



Preparing for Fall, 2008 - 2009

District American History Assessment

Dear Students:

Working with the practice documents below can help you prepare to respond thoughtfully to this semester's district assessment question for American history. Below is the question you will be asked to answer.

Question

How successful were Progressive Era reformers, from 1900-1920, in making America a freer and more humane society?

Here are some important ideas to consider as you prepare to write this essay.

As you learned in 10th grade World History, a DBQ (document based question) asks you to write a persuasive essay. This essay is composed using information learned in class and information provided in the source documents in the assessment.

It is important to understand and define for yourself the terms of the question. This means that an important part of developing a thoughtful answer to the question on the Progressives will be to decide what is meant by the phrase ***"a freer and more humane society."*** One dictionary definition of "free" is "enjoying personal freedom, not subject to the control or domination of another." One dictionary defines "humane" as "marked or motivated by concern for the alleviation of suffering." You will have to decide whether Progressive Era reformers were successful in moving governments (local, state, and federal) to take actions that made America a freer and more humane society.

During the Progressive Era there was controversy over what kind of society America could and would become. Some Americans did not think that a "more humane" society was always the same as a freer society. Others believed that a "freer" society was not always the same as a more humane society. Consider the two different perspectives, Progressive reformers and factory owners, in the following example. While some Progressive reformers argued that a more humane society would have minimum wage laws for factory workers, factory owners responded by saying that forcing them to pay a certain wage took away their freedom to run their business as they thought best. On the other hand, a factory worker may argue that a minimum wage law makes society more humane and more free because he could better feed his family (humane) and possibly save money that would enable him to quit and find a better job if he wanted to move (freer).

This example, about whether government should enforce minimum wage laws, also illustrates one of the key questions that you will be considering as you study 20th Century American history – "What role should government play in the economic lives of Americans?" The question is central to the study of the Progressive Era, central to the study of the Great Depression of the 1930s, central to the study of the 1960s and efforts to build a "Great Society," and central to the study of contemporary America, starting with the presidency of Ronald Reagan up until today.

The documents below identify some of the issues the nation confronted during the Progressive Era. Understanding these problems, and others, will help you decide, as you study this time period, whether

the efforts of the Progressive Era reformers had, by 1920, succeeded in making America a more humane and freer society.

Examine the documents that follow and complete the chart on pages 7-9.

Practice Document #1 - Women suffragists picketing in front of the White house, 1917.



Library of Congress Manuscript Division Washington, D.C. 20540



The little boy [Common People] and the big boys [Trusts] prepare for the baseball season

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Practice Document #3 – Child Labor during the Progressive Era



“Some of the young knitters in London Hosiery Mills,” London, Tennessee
From “Child Labor in American 1908-1912: Photographs by Lewis W. Hine” The History Place,
<http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/>

Practice Document #4 – Young newsboys



“A group of newsies playing craps in the jail alley at 10 p.m. Albany, N.Y.”
From “Child Labor in American 1908-1912: Photographs by Lewis W. Hine” The History Place,
<http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/>

TILL DEATH DO US PART



**Alcoholic Drinks Helped Break Up
9,228 Homes Every Year
184,568 in Twenty Years**

1887-1906

*One in Every Three Husbands
Divorced for Cruelty was
Intemperate*

Alcohol is an Enemy to the Home

Marriage and Divorce Special Report U. S. Census Bureau, 1909 Part I.

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SCIENTIFIC TEMPERANCE FEDERATION
BOSTON, MASS.

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WESTERVILLE, OHIO.

NO. 17

Practice Document #6 - Lynching Statistics: By Year and Race

Year	Whites	Blacks	Total
1900	9	106	115
1901	25	105	130
1902	7	85	92
1903	15	84	99
1904	7	76	83
1905	5	57	62
1906	3	62	65
1907	3	58	61
1908	8	89	97
1909	13	69	82
1910	9	67	76
1911	7	60	67
1912	2	62	64
1913	1	51	52
1914	4	51	55
1915	13	56	69
1916	4	50	54
1917	2	36	38
1918	4	60	64
1919	7	76	83
1920	8	53	61

***Statistics provided by the Archives at Tuskegee Institute.
<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchingyear.html>**

Practice Document #7 – Inside a New York City tenement apartment, 1890



- Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, photo of tenement life, 1890.

Practice Document #8 – Inside a Chicago meat packing plant, 1904



Chicago - Meat Packing Industry - Swift's Packing House: automatic scraping machine (capacity 1000 hogs per hour), 1904
Chicago Daily News, Inc., photographer

Practice Document #	1. Author, Date, type of document (primary or secondary)	2. What is the societal issue of problem does this document highlight that a Progressive Era reformer would want to solve?	3. Given the problem or issue raised in this document, what solution might a Progressive Era reformer suggest that would make America a freer and more humane society?	<p>4. Your essay in response to the district assessment question might include a body paragraph that highlights some of the problems Progressive reformers encountered.</p> <p>How would use information from this source to help develop sentences to include in that paragraph? Write a sentence for each source.</p> <p>Sample sentence starters include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What this example demonstrates is...</i> • <i>This photo illustrates</i> • <i>This chart highlights...</i>
1				
2				
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