



## Sample Test Questions

# Social Studies



## SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS

The sample test questions in this document are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included in the Washington Educator Skills Tests—Endorsements (WEST–E). They represent the various types of questions you may expect to see on an actual test in this test field; however, they are *not* designed to provide diagnostic information to help you identify specific areas of individual strength or weakness or to predict your performance on the test as a whole.

Work through the sample questions carefully before referring to the answer key that follows. The answer key provides the correct response for each question and lists the objective within the test framework to which each question is linked. When you are finished with the sample questions, you may wish to review the test objectives and descriptive statements provided in the test framework for this test field.

In addition to reading and answering the sample questions, you should also utilize the following preparation materials available on the WEST Web site:

- Read **WEST–E Test-Taking Strategies** to understand how test questions are designed to measure specific test objectives and to learn important test-taking strategies for the day of the test.
- Review the **Test Summary and Framework** for your test field to familiarize yourself with the structure and content of the test. This document contains general testing information as well as the percentage of the total test score derived from each content domain described in the test framework.

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## SAMPLE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. In the U.S. legal system, judges are empowered to issue a writ of habeas corpus to ensure that suspects in a criminal investigation:
  - A. can obtain the services of an attorney before being questioned.
  - B. cannot be forced to give testimony that might incriminate themselves.
  - C. are allowed to confront witnesses against them.
  - D. cannot be kept in jail without being charged with a specific crime.
  
2. Which of the following best describes a major responsibility of the governor of Washington?
  - A. resolving differences between the Senate and House of Representatives
  - B. appointing the directors and members of boards or commissions that oversee state agencies
  - C. regulating the conduct of businesses incorporated in the state of Washington
  - D. setting up state courts and determining punishments for criminal offenses

3. **Read the excerpt below from the Declaration of Independence; then answer the question that follows.**

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes. . . . But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce [the people] under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

Which of the following questions was the author of the Declaration attempting to address in the excerpt above?

- A. What are the purposes of government?
- B. How can people be protected from the abuses of government?
- C. What is the difference between democracy and despotism?
- D. Under what circumstances is political revolution justified?



4. Which of the following excerpts from the Washington State Constitution best demonstrates the state's commitment to the principle of popular sovereignty?
- A. "Every person may freely speak, write and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right."
  - B. "No law shall be passed granting to any citizen . . . privileges and immunities which upon the same terms shall not equally belong to all citizens."
  - C. "No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."
  - D. "All political power is inherent in the people, and governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."
5. Which of the following best describes the main purpose of national party conventions in contemporary U.S. presidential elections?
- A. to appoint local, state, and national directors for the presidential campaign
  - B. to promote party unity and generate enthusiasm for the presidential campaign
  - C. to assign fund-raising quotas to state delegations for the presidential campaign
  - D. to select delegates to serve as members of the Electoral College



6. Use the excerpt below from the U.S. Constitution to answer the question that follows.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him . . . and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Which of the following best describes the main purpose of the constitutional provision excerpted above?

- A. to protect criminal defendants' right to freedom of expression
- B. to place the burden of proof in criminal cases on the prosecution
- C. to protect the procedural rights of criminal defendants
- D. to assist the defendant in criminal cases in preparing a defense

7. Which of the following best describes a major difference between international law and domestic law?
- A. Customary practices are a major source of international law.
  - B. International law depends ultimately on a recourse to coercion.
  - C. There is no central authority in international law.
  - D. International law addresses a relatively limited range of issues.
8. The U.S. government would most likely collaborate with other member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on which of the following foreign policy initiatives?
- A. containing the expansion of authoritarian states
  - B. providing economic assistance to developing nations
  - C. forming tribunals to adjudicate violations of international law
  - D. establishing guidelines for the conduct of international commerce



9. Factors of production are best defined as the:
- A. resources needed to produce goods and services.
  - B. market forces that influence the production of goods and services.
  - C. amount of output that results from a given level of inputs.
  - D. cost of producing a given unit of good or service.

