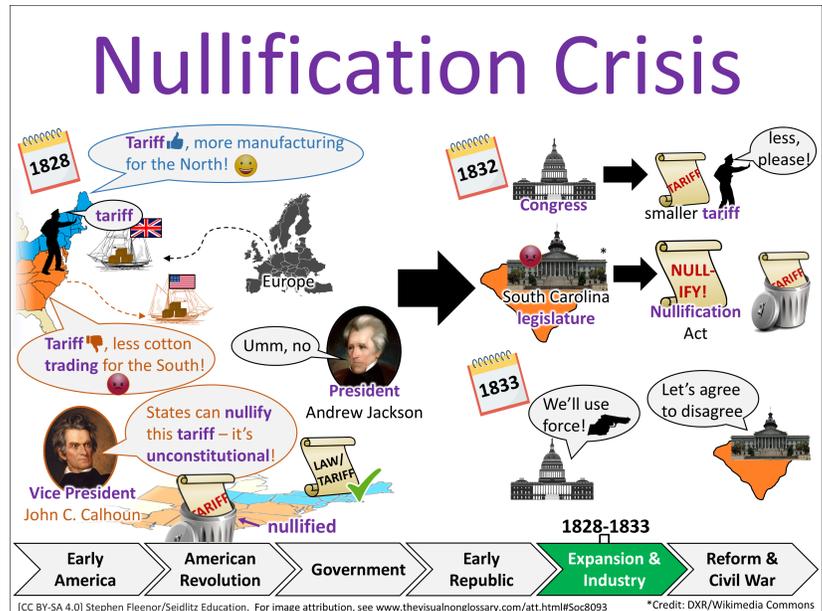


State vs. Country: The Fight Over Tariffs

Purpose for Reading: The purpose for reading is to explore how economic and political disagreements during the Nullification Crisis revealed tensions in the United States.

Pay Attention To:

- Differences in how the North and South felt about the tariff
- Actions taken by South Carolina
- Reactions of federal leaders like Andrew Jackson
- Examples of states' rights
- Any compromises or resolutions



In the 1800s, the U.S. government made a high **tariff** to help Northern businesses. This meant imported goods were more expensive. The **South** didn't like it because they bought a lot of goods from other countries. They thought the **tariff** was unfair and hurt their economy.

South Carolina's legislature said they didn't have to follow the law. They passed the **Nullification Act** to cancel the **tariff**. They believed in **states' rights**, which means states can make some decisions on their own.

Vice President John C. Calhoun agreed with South Carolina. But President **Andrew Jackson** said only the U.S. government could decide if a law was fair. He said he would use force if South Carolina didn't follow the law.

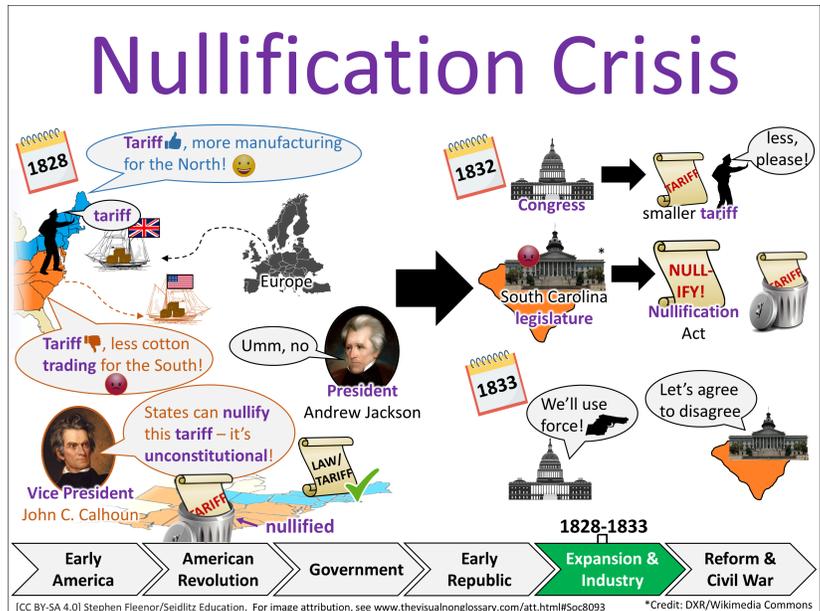
To stop fighting, Congress changed the **tariff**, and South Carolina took back the **Nullification Act**. The **Nullification Crisis** ended, but it showed the country had big problems with power between states and the government.

