

# CLEP® History of the United States I: Early Colonization to 1877: At a Glance

## Description of the Examination

The History of the United States I: Early Colonization to 1877 examination covers material that is usually taught in the first semester of a two-semester course in United States history. The examination covers the period of United States history from early European colonization to the end of Reconstruction, with the majority of the questions on the period of 1790–1877. In the part covering the 17th and 18th centuries, emphasis is placed on the English colonies.

The examination contains approximately 120 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored. Any time candidates spend on tutorials and providing personal information is in addition to the actual testing time.

## Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the History of the United States I examination require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities in regard to historical phenomena:

- Identification and description
- Analysis and interpretation
- Comparison and contrast

The subject matter of the History of the United States I examination is drawn from the following topics. The percentages next to the main topics indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions on that topic.

### Topical Specifications

- 35% Political institutions, political developments, behavior and public policy
- 25% Social developments
- 10% Economic developments
- 15% Cultural and intellectual developments
- 15% Diplomacy and international relations

### Chronological Specifications

- 30% 1500–1789
- 70% 1790–1877

The following themes are reflected in a comprehensive introductory survey course:

- The impact of European discovery and colonization upon indigenous societies
- The nature of indigenous societies in North America
- The origins and nature of slavery and resistance
- Immigration and the history of ethnic minorities
- Major movements and individual figures in the history of women and the family
- The development and character of colonial societies
- British relations with the Atlantic colonies of North America
- The changing role of religion in American society
- The content of the Constitution and its amendments, and their interpretation by the Supreme Court
- The development and expansion of participatory democracy
- The growth of and changes in political parties
- The changing role of government in American life
- The intellectual and political expressions of nationalism
- Major movements and individual figures in the history of American literature, art and popular culture
- Abolitionism and reform movements
- Long-term democratic trends (immigration and internal migration)
- The motivations for and character of American expansionism
- The process of economic growth and development
- The causes and impacts of major wars in United States history

## Study Resources

Most textbooks used in college-level United States history (pre-1865) courses cover the topics in the outline above, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphases given to them may differ. To prepare for the History of the United States I exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found in most college bookstores. A recent survey conducted by CLEP® found that the following textbooks are among those used by college faculty who teach the equivalent course. You might find one or more of these online or at your local college bookstore. HINT: Look at the table of contents first to make sure it matches the Knowledge and Skills Required for this exam.

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Berkin, <i>Making America</i> (Wadsworth)
Boydston, <i>Making a Nation</i> (Prentice Hall)
Boyer, <i>The Enduring Vision</i> (Wadsworth)
Brinkley, <i>American History: A Survey</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Carnes and Garraty, <i>The American Nation</i> (Longman)
Davidson, <i>Nation of Nations: A Concise Narrative of the American Republic</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Divine, <i>The American Story</i> (Penguin/Prentice Hall)
Faragher, <i>Out of Many: A History of the American People</i> (Prentice Hall)
Foner, <i>Give Me Liberty!</i> (W. W. Norton)
Goldfield, <i>American Journey</i> (Prentice Hall)
Henretta, <i>America's History</i> (Bedford/St. Martin's)
Jones, <i>Created Equal: A History of the United States</i> (Prentice Hall)
Kennedy, <i>Brief American Pageant: The History of the Republic</i> (Wadsworth)
Martin, <i>America and Its Peoples</i> (Longman)
Murrin, <i>Liberty, Equality and Power</i> (Wadsworth)
Nash, <i>The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society, Concise Ed.</i> (Prentice Hall)
Tindall and Shi, <i>Essential America</i> (W. W. Norton)

Additional details and differing interpretations can be gained by consulting readers and specialized historical studies. Pay attention to visual materials (pictures, maps and charts) as you study. These resources, compiled by the CLEP test development committee and staff members, may help you study for your exam. However, none of these sources are designed specifically to provide preparation for a CLEP exam. The College Board has no control over their content and cannot vouch for accuracy.

Digital History at the University of Houston:  
<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/>

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History:  
<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/>

U.S. History Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium:  
<http://www.ushistory.org/us/>

History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web:  
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>

HippoCampus textbooks and courses:  
<http://www.hippocampus.org>

Annenberg's A Biography of America telecourse:  
<http://www.learner.org/biographyofamerica/>

Visit [www.collegeboard.com/clepprep](http://www.collegeboard.com/clepprep) for additional history resources. You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *CLEP Official Study Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

