**American History**

**Mid-Term Essay Questions**

1. The post-war period known as Reconstruction was a time of great political hostility, social upheaval, and economic ruin.
   1. Describe how the Radical Republicans reshaped the politics of the South to increase the equality of the newly-freed African-American population.
   2. In what ways did the Southern states resist the participation of freedmen in Southern government and society?
   3. What changes were made to the Constitution in order to help guarantee the rights of freedmen? Explain how these helped to guarantee rights.
2. The age of American Industrialization in the latter half of the 1800s was made possible by a combination of vast resources, clever innovation, entrepreneurship, and a rapidly growing cheap labor force.
   1. Identify three of the key innovators responsible for developing the technology that drove the Industrial Revolution, their innovation/s, and the role their technology played in our industrial development.
   2. Explain the role played by the development of big businesses in shaping the attitudes of the wealthy toward the working class and vise versa.
   3. Describe the conditions that led to the formation of labor unions in America. Identify two key early unions and explain what they wanted to achieve and the methods they used.
3. The mid-late 19th century was a period of westward expansion in American history leading to extensive growth of the nation, but not without great conflict, controversy and hardship.
   1. Discuss the methods and justifications used by the federal government for taking Indian lands.
   2. In what ways did native tribes respond to the pressures of white settlers and soldiers?
   3. Describe the purpose and the effect of the Dawes Act on the native people it targeted.
4. The Gilded Age was a time of overall economic and industrial growth as well as unprecedented political corruption at all levels of government.
   1. Explain how and why corruption in the spoils system was responsible for so many of the scandals and corrupt practices at the federal level. Cite specific scandals and corruptions to illustrate your point.
   2. Describe how a large and growing cheap immigrant workforce in American cities helped to create powerful political machines.
   3. Identify two key movements in America that were pushing for social reform in response to the corruption of the Gilded Age. What methods were they using to bring about social change?
5. By the end of the 1800s a complex web of local and state laws combined with unspoken social rules for minorities were designed to oppress and exclude minorities from equal participation in government, the workforce, and society.
   1. Discuss the purposes and effects of voting restrictions toward minorities in the South. Use specific examples to illustrate your point.
   2. Describe the impact of the Supreme Court decision, Plessey v Ferguson.
   3. In what ways did African Americans and other minorities overcome obstacles created by segregation? Discuss key organizations and leaders in the long struggle for racial equality and their views on how to reach their goals.
6. In the years after the American victory in the Spanish-American War, Presidents adopted more assertive views on the role of America in foreign affairs.
   1. Explain the goals of Theodore Roosevelt’s “big stick” diplomacy. How are those goals a reflection of America’s growing ambitions?
   2. Describe the theory behind Taft’s “dollar diplomacy”. Where were Taft’s policies tried and what were the results?
   3. Describe Woodrow Wilson’s approach to foreign affairs. What was his justification for American involvement in the Mexican Revolution?
7. As the 19th century drew to a close, the great western frontier disappeared as the nation expanded westward igniting a debate over the future of America’s development.
   1. Describe the impact of the Turner Thesis on American attitudes toward imperial ambitions.
   2. Discuss the reasons many Americans opposed the pursuit of foreign territory. Conversely, what justifications were given in favor of foreign expansion?
   3. Explain the role of the Monroe Doctrine in creating a more aggressive foreign policy. Cite specific examples to illustrate your point
8. By the turn of the century, the United States had grown into the most innovative, productive industrial power on Earth. However, those achievements did not include comparable growth in social or economic equality between the races, classes, and genders.
   1. Describe the influence of the earlier Populist movement on the goals of the Progressive reform era.
   2. Why is Theodore Roosevelt considered the first President of the Progressive Era? What Progressive reforms did he institute? What was the motivation for those reforms?
   3. Women were a key force in the social reform movement (Progressive Era). What reforms were women most interested in? Why?
9. In 1916 the war between the empires of Europe intensified in ways that created serious concerns for America. These concerns sparked a debate within our government and among our people about what actions, if any, our nation should take.
   1. Explain America’s position on the war in 1914. What were our reasons for that position?
   2. Compare the views of the Preparedness Movement vs the Peace Movement. Who would likely be members of each?
   3. Describe how each of the following influenced America’s attitude toward the war in Europe: the Sussex Pledge, the Zimmerman Note, and the Russian Revolution.
10. After deciding to mobilize for war, America engaged in the largest unified effort toward a single goal since the founding of the nation. The effort brought together the organizing power of the government, the manufacturing capacity of industry, and the financial and social support of the people.
    1. Describe the role that each of the following played in America’s mobilization for war: Liberty Bonds, the War Industries Board, rationing, daylight savings time.
    2. Explain how and why the federal government enforced loyalty for the war effort. Use examples to explain how dissidents were dealt with.
    3. What role did propaganda play in mobilizing the American population for the war?