

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
1	Option A is correct	The National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) advocated for women's suffrage in the United States, including providing a way for women to have a more active voice in government.
	Option B is incorrect	There is no guarantee of which person will be appointed to office.
	Option C is incorrect	The NAWSA did not provide women studying politics with college scholarships.
	Option D is incorrect	Generally, political campaigns will accept donations from everyone.

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Item Position	Rationale	
2	Option B is correct	The Dust Bowl was a result of poor agricultural practices and an extended drought in the Great Plains region.
	Option A is incorrect	The expansion of primary and secondary road systems did not result in the Dust Bowl.
	Option C is incorrect	Expansion of oil fields and open-pit coal mining did not create the conditions that led to the dust storms of the 1930s.
	Option D is incorrect	The 1930s Dust Bowl was a result of wind erosion, poor agricultural practices, and drought, not the mismanagement of river and wetland resources.

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Item Position	Rationale	
3	Option C is correct	This was the beginning of the recognition of China by the United States. Prior to this time, the United States had not recognized the Chinese government.
	Option A is incorrect	The opposite was in fact true: This was the beginning of U.S. recognition of the Chinese government.
	Option B is incorrect	The United States had not abandoned its interests in Asia.
	Option D is incorrect	The United States continued to maintain close political and economic ties to Taiwan but did not provide military support, which would have jeopardized its relationship with China at this time.

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Item Position	Rationale	
4	Part A: Option A is correct	The Harlem Renaissance helped illuminate the African American experience and inspired artists to continue to draw attention to that experience.
	Part A: Option B is incorrect	African American artists during the Harlem Renaissance were encouraged to create art and literature that challenged the typical historical narrative.
	Part A: Option C is incorrect	African American artists during the Harlem Renaissance created art and literature that challenged negative, racist stereotypes and misconceptions about African Americans.
	Part A: Option D is incorrect	The wealthy white patrons that provided some support for the Harlem Renaissance were not motivated to control the production of this movement's art.
	Part B: Option C is correct	This quote specifically describes an experience of African Americans during this time; it describes the housing costs and conditions that were available for many African Americans employed in similar conditions.
	Part B: Option A is incorrect	This is a description of the setting of the play and does not specifically describe an experience unique to African Americans during this time.
	Part B: Option B is incorrect	This is a description of the setting of the play and does not specifically describe an experience unique to African Americans during this time.
	Part B: Option D is incorrect	This quotation does not specifically describe an experience unique to African Americans during this time.

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Item Position	Rationale	
5	Option D is correct	The time line shows that three different companies within the same industry were responsible for three separate technological innovations within a seven-year period. This suggests that the competition generated by the free-enterprise system was a driving force behind a period of rapid technological development in the mobile phone industry.
	Option A is incorrect	The time line shows that three different companies within the same industry were responsible for three separate technological innovations within a seven-year period. This suggests there was not a monopoly in the mobile phone industry.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the success of the mobile phone industry via the free-enterprise system has led to oversight by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), this fact is not reflected by the information in the time line.
	Option C is incorrect	The time line does not include information about pricing.

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6	Option A is correct	George Washington Carver's inventions promoted expanding the uses of crops such as the peanut. His innovations included alternating crops to prevent soil depletion.
	Option B is incorrect	Carver's inventions were not involved in research to prevent diseases.
	Option C is incorrect	Carver's inventions were based in agriculture, not weapons technology.
	Option D is incorrect	Carver's inventions were not used to identify changes to dietary guidelines.

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7	Option "Provides economic development to the region" is correct	The TVA still affects the daily lives of U.S. citizens by supporting infrastructure development and the natural environment.
	Option "Protects against natural disasters" is correct	The TVA dams and reservoirs mitigate the effects of natural disasters, including flood damage.
	Option "Provides crop subsidies to farmers" is incorrect	The role of the TVA does not include providing subsidies to farmers. This action would be associated with the U.S. Department of Agriculture or a similar agency.
	Option "Provides retirement funds for older Americans" is incorrect	The role of the TVA does not include providing older Americans with retirement funds. This action is associated with the Social Security Administration.
	Option "Protects workers' right to form labor unions" is incorrect	The role of the TVA does not include protecting workers' right to form a labor union. This action is associated with the National Labor Relations Board.

