

(APUSH) KEY TAKEAWAYS

AP US HISTORY KEY TAKEAWAYS

Made by a Captain who scored a 5 on the test!

Note: Not everything is on here*

Just so you can get an idea**



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Unit 1

Unit 1 (RUN THROUGH)

(This unit should've been mostly summer work)

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Comparison

Causation

Contextualization

Key Native Groups/Regional Adaptions

European Motives & Methods

Motives

Nations

Systems

Columbian Exchange

To Americas

To Europe

Impact

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

LEQ

DBQ

Key Terms to Know

Maize cultivation

Encomienda system

Joint-stock company

Mestizo

[Columbian Exchange](#)
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[Bartolomé de Las Casas](#)
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College Board Key Concept 1.1-1.3

1.1

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Native American societies developed complex cultures shaped by geography and environment.

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European exploration was driven by economics, religion, and competition.

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The Columbian Exchange and early contact led to dramatic changes—especially for Native populations.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Native societies across regions (e.g., Southwest vs. Northeast)

Causation

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Impact of European arrival on indigenous populations

Contextualization

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Renaissance, maritime tech, and global trade shaped exploration

Key Native Groups/Regional Adaptions

Region	Example Group	Adaptation/Featur
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		es
Southwest	Pueblo	Irrigation, maize cultivation, and adobe homes
Great Plains	Sioux	Nomadic, buffalo hunting
Northeast	Iroquois	Mixed agriculture, longhouses, confederacy
Pacific Coast	Chinook	Fishing, totem poles, plank houses

European Motives & Methods

Motives

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Triple G: Gold, God, Glory

Nations

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Spain (conquest/conversion), France (trade alliances),
England (settlement)

Systems

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Encomienda (forced labor), caste system (racial hierarchy)

Columbian Exchange

To Americas

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Horses, pigs, wheat, smallpox

To Europe

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Maize, potatoes, tomatoes, tobacco

Impact

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Exchange of diseases, food, ideas, crops, and populations between the New and Old World. (Christopher Columbus Initiated*)

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Compare Native societies; analyze effects of European contact

LEQ

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Evaluate the causes and consequences of exploration

DBQ

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Interpret primary sources on early contact and cultural exchange

Key Terms to Know

Maize cultivation

Encomienda system

Joint-stock company

Mestizo

Columbian Exchange

Animism

Bartolomé de Las Casas

Treaty of Tordesillas

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Unit 2 (RUN THROUGH)

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Colonies developed based on regional environments and goals

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Transatlantic trade shaped colonial economies and cultures

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Resistance to imperial control began to emerge

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Colonial regions

Causation

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Labor systems

Contextualization

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Global empire-building and religious conflict.

Colonial Regions & Characteristics

Region	Colonies	Features & Economy
New England	MA, CT, RI	Puritan, trade, family-based
Middle	NY, PA	Diverse, grain farming, tolerance
Chesapeake	VA, MD	Tobacco, slavery, and plantations

Southern	SC, GA	Rice, enslaved labor, aristocracy
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Labor Systems & Social Hierarchies

Indentured Servitude

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Early labor source, especially in Chesapeake

Slavery

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Expanded rapidly post-1676, especially in the Southern colonies

Racial Hierarchies

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Codified through slave codes and social norms

Transatlantic Trade & Mercantilism

Mercantilism

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Colonies existed to enrich the mother country

Navigation Acts

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Restricted colonial trade to benefit Britain

Triangular Trade

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Slaves, sugar, and rum moved across the Atlantic

Middle Passage

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Brutal journey for enslaved Africans

Imperial Control & Colonial Resistance

Saulutory Neglect

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Britain loosely enforced laws → colonial autonomy

Colonial Assemblies

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House of Burgesses, town meetings

Zenger Trial (1735)

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Early push for freedom of the press

First Great Awakening

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Religious revival challenged authority

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Regional differences, trade systems, and early resistance

LEQ

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Causes of colonial autonomy

DBQ

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Political and economic development of colonies

Key Terms to Know

Puritans

Mercantilism

Navigation Acts

Middle Passage

Bacon's Rebellion

First Great Awakening

Enlightenment

John Locke

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Colonial dissatisfaction with British policies—especially taxation and lack of representation—led to organized resistance and ultimately revolution.

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The American Revolution was influenced by Enlightenment ideas and resulted in independence and the creation of a republican government.

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The new U.S. government faced challenges in defining federal power and protecting individual liberties, leading to the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Compare colonial resistance strategies and political ideologies (Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists).

