri's southern boundary). The first explicit sectional compromise over slavery extension.

QUESTION 8

Open-ended thesis sketch. Acceptable answers should: (1) state a clear position on the consolidation-vs-interregnum-vs-imperial axis, (2) avoid treating them as equivalent, (3) signal at least one piece of evidence from each source. Award credit for any defensible thesis that meets these three conditions.

The thesis sketch is preparatory. The LEQ rubric evaluates the full essay.