

STAR Test Sample Questions

8th Grade History - Social Science

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Standardized Testing and Reporting - STAR

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

The Chinese people turned to the teachings of Confucius because his ideas were thought to help

- A unify the Chinese against foreign enemies.
- B restore order in China.
- C stop the Chinese people from converting to Islam.
- D create democratic institutions.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

What was the main contribution of Emperor Shi Huangdi to China?

- ☐ A He unified most of China under one government.
- ☐ B He established a public education system in China.
- ☐ C He required citizens to use the Mongol language.
- ☐ D He encouraged acceptance of the Hindu religion.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

Greece's mountainous terrain and its series of small islands influenced the ancient Greeks to develop

- ☐ A a political system based on independent city-states.
- ☐ B a culture that was uniform throughout its vast empire.
- ☐ C an economic system based on mining precious metals.
- ☐ D a society completely isolated from other civilizations.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

The legacy of ancient Greek myths and epics, such as the *Iliad*, continues to provide people with

A accurate descriptions of historical events.

B heroic figures and great adventures.

C real life stories about everyday people.

D objective studies of ancient civilizations.

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Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

atlas — a collection of maps

herculean — very powerful

labyrinth — a maze

olympian — majestic, honored

All of these words used in the English language today originated in myths of the

A Chinese.

B Romans.

C Greeks.

D Egyptians.

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Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

Hammurabi's Code of ancient Mesopotamian society was important because it

- A listed the laws and the corresponding punishments.
- B explained how government officials were chosen.
- C established a single currency for use across the empire.
- D described how to perform formal religious ceremonies.

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Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 04

Which development *most* enabled early peoples to form permanent settlements?

A advances in agricultural production

B the creation of democratic government

C the spread of monotheism

D advances in written language

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Ancient Civilizations (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

Cuneiform and hieroglyphics were important achievements in the development of

A written language.

B religious beliefs.

C agricultural production.

D representative government.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

What is one reason that the Union strategy for defeating the South included a naval blockade of Southern ports?

- ☐ A to cut the South off from its supply lines in the countries of Latin America
- ☐ B to stop Southern attempts to establish slave plantations in Cuba and Mexico
- ☐ C to prevent Southern efforts to sell cotton in Europe in exchange for war supplies
- ☐ D to deprive the South of fishing and whaling as a primary source of food

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is similar to the Declaration of Independence in that both documents

- A include descriptions of laws which should be passed.
- B emphasize the need for effective government.
- C support the ideals of self-government and human rights.
- D justify the need for economic change.

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Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

What was the first major goal of President Abraham Lincoln's administration?

- ☐ A to destroy the institution of slavery
- ☐ B to maintain the unity of the country
- ☐ C to expand the power of state governments
- ☐ D to industrialize the economy

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Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 04

States' rights played a major role in all of the following except the

A Kentucky and Virginia Resolves.

B Missouri Compromise.

C Nullification Crisis.

D Monroe Doctrine.

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Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

One goal of post–Civil War Congressional Reconstruction was to

- ☐ A repay Confederate war debts.
- ☐ B ensure civil rights for former slaves.
- ☐ C preserve the plantation system.
- ☐ D rebuild the Southern naval system.

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Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

The main goal of abolitionists like William Lloyd Garrison was to

A allow all women the right to vote.

B establish tax-supported schools.

C stop individuals from drinking alcoholic beverages.

D end slavery immediately.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

A large percentage of the immigrants who came to the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries settled in large cities because

- ☐ A most of them had lived in cities in their homelands.
- ☐ B there were fewer and fewer farms in the United States.
- ☐ C the growing industries were usually located in cities.
- ☐ D the government encouraged immigrants to settle in big cities.

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Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 04

What led the newspapers to speak of “Bleeding Kansas” in 1856?

A fighting between pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces

B attacks on job-seeking Irish immigrants

C conflict between cattle ranchers and farmers

D reaction to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling against Dred Scott

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 05

The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States were intended to solve problems relating to

A government organization.

B civil rights.

C checks and balances.

D rapid economic change.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Civil War and Its Aftermath (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

Who was the most important leader of the Underground Railroad?

☐ A Harriet Tubman

☐ B William Lloyd Garrison

☐ C Phyllis Wheatley

☐ D Sarah Grimké

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Performance Level: Advanced) –

Question 01



The map above represents the military conquests associated with the spread of what major world religion?

A Christianity

B Judaism

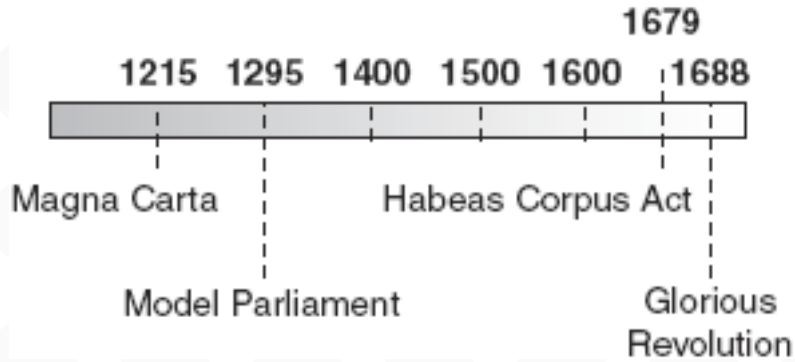
C Islam

D Hinduism

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

Use the timeline to complete the following statement.



