

# CLEP® History of the United States II: 1865 to the Present: At a Glance

## Description of the Examination

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The History of the United States II examination covers material that is usually taught in the second semester of what is often a two-semester course in United States history. The examination covers the period of United States history from the end of the Civil War to the present, with the majority of the questions being on the 20th century.

The examination contains approximately 120 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored.

## Knowledge and Skills Required

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Questions on the History of the United States II examination require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities:

- Identification and description of historical phenomena
- Analysis and interpretation of historical phenomena
- Comparison and contrast of historical phenomena

The subject matter of the History of the United States II examination is drawn from the following topics. The percentages next to the main topics indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions on that topic.

### Topical Specifications

- 35% Political institutions, political developments, behavior and public policy
- 25% Social developments
- 10% Economic developments
- 15% Cultural and intellectual developments
- 15% Diplomacy and international relations

### Chronological Specifications

- 30% 1865–1914
- 70% 1915–present

The following are among the specific topics tested:

- The impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction on the South
- The motivations and character of American expansionism
- The content of constitutional amendments and their interpretations by the Supreme Court
- The changing nature of agricultural life
- The development of American political parties
- The emergence of regulatory and welfare state legislation
- The intellectual and political expressions of liberalism, conservatism and other such movements
- Long-term demographic trends
- The process of economic growth and development
- The changing occupational structure, nature of work and labor organization
- Immigration and the history of racial and ethnic minorities
- Urbanization and industrialization
- The causes and impacts of major wars in American history
- Major movements and individual figures in the history of American arts and letters
- Trends in the history of women and the family

## Study Resources

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Most textbooks used in college-level United States history (post-1865) courses cover the topics in the outline above, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphases given to them may differ. To prepare for the History of the United States II exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found in most college bookstores. A recent survey conducted by CLEP® found that the following textbooks are among those used by college faculty who teach the equivalent course. You might find one or more of these online or at your local college bookstore. HINT: Look at the table of contents first to make sure it matches the Knowledge and Skills Required for this exam.

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Berkin, <i>Making America</i> (Wadsworth)
Boydston, <i>Making a Nation</i> (Prentice Hall)
Boyer, <i>The Enduring Vision</i> (Wadsworth)
Brinkley, <i>American History: A Survey</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Carnes and Garraty, <i>The American Nation</i> (Longman)
Davidson, <i>Nation of Nations: A Concise Narrative of the American Republic</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Divine, <i>The American Story</i> (Penguin/Prentice Hall)
Faragher, <i>Out of Many: A History of the American People</i> (Prentice Hall)
Foner, <i>Give Me Liberty!</i> (W. W. Norton)
Goldfield, <i>American Journey</i> (Prentice Hall)
Henretta, <i>America's History</i> (Bedford/St. Martin's)
Jones, <i>Created Equal: A History of the United States</i> (Prentice Hall)
Kennedy, <i>Brief American Pageant: The History of the Republic</i> (Wadsworth)
Martin, <i>America and Its Peoples</i> (Longman)
Murrin, <i>Liberty, Equality and Power</i> (Wadsworth)
Nash, <i>The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society, Concise Ed.</i> (Prentice Hall)
Tindall and Shi, <i>Essential America</i> (W. W. Norton)

Additional details and differing interpretations can be gained by consulting readers and specialized historical studies. Pay attention to visual materials (pictures, maps and charts) as you study. These resources, compiled by the CLEP test development committee and staff members, may help you study for your exam. However, none of these sources are designed specifically to provide preparation for a CLEP exam. The College Board has no control over their content and cannot vouch for accuracy.

Digital History at the University of Houston:  
<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/>

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History:  
<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/>

U.S. History Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium:  
<http://www.ushistory.org/us/>

History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web:  
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>

HippoCampus textbooks and courses:  
<http://www.hippocampus.org>

Annenberg's A Biography of America telecourse:  
<http://www.learner.org/biographyofamerica/>

Visit [www.collegeboard.com/clepprep](http://www.collegeboard.com/clepprep) for additional history resources. You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *CLEP Official Study Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

## Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. For more sample questions and info about the test, see the *CLEP Official Study Guide*.