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Item Position	Rationale	
8	Option B is correct	As the population increases, demands on infrastructure such as roads and highways become greater, commute times increase, and the need for spending on infrastructure becomes greater.
	Option A is incorrect	As the population grows and development increases, wildlife habitat areas decline.
	Option C is incorrect	The increase in population growth is driving the need to use energy more efficiently.
	Option D is incorrect	The increase in population growth is increasing the need for alternative energy sources.



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Item Position	Rationale	
9	Option A is correct	Dr. King is referring to peacefully changing attitudes by promoting interaction among races.
	Option B is incorrect	This excerpt does not show petitioning to permanently close segregated businesses and facilities.
	Option C is incorrect	Although Dr. King supported a nonviolent approach to achieving civil rights, he did not support avoiding disagreements with supporters of segregation.
	Option D is incorrect	This excerpt does not show Dr. King encouraging relocating to states with less integration.

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Item Position	Rationale	
10	Option B is correct	The Heritage Foundation helped inspire a resurgence of the conservative political agenda, including economic policies and political values.
	Option E is correct	President Ronald Reagan was a supporter of conservative ideas, including those of The Heritage Foundation. He used many of its ideas in his government policies.
	Option A is incorrect	The Heritage Foundation supports a limited government, and environmental protection regulations are not referred to in the excerpt.
	Option C is incorrect	Evangelical Christianity grew in popularity and in influence over conservatives in part due to the efforts of The Heritage Foundation.
	Option D is incorrect	Conservatives rejected communism in America.

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Item Position	Rationale	
11	Option B is correct	During the 1950s the United States had a booming economy. Programs such as the GI Bill of Rights and events such as the Baby Boom led to economic prosperity. The 1950s were also a time of anti-communist policies (i.e., the Cold War) and support for involvement in conflicts like the Korean War.
	Option A is incorrect	It was during World War II, not the 1950s, that both military enlistment and women working outside the home increased.
	Option C is incorrect	The rise of environmental conservation was part of the Progressive Era, not the 1950s, and inspired the founding of national parks. Further, progressive legislation also led to restrictions on child labor and limits on the formation of monopolies.
	Option D is incorrect	The expansion of work programs and the creation of retirement benefits were features of New Deal legislation, which was passed during the 1930s.

Item Position	Rationale	
12	Option "The first woman to serve as a justice on the Supreme Court" is correct	In 1981, Sandra Day O'Connor was the first woman to be appointed as a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.
	Option "The first woman to argue a case in front of a federal judge" is incorrect	During the 1870s and 1880s, Belva Lockwood became the first woman admitted to the bar, the first woman to argue a case before a federal judge, and the first woman to argue a case before the U.S. Supreme Court.
	Option "The first woman to be considered for the vice presidency" is incorrect	In 1924, Lena Springs became the first woman to have her name placed into nomination for vice president at a U.S. major-party political convention.
	Option "The first woman to lead the Office of the Attorney General" is incorrect	In 1993, Janet Reno became the first woman nominated as attorney general. She was confirmed the following month and was the second-longest-serving attorney general.
	Option "The first woman to issue a legal ruling as an appellate judge" is incorrect	In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt named Florence Allen to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. She was the first woman to serve in an Article III appellate court.

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Item Position	Rationale	
13	Option B is correct	The arrival of gold seekers at the Klondike taxed the environment and strained the region's natural resources—especially lumber, which was used as a source of heat and power and for transportation, mining activities, and building construction.
	Option A is incorrect	In this case, the use of technology decreased the biodiversity of habitats.
	Option C is incorrect	The sub-optimal use of technology increased the risk of disasters & did not improve disaster recovery.
	Option D is incorrect	Increased human populations led to more deforestation, which destroyed water ecosystems via pollution or natural disasters.

