

# A Level History - America - Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

**Remember:** successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## **1. Start with a Diagnostic Review**

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## **2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions**

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.**

## **3. Learn from the Explanations**

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## **4. Track Your Progress**

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## **5. Simulate the Real Exam**

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## **6. Repeat and Review**

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

## Questions

- 1. What legal act did the Tennessee legislature pass that led to the Monkey Trials?**
  - A. National Origins Act**
  - B. Bill of Rights**
  - C. Butler Act**
  - D. Immigration Act**
- 2. Which radio personality criticized FDR, believing he was too allied with banks?**
  - A. Huey Long**
  - B. Charles E. Coughlin**
  - C. Francis Townsend**
  - D. John Collier**
- 3. What was the general status of African American education during the Gilded Age?**
  - A. Rapidly improving**
  - B. Severely underfunded**
  - C. Widely accessible**
  - D. Completely integrated**
- 4. Which amendment abolished slavery in the United States?**
  - A. The 13th amendment**
  - B. The 14th amendment**
  - C. The 15th amendment**
  - D. The 16th amendment**
- 5. What sparked the economic decline in the National Labour Union's membership in the early 1870s?**
  - A. A successful strike in the steel industry**
  - B. A major economic crash in 1873**
  - C. Government intervention in labor disputes**
  - D. Formation of rival labor organizations**

- 6. Which strategy did Cornelius Vanderbilt employ in the railroad industry?**
- A. He primarily invested in shipping lines**
  - B. He bought out many railroad companies to reduce costs**
  - C. He established the first national rail network**
  - D. He focused on creating a passenger rail service**
- 7. What was a consequence of widespread railroad construction in the Gilded Age?**
- A. Increased reliance on horse-drawn carriages**
  - B. Reduction in the production of steel**
  - C. Cut in journey times across the country**
  - D. Decline of urban centers**
- 8. What was a significant feature of the railroad expansion during the Gilded Age?**
- A. Reduction of urban populations**
  - B. Integration of telecommunication lines**
  - C. Completion of the transcontinental railroad by 1869**
  - D. Increase in hand-powered transport solutions**
- 9. What was a prominent factor contributing to the slow movement of African Americans towards land ownership?**
- A. High taxation rates**
  - B. Lack of financial resources**
  - C. Strong opposition from white landowners**
  - D. Racial segregation in the North**
- 10. What was John Hay's Open Door Policy mainly focused on?**
- A. Access to the European markets**
  - B. Equal access to the Chinese market**
  - C. Promoting American immigration**
  - D. Ending colonial rule in Asia**



## **Answers**

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1. C
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. B
7. C
8. C
9. B
10. B

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What legal act did the Tennessee legislature pass that led to the Monkey Trials?**

- A. National Origins Act**
- B. Bill of Rights**
- C. Butler Act**
- D. Immigration Act**

The Butler Act, passed by the Tennessee legislature in 1925, specifically prohibited the teaching of human evolution in state-funded schools. This legal act directly led to the famous Scopes "Monkey" Trial, where a high school teacher, John T. Scopes, was accused of violating the act by teaching Charles Darwin's theory of evolution in his classroom. The trial became a significant moment in the debate between science and religion, reflecting the cultural tensions of the time regarding modernism and traditional values. The Butler Act's introduction exemplified the growing conflict between scientific ideas and fundamentalist religion, marking a pivotal point in American educational and legal history.

**2. Which radio personality criticized FDR, believing he was too allied with banks?**

- A. Huey Long**
- B. Charles E. Coughlin**
- C. Francis Townsend**
- D. John Collier**

The correct answer is indeed Charles E. Coughlin. He was a prominent radio personality in the 1930s who gained a large following through his broadcasts. Coughlin started out as a supporter of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal but became increasingly critical over time, particularly expressing concerns that FDR was overly accommodating to banks and big financial institutions. He felt that the policies implemented during the New Deal favored the wealthy at the expense of the poor and working-class citizens. Coughlin's broadcasts often included populist rhetoric and he advocated for monetary reforms, including the nationalization of banks and the issuance of more silver currency to support the economy. His shift from support to criticism of FDR epitomizes the broader discontent that some Americans felt toward the government's alignment with Wall Street during the Great Depression, showcasing the tensions surrounding economic reform during that era.