## Sample Test Questions

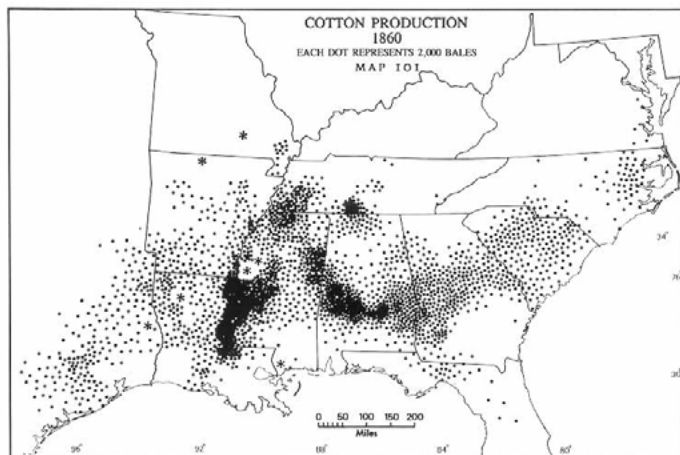
The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. For more sample questions and info about the test, see the *CLEP Official Study Guide*.

1. Which of the following was acknowledged as a clear advantage held by the Union over the Confederacy during the U.S Civil War?
  - (A) Control over the Mississippi River from end to end from the outset of the war
  - (B) A sense of purpose in the conflict that unified all Northerners
  - (C) An industrial capacity that allowed the Union to produce most of what it needed for the war
  - (D) A more highly trained and experienced military leadership
  - (E) A better understanding of the terrain on which the majority of the battles were fought
2. Anne Hutchinson and her followers were banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony because
  - (A) Hutchinson had been convicted of adultery
  - (B) they attempted to overthrow the colony's elected government
  - (C) their advocacy of the banning of alcohol put them at odds with the rest of the colonists
  - (D) Hutchinson's religious views led to her excommunication from the Puritan church
  - (E) their support of the English monarchy made them enemies with the Revolutionary leaders in Boston
3. The Great Famine of Ireland in the 1840s affected the United States in which of the following ways?
  - (A) It led to a massive wave of Irish immigrants to the United States.
  - (B) It forced Americans to abandon imports of the potato and look for other sources of food.
  - (C) It led to a decline in the influence of the Roman Catholic Church.
  - (D) Inter-marriage between Irish immigrants and native-born US citizens declined.
  - (E) It led American scientists to pool their skills in finding a cure for the potato blight.

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4. The Mason-Dixon Line, surveyed in the 1760s, was important for which of the following reasons?

- (A) It became the basis for the boundary between the United States and Canada.
- (B) It carved out the territory that later became the District of Columbia.
- (C) It marked the westernmost limit of settlement for European colonists after the French and Indian War.
- (D) It referred to the line where British troops assembled in their efforts to turn back the colonists' rebellion.
- (E) It was used as the dividing line between free and slave states in the Missouri Compromise of 1820.



Map 21: Georgia and South Carolina were no longer leaders in growing cotton by 1860 when the heaviest production had shifted west to Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

5. Which of the following conclusions can be drawn from the map above, which shows cotton production in 1860 in the US?

- (A) Cotton production tended to be concentrated where railroad transportation was most abundant.
- (B) Warm weather is the only factor that determines the location of cotton plantations.
- (C) There was a correlation between the importance of cotton and the use of slave labor in the Southern economy.
- (D) Cotton was grown only in states that seceded from the Union.
- (E) Cotton production was impossible to sustain once the Civil War ended.

6. The disagreement between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson regarding the economic policy of the United States can best be summarized as a contrast between

- (A) alignment with the French colonial system and remaining part of the British commonwealth
- (B) a centralized system based on trade and manufacturing and a system that relied on independent farmers and agriculture
- (C) a proslavery economic system and one in which slavery would eventually be abolished
- (D) a system in which workers own the principal means of industrial production and one in which an aristocracy controls economic policy
- (E) an Old World economy in which land ownership is taxed and a New World system in which high tariffs are assessed on industry

7. The idea of Manifest Destiny was probably expressed most clearly in which of the following actions?

- (A) The creation of the House of Burgesses in colonial Virginia
- (B) The founding of Harvard College in colonial Massachusetts
- (C) The addition of the Bill of Rights to the Constitution
- (D) The declaration of war against Mexico in 1846
- (E) The abolition of slavery at the end of the Civil War

8. The economic growth of the Great Lakes region in the early 19th century was most facilitated by the

- (A) completion of the Erie Canal
- (B) blockade of Eastern ports by the British
- (C) discovery of gold in the Northwest Territories
- (D) improvements brought by the transcontinental railroad
- (E) organization of several Midwest territories into states

## Credit Recommendations

The American Council on Education has recommended that colleges grant 3 credits for a score of 50, which is equivalent to a course grade of C, on the CLEP History of the United States I exam. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the History of the United States I examination, colleges may grant credit toward fulfillment of a distribution requirement, or for a particular course that matches the exam in content. Check with your school to find out the score it requires for granting credit, the number of credit hours granted and the course that can be bypassed with a passing score.

*Answers to Sample Questions:* 1-C; 2-D; 3-A; 4-E; 5-C; 6-B; 7-D; 8-A.