



# AP US History Exam Prep I

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## Practice Questions

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**1. The development of maize cultivation by Native Americans before 1491 most directly contributed to which of the following?**

- A. Increased dependence on hunting and gathering
- B. Decline in trade networks among indigenous groups
- C. Reduction in religious ceremonial practices
- D. Growth of complex, settled societies with larger populations

**2. Which of the following best explains the primary motivation for Spanish exploration and conquest in the Americas during the 16th century?**

- A. Goal of promoting religious tolerance and diversity
- B. Need to establish representative democratic governments
- C. Desire to acquire gold and silver for enrichment
- D. Effort to escape political persecution in Europe

**3. The encomienda system established by the Spanish in the early colonial period most directly represented which labor practice?**

- A. Voluntary wage employment of European immigrants
- B. Forced labor of Native Americans in exchange for supposed protection
- C. Communal agricultural production by Spanish settlers
- D. Independent farming by Native American communities

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**4. The Columbian Exchange most directly resulted in which demographic change in the Americas after 1492?**

- A. Massive population decline among Native Americans due to disease
- B. Rapid population growth among Native Americans due to new crops
- C. Equal demographic decline in both Europe and the Americas
- D. Immediate mass migration of Africans to the Americas



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**5. Which of the following crops transferred from the Americas to Europe had the most significant impact on European population growth after 1500?**

- A. Barley
- B. Wheat
- C. Rice
- D. Potato

**6. Spanish missionary efforts to convert Native Americans to Christianity in the 16th century most directly resulted in which outcome?**

- A. Widespread Native American conversion to Protestantism
- B. Complete abandonment of all indigenous religious traditions
- C. Blending of Catholic and indigenous religious practices
- D. Spanish adoption of Native American spiritual practices

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**7. The introduction of horses by Spanish explorers most directly transformed which aspect of Native American life on the Great Plains?**

- A. Agricultural techniques and crop yields
- B. Hunting practices and territorial mobility
- C. Religious ceremonies and spiritual beliefs
- D. Written language systems and record keeping

**8. Which of the following best explains why Spanish colonizers increasingly relied on African slave labor in the Americas after 1550?**

- A. Dramatic decline in Native American population from disease
- B. African slaves were less expensive than Native American labor
- C. Spanish law prohibited all forms of Native American labor
- D. Africans possessed superior agricultural knowledge

**9. The Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire by Hernan Cortes was most directly facilitated by which factor?**

- A. Support from English and French military forces
- B. Overwhelming technological superiority of Spanish firearms
- C. Peaceful diplomatic negotiations with Aztec leadership
- D. Alliances with Native American groups hostile to the Aztecs



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**10. Before European contact, the extensive trade networks among Native American societies in North America most directly demonstrate which characteristic?**

- A. Absence of agricultural production
- B. Complete political unification under a single government
- C. Economic complexity and inter-regional connections
- D. Isolation and lack of communication between groups

**11. The Spanish requirement (requerimiento) read to Native Americans before military action primarily served which purpose?**

- A. Establishment of equal trade agreements with indigenous peoples
- B. Legal justification for Spanish conquest and forced conversion
- C. Recognition of Native American territorial sovereignty
- D. Promise of political representation for Native Americans

**12. Which of the following best describes the environmental impact of European livestock introduction to the Americas after 1492?**

- A. Disruption of native ecosystems and agricultural lands
- B. Improvement of soil quality for Native American crops
- C. Elimination of all native animal species
- D. Reduction in European colonial food supplies

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**13. The development of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in the 16th century was most directly connected to which economic system?**

- A. Feudal land tenure systems
- B. Free market capitalism and wage labor
- C. Socialist collective farming practices
- D. Mercantilism and colonial resource extraction



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**14. Differences in climate and geography between the Caribbean islands and the mainland territories most directly influenced which aspect of Spanish colonization?**

- A. Development of representative political institutions
- B. Spanish decisions about religious conversion strategies
- C. Types of economic activities and labor systems established
- D. Adoption of Native American languages by colonists

**15. The papal Line of Demarcation established by the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) most directly reflected which European assumption about the Americas?**

