

Test #2 Study Guide

These questions will help you to prepare for the second test. The material on which the multiple-choice questions are based will be drawn from this study guide. If you are able to answer the review questions and *understand* the material they cover, you should have no trouble answering the exam questions.

1. Why were farmers in debt during the late nineteenth century? Why was it so difficult for them to get out of debt?
2. How did farmers use both self-help and appeals for government assistance to improve their economic situation during the 1890s?
3. According to the farmers of the 1890s, why was the source of their problems “underconsumption” and not “overproduction”?
4. How did farmers try to get around “middle men” such as local merchants and railroad owners? Even when they “cooperated,” why did they find that they still could not make many significant improvements in their economic status?
5. How did the Grange increase farmers’ political power? How were the “Granger laws” helpful to farmers?
6. Why did farmers have more influence with local and state governments than they did with Congress at the national level?
7. How did Charles Macune’s idea of a “subtreasury system” propose to help farmers escape debt and also solve the problem of overproduction?
8. Under the “gold standard,” how does the amount of gold in the treasury affect the issuing of currency?
9. Why did the shortage of gold during the late nineteenth century have a negative effect on the financial position of many farmers who were in debt?
10. If prices are rising, is the dollar becoming more or less valuable? What about when prices are falling?
11. Why does a creditor prefer deflation while someone in debt prefers inflation?
12. What groups supported the coinage of silver? What groups opposed it? Why?
13. How did lack of gold in the U. S. treasury (and the resulting shortage of currency) help produce the Depression of 1893? Why did businesses need access to currency? Why weren’t the banks in a position to lend them money?
14. How did J. P. Morgan’s bailing out of the US government during the Depression of 1893 solve an economic problem but also raise a political issue? Why was one rich man’s ability to save the nation’s economy perceived as a possible threat to democratic government?
15. How were bankers and financiers able to convince small businessmen and working people that inflating the currency (through the coinage of silver) was a bad idea? How could the coinage of silver hurt the economic status of a laborer or factory worker?
16. Along what lines was the nation sharply divided during the election of 1896? Why were the “haves” (the wealthy) more unified than the “have nots” (the poor and working-class wage earners)?
17. Why did some Americans in the 1890s come to believe that the U.S. should pursue a more expansionist foreign policy? [Note that the arguments fall into five categories: Economic, Geopolitical, Political, Gender-related, and Religious.]
18. How was “twisting the lion’s tail” a way to divert public attention away from domestic problems? Why did this tactic backfire when President Cleveland used it during the Venezuelan crisis?

19. Why did the Depression of 1893 convince some Americans that it was urgent for the US to open overseas markets for U.S. goods? What did they fear would happen if the U.S. did not open these markets?
20. What questions did those who supported the opening of new foreign markets to U.S. goods fail to ask? Why were these questions important to consider?
21. Why did some Americans believe the U.S. needed to build a larger and more powerful military if the nation was going to succeed in opening new markets for its goods?
22. Why was there a “crisis of masculinity” during the 1890s? What were some men so worried about? What evidence of this crisis do we see in popular culture?
23. How was the idea of the “white man’s burden” related to American expansionism?
24. How did “realist” motivations for pursuing an expansionist foreign policy differ from “idealist” motivations?
25. During the late 1890s how did attitudes about gender (particularly masculinity) shape attitudes about foreign policy?
26. How did newspaper men like Hearst and Pulitzer and politicians like Theodore Roosevelt use “gendered” language and imagery to pressure President William McKinley to declare war on Spain?
27. How did Maximo Gomez hope to convince Spain to abandon its Cuban colony? Why did Gomez’s tactics lead to General Weyler’s policy of re-concentration?
28. Why did the re-concentration policy of General “Butcher” Weyler convince many Americans they should support the Cuban revolution?
29. Why did Weyler’s policy of re-concentration backfire? Why did his tactics end up making things harder for the Spanish and actually gather more support for the Cuban revolutionaries?
30. What were the goals of President McKinley’s Cuba policy? How did President McKinley’s views on U. S. policy toward Spain and Cuba differ from those of Theodore Roosevelt?
31. Why did many businessmen oppose U. S. entry into the Spanish-American war? How did figures like Theodore Roosevelt use business’s opposition to war with Spain as a way building support for the pro-war side?
32. What were some of the significant events in early 1898 that seemed to push the United States closer to war with Spain? How did these events affect public opinion and build pro-war sentiment?
33. Why did McKinley’s decision to send the USS Maine to Cuba end up not preventing war but making war with Spain more likely?
34. How did the DeLome letter play into the hands of the jingoes who were suggesting McKinley’s reluctance to go to war indicated a lack of “manliness”?
35. What problems faced the U.S. military as it began its war with Spain? Why, in the end, did the U.S. succeed in defeating the Spanish fairly easily?
36. How do the “Four D’s” – duty, destiny, defense, and dollars – each explain in part the motivations for America’s foreign policy at the turn of the twentieth century? Which were “idealistic” motives and which were “realistic”?
37. Why did idealistic motivations for U. S. foreign policy – such as “duty” and “destiny” – often produce intolerant and even racist policies? Why was allowing the “ends” to justify the “means” a problem?
38. Why did the United States want to establish a naval base on the Philippine islands? How would a military presence there also assist American merchants who wanted to sell their goods to China?
39. Why did the United States’ desire to open markets in China and Latin America seem unlikely to bring immediate economic rewards for US manufacturers?
40. Since the United States’ major trading partners were European nations like Britain and France, why might it have been unwise for the Americans to demand that they be given the chance to