10. Which of the following is the most appropriate measure of productivity?
- A. total amount produced during a given time period
  - B. output per unit of inputs
  - C. average amount of capital invested per each unit of labor
  - D. total revenue divided by quantity sold

11. **Read the passage below; then answer the question that follows.**

The Sullivan Paper Company operates in a niche market that it has long dominated. Over the past several years, however, two new firms have undermined Sullivan's market position by selling goods similar to those produced by Sullivan at a considerable markdown. In response, Sullivan executives have reduced production of existing products and begun development of a new line of goods to be marketed to high-end buyers.

Information presented in the passage best illustrates how:

- A. business cycles influence the economic decision-making process.
- B. changes in quantity supplied influence costs.
- C. prices influence the economic decision-making process.
- D. changes in quantity demanded influence prices.



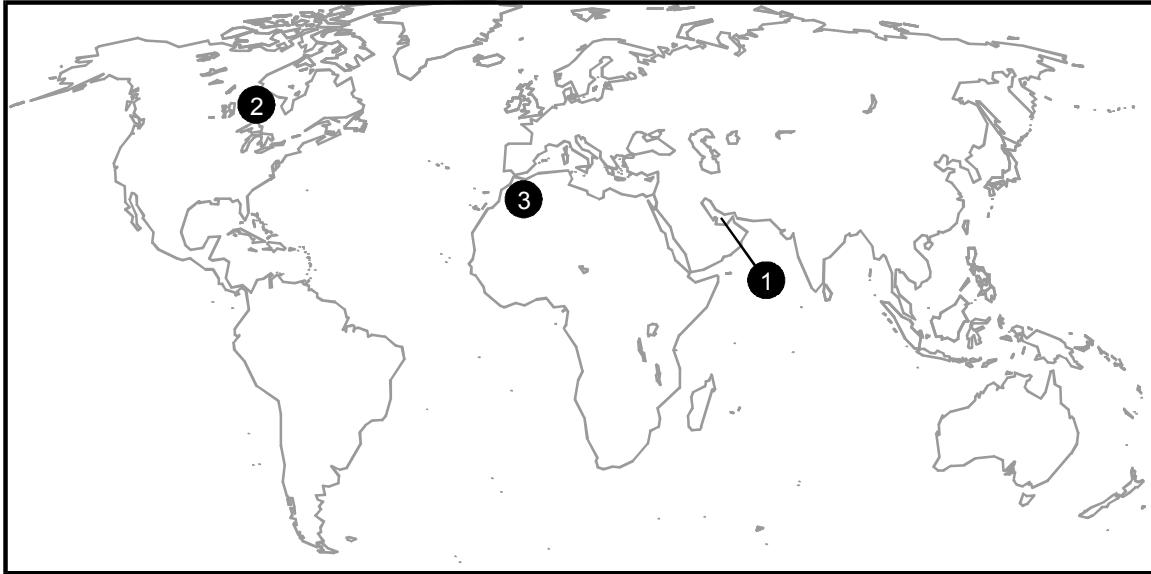
12. In country X, the financial resources available to the nation's steel industry were abruptly cut in half when the government decided to reorient the agricultural sector from production for domestic markets to the production of export crops. The nation's farmers, however, had difficulty making the transition to new crops with unfamiliar cultivation and storage requirements, while workers laid off in the steel plants struggled to find new jobs. This scenario best illustrates which of the following?
- A. the failure of the price system in a market economy
  - B. the inefficiency associated with command economic systems
  - C. the breakdown of competition in a mixed economy
  - D. the lack of innovation in traditional economic systems
13. Which of the following best illustrates the role of the U.S. government in reallocating resources?
- A. breaking up large corporations that threaten to monopolize a given market
  - B. requiring employers to bargain collectively with employees who have formed unions
  - C. purchasing goods and services from private businesses
  - D. enacting laws to safeguard consumers



14. Which of the following changes in economic indicators would most likely prompt government policymakers to consider adopting an expansionary fiscal policy?
- A. an increase in the length of the average workweek
  - B. an increase in the length of time required for vendor deliveries
  - C. an increase in the cost of labor per unit of output
  - D. an increase in the rate of unemployment
15. Which of the following best describes a significant difference between maps and globes?
- A. A globe is more likely to provide an appropriate scale for analyzing the spatial dimensions of human activities in a given country.
  - B. A map is more likely to provide accurate compass directions and latitude lines.
  - C. A map is less likely to provide the detail needed for a thorough assessment of relationships between global regions.
  - D. A globe is less likely to contain distortions in the size and shape of landmasses.