The Nullification Crisis

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In the early 1800s, tensions were growing between different parts of the United States. One of the most serious events during this time was the **Nullification Crisis**, a political conflict that tested the limits of **states' rights**. The trouble began when the federal government passed a high **tariff**, or tax, on imported goods. This tariff helped Northern industries by making foreign products more expensive. However, the Southern states, which relied on imported goods and traded crops like cotton, felt the tariff hurt their economy.

South Carolina's legislature believed the tariff was unfair and harmful to their section of the country. In response, they passed the **Nullification Act** in 1832, claiming they had the right to cancel, or "nullify," any federal law they believed was unconstitutional. This action reflected the idea of **states' rights**—the belief that each state had certain powers the federal government could not take away.

The situation became even more serious when **Vice President John C. Calhoun**, who was from South Carolina, supported the idea of nullification. Calhoun believed

that the federal government should not have the power to force states to obey laws they disagreed with. President **Andrew Jackson**, however, strongly opposed South Carolina's decision. He believed that only the federal government had the authority to decide whether laws were constitutional. Jackson even threatened to use the U.S. Army to make South Carolina follow the law.

To avoid violence, Congress passed a compromise that lowered the tariff, and South Carolina backed down. Even though the crisis ended peacefully, the **Nullification Crisis** revealed deep disagreements about power in the United States. It showed how the struggle over **states' rights** could create major conflicts between state and federal governments.

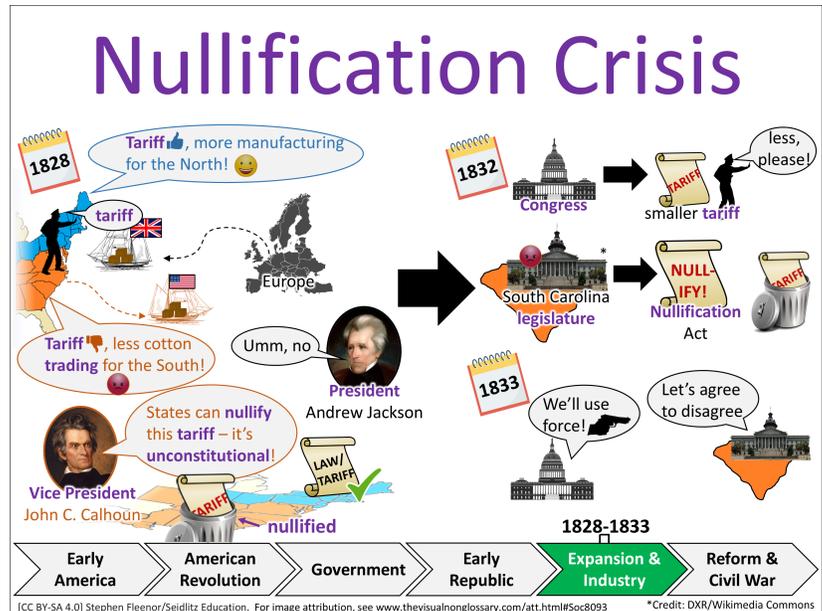


A Nation Divided: Lessons from the Nullification Crisis

Purpose for Reading: The purpose for reading is to explore how economic and political disagreements during the Nullification Crisis revealed tensions in the United States.

Pay Attention To:

- Differences in how the North and South felt about the tariff
- Actions taken by South Carolina
- Reactions of federal leaders like Andrew Jackson
- Examples of states' rights
- Any compromises or resolutions



In the early 1800s, rising tensions between different regions of the United States exposed deep economic and political divisions. One event that brought these differences into sharp focus was the **Nullification Crisis**, a confrontation that challenged the authority of the federal government and the concept of **states' rights**. The conflict was triggered by a high **tariff** on imported goods, which protected Northern industries but placed financial strain on the agricultural South. Southern states, especially South Carolina, viewed the **tariff** as economically harmful and politically biased.

Responding to this, **South Carolina's legislature** passed the **Nullification Act**, declaring the **tariff** void within the state's borders. Their claim was based on the principle of **states' rights**, asserting that individual states could judge the constitutionality of federal laws.

Vice President John C. Calhoun, a South Carolinian, emerged as a vocal supporter of this stance, advocating for state power over federal imposition.

President **Andrew Jackson**, however, saw this as a direct threat to the Union. He rejected the idea that states could nullify federal laws and made it clear he was willing to use force to ensure compliance.

The crisis was diffused when Congress lowered the **tariff**, and South Carolina repealed its nullification. Yet the **Nullification Crisis** left a lasting legacy. It exposed the fragile balance of power in the republic and underscored how disputes over **states' rights** could ignite national tension.

