

# US and Virginia History SOL Practice Test (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

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- 1. Which region's economy remained primarily agricultural at the end of the Civil War?**
  - A. North**
  - B. South**
  - C. West**
  - D. Northeast**
  
- 2. The 20th Amendment is primarily associated with changes in what?**
  - A. Length of presidential and congressional terms**
  - B. Abolition of slavery**
  - C. Prohibition**
  - D. Women's suffrage**
  
- 3. Which battle is described as the turning point and the last major battle in the Northern theater?**
  - A. Gettysburg**
  - B. Vicksburg**
  - C. Fredericksburg**
  - D. Chickamauga**
  
- 4. The Open Door Policy urged foreigners to do what with respect to China?**
  - A. Establish exclusive trading zones**
  - B. Respect China's territorial integrity**
  - C. Have equal trading rights with China**
  - D. Withdraw all investments**
  
- 5. Who wrote the majority of the U.S. Bill of Rights?**
  - A. James Madison**
  - B. Thomas Jefferson**
  - C. George Mason**
  - D. Benjamin Franklin**

- 6. After Appomattox, which figure urged Southerners to accept defeat and unite?**
- A. Robert E Lee**
  - B. Ulysses S. Grant**
  - C. Jefferson Davis**
  - D. Frederick Douglass**
- 7. The Monroe Doctrine is associated with which principle regarding European involvement in the Americas?**
- A. The United States will not interfere with European affairs**
  - B. The United States will colonize the Americas**
  - C. The United States will ally with European powers**
  - D. The United States will seek to control European trade**
- 8. The 17th Amendment changed how U.S. Senators are selected, shifting from appointment by state legislatures to what method?**
- A. Direct election by the people**
  - B. Appointment by the President**
  - C. Appointment by the Supreme Court**
  - D. Lottery**
- 9. The Southern Colonies were founded by people seeking what?**
- A. Economic opportunities**
  - B. Religious freedom**
  - C. Democracy**
  - D. Education**
- 10. What were two ways the government aided the growth of industry?**
- A. Laissez-faire capitalism and special considerations**
  - B. Tariffs and subsidies**
  - C. Regulation and nationalization**
  - D. Tax breaks and grants**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which region's economy remained primarily agricultural at the end of the Civil War?**

- A. North**
- B. South**
- C. West**
- D. Northeast**

This question looks at how regional economies differed after the Civil War. The South stayed focused on farming, while the North and Northeast moved toward industry and cities, and the West expanded both farming and resource extraction. The South's economy had been built on plantation agriculture and slavery, with cotton as a key crop. After emancipation, the labor system shifted to sharecropping and tenant farming, and the region faced the destruction of infrastructure and capital from the war. Those conditions meant industrial growth was slow, so farming remained the dominant economic activity. Therefore, the region whose economy remained primarily agricultural at the end of the Civil War is the South.

**2. The 20th Amendment is primarily associated with changes in what?**

- A. Length of presidential and congressional terms**
- B. Abolition of slavery**
- C. Prohibition**
- D. Women's suffrage**

The main idea here is about when federal offices begin their terms. The 20th Amendment moved the start of presidential and congressional terms from March to January, shortening the time between elections and the new leadership taking office. It also sets in place what happens if the President-elect dies before taking office, but the key point is the change in the timing of when leaders officially begin their terms. This is why the amendment is associated with term dates and the transition period, not with other reforms like slavery abolition, prohibition, or women's suffrage.

**3. Which battle is described as the turning point and the last major battle in the Northern theater?**

- A. Gettysburg**
- B. Vicksburg**
- C. Fredericksburg**
- D. Chickamauga**

The key idea is identifying the battle that marks a decisive shift in the war and was the last large confrontation fought in the Northern theater. Gettysburg fits best because it stopped Lee's invasion of the North, preserving Union morale and turning the momentum of the war toward the Union. The victory in Pennsylvania ended Confederate hopes of a successful northern invasion and began a series of Union offensives that steadily wore down the Confederacy. This battle is viewed as the turning point for the Eastern Theater. It's also why it's considered the last major battle in the Northern theater—after Gettysburg, the major actions moved to other theaters, and no large-scale Confederate invasion into Northern territory occurred. Fredericksburg was a Confederate victory in Virginia and does not represent a turning point; Chickamauga occurred in the Western Theater, and Vicksburg, while critical, was a Western Theater campaign on the Mississippi.

**4. The Open Door Policy urged foreigners to do what with respect to China?**

- A. Establish exclusive trading zones**
- B. Respect China's territorial integrity**
- C. Have equal trading rights with China**
- D. Withdraw all investments**

The Open Door Policy centers on keeping Chinese markets open to trade by all nations on an equal basis. It argued that no country should monopolize trade in China or carve out exclusive zones, and that China's territorial integrity should be respected. The key action asked of foreigners was to have equal trading rights with China, ensuring access to ports and markets for every nation under the same terms. That's why this option is the best fit. The other ideas—establishing exclusive trading zones, withdrawing investments, or merely invoking territorial integrity—do not capture the policy's main push for equal access to Chinese trade.