16. Use the world map below to answer the question that follows.



Which of the following correctly identifies the three physical features of the world indicated by the numbers on the map above?

- A. 1. Persian Gulf  
2. Canadian Shield  
3. Atlas Mountains
- B. 1. Red Sea  
2. Mackenzie Plateau  
3. Ural Mountains
- C. 1. Red Sea  
2. Deccan Plateau  
3. Andes Mountains
- D. 1. Persian Gulf  
2. Laurentian Highlands  
3. Zagros Mountains



17. Which line on the table below accurately sequences three modes of production in terms of the permanency of the types of settlement most commonly associated with each mode of production?

Line	Least Permanent	→	Most Permanent
1	slash-and-burn horticulture	→ hunting and gathering	→ plow agriculture
2	hunting and gathering	→ plow agriculture	→ slash-and-burn horticulture
3	plow agriculture	→ hunting and gathering	→ slash-and-burn horticulture
4	hunting and gathering	→ slash-and-burn horticulture	→ plow agriculture

- A. Line 1
- B. Line 2
- C. Line 3
- D. Line 4
18. Which of the following best matches a major source of conflict in the late twentieth century with two countries in which such conflict has occurred?
- A. ethnic rivalries: North Korea and South Korea
- B. economic competition: Rwanda and Burundi
- C. postcolonial boundary disputes: Turkey and Iraq
- D. religious nationalism: India and Pakistan



19. The global importance of biomass fuels as an energy source has declined steadily since the mid-nineteenth century primarily because of:
- A. the invention of technology for obtaining solar and wind energy.
  - B. the discovery and development of fossil fuels.
  - C. increasing concerns about the effect of air pollution.
  - D. growing awareness of the value of conservation.
20. To improve air quality in heavily polluted industrial regions of the Midwest, legislation in the United States required manufacturing firms to increase the height of smokestacks so that pollutants would be discharged higher in the atmosphere. Implementation of this response to local pollution contributed most directly to which of the following environmental problems?
- A. the desertification of agricultural lands as airborne chemicals altered rainfall patterns
  - B. the degradation of forests and lakes east of the industrial region by acid rain
  - C. the depletion of the ozone layer as a result of changes in the composition of the upper atmosphere
  - D. the formation of persistent brown clouds of airborne pollution over large areas of the Pacific