Causation

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British taxation and Enlightenment ideas caused revolutionary sentiment and constitutional debates.

Contextualization

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The Revolution occurred in the context of global Enlightenment thought and other Atlantic revolutions (e.g., French and Haitian Revolutions).

Colonial Regions & Revolutionary Tensions

Region	Key Colonies	Political & Economic Traits	Role in revolution
New England	Massachusetts, Rhode Island	Town meetings, shipping economy, Puritan influence	Early resistance (Boston Massacre, Tea Party)
Middle	New York, Pennsylvania	Diverse, trade-based economy, religious tolerance	Moderate resistance, key to unification
Chesapeake	Virginia, Maryland	Plantation economy, slavery, and the Anglican elite	Strong support for independence, Jefferson
Southern	South Carolina, Georgia	Rice/indigo plantations, heavy slavery	Divided loyalties; some Loyalist strongholds

Road to Revolution

French & Indian War

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Conflict over territory led to British debt and increased colonial taxation.

British Taxation

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Stamp Act, Townshend Acts, Tea Act → colonial protest and boycotts.

Colonial Resistance

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Sons of Liberty, Boston Tea Party, Committees of Correspondence.

Revolutionary Ideals & War

Enlightenment

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Ideas of natural rights, the social contract, and popular sovereignty influenced revolutionaries.

Declaration of Independence

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Outlined grievances and justified independence based on Enlightenment principles.

Key Battles

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Saratoga (turning point), Yorktown (final victory), and foreign aid from France.

Building a New Government

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Weak central government, no power to tax, ineffective interstate coordination.

Constitution

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Created federal structure, separation of powers, checks and balances.

Federalist vs. Anti-Federalist

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Debates over central power and individual rights → Bill of Rights added.

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Causes of revolution, Enlightenment influence, and Constitution debates.

LEQ

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Evaluate changes in American political identity and government structure.

DBQ

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Analyze the causes and outcomes of the American Revolution and the framing of the Constitution.

Key Terms to Know

Proclamation of 1763

Stamp Act

Boston Tea Party

Common Sense

Declaration of Independence

Articles of Confederation

Federalist Papers

Bill of Rights

Shay's Rebellion

Northwest Ordinance

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The U.S. developed a more participatory democracy, especially through Jacksonian policies and expanded suffrage.

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The Market Revolution transformed the economy, transportation, and labor systems, creating regional interdependence.

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Reform movements emerged in response to religious revival and societal changes, challenging traditional norms.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Compare Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democracy; regional economic development.

Causation

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The Market Revolution and the Second Great Awakening caused reform movements and sectional tensions.

Contextualization

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Global industrialization and democratic revolutions influenced American politics and reform.

Regional Chart: Political & Economic Shifts

Region	Political Traits	Economic Traits	Reform Influence
North	Whigs, pro-tariff, anti-slavery	Industrialization, wage labor	Strong abolitionist and temperance supporter
South	Democrats, pro-slavery, anti-tariff	Plantation economy, cotton, slavery	Resistance to reform, defense of slavery
West	Mixed politics, expansion-focused	Grain, livestock, transportation hubs	Support for infrastructure and education

Expanding Democracy

Jeffersonian vs. Jacksonian

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Jefferson: agrarian republic, limited government
 Jackson: populism, spoils system, expanded suffrage

Suffrage Expansion

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Property requirements dropped → universal white male voting

Political Parties

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Democrats vs. Whigs; debates over federal power and economic policy

Market Revolution

Transportation

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Erie Canal, railroads, and steamboats revolutionized the movement of goods and people.

Industrialization

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Textile mills, factory system, wage labor, Lowell girls

Regional Specialization

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North: industry

South: cotton/slavery

West: grain/livestock

Reform Movements

Second Great Awakening

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Religious revival emphasizing individual salvation and moral reform

Abolition

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Garrison, Douglass, Grimké sisters challenge slavery

Temperance

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Alcohol blamed for social problems → calls for moderation or bans

Women's Rights

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Seneca Falls Convention (1848), Declaration of Sentiments

Sectionalism & Federal Power

Tariff Debates

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Protective tariffs favored North, angered South

Nullification Crisis

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South Carolina rejected federal tariffs → showdown with Jackson

Slavery Tensions

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Missouri Compromise (1820) tried to balance free/slave states

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Political participation, Market Revolution, and reform movements

LEQ

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Evaluate how democracy and reform expanded in the early 1800s

DBQ

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Analyze the causes and effects of the Market Revolution and reform

Key Terms to Know

Jacksonian Democracy

American System

Second Great Awakening

Seneca Falls Convention

Temperance Movement

Nullification Crisis

Lowell System

Cult of Domesticity

Transcendentalism

Missouri Compromise

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U.S. expansion into new territories intensified sectional conflict over slavery and federal power.