- A. Recognition of Native American territorial claims
- B. European right to claim and divide lands without indigenous consent
- C. Need for democratic approval from colonial settlers
- D. Requirement for peaceful negotiation with all indigenous groups

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**16. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 most directly contributed to which of the following developments in the early nineteenth century?**

- A. Increased westward migration and territorial expansion
- B. Immediate resolution of slavery debates in new territories
- C. Decreased tensions with Native American groups
- D. Strengthened alliance with France against Britain

**17. Which of the following best describes a major consequence of the War of 1812 for the United States?**

- A. Establishment of permanent military alliances with France
- B. Acquisition of Canadian territories
- C. Elimination of British influence in North America
- D. Growth of domestic manufacturing and economic independence

**18. The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 primarily sought to achieve which of the following foreign policy goals?**

- A. Territorial acquisition of Spanish colonies in the Caribbean
- B. Formation of military alliances with Latin American republics
- C. Prevention of European colonial expansion in the Western Hemisphere
- D. Recognition of U.S. sovereignty over the Pacific Ocean



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**19. The construction of the Erie Canal in the 1820s most directly facilitated which economic development?**

- A. Development of the cotton plantation system in the South
- B. Expansion of commercial agriculture and trade between the West and East
- C. Decline of international trade with European markets
- D. Establishment of manufacturing centers in the Mississippi Valley

**20. Andrew Jackson's veto of the recharter of the Second Bank of the United States in 1832 reflected which political ideology?**

- A. Opposition to concentrated federal economic power and elite privilege
- B. Support for protective tariffs to aid manufacturing
- C. Advocacy for international banking partnerships
- D. Promotion of national infrastructure projects

**21. The Nullification Crisis of 1832-1833 most directly raised questions about which constitutional principle?**

- A. The process for amending the Constitution
- B. The separation of powers among branches of government
- C. The protection of individual civil liberties
- D. The balance of power between federal and state governments

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**22. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 primarily resulted in which of the following outcomes for Native American populations?**

- A. Granting of U.S. citizenship to all tribal members
- B. Integration of Native Americans into white settler communities
- C. Forced migration of southeastern tribes to western territories
- D. Establishment of permanent reservations in the Southeast



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**23. The Market Revolution of the early nineteenth century most directly contributed to which social change?**

- A. Decline of slavery in the southern states
- B. Growth of an urban working class dependent on wage labor
- C. Elimination of regional economic differences
- D. Decrease in immigration from Europe

**24. Which of the following best characterizes the expansion of suffrage during the Jacksonian era?**

- A. Removal of property requirements for white male voters
- B. Extension of voting rights to free African Americans in all states
- C. Granting of suffrage to women in western territories
- D. Establishment of literacy tests for all voters

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**25. The Second Great Awakening of the early nineteenth century most directly influenced which reform movement?**

- A. The effort to establish a national church
- B. The movement for states' rights and nullification
- C. The campaign for westward territorial expansion
- D. The abolitionist movement against slavery

**26. Henry Clay's American System proposed in the 1820s primarily sought to achieve which economic goal?**

- A. Elimination of state-chartered banks
- B. Expansion of agricultural exports to European markets
- C. Promotion of national economic unity through tariffs, banking, and infrastructure
- D. Reduction of federal involvement in economic development

**27. The growth of the cotton economy in the South between 1800 and 1848 most directly led to which development?**

- A. Diversification of southern agricultural production
- B. Increased reliance on and expansion of slavery
- C. Rapid industrialization of southern cities
- D. Decreased sectional tensions with the North



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**28. The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 is most significant for which contribution to American reform movements?**

- A. Launching the organized movement for women's rights and suffrage
- B. Achieving immediate voting rights for women in New York
- C. Establishing the first women's colleges
- D. Securing property rights for married women nationwide

**29. The temperance movement of the early nineteenth century was most directly motivated by which concern?**

- A. Opposition to taxation of alcoholic beverages
- B. Desire to increase agricultural productivity
- C. Concern about competition with European breweries
- D. Belief that alcohol caused moral degradation and social problems

**30. Which of the following best explains the rise of the spoils system during Andrew Jackson's presidency?**

- A. Supreme Court decisions mandating political appointments
- B. Constitutional requirements for regular turnover of federal employees
- C. Jackson's belief that rotation in office democratized government
- D. Congressional legislation requiring partisan balance in offices



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## Answer Key & Explanations

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### 1. D — Growth of complex, settled societies with larger populations

The domestication and widespread cultivation of maize allowed Native American societies to develop larger, more sedentary populations. Reliable agricultural surpluses supported population growth and enabled the emergence of complex civilizations with specialized labor, social hierarchies, and permanent settlements.