The timeline shows events related to the

- A conflict between the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor.
- B Catholic Church's expansion of influence in government.
- C evolution towards constitutional government in England.
- D establishment of an absolute monarchy in France.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

Which shows the importance the Mongols placed on improving trade contacts with other civilizations?

- ☐ A the conquest of Constantinople
- ☐ B the establishment of caravan routes
- ☐ C the construction of large merchant fleets
- ☐ D the creation of a national currency

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Renaissance/Reformation (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

Which of these is *not* a characteristic of Renaissance painting?

A subject matter limited to Christian themes

B realistic portrait painting

C settings reflecting the world of the artists

D paintings showing depth and perspective

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Renaissance/Reformation (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

England became a Protestant country during the Reformation when its

A king declared himself head of the Church of England.

B people demanded the adoption of Lutheran beliefs.

C priests opposed reforms implemented by the Pope.

D armies were exposed to Calvinist beliefs while in France.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Renaissance/Reformation (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

What were both the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights designed to do?

- ☐ A limit the power of the monarch
- ☐ B provide for religious freedom
- ☐ C accept the theory of divine right
- ☐ D give commoners the right to vote

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Renaissance/Reformation (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

The stories from Marco Polo's travels encouraged Europeans to

A journey to Asia in search of wealth.

B abandon the feudal land system.

C launch the Crusades against Muslims.

D isolate themselves from foreigners.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

Renaissance/Reformation (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

- ▶ Artist, architect, mathematician
- ▶ Studied anatomy to more realistic human figures
- ▶ Painted a mural depicting the last meeting of Jesus and his disciples
- ▶ Painted the portrait known as “Mona Lisa”

The information in the chart above best describes which of these individuals of the Renaissance?

A Raphael

B Michelangelo

C da Vinci

D Botticelli

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

Which of these groups most likely supported the political ideas and policies of Alexander Hamilton?

- ☐ A small farmers
- ☐ B tobacco planters
- ☐ C business owners
- ☐ D frontier settlers

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

Go west, young man, and grow up with the country.

—Horace Greeley

Hints Toward Reform

Greeley's quotation is associated with which of these?

A Farmers Alliance

B Populist Party

C Manifest Destiny

D Temperance movement

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

One goal of the Declaration of Independence was to

- ☐ A establish a new monarchy for the independent states.
- ☐ B convince the British Parliament to prevent the start of war.
- ☐ C explain why the colonists felt the need to be free from British rule.
- ☐ D outline an economic system to raise money for the revolution.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 04

What was the purpose of the Monroe Doctrine (1823)?

- A to open Canada to American settlers
- B to prevent European expansion in the Americas
- C to acquire Florida for the United States
- D to end the United States' alliance with Great Britain

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

Use the excerpt to answer the following question.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

—Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

The Tenth Amendment was added to the Constitution to resolve which of the following topics of debate surrounding the development of the Constitution?

A division of powers among branches of government

B the annexation of new lands into the country

C balance between national and state government power

D the representation of states in the legislative houses

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

During the 1800s, the movement of large numbers of immigrants from many different countries into large American cities resulted in the rapid growth of

A effective public health programs.

B ethnic neighborhoods.

C public parks and recreation areas.

D plentiful and affordable public housing.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

By the mid-1800s, California was being settled mostly by people in search of

A jobs in industrial cities.

B wealth from the discovery of gold.

C animal pelts for the fur trade.

D trade with American Indians.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 04

Texas has been absorbed into the Union in the inevitable fulfillment of the general law which is rolling our population westward.

—Democratic Review, 1845

The quotation above describes the nineteenth-century American belief in

- ☐ A the Social Contract.
- ☐ B Manifest Destiny.
- ☐ C isolationism.
- ☐ D the Monroe Doctrine.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 05

While the American colonies were fighting a revolution against England and forming a new nation, New Spain was establishing new settlements in California using what type of system?

☐ A plantation

☐ B factory

☐ C mission

☐ D capitalist

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 06

In his Farewell Address, George Washington urged the American people to

- ☐ A limit a president to two terms in office.
- ☐ B value and maintain a sense of national unity.
- ☐ C create a defensive alliance with European countries.
- ☐ D establish more effective political parties.

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U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 07

Which of these parts of the United States Constitution contains fundamental liberties of American citizens?

☐ A Preamble

☐ B Article I, Section 8 — Enumerated Powers

☐ C Article III — Judicial Branch

☐ D Amendments 1–10 — Bill of Rights

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U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Basic) –

Question 01

Conflict with Mexico became highly likely following the granting of statehood to

A Texas.

B Missouri.

C Arizona.

D Louisiana.

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U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 02

In designing the legislative branch, the writers of the Constitution mainly based their ideas on the

A French Estates General.

B Congress of Vienna.

C Council of Trent.

D English Parliament.

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 03

What agricultural invention, designed to increase production, had the effect of increasing the number of slaves needed for labor in the Deep South?

A the wheat reaper

B the cotton gin

C the steel plow

D the rice mill

Grade 8: History-Social Science

U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic (Performance Level: Basic) – **Question 04**

Prior to the Civil War, which group had the most political power in the South?

A plantation owners

B cattle ranchers

C urban merchants

D religious officials