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Item Position	Rationale	
14	<p>"Stock market speculation increased.": Option "Cause of Bank Failures" is correct</p>	<p>Stock market speculation was one of the leading causes of the crash of the stock market in 1929. Buying stock on margin and the frenzy to own shares drove up stock prices to unrealistic levels until the bubble burst.</p>
	<p>"Many people lost their life savings.": Option "Effect of Bank Failures" is correct</p>	<p>Many people lost their savings after bank depositors demanded their money in cash. The banks were forced to close because they did not have enough money on hand.</p>
	<p>"Financial institutions were closed to determine their stability.": Option "Effect of Bank Failures" is correct</p>	<p>Financial institutions were ordered closed by the government during a "bank holiday," to determine their financial stability after runs by depositors had caused many banks to fail.</p>
	<p>"Financial institutions lacked cash reserves because they had invested deposits.": Option "Cause of Bank Failures" is correct</p>	<p>In some cases, bank failures were caused by bank management using depositors' money, the cash reserves, to invest in the stock market to make money by buying low and selling high. In other cases, bank failures were caused by bank management using the cash reserves to loan to people to buy stocks on margin, when the bank could not collect the amount of the loan after the stock market bubble had burst.</p>
	<p>"Businesses were unable to take out loans.": Option "Effect of Bank Failures" is correct</p>	<p>Many businesses, large and small, required loans to meet their financial obligations from time to time. When many banks closed due to runs or insolvency, these businesses could not get loans, and in many cases they were forced to cease operations.</p>

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Item Position	Rationale	
15	Option A is correct	The growth of industrialization in the late nineteenth century created jobs in urban areas that attracted migrants from rural areas. Immigrants also sought the economic opportunities found in urban areas over agricultural jobs found in rural areas.
	Option B is incorrect	The government was not directly involved in the movement of people from rural to urban areas. People did not move to urban areas because of government intervention.
	Option C is incorrect	Social reformers were not directly involved in the movement of people from rural to urban areas.
	Option D is incorrect	People were not being forced to relocate to urban areas because of environmental disasters.

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Item Position	Rationale	
16	Option C is correct	The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) established a free-trade zone in North America from 1994 to 2020. It lifted tariffs on most goods produced in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
	Option A is incorrect	NAFTA affected the U.S. economy by lowering trade costs within North America. It did not decrease the number of foreign manufacturing jobs.
	Option B is incorrect	NAFTA did not increase tariffs.
	Option D is incorrect	NAFTA did not guarantee profits for companies, since the agreement was between North American countries.



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Item Position	Rationale	
17	Option D is correct	Saddam Hussein believed that Kuwait was stealing oil from Iraqi fields and used that claim to justify invading the country in August 1990.
	Option A is incorrect	No members of the Iraqi government were killed in Kuwait.
	Option B is incorrect	The invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi forces led to U.S. involvement in the Gulf War, not to Kuwaiti citizens being taking hostage.
	Option C is incorrect	Kuwait was a sovereign country and did not need to free itself from Iraq.

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Item Position	Rationale	
18	Drop-Down 1: Option "travel to the United States for medical care" is correct	The Iranian Hostage Crisis stemmed from the U.S. president's decision to allow Iran's exiled shah to travel to the United States for medical care.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "sell more oil to the United States" is incorrect	During this time, the U.S. was not asking the exiled shah to sell more oil to the United States, since Iran was in the middle of a revolution.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "open new U.S. military bases in Iran" is incorrect	During this time, the U.S. was not asking the exiled shah to open new U.S. military bases in Iran.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "allow more U.S. companies access to Iran" is incorrect	During this time, U.S. companies were not allowed more access to Iran, since there was a revolution occurring.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "interference in their affairs" is correct	The Iranian students who held the hostages were opposed to the U.S. interfering in their affairs.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "threat of invasion" is incorrect	The Iranian students took the U.S. hostages in order to declare their opposition to U.S. interference in their affairs, not to a threat of invasion.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "imposed economic sanctions" is incorrect	The United States imposed economic sanctions because of the hostage crisis.