sell more goods in China? If they upset the European nations already trading with China, what risk did the U.S. take?

41. Why did the Philippine insurrection that followed the Spanish-American War convince many Americans that pursuing an overseas empire was not such a good idea after all?
42. How did Mark Twain's view of American expansionism differ from that of Albert Beveridge?
43. Why can it be argued that some anti-imperialists were more racist than those who supported "civilizing" and "Christianizing" foreign peoples?
44. How was the U.S. military's treatment of the Filipinos ironic given how the U.S. had responded to Spanish General Weyler's treatment of the Cubans?
45. How did anti-imperialists use arguments about preserving American "masculinity" to support U.S. withdrawal from the Philippines? How had this "flipped the script" given that such arguments about defending masculinity had originally been used to *support* an expansive U.S. foreign policy?
46. How were industrialization, immigration, and urbanization all related? Why did Progressives believe that immigration and the growth of cities would create "disorder" and conflict in society?
47. Why were Progressives worried about social turmoil and economic inequality?
48. In what ways did immigrants' identities change when they left their homelands and came to America? How were these new identities "American" but not necessarily considered "American" by those who had been born in the United States?
49. How did the supposedly "Italian" dish of spaghetti and meatballs actually embody a newly-created "Italian-American" ethnic identity?
50. What is a "unitary culture"? Why did Progressives believe that promoting a unitary culture would help to preserve order?
51. Why do some observers say Progressives' approach to solving social problems was grounded in "innovative nostalgia"? Explain how Progressives incorporated BOTH "nostalgia" and "innovation" into their social vision.
52. How did Progressives differ from Social Darwinists? How, for example, did their views on how to address urban poverty differ?
53. In the debate over "nature" vs "nurture," where did the Progressives stand? What about the Social Darwinists? Did their views ever overlap?
54. In order to improve the human environment, Progressives sought to think "systematically." What does "thinking systematically" entail? Why was it important to think systematically in a society that had become increasingly interdependent?
55. How did Progressives use the scientific method?
56. What is a pragmatist? How do we know Progressives were pragmatists?
57. In looking at how Progressives set out to solve social problems, how do we know they were both "interventionists" and "optimists"?
58. How did the "Social Gospel" approach to religion differ from earlier theology?
59. What is the difference between a "social control" Progressive and a "social justice" Progressive? [Think in terms of how each would "solve" the problem of trash piling up in poor neighborhoods.]
60. Did Progressives want to overthrow the capitalist economic system? If not, why not? How did their fear of concentrated power in the hands of the federal government put limits on the kinds of solutions they proposed to social and economic problems?