### 2. C — Desire to acquire gold and silver for enrichment

Spanish conquistadors and the Crown were primarily motivated by the desire to acquire gold, silver, and other valuable resources. The extraction of precious metals from the Americas, particularly silver from Potosi, became central to Spanish colonial policy and the broader mercantilist economic system.

### 3. B — Forced labor of Native Americans in exchange for supposed protection

The encomienda system granted Spanish colonists control over Native American labor and tribute in exchange for providing protection and Christian instruction. This system allowed colonists to exploit indigenous labor for mining and agriculture, though it was theoretically regulated by the Spanish Crown.

### 4. A — Massive population decline among Native Americans due to disease

European diseases such as smallpox, measles, and influenza, to which Native Americans had no immunity, caused catastrophic population decline. It is estimated that up to 90% of the indigenous population died within the first century of contact, fundamentally reshaping American demographics and societies.

### 5. D — Potato

The potato, native to the Americas, became a staple crop in Europe, particularly in Ireland and northern Europe. Its high caloric yield and ability to grow in various climates contributed significantly to European population growth in the following centuries, fundamentally altering European agricultural and dietary patterns.

### 6. C — Blending of Catholic and indigenous religious practices

While Spanish missionaries sought complete conversion, Native Americans often practiced syncretism, blending Catholic rituals and symbols with their traditional religious beliefs. This cultural adaptation allowed indigenous peoples to maintain aspects of their spiritual heritage while appearing to conform to Spanish religious requirements.

### 7. B — Hunting practices and territorial mobility

Horses, which had been extinct in the Americas for thousands of years, were reintroduced by the Spanish. Native American groups on the Great Plains adopted horse culture, which revolutionized their hunting methods, particularly buffalo hunting, and increased their mobility, military capabilities, and territorial range.

### 8. A — Dramatic decline in Native American population from disease

The catastrophic decline of Native American populations due to disease, combined with moral and legal debates about indigenous enslavement, led Spanish colonizers to turn increasingly to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Africans were also perceived to have immunity to certain European diseases and resistance to tropical conditions.



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**9. D — Alliances with Native American groups hostile to the Aztecs**

Cortes formed military alliances with indigenous groups such as the Tlaxcalans, who were enemies of the Aztecs and resented Aztec tribute demands. These alliances provided crucial military support, local knowledge, and numerical superiority that enabled the relatively small Spanish force to conquer the powerful Aztec Empire.

**10. C — Economic complexity and inter-regional connections**

Archaeological and historical evidence shows that pre-Columbian Native American societies maintained extensive trade networks spanning thousands of miles. These networks facilitated exchange of goods, ideas, and cultural practices, demonstrating sophisticated economic organization and inter-group cooperation across diverse regions.

**11. B — Legal justification for Spanish conquest and forced conversion**

The requerimiento was a legal document read to Native Americans (often in Spanish, which they could not understand) demanding their acceptance of Spanish authority and Christianity. It served as a legal justification for Spanish conquest and violence, allowing Spaniards to claim they had offered peaceful conversion before resorting to warfare.

**12. A — Disruption of native ecosystems and agricultural lands**

European livestock such as cattle, pigs, and sheep, which had no natural predators in the Americas, reproduced rapidly and altered American ecosystems. They damaged native plant species, competed with indigenous animals, transformed grazing lands, and disrupted Native American agricultural practices and hunting patterns.

**13. D — Mercantilism and colonial resource extraction**

Mercantilism, the dominant European economic theory of the period, emphasized accumulating wealth through favorable trade balances and colonial exploitation. The trans-Atlantic slave trade provided the labor force necessary for profitable plantation agriculture in the Americas, generating wealth that flowed back to European colonial powers.