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The Civil War was caused by long-standing tensions over slavery, states' rights, and federal authority.

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Reconstruction attempted to redefine citizenship and rights, but faced resistance and ultimately failed to achieve lasting equality.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Compare Northern and Southern economies, political goals, and wartime strategies.

Causation

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Expansion and slavery debates caused sectionalism and war; Reconstruction policies caused backlash.

Contextualization

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Global nationalism, industrialization, and abolition movements shaped U.S. conflicts and reforms.

Sectional Chart: Expansion & Conflict

Region	Political Goals	Economic Traits	Civil War Role
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North	Preserve Union, limit slavery	Industry, wage labor	Union leadership, emancipation push
South	Protect slavery, states' rights	Plantation economy, enslaved labor	Secession, Confederate resistance
West	Mixed views, focus on expansion	Agriculture, infrastructure development	Battleground for slavery debates

Expansion & Sectionalism

Manifest Destiny

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Belief in U.S. territorial expansion → Oregon, Texas, Mexican Cession

Mexican-American War

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U.S. victory added vast territory → reignited slavery debates

Slavery Debates

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Wilmot Proviso, Free Soil movement, Southern defense of slavery

Road to Civil War

Compromise of 1850

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California free state, Fugitive Slave Act, popular sovereignty

Kansas-Nebraska Act

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Repealed the Missouri Compromise → “Bleeding Kansas”

Dred Scott Decision

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Ruled African Americans not citizens; Congress couldn't ban slavery

Civil War

Emancipation Proclamation

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Freed slaves in Confederate states; reframed war as a moral cause

Key Battles

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Antietam (bloodiest day), Gettysburg (turning point), Appomattox (surrender)

Union Victory

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Industrial strength, leadership, and total war strategy

Sectionalism & Federal Power

Amendments

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13th (abolish slavery), 14th (citizenship), 15th (voting rights)

Freedmen's Bureau

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Provided education, aid, and support for formerly enslaved people

Resistance & Collapse

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Black Codes, KKK, Compromise of 1877 ended federal enforcement

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Expansion, slavery debates, Reconstruction policies

LEQ

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Evaluate the causes of the Civil War and the effectiveness of Reconstruction

DBQ

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Analyze political, social, and constitutional changes from 1844 to 1877

Key Terms to Know

Manifest Destiny

Mexican Cession

Wilmot Proviso

Compromise of 1850

Fugitive Slave Act

Kansas-Nebraska Act

Dred Scott v. Sandford

Emancipation Proclamation

13th, 14th, 15th Amendments

Freedmen's Bureau

Black Codes

Ku Klux Klan

Compromise of 1877

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The rise of industrial capitalism transformed the economy and created new labor systems and class divisions.

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Immigration and urbanization reshaped American cities and culture, sparking tensions and reform efforts.

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Political movements emerged to challenge corporate power and address inequality, especially among farmers and workers.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Compare labor unions, immigrant groups, and regional economies.

Causation

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Industrialization caused urban growth, labor unrest, and reform movements.

Contextualization

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Global industrial revolutions and migration patterns shaped U.S. development.

Regional Chart: Industry, Labor, Immigration

Region	Economic	Labor	Immigration
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	Traits	Conditions	Patterns
Northeast	Factories, railroads, finance	Wage labor, strikes, and union organizing	Ellis Island, European immigrants
South	Agriculture, sharecropping	Low wages, racial hierarchy	Limited immigration, Black migration
West	Mining, farming, and railroads	Seasonal labor, conflict with Native groups	Chinese labor, Mexican migration
Region	Economic Traits	Labor Conditions	Immigration Patterns

Industrialization & Big Business

Key Figures

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Carnegie (steel), Rockefeller (oil), Vanderbilt (railroads)

Monopolies & Trusts

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Vertical/horizontal integration, trusts, robber barons vs. captains of industry

Government Response

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Laissez-faire policies, the Sherman Antitrust Act (1890), and limited regulation

Labor Movements

Working Conditions

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Long hours, low wages, child labor, unsafe factories

Unions & Strikes

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Knights of Labor, AFL, Haymarket Riot, Homestead Strike, Pullman Strike