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Item Position	Rationale	
19	Option C is correct	To implement the policy described in the excerpt by Mahan, the U.S. government needed to obtain coaling stations around the world to support the maintenance of a navy to protect its growing influence.
	Option A is incorrect	The United States took over construction and rights to the canal after France was unable to complete the project.
	Option B is incorrect	Mexico had gained its independence in 1821; the United States had recognized Mexico in 1822.
	Option D is incorrect	The United States assumed an expansionary policy in the Caribbean in the late 1800s.

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Item Position	Rationale	
20	Option D is correct	Cesar Chavez is known for his work with the United Farm Workers, which engaged in strikes against growers and advocated for civil rights.
	Option A is incorrect	Chavez did not organize to improve schools; rather, he organized migrant agricultural workers seeking better wages and working conditions.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Chavez supported Mexican American political rights, his activism took the form of labor organization, not demonstration for voting rights.
	Option C is incorrect	Chavez did not publish books that described new economic reforms; he organized migrant agricultural workers seeking better wages and working conditions.

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<b>Item Position</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
21	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.

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Item Position	Rationale	
22	Option B is correct	During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the working conditions in factories were unsafe and unsanitary. Workers used the threat of strikes to convince their employers to meet their demands for better working conditions.
	Option A is incorrect	Factory owners relied on mass production techniques to increase output.
	Option C is incorrect	Employer-sponsored naturalization classes were not a response to harsh working conditions in factories.
	Option D is incorrect	Industrialists tended to adopt capitalist, not socialist, policies; these policies often promoted harsh working conditions.

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Item Position	Rationale	
23	Option C is correct	The unemployment rate declined from 7.9 percent to 1.4 percent. The wartime economy created jobs and lowered the unemployment rate.
	Option A is incorrect	Liberty bonds were sold throughout the country during the war years to help fund the war.
	Option B is incorrect	The War Revenue Act of 1917 taxed “excess profits” (profits exceeding an amount determined by the rate of return on capital in a base period). In addition, the tax rate on income greater than \$50,000 rose from 1.5 percent in 1913–1915 to more than 18 percent in 1918.
	Option D is incorrect	Trade increased as Europeans began purchasing U.S. goods for the war.

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Item Position	Rationale	
24	Option D is correct	President Reagan sought to cut taxes to stimulate domestic production, consumption, and job growth.
	Option A is incorrect	Supply-side economics was about increasing domestic production and consumption of goods to create job opportunities at home, not to increase foreign trade.
	Option B is incorrect	President Reagan supported growth for businesses at home, not increased foreign business loans.
	Option C is incorrect	President Reagan wanted to decrease government spending and cut taxes on businesses and individuals.



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Item Position	Rationale	
25	Option C is correct	Labor-saving devices and other electric appliances decreased the amount of time consumers devoted to housework in American households. These devices increased the time available for many leisure activities and for people to work outside the home, allowing people to earn extra money and leading to an improved standard of living.
	Option A is incorrect	Electric appliances did not force consumers to buy larger houses to accommodate these new labor-saving devices.
	Option B is incorrect	Consumers do not clean their own dishes in restaurants.
	Option D is incorrect	Consumers did not have to go back to school to learn how to use labor-saving devices and other electric appliances.

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Item Position	Rationale	
26	Option C is correct	Betty Friedan’s book <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> helped give rise to a second wave of feminism by expressing the need for greater equality of gender roles.
	Option A is incorrect	Betty Friedan was a writer and activist, not a member of Congress.
	Option B is incorrect	Betty Friedan encouraged women to support politicians who favored women’s rights.
	Option D is incorrect	Betty Friedan encouraged support for the Equal Rights Amendment.