**14. C — Types of economic activities and labor systems established**

Regional environmental differences shaped Spanish colonial economic activities. The Caribbean's tropical climate proved ideal for sugar cultivation using plantation agriculture and enslaved labor, while mainland regions with mineral deposits focused on mining operations. These geographic factors determined labor systems, settlement patterns, and economic organization.

**15. B — European right to claim and divide lands without indigenous consent**

The Treaty of Tordesillas, which divided the non-European world between Spain and Portugal without consulting indigenous peoples, demonstrated European powers' assumption that they had the right to claim and divide newly encountered lands. This reflected a worldview that denied indigenous sovereignty and legitimized European imperial expansion.

**16. A — Increased westward migration and territorial expansion**

The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States and opened vast territories west of the Mississippi River, accelerating westward migration and settlement patterns that would define much of nineteenth-century American expansion.



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**17. D — Growth of domestic manufacturing and economic independence**

The War of 1812 disrupted trade with Britain and exposed American dependence on foreign manufactured goods, spurring domestic manufacturing development and early industrialization, particularly in New England.

**18. C — Prevention of European colonial expansion in the Western Hemisphere**

The Monroe Doctrine declared that European powers should not establish new colonies or interfere in the affairs of independent nations in the Western Hemisphere, asserting U.S. opposition to further European colonization in the Americas.

**19. B — Expansion of commercial agriculture and trade between the West and East**

The Erie Canal connected the Great Lakes region to the Atlantic Ocean via the Hudson River, dramatically reducing transportation costs and time, which stimulated commercial agriculture and trade between western farmers and eastern markets.

**20. A — Opposition to concentrated federal economic power and elite privilege**

Jackson's bank veto reflected his belief that the Bank represented concentrated economic power that favored wealthy elites over common citizens, and his interpretation that federal power should be limited in favor of states' rights and individual liberty.

**21. D — The balance of power between federal and state governments**

The Nullification Crisis centered on South Carolina's claim that states could nullify federal laws they deemed unconstitutional, directly challenging the relationship between federal authority and state sovereignty under the Constitution.

**22. C — Forced migration of southeastern tribes to western territories**

The Indian Removal Act authorized the forced relocation of southeastern Native American tribes to lands west of the Mississippi River, most notably the Cherokee Trail of Tears, causing thousands of deaths and the loss of ancestral homelands.

**23. B — Growth of an urban working class dependent on wage labor**

The Market Revolution transformed household production into wage labor and commercial manufacturing, creating a growing urban working class employed in factories, mills, and commercial enterprises rather than in subsistence agriculture.

**24. A — Removal of property requirements for white male voters**

During the Jacksonian era, most states eliminated property ownership requirements for voting, significantly expanding suffrage among white men regardless of economic status, though voting rights remained restricted by race and gender.

**25. D — The abolitionist movement against slavery**

The Second Great Awakening emphasized personal salvation, moral perfectibility, and social responsibility, inspiring many reformers to view slavery as a moral sin that must be abolished, thus energizing the abolitionist movement.

**26. C — Promotion of national economic unity through tariffs, banking, and infrastructure**

Clay's American System advocated for protective tariffs to support manufacturing, a national bank to stabilize currency, and federally funded internal improvements to connect regions, promoting national economic integration and self-sufficiency.



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**27. B — Increased reliance on and expansion of slavery**

The profitability of cotton cultivation, enabled by the cotton gin and strong international demand, made slavery increasingly economically vital to the South, leading to the expansion and entrenchment of the institution rather than its gradual decline.

**28. A — Launching the organized movement for women's rights and suffrage**

The Seneca Falls Convention issued the Declaration of Sentiments, which formally articulated demands for women's legal, political, and social equality, including suffrage, launching the organized women's rights movement in the United States.

**29. D — Belief that alcohol caused moral degradation and social problems**

Temperance reformers, often inspired by the Second Great Awakening, believed that alcohol consumption led to moral decay, family disruption, poverty, and social disorder, and sought to improve society through voluntary abstinence or legal prohibition.

**30. C — Jackson's belief that rotation in office democratized government**

Jackson defended the practice of appointing political supporters to government positions as a democratic reform that prevented the development of an entrenched bureaucratic elite and allowed ordinary citizens to participate in government service.



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