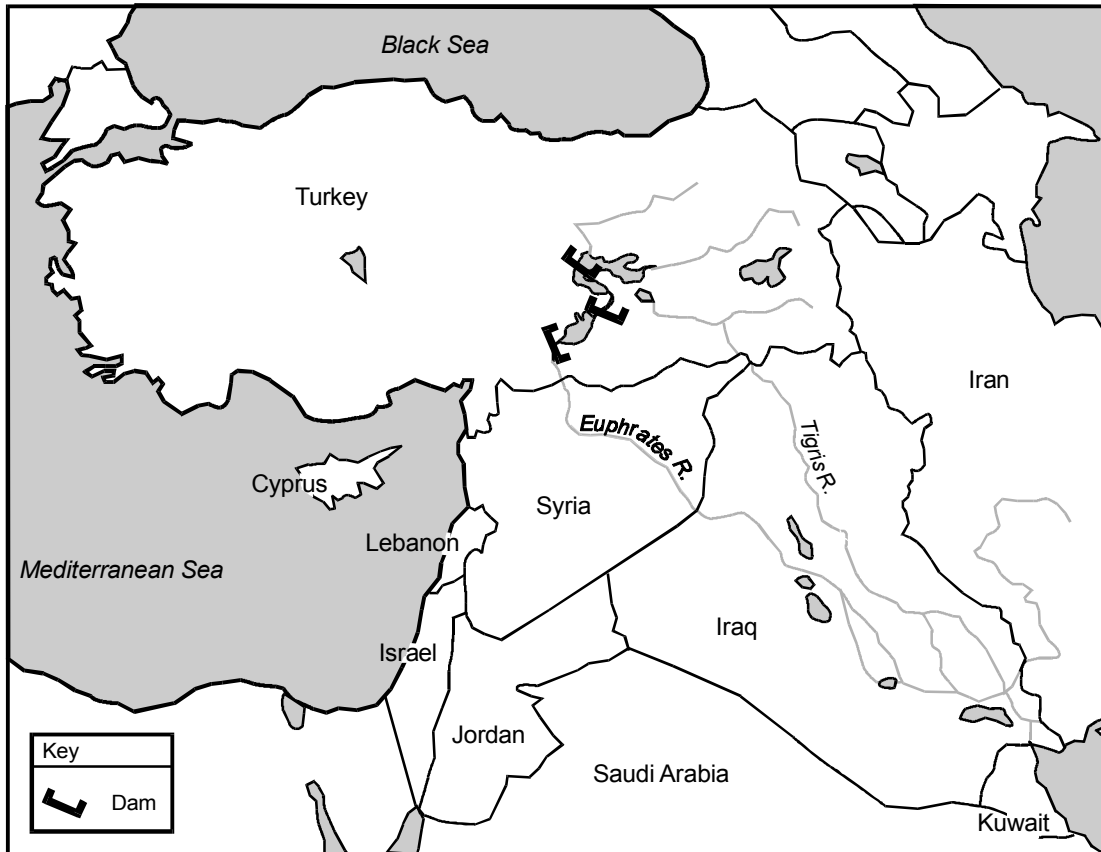
21. Use the table below, listing Latin American countries belonging to different economic unions, to answer the question that follows.

Economic Union	Member Nations	Associate Nations
Central American Common Market	Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica	
CARICOM	Belize, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Suriname	
Andean Group	Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia	
MERCOSUR	Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina	Peru, Bolivia, Chile

Which of the following changes is most likely to occur as a result of the formation of the regional economic associations shown in the table above?

- A. Regional conflicts will increase as the economic unions compete for favorable trade arrangements with nations and economic unions outside Latin America.
- B. Cultural distinctions among individual countries will diminish as political borders become increasingly less relevant.
- C. Countries will increase domestic investment in industries producing for regional markets and gradually withdraw from the broader global economy.
- D. Countries will relinquish some aspects of national independence in order to achieve common economic development objectives.

22. Use the map of the Euphrates River basin below to answer the question that follows.



After Turkey constructed the dams shown on the map above as part of an initiative to promote economic development, both Syria and Iraq raised objections to the project. Which of the following most likely explains why the project generated regional concern?

- A. The resulting economic development produced air pollution and acid rain harmful to the ecology of downwind regions.
- B. The dams and use of water for development altered the quality and quantity of water in the Euphrates River available to Syria and Iraq.
- C. The resulting economic development created a pull factor that drew large numbers of workers from neighboring countries.
- D. The dams lowered water levels in the Euphrates River, diminishing its usefulness as a route for the shipment of Syrian and Iraqi goods.



23. Which of the following features of the French and Indian War (1754–1761) led most directly to a breakdown in relations between Great Britain and the thirteen colonies during the decade following the conflict?
- A. British seizure of vessels carrying goods to France's Caribbean colonies during the war
  - B. the large debts incurred by the British government to finance the war effort
  - C. British employment of Native American forces for service in northern and western frontier areas
  - D. the disagreements between British generals and colonial leaders over wartime strategy
24. In which of the following ways did Virginia and Maryland differ from colonial New England during the first half of the eighteenth century?
- A. Government in Virginia and Maryland was conducted in part through representative assemblies.
  - B. Indentured servants and enslaved Africans were part of the colonial population of Virginia and Maryland.
  - C. Seaports in Virginia and Maryland enabled the two colonies to participate in the transatlantic trade.
  - D. Plantations growing a single staple crop were the foundation of the Virginia and Maryland economies.