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Item Position	Rationale	
27	Drop-Down 1: Option "civil disobedience" is correct	The excerpt describes Julia Butterfly Hill using civil disobedience to draw attention to an environmental issue and make a difference.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "violent protest" is incorrect	Hill used an act of civil disobedience, not violence, to draw attention to an environmental issue.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "boycotts" is incorrect	Hill used an act of civil disobedience, not boycotts, to draw attention to an environmental issue.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "commercial development" is correct	Hill wanted to bring attention to the clear-cutting of forests, especially the ancient redwoods, without regard for the environmental effects.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "pesticide use" is incorrect	The use of pesticides was not the reason Hill brought attention to environmental issues.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "use of plastics" is incorrect	The use of plastics was not the reason Hill brought attention to environmental issues.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "mineral development" is incorrect	Mineral development was not the reason Hill brought attention to environmental issues.

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Item Position	Rationale	
28	Option C is correct	The political cartoon portrays the passage of the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, one of two major pieces of legislation during the 1920s that restricted immigration to the United States. In the cartoon, the path to immigration is represented by a funnel and the immigration quota is reflected by the "3%" gate that Uncle Sam is inserting into the narrow part of the funnel.
	Option A is incorrect	The Open Door Policy was a statement of principles that called for protection of equal privileges for all countries trading with China. This policy is not reflected in the political cartoon.
	Option B is incorrect	The political cartoon is showing immigration quotas and not the League of Nations, which was an international organization created after World War I to provide a way to resolve international disputes.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the United States pursued an isolationist foreign policy during the 1920s, this policy is not directly reflected by the content of the political cartoon.

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Item Position	Rationale	
29	Option A is correct	Nonviolent, passive resistance increased public awareness of the denial of rights to women, including suffrage.
	Option B is incorrect	Police continued to arrest women activists despite their adherence to nonviolent, passive resistance.
	Option C is incorrect	Nonviolent, passive resistance did not force international leaders to recognize the rights of women.
	Option D is incorrect	Nonviolent, passive resistance did not cause the courts to recognize the women as political prisoners.

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Item Position	Rationale	
30	Option B is correct	Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare against hostile and neutral ships in early 1917 as it tried to destroy the Allies before the United States could enter the war. Congress declared war on Germany on April 2, 1917.
	Option A is incorrect	President Wilson asked for a declaration of war against Germany because of Germany's aggression toward neutral nations, not because he claimed the U.S. military was superior.
	Option C is incorrect	President Wilson asked for a declaration of war against Germany because of its actions toward neutral nations of the world; the United States would be aiding the Allies' military effort against Germany.
	Option D is incorrect	President Wilson asked for a declaration of war against Germany, signifying that neutrality did not work and that only armed intervention would restore peace to the world.

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Item Position	Rationale	
31	Option A is correct	Salinger's book <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> connected with individuals in cultures around the world by portraying experiences of Americans with which they could relate.
	Option D is correct	Salinger's book <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> was translated into 30 languages and contributed to the spread of American culture to people around the world.
	Option B is incorrect	The excerpt explains that Salinger impacted foreign countries with his writing.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the excerpt describes the impact of Salinger's work on the spread of American culture, it does not contain a blend of customs from various countries of the world.
	Option E is incorrect	The excerpt describes the impact of Salinger's work on the spread of American culture. That novel did not outline a global political system.

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Item Position	Rationale	
32	Option D is correct	The invasion of Normandy, which was the successful liberation of Western Europe in 1944, completes the timeline.
	Option A is incorrect	The Battle of Midway, a major naval battle in the Pacific Ocean, took place in 1942, not 1944.
	Option B is incorrect	Germany surrendered in May 1945.
	Option C is incorrect	The Bataan Death March, which was a forced transfer of prisoners, occurred in April 1942.



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Item Position	Rationale	
33	Option "In Dallas County the percentage of African Americans signed up to vote zoomed from 2.1 in 1965 to 70.4 in 1968." is correct	This excerpt describes a rise in the number of registered African American voters, which can be directly related to the Civil Rights Movement and the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
	Option "Since 1990, the number of Latino students enrolled in higher education increased by 47 percent." is correct	This excerpt describes an increase in Latino students accessing higher education. This increase occurred because the Civil Rights Movement influenced the Chicano movement.
	Option "The service-producing sector of the economy is projected to grow by 19.1 million wage-and-salary jobs between 1998 and 2008." is incorrect	This excerpt describes an economic change to society that was not a result of the Civil Rights Movement.
	Option "The top tax rate has been cut six times since 1980." is incorrect	This excerpt describes economic changes to society that were not results of the Civil Rights Movement.
	Option "Supreme Court Rules [Redistricting to Favor a Political Party] Is Beyond the Reach of Federal Courts." is incorrect	This excerpt is about partisan gerrymandering. It does not describe a societal change that resulted from the Civil Rights Movement.