Labor vs. Capital

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Tensions between workers and industrialists; strikes often met with violence

Immigration & Urbanization

New Immigrants

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Southern/Eastern Europeans, Chinese, settled in ethnic enclaves

Nativism

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American Protective Association, Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)

City life

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Tenements, overcrowding, sanitation issues, rise of slums

Reform & Politics

Political Machines

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Tammany Hall, patronage, corruption, urban control

Populist Party

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Farmers demand inflation, regulation, and direct election of senators

Federal regulation

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Interstate Commerce Act (1887), early attempts to regulate railroads

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Industrial growth, labor unrest, and immigration patterns

LEQ

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Evaluate the impact of industrialization on workers and society

DBQ

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Analyze responses to inequality and corporate power

Key Terms to Know

Laissez-faire

Vertical Integration

Horizontal Integration

Trusts

Labor unions

Tenements

Political machines

Populism

Chinese Exclusion Act

Sherman Antitrust Act

Interstate Commerce Act

Unit 7

Unit 7 (RUN THROUGH)

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Progressive reformers responded to economic instability, social inequality, and political corruption with activism and government intervention.

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The U.S. expanded its global role through imperialism and participation in World War I, sparking debates over foreign policy.

7.3

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The Great Depression and WWII reshaped the role of government, the economy, and U.S. global leadership.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Compare Progressive reformers and New Deal programs; isolationism vs. interventionism.

Causation

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Industrialization and inequality caused reform; the stock market crash caused depression; Pearl Harbor led to the U.S. entry into WWII.

Contextualization

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Global imperialism, economic collapse, and total war shaped U.S. domestic and foreign policy.

Thematic Chart: Reform, War, Recovery

Theme	Key Events/Policies	Impact on Government & Society
Reform	Progressive laws, trust-busting	Increased federal regulation, civic activism
War	WWI, WWII, imperialism	Shift to global power, debates over intervention
Recovery	New Deal programs, wartime economy	Expanded federal role, social safety net

Progressive era

Reform Goals

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Address poverty, labor conditions, corruption, and women’s rights

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Jane Addams, Upton Sinclair, Ida B. Wells, W.E.B. Du Bois

Federal Action

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Trust-busting, Pure Food and Drug Act, 19th Amendment

U.S. Imperialism & WWI

Spanish-American War

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U.S. gains Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico; debates over empire

Global Involvement

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WWI: neutrality → intervention; Wilson's 14 Points

Treaty of Versailles

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League of Nations rejected by Senate; U.S. returns to isolationism

Great Depression & New Deal

Causes

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Overproduction, speculation, banking collapse, unequal wealth

New Deal Programs

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CCC, WPA, FDIC, Social Security Act; relief, recovery, reform

Opposition & Legacy

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Critics: Huey Long, Supreme Court; expanded federal role

WWII

Mobilization

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War Production Board, rationing, draft, women in the workforce

Homefront

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Japanese internment (EO 9066), propaganda, and economic recovery

Victory & Consequences

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D-Day, atomic bomb, U.S. emerges as global superpower

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Progressive reforms, New Deal programs, and WWII mobilization

LEQ

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Evaluate how government power expanded from 1890 to 1945

DBQ

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Analyze reform movements and responses to economic crisis and war

Key Terms to Know

Muckrakers

Roosevelt Corollary

19th Amendment

Spanish-American War

Wilson's 14 Points

League of Nations

Stock Market Crash

Social Security Act

Executive Order 9066

Manhattan Project

Unit 8

Unit 8 (RUN THROUGH)

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College Board Key Concept 8.1-8.3

8.1

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The Cold War shaped U.S. foreign and domestic policy through containment, military conflicts, and ideological competition.

8.2

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The Civil Rights Movement challenged racial and social injustice, leading to landmark legislation and expanded activism.

8.3

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Social movements broadened definitions of citizenship and rights, while political debates over government power intensified.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Compare civil rights strategies, Cold War conflicts, and social movements.

Causation

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Cold War tensions caused military interventions; civil rights activism caused federal legislation.

Contextualization

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Post-WWII global power shifts and decolonization influenced U.S. foreign policy and domestic reform.