25. Which of the following excerpts from the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments (1848) most clearly illustrates the influence of the American Revolution on the antebellum women's movement in the United States?
- A. "[Man] has denied [woman] the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her."
  - B. "[Man] has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for [woman] a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God."
  - C. "[Man] has compelled [woman] to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice."
  - D. "[Man] has made [woman], morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband."
26. Which of the following elements of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857) contributed most to rising intersectional tensions between the North and the South?
- A. States must observe the provisions of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850.
  - B. Legal protections contained in the Bill of Rights did not extend to African Americans.
  - C. Congress did not have the power to prohibit slavery in the territories.
  - D. Congress could not deprive citizens of slave property without due process of law.
27. During the 1880s and 1890s, which of the following strategies most distinguished the American Federation of Labor (AFL) from other early labor organizations in the United States?
- A. organizing skilled workers into national trade unions
  - B. engaging in strikes against major business and industrial firms
  - C. forming a political party that advanced the interests of workers
  - D. recruiting women and ethnic minorities into labor unions



28. Which of the following best explains U.S. reluctance to become involved in World War II before the attack on Pearl Harbor?
- A. World War I had generated strong isolationist sentiments in the United States.
  - B. Many people in the United States condemned the imperialist policies of Great Britain.
  - C. The Red Scare had provoked strong opposition to an alliance with the Soviet Union.
  - D. Many people in the United States feared that the war would stall economic recovery.
29. Which of the following best describes how Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. contributed to the success of the civil rights movement?
- A. He united the African American organizations fighting for racial equality in the United States.
  - B. He developed a self-help ideology that inspired African Americans to form social institutions of their own.
  - C. He organized nonviolent civil disobedience generating broad public support for the movement.
  - D. He formulated a legal strategy that resulted in the outlawing of racially segregated institutions.
30. Which of the following factors contributed most to the growth of Sunbelt cities after World War II?
- A. growing immigration from Mexico and Central America
  - B. increases in federal defense spending
  - C. improvements in the national communication system
  - D. expanding trade with Asia and Latin America
31. The growth of San Francisco most influenced which of the following developments in Washington during the territorial period?
- A. the expansion of Tacoma and Spokane
  - B. the growth of the territory's Scandinavian population
  - C. the rise of the coal and timber industries
  - D. the spread of steamship transportation





32. Which of the following best describes the significance of the Boldt Decision (1974) for the people of Washington?
- A. It affirmed the supremacy of federal court decisions over those of Washington State courts.
  - B. It transferred control of the Washington's fishing industry from the state to the federal government.
  - C. It produced a decline in the number of salmon found in Washington State waters.
  - D. It upheld the treaty rights granted to the state's Native Americans during the nineteenth century.
33. Which of the following had the greatest impact on the diffusion of Hellenistic culture throughout Southwest Asia after the decline of the Greek city-states in the fourth century BCE?
- A. Greek refugees displaced by invasions and internal conflicts established communities throughout Southwest Asia.
  - B. Advances in papermaking and the establishment of private academies of learning facilitated the spread of Greek ideas in Southwest Asia.
  - C. Southwest Asian political leaders embraced Greek culture as a counterweight to the growing cultural hegemony of Rome.
  - D. The conquests of Alexander the Great and his successors introduced Greek ideas and practices throughout Southwest Asia.



34. Iron smelting sites dating from as early as 500 BCE have been found in both east Africa and west Africa, although the two regions are 1500 to 2000 miles apart. Which of the following most likely accounts for the existence of these widely separated sites?
- A. Early African kingdoms were connected through an extensive network of trading routes.
  - B. A single African empire exercised control over the northern half of the continent.
  - C. Africans on both sides of the continent had substantial contacts with Egypt and Mesopotamia.
  - D. Early African peoples shared the same economic, political, and cultural practices and traditions.
35. Muslim scholars during the era of Islamic expansion from the seventh to the eleventh centuries CE made their greatest contributions in their:
- A. commentaries on the laws and customs of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.
  - B. application of the scientific method to the study of human society.
  - C. original contributions in the fields of economics and comparative religion.
  - D. synthesis, adaptation, and diffusion of the learning of diverse cultures.
36. Which of the following best describes an important consequence of the Reformation for European civilization?
- A. Protestant belief in a chosen people selected by God contributed to the emergence of nationalism.
  - B. Protestant emphasis on individual study of the Bible contributed to the spread of literacy.
  - C. Protestant stress on the role of faith in salvation contributed to the development of democracy.
  - D. Protestant opposition to monasticism contributed to the rise of capitalism.

