Exam Overview

The APUSH exam takes 3 hours and 15 minutes to complete and is comprised of two sections: a multiple choice/short answer section and a free response section. There are two parts (Part A and Part B) to each section.

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|  | Timing | Number of Questions |
| Section 1 | Part A: 55 minutesPart B: 40 minutes | 55 multiple-choice questions3 short answer questions |
| Section 2 | Part A: 60 minutesPart B: 40 minutes | 1 document-based question1 long essay |

Question Types

APUSH Multiple Choice Questions

Questions are grouped into sets of two to five questions and based on a primary source, secondary source, or historical issue. Each set of questions is based on a different piece of source material. This section will test your ability to analyze and engage with the source materials while recalling what you already know about U.S. history.

APUSH Short Answer Questions

The three questions in this section will be tied to a primary source, historical argument, data or maps, or general propositions of U.S. history. Students are required to answer the first and second questions and then answer either the third or the fourth question. You are not required to develop and support a thesis statement, but you must describe examples of historical evidence relevant to the source or question.

APUSH Document-Based Question (DBQ)

The DBQ question requires you to answer a question based on six or seven primary source documents and your knowledge of the subject and time period. All the documents will pertain to a single subject. Students should develop an argument about the question and use the documents to support this argument.

APUSH Long Essay Question

For the long essay question you’re given a choice of three essay options on the same theme, and you must choose one. You must develop and defend a relevant thesis, but there won’t be any documents on which you must base your response. Instead you’ll need to draw upon your own knowledge of topics you learned in your AP U.S. History class.

What topics should I review?

The College Board requires your AP teacher to cover certain topics in the AP U.S. History course. As you complete your APUSH review, make sure you are familiar with the following topics:

* Pre-Columbian Societies
* Transatlantic Encounters and Colonial Beginnings, 1492-1690
* Colonial North America, 1690-1754
* The American Revolutionary Era, 1754-1789
* The Early Republic, 1789-1815
* Transformation of the Economy and Society in Antebellum America
* The Transformation of Politics in Antebellum America
* Religion, Reform, and Renaissance in Antebellum America
* Territorial Expansion and Manifest Destiny
* The Crisis of the Union
* Civil War
* Reconstruction
* The Origins of the New South
* Development of the West in the Late 19th Century
* Industrial America in the Late 19th Century
* Urban Society in the late 19th Century
* Populism and Progressivism
* The Emergence of America as a World Power
* The New Era: 1920s
* The Great Depression and the New Deal
* The Second World War
* The Home Front During the War
* The United States and the Early Cold War
* The 1950s
* The Turbulent Sixties
* Politics and Economics at the End of the 20th Century

The United States in the Post-Cold War World

**Key terms, documents, and court cases to know**

Having a general grasp of the following major documents, terms, and cases will be a big help on the AP US history exam. Don't worry about knowing specifics or memorizing details—just get the general gist.

**Primary documents:**

John Winthrop, “City on a Hill” / “A Model of Christian Charity”

Jonathan Edwards, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”

Thomas Jefferson, “Declaration of Independence”

James Madison, “Constitution of the United States”

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, “Declaration of Sentiments”

Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?”

Harriet Beecher Stowe, “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” (main ideas)

Abraham Lincoln, “House Divided” speech, Second Inaugural Address

Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?”

Andrew Carnegie, “The Gospel of Wealth” (main ideas)

Josiah Strong, “Our Country” (main ideas)

Upton Sinclair “The Jungle” (main ideas)

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address, December 8 1941 address

George Kennan, “Long Telegram”

Martin Luther King Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail”, “I Have a Dream” speech

Betty Friedan “The Feminine Mystique” (main ideas)

Ronald Reagan “Evil Empire” speech

**Supreme Court cases:**

*Marbury v. Madison*

*Dred Scott v. Sanford*

*Plessy v. Ferguson*

*Brown v. Board of Education*

*Roe v. Wade*

*Bush v. Gore*

**Foreign policy doctrines:**

Monroe Doctrine

Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine

Truman Doctrine

Nixon Doctrine

Bush Doctrine

**Key terms**

virgin soil epidemic

salutary neglect / benign neglect

mercantilism

Federalist

Anti-Federalist

isolationism

judicial review

embargo

Democratic-Republican

Whig

Jacksonian Democracy

nullification

popular sovereignty

Emancipation

Jim Crow segregation

sharecropping

nativism

mass production

monopoly

labor union

frontier

imperialism

self-determination

prohibition

laissez-faire economics

liberalism (economics/politics)

Soviet Union

containment

Domino Theory

communism

non-violent protest (Civil Rights)

Vietnamization

conservatism

terrorism