Thematic Chart: Cold War, Rights, Reform

Theme	Key Events/Policies	Impact on Government & Society	Theme
Cold War	Containment, proxy wars, arms race	Military buildup, fear of communism, global intervention	Cold War
Civil Rights	Legal cases, protests, legislation	End of segregation, expanded voting rights	Civil Rights
Reform	Feminism, environmentalism, counterculture	Redefined citizenship, challenged norms	Reform

Cold War Foreign Policy

Containment

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The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and NATO aimed to stop communism

Proxy Wars

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Korean War, Vietnam War—U.S. fought indirectly against Soviet influence

Nuclear Tensions

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Arms race, Cuban Missile Crisis, Mutually Assured Destruction

Civil Rights Movement

Legal Challenges

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Brown v. Board (1954), NAACP litigation, Civil Rights Act (1964)

Grassroots Activism

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Montgomery Bus Boycott, sit-ins, Freedom Rides, SNCC, MLK

Federal Response

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Voting Rights Act (1965), executive orders, and national guard enforcement

Social Movements

Feminism

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Betty Friedan, NOW, Roe v. Wade (1973), Equal Rights Amendment debates

Environmentalism

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Silent Spring, the EPA creation, the Clean Air and Water Acts

Counterculture

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Youth rebellion, anti-war protests, music, drugs, Woodstock

Political Shifts

Great Society

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LBJ's programs: Medicare, education, poverty reduction

Conservative Backlash

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Rise of New Right, opposition to welfare and liberalism

Watergate

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Nixon scandal → resignation, public distrust in government

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Cold War policies, civil rights activism, and political shifts

LEQ

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Evaluate how rights and liberties expanded from 1945 to 1980

DBQ

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Analyze government responses to activism and Cold War pressures

Key Terms to Know

Truman Doctrine

Marshall Plan

NATO

Korean War

Vietnam War

Brown v. Board

Civil Rights Act

Voting Rights Act

Roe v. Wade

EPA

Great Society

Watergate

Silent Majority

Unit 9

Unit 9 (RUN THROUGH)

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College Board Key Concept 9.1-9.3

9.1

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Conservative movements reshaped U.S. politics and economics, challenging liberal policies and expanding deregulation.

9.2

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Globalization and technological innovation transformed the economy, society, and culture, creating new opportunities and tensions.

9.3

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Debates over identity, civil rights, and the role of government intensified, reflecting broader social and demographic changes.

Historical Thinking Skills

Comparison

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Compare liberal and conservative policies; civil rights movements across decades.

Causation

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Globalization and terrorism caused shifts in foreign and domestic policy.

Contextualization

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The rise of conservatism in the U.S. mirrored global reactions to liberal policies. Globalization, terrorism, and digital technology reshaped politics and identity worldwide.

Thematic Chart: Conservatism, Globalization, Identity

Theme	Key Events/Policies	Impact on Government & Society	Theme
Conservatism	Reaganomics, deregulation, culture wars	Reduced federal programs, rise of the New Right	Conservatism
Globalization	NAFTA, tech boom, outsourcing	Economic shifts, global interdependence	Globalization
Identity	LGBTQ+ rights, immigration, and racial justice	Expanded civil rights, political polarization	Identity

Rise of Conservatism

Reaganomics

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Tax cuts, supply-side economics, and reduced social spending

Moral Majority

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Religious conservatives mobilized around family values and opposition to liberal social policies.

Deregulation

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Reduced government oversight in business, finance, and environmental policy

Globalization & Technology

Trade Agreements

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NAFTA, WTO—expanded global trade networks

Outsourcing

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Jobs moved overseas; debates over economic impact

Digital Revolution

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Internet, social media, and smartphones have transformed communication and activism

Civil Rights & Identity

LGBTQ+ Rights

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Obergefell v. Hodges (2015), Don't Ask Don't Tell repeal, Pride movements

Immigration Debates

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Border security, DREAM Act, refugee policy

Affirmative Action

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Controversies over race-conscious admissions and hiring

Foreign Policy

End of the Cold War

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Fall of the Berlin Wall, collapse of the USSR → U.S. as sole superpower

9/11 & War on Terror

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Patriot Act, Afghanistan and Iraq Wars, homeland security expansion

Global Leadership

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Climate agreements, international coalitions, shifting alliances

Testable Themes

SAQ/MCQ

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Conservative policies, globalization, and civil rights expansion

LEQ

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Evaluate how U.S. politics and identity evolved from 1980 to the present

DBQ

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Analyze causes and effects of political, economic, and social shifts

Key Terms to Know

Reaganomics

Moral Majority

NAFTA

Outsourcing

Patriot Act

Affordable Care Act

Obergefell v. Hodges

Black Lives Matter

Social media activism

Climate change policy