37. Use the map below to answer the question that follows.



The shaded regions on the map above represent the locations of colonies controlled during the mid-eighteenth century by which of the following nations?

- A. Denmark
- B. France
- C. Netherlands
- D. Portugal



38. Throughout much of the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1867), Japanese rulers adopted an isolationist foreign policy. Their primary reason for restricting contact with other nations was to:
- A. limit foreign influence on Japanese society and culture.
  - B. protect Japan's industrial and agricultural sectors from foreign competition.
  - C. keep disaffected groups from overthrowing Japan's central government.
  - D. prevent Japanese involvement in international conflicts.

39. **Use the excerpt below from an 1815 letter by Simón Bolívar to answer the question that follows.**

We were, as I have just explained, virtually removed from the world in relation to the science of government and administration of the state. We were never viceroys or governors, save in exceptional circumstances; seldom archbishops and bishops; diplomats never; in the army, only subordinates; as nobles, without royal privileges. In brief, we were neither magistrates nor financiers and seldom merchants—all in direct contravention of our institutions.

The excerpt above can best be used to show the influence of which of the following ideals of the French Revolution on leaders of the Latin American independence movement?

- A. the brotherhood and sisterhood of all human beings
- B. each person's right to act freely within the law
- C. the equal status of all people as human beings
- D. each person's right to live secure from the arbitrary exercise of power



40. Which of the following best describes an important factor that enabled industrialization to proceed more swiftly in Great Britain than in France or Germany during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries?
- A. the efforts of British farmers to furnish manufacturers with raw materials used in the production process
  - B. the excellence of the British educational system
  - C. the willingness of the British government to support the initiatives of risk-taking private entrepreneurs
  - D. the extensive mineral resources of Great Britain
41. The two major figures in the Chinese Civil War of the late 1940s—Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek—differed most in their approach to which of the following questions?
- A. What should be the relationship among the major social groups in Chinese society?
  - B. What role should political parties play in the organization of China's government?
  - C. Was the promotion of nationalist sentiment an appropriate means of creating social unity in China?
  - D. Should the state retain a monopoly on political power in Chinese society?
42. In which of the following ways has the increasingly widespread use of computers contributed most to the cultural and intellectual integration of the world?
- A. Computers have enhanced people's ability to manipulate complex ideas and solve problems.
  - B. Computers have enhanced people's ability to receive and send information on diverse subjects.
  - C. Computers have enhanced people's ability to create sophisticated images and graphic designs.
  - D. Computers have enhanced people's ability to store and retrieve information on diverse subjects.



43. Which of the following places three major eras or developments in world history in correct chronological order?
- A. 1. the French Revolution  
2. the Industrial Revolution  
3. the Scientific Revolution
  - B. 1. the Italian Renaissance  
2. the Columbian Exchange  
3. the Enlightenment
  - C. 1. the growth of the Aztec Empire  
2. the rise of the Islamic Empire  
3. the decline of the Roman Empire
  - D. 1. the decolonization of Africa  
2. the collapse of the Qing Dynasty  
3. the Second World War
44. A historian would most likely use the term *liberal* to describe an eighteenth-century political theorist who:
- A. supported government regulation of trade.
  - B. advocated the expansion of government bureaucracies.
  - C. condemned aristocratic and clerical privilege.
  - D. subordinated individual rights to the national interest.
45. A researcher who is studying patterns of late twentieth-century Mexican immigration to the United States would likely find data about changes in which of the following most useful?
- A. gross saving and investment in Mexico
  - B. the cost of living in Mexican urban centers
  - C. output per hour for major Mexican industries
  - D. the average income of Mexican families
46. A social science researcher would most likely use content or textual analysis to examine which of the following questions?
- A. What effect did the Vietnam War have on U.S. relations with the Soviet Union?
  - B. What were the main reasons for U.S. intervention in Vietnam?
  - C. How did popular attitudes toward the Vietnam War change between 1965 and 1975?
  - D. Why did the United States decide to withdraw its forces from Vietnam?