### 3. What was the general status of African American education during the Gilded Age?

- A. Rapidly improving
- B. Severely underfunded**
- C. Widely accessible
- D. Completely integrated

During the Gilded Age, the general status of African American education was severely underfunded. This period followed the Reconstruction era and was marked by the establishment of Jim Crow laws, which enforced racial segregation and discrimination in many areas of public life, including education. As a result, while there were some efforts to establish schools for African Americans, these institutions often received significantly less funding compared to schools for white students, leading to inadequate facilities, insufficient teaching materials, and a lack of qualified teachers. Furthermore, the pervasive racism of the time resulted in limited access to quality education for African Americans, particularly in the Southern states. Many African American children were denied regular access to schools altogether, and those that did attend often faced significant obstacles, including a hostile atmosphere and a curriculum designed to limit their educational advancement. The other options do not accurately represent the educational climate for African Americans during the Gilded Age. Education was not rapidly improving due to systemic barriers and a lack of investment, nor was it widely accessible because many African American children were excluded from educational opportunities. Integration of schools was also not a reality during this time, as segregation was firmly in place, further highlighting the stark inequities faced by African Americans in education.

### 4. Which amendment abolished slavery in the United States?

- A. The 13th amendment**
- B. The 14th amendment
- C. The 15th amendment
- D. The 16th amendment

The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified in December 1865, abolished slavery and involuntary servitude in the country. This amendment was a pivotal change in American history, officially ending the legal institution of slavery which had been a foundational aspect of society, particularly in the Southern states. The language of the 13th Amendment is clear, stating that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." The significance of the 13th Amendment lies not only in its legal dissolution of slavery but also in its broader implications for civil rights and social justice in the post-Civil War era. It marked the beginning of a series of legislative measures aimed at addressing the rights of formerly enslaved individuals and integrating them into society as full citizens. The other amendments listed each addressed different aspects of civil rights and governance. The 14th Amendment, for example, focuses on citizenship rights and equal protection under the law, while the 15th Amendment prohibits denying the right to vote based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude. The 16th Amendment pertains to the federal

**5. What sparked the economic decline in the National Labour Union's membership in the early 1870s?**

- A. A successful strike in the steel industry**
- B. A major economic crash in 1873**
- C. Government intervention in labor disputes**
- D. Formation of rival labor organizations**

The correct choice, identifying a major economic crash in 1873 as the catalyst for the decline in the National Labour Union's membership, reflects the significant impact of economic conditions on labor organizations. The economic downturn triggered by the Panic of 1873 led to widespread financial instability, business failures, unemployment, and reduced wages. As companies struggled to cope with the economic strain, many workers faced job loss or decreasing job security, undermining their willingness or ability to participate in labor unions. This environmental stress made it difficult for the National Labour Union to maintain its organizing strength or to attract new members during a period when job security was fleeting. Additionally, the association of labor unions with strikes and demands for better conditions became less appealing to workers desperate to hold onto jobs, leading to a decline in member engagement and recruitment efforts. The impact of the economic crash during this period highlights the interconnectedness of labor movements and the broader economic context, emphasizing that external economic factors can profoundly influence labor organization dynamics.

**6. Which strategy did Cornelius Vanderbilt employ in the railroad industry?**

- A. He primarily invested in shipping lines**
- B. He bought out many railroad companies to reduce costs**
- C. He established the first national rail network**
- D. He focused on creating a passenger rail service**

Cornelius Vanderbilt's primary strategy in the railroad industry was to buy out many railroad companies to reduce costs and establish dominance in the market. This approach, known as consolidation, allowed him to streamline operations, eliminate competition, and create a more efficient and extensive network of railroads. By acquiring struggling or smaller companies, he was able to integrate their resources and routes into his own operations, leading to greater efficiency and profitability. This strategy contributed significantly to the expansion of the railroad industry in the United States during the late 19th century, as it enabled Vanderbilt to control critical routes and ensure lower transportation costs across the board. His focus on consolidation rather than merely investing in shipping lines, establishing passenger services, or creating the first national rail network distinguish his approach, as it centered around enhancing operational efficiency and market control through strategic acquisitions.