1. Medicare, the Voting Rights Act, and the War on Poverty were all elements of which of the following?

- (A) Henry Clay's American System
- (B) Abraham Lincoln's Reconstruction Act
- (C) Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points
- (D) Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal
- (E) Lyndon Johnson's Great Society

2. The *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision overturned which of the following?

- (A) *Gideon v. Wainwright*
- (B) *Plessy v. Ferguson*
- (C) *Korematsu v. United States*
- (D) *Lochner v. New York*
- (E) *Muller v. Oregon*

3. President Theodore Roosevelt most frequently employed his "Big Stick" policy in

- (A) conducting international relations in Latin America
- (B) preserving national forest lands
- (C) breaking up industrial monopolies
- (D) enforcing racial equality in the South
- (E) working with Congress to create restrictive immigration policies

4. Rosie the Riveter was a symbol during World War II of

- (A) high unemployment rates among men because corporations were allowed to pay lower wages to women
- (B) the class divide between the wealthy and the poor that was made worse by wartime mobilization

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- (C) the need for women to take jobs in factories and munitions plants to maintain wartime output
- (D) the lack of technological advances made by the U.S. during the war, in contrast to those of Germany and Japan
- (E) widespread protests against large-scale importation of foreign goods and materials

5. Which of the following had the greatest impact on post-World War II industrialization of the South?

- (A) The increasing availability of modern conveniences, such as air conditioning
- (B) Large investments in public schools by international corporations
- (C) Creation of effective partnerships among corporations, labor unions, and state government
- (D) Continued advocacy of New South policies by urban boosters
- (E) The end of large-scale migration of African Americans to the North and West

6. The Reconstruction era was effectively ended in the South with

- (A) the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad
- (B) the disputed election of Rutherford Hayes to the presidency
- (C) the forcible removal of the carpetbaggers
- (D) the government's legal eradication of the Ku Klux Klan
- (E) integration of public accommodations was complete

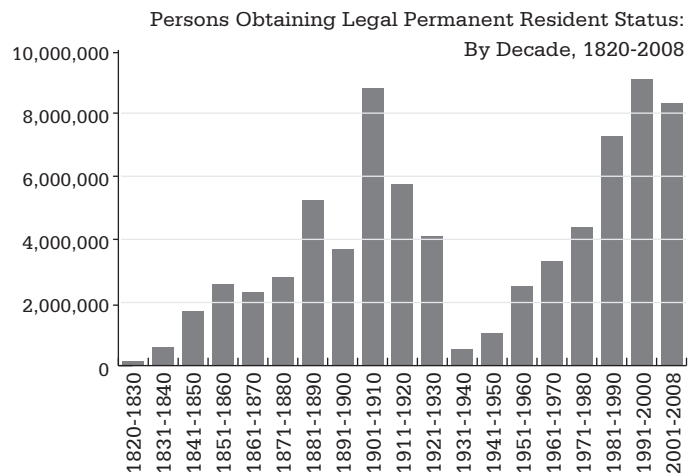
7. The “muckrakers” like Jacob Riis and Ida Tarbell were best known as which of the following?

- (A) Sanitation experts whose innovations in trash disposal eliminated urban health epidemics
- (B) Agricultural researchers who developed soil conservation methods in the Midwest
- (C) Journalists who encouraged reform and worked to expose corruption and scandal
- (D) Political thinkers who championed the cause of Social Darwinism
- (E) Business leaders whose goal was to improve workplace efficiency and productivity

8. The so-called Lost Generation of the 1920s included

- (A) Religious traditionalists who once again became influential after the Scopes trial
- (B) Immigrants to the U.S. who were imprisoned upon arrival until their loyalties were established

- (C) Settlers in newly established U.S. territories who were forced to give up modern conveniences
- (D) African Americans who moved to Canada in protest of U.S. Jim Crow laws
- (E) Disillusioned American artists and writers who left the U.S. for Europe after World War I



9. Which most likely would account for the drop in immigration in the 1920s and 1930s, as shown in the table above?

- (A) A gradually increasing prosperity in both Europe and Asia
- (B) Restrictive immigration quotas passed in the 1920s, followed by economic depression
- (C) Wartime realities that made shipboard immigration to the U.S. particularly dangerous
- (D) A decline in the European birthrate that made land ownership more affordable
- (E) The closing of the Western frontier meant that there were fewer opportunities for new arrivals

## Credit Recommendations

The American Council on Education has recommended that colleges grant 3 credits for a score of 50, which is equivalent to a course grade of C, on the CLEP History of the United States II exam. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the History of the United States II examination, colleges may grant credit toward fulfillment of a distribution requirement, or for a particular course that matches the exam in content. Check with your school to find out the score it requires for granting credit, the number of credit hours granted and the course that can be bypassed with a passing score.

Answers to Sample Questions: 1-D; 2-B; 3-A; 4-C; 5-A; 6-B; 7-C; 8-E; 9-B.

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