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Item Position	Rationale	
34	Option B is correct	Governor Wallace opposed efforts to desegregate public schools and universities during the 1960s. In 1963 he stood at a door at the University of Alabama, hoping to prevent two African American college students from enrolling.
	Option A is incorrect	Poll taxes were illegal after ratification of the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in January 1964. Also, poll taxes had been introduced by southern legislatures decades before Wallace became the governor of Alabama.
	Option C is incorrect	Governor Wallace supported Jim Crow laws and other forms of segregation.
	Option D is incorrect	Governor Wallace opposed affirmative action and other civil-rights-related laws and regulations.

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Item Position	Rationale	
35	Option B is correct	Improved robotic technology has led to widespread automation in the manufacturing industry by speeding the production of manufactured goods.
	Option C is correct	In many instances (e.g., assembly line production), advances in robotic technologies have led certain employers to replace human labor with robots that can perform the same task more efficiently.
	Option A is incorrect	Innovations in robotic technology have not resulted in more equitable pay differences between employees.
	Option D is incorrect	Despite the increased use of robots in workplaces across the United States, more employees are not working shorter hours.
	Option E is incorrect	Increased automation has increased the use of machines in manufacturing processes.

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Item Position	Rationale	
36	Option D is correct	The information on the timeline identifies events leading to U.S. entry into World War I. The American Expeditionary Forces joined the war in Europe on the side of the Allies, which helped end the stalemate on the western front
	Option A is incorrect	Although long-range bombing strategies were used during World War I, the city of Berlin was not destroyed by U.S. long-range bombers.
	Option B is incorrect	Germany did not seize U.S. territories in the Pacific during World War I.
	Option C is incorrect	German forces did not surrender before U.S. entry in the war.

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Item Position	Rationale	
37	Option C is correct	The primary goal of the containment policy was to stop Soviet expansion. George Kennan advocated that this be done through economic means (i.e., the Marshall Plan) and through psychology (i.e., propaganda).
	Option A is incorrect	Containment was a policy intended to contain the spread of Soviet influence, not to prevent that country from developing nuclear weapons.
	Option B is incorrect	Containment focused on preventing the spread of Soviet influence worldwide, not just in Eastern Europe.
	Option D is incorrect	Containment was a policy intended to contain the spread of Soviet influence, not a foreign policy targeted at spies.

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Item Position	Rationale	
38	Option "checks and balances" is correct	Each branch of government has specific constitutional powers to check, or limit, the powers of other branches. The executive branch can veto laws of the legislative branch, while the legislative branch can override the veto of the executive branch. The decision of Congress to override President Ronald Reagan's veto of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 is an example of checks and balances.
	Option "federalism" is incorrect	Federalism describes a system of government that is controlled by two levels of government. It does not describe the interactions between branches about the ratification or veto of legislation.
	Option "republicanism" is incorrect	Republicanism refers to a government led by the representatives of citizens. It does not refer to the procedures and rules for the ratification or veto of legislation.
	Option "limited government" is incorrect	Limited government refers to the government having a finite amount of power, which protects the rights of citizens.
	Option "individual rights and duties" is incorrect	Individual rights and duties are not the focus of this item. The excerpt describes how Congress overrode a presidential veto to address apartheid in South Africa.

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Item Position	Rationale	
39	Option A is correct	Perot's political platform was similar to President Bush's, so he would most likely have taken votes from the Republican Party candidate.
	Option B is incorrect	It was not a common argument that Perot's election results were hurt because he was not on the ballot in all states.
	Option C is incorrect	Clinton received about 43 percent of the popular vote, while Bush received about 37 percent and Perot received about 19 percent; however, Clinton took about 69 percent of the electoral votes. Perot thus did not cause Bush to win.
	Option D is incorrect	People did not argue that Ross Perot's campaign violated constitutional requirements.