**7. What was a consequence of widespread railroad construction in the Gilded Age?**

- A. Increased reliance on horse-drawn carriages**
- B. Reduction in the production of steel**
- C. Cut in journey times across the country**
- D. Decline of urban centers**

The answer is correct because widespread railroad construction during the Gilded Age significantly facilitated transportation across the United States. This development allowed for much quicker travel times, enabling people and goods to move faster than ever before. Railroads connected rural areas with urban centers, opening up markets, promoting economic growth, and encouraging westward expansion. As railroads became the dominant mode of transportation, journey times were cut dramatically, transforming the landscape of American travel and commerce. In contrast, the other choices do not accurately reflect the consequences of railroad expansion. The reliance on horse-drawn carriages actually decreased, as railroads took over the transportation needs of many communities. The production of steel actually increased during this period, largely driven by the demand for rails and infrastructure, thereby contradicting the idea of a reduction in steel production. Lastly, rather than a decline, urban centers often grew in prominence as they became hubs of transportation and trade facilitated by the rail networks.

**8. What was a significant feature of the railroad expansion during the Gilded Age?**

- A. Reduction of urban populations**
- B. Integration of telecommunication lines**
- C. Completion of the transcontinental railroad by 1869**
- D. Increase in hand-powered transport solutions**

The completion of the transcontinental railroad by 1869 stands out as a significant feature of railroad expansion during the Gilded Age because it symbolized a monumental achievement in American infrastructure, connecting the eastern United States with the western territories. This development facilitated not only the movement of goods and people across vast distances but also contributed to economic growth and the expansion of industries, particularly in mining and agriculture. The transcontinental railroad played a crucial role in the settlement of the West, enabling faster travel and promoting trade between different regions. This connectivity helped to unify the nation after the Civil War and was instrumental in the westward expansion that characterized the Gilded Age. The railroad also led to the establishment of new communities and towns along its route, profoundly affecting the demographic and economic landscape of America during that period. Moreover, this achievement set the stage for further railroad construction and development, which were pivotal in shaping America's economy and society in the following decades. Therefore, the completion of the transcontinental railroad serves as a key reminder of the transformative impact of railroads during the Gilded Age.

**9. What was a prominent factor contributing to the slow movement of African Americans towards land ownership?**

- A. High taxation rates**
- B. Lack of financial resources**
- C. Strong opposition from white landowners**
- D. Racial segregation in the North**

The movement of African Americans towards land ownership was significantly hindered by a lack of financial resources. After the Civil War and during the Reconstruction era, many African Americans sought to acquire land as a means to secure independence and economic stability. However, systemic barriers such as discriminatory lending practices, limited access to education, and the legacy of poverty made it difficult for them to gather the necessary capital for purchasing land. While other factors, like strong opposition from white landowners and racial segregation, impacted various aspects of African American life, the crucial barrier preventing widespread land ownership was primarily tied to financial constraints. Without the means to purchase or maintain property, many African Americans remained renters or sharecroppers, limiting their economic mobility and perpetuating cycles of poverty.

**10. What was John Hay's Open Door Policy mainly focused on?**

- A. Access to the European markets**
- B. Equal access to the Chinese market**
- C. Promoting American immigration**
- D. Ending colonial rule in Asia**

John Hay's Open Door Policy was primarily aimed at ensuring equal access to the Chinese market for all foreign nations, particularly in the context of trade. This policy was formulated in response to the increasing European control and influence over various parts of China and sought to prevent the establishment of exclusive spheres of influence by foreign powers. The essence of the Open Door Policy was to advocate for free trade and to ensure that no single nation would monopolize trade with China. It reflected the United States' desire to participate in the lucrative Chinese market and to assert its interests alongside those of European powers without engaging in colonialism. By promoting the idea that all foreign nations should have equal opportunities to trade in China, Hay aimed to preserve China's territorial integrity and maintain an environment favorable for American economic interests. While the other options touch on significant themes in American history, they do not align with the specific purpose of Hay's policy. Access to European markets pertains more to transatlantic trade dynamics, promoting American immigration is a different aspect of immigration policy, and ending colonial rule in Asia reflects a broader anti-colonial sentiment, which was not the direct goal of the Open Door Policy.



## Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://alevelhistoryamerica.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**