## 5. Who wrote the majority of the U.S. Bill of Rights?

- A. James Madison**
- B. Thomas Jefferson**
- C. George Mason**
- D. Benjamin Franklin**

The main idea here is who actually drafted the amendments that became the Bill of Rights. James Madison did the heavy lifting in this process. In 1789, within the First Congress, Madison introduced a package of 19 proposed amendments to the Constitution. He wrote the bulk of the wording and guided them through Congress, aiming to protect essential liberties and limit the power of the new federal government. Although not all ideas came from him—he drew on existing proposals and relevant state declarations—his role was to draft and push forward the amendments that eventually became the ten ratified amendments in 1791. That's why he's credited with writing the majority of the U.S. Bill of Rights. Other figures contributed important influence. Thomas Jefferson inspired many of the rights and principles that shaped the Bill of Rights, but he did not draft the majority of its language. George Mason wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights, which influenced later protections, yet it was Madison who translated those ideas into the federal amendments. Benjamin Franklin supported the constitutional project and served as a key elder statesman, but the actual drafting of the Bill of Rights was Madison's work.

## 6. After Appomattox, which figure urged Southerners to accept defeat and unite?

- A. Robert E Lee**
- B. Ulysses S. Grant**
- C. Jefferson Davis**
- D. Frederick Douglass**

After Appomattox, the country sought healing and reconciliation, bringing the North and South back together. Robert E. Lee, the Confederate commander, spoke in terms of unity and asked his fellow Southerners to accept the defeat, lay down their arms, and rejoin the nation as peaceful, loyal citizens. He emphasized moving forward and rebuilding together rather than prolonging conflict, which is why his message is seen as the call to unite after the surrender. Ulysses S. Grant was the Union general who accepted Lee's surrender and would lead the country through the next phase, but he didn't issue the plea to reconcile in the same way. Jefferson Davis, still devoted to the Confederacy, and Frederick Douglass, while a powerful advocate for emancipation and civil rights, did not frame the immediate postwar appeal as a call for Southern unity after defeat in the same sense Lee did.

**7. The Monroe Doctrine is associated with which principle regarding European involvement in the Americas?**

- A. The United States will not interfere with European affairs**
- B. The United States will colonize the Americas**
- C. The United States will ally with European powers**
- D. The United States will seek to control European trade**

The key idea is that Europe should stay out of the western hemisphere, and the United States would stay out of European matters. In other words, the Monroe Doctrine places a boundary: European powers should not establish new colonies or interfere in the politics of the Americas, and the United States would refrain from getting involved in European wars or internal affairs. This reciprocal stance—non-interference by the United States in European affairs—best captures the principle about European involvement in the Americas. That’s why this option fits: it reflects the doctrine’s concern with limiting European influence in the Americas while signaling the U.S. commitment to avoid meddling in European affairs. The other options describe actions (colonizing the Americas, allying with European powers, trying to control European trade) that go against what the Monroe Doctrine actually asserts.

**8. The 17th Amendment changed how U.S. Senators are selected, shifting from appointment by state legislatures to what method?**

- A. Direct election by the people**
- B. Appointment by the President**
- C. Appointment by the Supreme Court**
- D. Lottery**

Direct election by the people. The 17th Amendment (ratified in 1913) shifted Senate selection from state legislatures to voters in statewide elections, making senators chosen by citizens rather than by state lawmakers. This change aimed to reduce legislative deadlock and corruption, giving the people a direct voice in who represents them in the Senate. Senators are elected to six-year terms in statewide races. Vacancies are filled according to state law, often by a governor’s appointment until a special election. The President or the Supreme Court do not appoint senators, and a lottery is not a method used for selecting senators.

**9. The Southern Colonies were founded by people seeking what?**

- A. Economic opportunities**
- B. Religious freedom**
- C. Democracy**
- D. Education**

The main idea here is that the Southern Colonies were started to make money. Investors and settlers looked for land, resources, and the chance to grow cash crops like tobacco, rice, and indigo to export and profit from. Jamestown, for example, was established by the Virginia Company as a money-making venture, and tobacco soon became the economic backbone of Maryland and the Carolinas. While religious motives did appear in some colonies (Maryland was founded as a haven for Catholics), the driving force behind founding these southern colonies was economic opportunity—turning land and labor into wealth for investors and settlers.

**10. What were two ways the government aided the growth of industry?**

- A. Laissez-faire capitalism and special considerations**
- B. Tariffs and subsidies**
- C. Regulation and nationalization**
- D. Tax breaks and grants**

Government support for industry came from shielding domestic producers and providing financial help. Tariffs protected U.S. factories by making imported goods more expensive, which encouraged people to buy American-made products and let industries expand. Subsidies—such as cash payments, tax incentives, land grants, or railroad subsidies—lowered costs and helped build the infrastructure and capital needed for growth. This combination of protection and financial assistance was a common way governments boosted industrial expansion in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Laissez-faire describes little government action, which wouldn't fit the idea of aiding growth, and while tax breaks and grants are forms of subsidies, the usual historical pattern highlights tariffs alongside subsidies as the two main methods.

## 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://usvahistorysol.examzify.com>**

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

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