47. Use the chart below to answer the question that follows.

Country	Population (millions)	Agriculture as a Percentage of Economic Activity	Life Expectancy (years)	Literacy Rate (percentage)
Ghana	20.1	36	56.5	75
Chad	1.3	38	48.5	48
Nigeria	133.9	45	51.0	68
Mali	11.6	45	45.4	46

Based on information presented in the chart, it is reasonable to conclude that:

- A. Nigeria has a higher birth rate than Mali.
- B. Ghana has a higher standard of living than Chad.
- C. Mali has a lower infant mortality rate than Nigeria.
- D. Chad has a more effective population control program than Ghana.



48. **Read the passage below; then answer the question that follows.**

Of the many weaknesses of the U.S. economy of the 1920s, the banking system was doubtless the greatest. During the decade, more banks in the United States failed than in any other industrial nation in the world. One of the system's major shortcomings was its structure. There were numerous independent banks that lacked the assets to withstand a serious jolt to the general economy. When one or several of these banks went under, the assets of other banks with which they did business were compromised. This naturally worried their depositors, and the more worried they became, the more likely they were to withdraw their savings. In short, it was a situation in which a relatively small number of bank failures could touch off a chain reaction that reverberated through the whole system.

Based on the information presented in the passage, the author would most likely agree with which of the following statements?

- A. Lack of sufficient government regulation during the 1920s left the banking industry in a vulnerable position.
- B. The inability of smaller banks to operate soundly was the primary cause of the Great Depression.
- C. The unwillingness of depositors to trust the banks prevented bankers from putting the system on a sound footing.
- D. During the 1920s, the U.S. banking system's greatest problem was a chronic shortage of cash.





49. A pie chart would best be used to convey which of the following kinds of information?
- A. the percentage of eligible voters who have voted in local elections for each of the past 10 years
  - B. monthly variations in the number of visitors to a state park over the course of a year
  - C. the proportion of a city's total annual expenditures devoted to each of 10 major budget categories
  - D. changes in the tax revenues that a state expended on education over a 20-year period

50. Use the social science research question below to answer the question that follows.

Why did labor unions lose influence in U.S. politics during the second half of the twentieth century?

Which of the following offers the best evaluation of this research question?

- A. This is an appropriate research question because it asks about an important economic institution.
- B. This is an inappropriate research question because it assumes labor unions lost political influence after 1950.
- C. This is an appropriate research question because it asks about the causes of a general trend.
- D. This is an inappropriate research question because it reflects a biased attitude toward labor unions.



## ANSWER KEY

Question Number	Correct Response	Test Objective
1	D	0001
2	B	0001
3	D	0002
4	D	0002
5	B	0003
6	C	0003
7	C	0004
8	A	0004
9	A	0005
10	B	0005
11	C	0006
12	B	0006
13	C	0007
14	D	0007
15	D	0008
16	A	0008
17	D	0009
18	D	0009
19	B	0010
20	B	0010
21	D	0011
22	B	0011
23	B	0012
24	D	0012
25	C	0013

Question Number	Correct Response	Test Objective
26	C	0013
27	A	0014
28	A	0014
29	C	0015
30	B	0015
31	C	0016
32	A	0016
33	D	0017
34	A	0017
35	D	0018
36	B	0018
37	D	0019
38	A	0019
39	C	0020
40	C	0020
41	A	0021
42	B	0021
43	B	0022
44	A	0022
45	D	0023
46	C	0023
47	B	0024
48	A	0024
49	C	0025
50	C	0025