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Item Position	Rationale	
40	Option B is correct	The Black Panthers supported armed self-defense to protect neighborhoods from what they saw as police brutality.
	Option A is incorrect	The Black Panthers did not advocate using court action as a means of overturning remaining examples of segregation or the “separate but equal” doctrine.
	Option C is incorrect	The Black Panthers did not stop paying taxes as a means of protesting discriminatory laws or conditions.
	Option D is incorrect	The Black Panthers did not use church sermons to spread their message.



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Item Position	Rationale	
41	Option C is correct	A progressive federal income tax system was created following the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment. Under this amendment, U.S. citizens have varying income tax rates based on their level of income.
	Option A is incorrect	The Sixteenth Amendment created a federal income tax. It did not affect the price of goods through increased tariffs.
	Option B is incorrect	The Sixteenth Amendment created a federal income tax. It did not abolish tariffs.
	Option D is incorrect	A progressive federal income tax system was created following the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment. Under this amendment, U.S. citizens are not taxed at the same rate regardless of income.

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Item Position	Rationale	
42	Option B is correct	The political cartoon shows President Theodore Roosevelt, who issued the Roosevelt Corollary to threaten military action against countries that intervened in Latin America. Roosevelt also built up the military as a show of force to back up his efforts at diplomacy, which was known as the Big Stick Policy.
	Option A is incorrect	The political cartoon does not represent an expansion of immigration. During his presidency, Roosevelt signed the Immigration Act of 1907 and the Gentlemen’s Agreement (1907), both of which restricted immigration.
	Option C is incorrect	While the United States did engage in overseas trade, and the need for overseas markets was one of the key reasons for overseas expansion, the political cartoon does not show trade.
	Option D is incorrect	The United States did not interfere in elections abroad at this time in history.

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Item Position	Rationale	
43	Option A is correct	Turner specifically cites the railroad, mining, ranching, and urbanization as factors that led to the closing of the American frontier.
	Option B is incorrect	Turner does not cite cultural diffusion as a reason for the closing of the frontier.
	Option C is incorrect	Turner states that American Indians had already been defeated in a series of wars before the closing of the frontier.
	Option D is incorrect	Turner does not include references to limits being placed on immigrant populations.

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Item Position	Rationale	
44	Option B is correct	To support U.S. forces abroad during World War II, the U.S. government had to ensure that many goods were diverted to the theaters of war in Europe and Asia. This led to a shortage of goods that were normally available for purchase inside the United States, which subsequently caused the federal government to enforce a domestic rationing system. The poster reflects an effort by the U.S. government to encourage citizens to grow and preserve their own food to compensate for foods that they could no longer purchase in unlimited quantities.
	Option A is incorrect	Although many automotive factories were repurposed to produce tanks and other military vehicles, existing farm tractors were not retrofitted for military use.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the United States had started a full embargo on trade with Japan prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, the attack in isolation did not cause a food shortage inside the United States.
	Option D is incorrect	Although German bombers extensively targeted U.S. military forces in Europe, they did not have the range to attack U.S. farms and agricultural facilities.

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Item Position	Rationale	
45	Factors Leading to U.S. Involvement: Option "Communist takeover of mainland China" is correct	The United States was worried about the spread of communism into China, and this was a factor leading to U.S. involvement in the Korean War.
	Factors Leading to U.S. Involvement: Option "Invasion of South Korea by the North Korean military" is correct	When the Communist North Korean military invaded South Korea, the United States was led to enter the Korean War to ensure that communism did not spread into South Korea.
	Outcomes of the War: Option "Long-term presence of the U.S. military in South Korea" is correct	As a result of the Korean War, the United States placed military bases and soldiers in South Korea to continue to guard against North Korean aggression. The conflict in Korea ended with a ceasefire.
	Outcomes of the War: Option "Military stalemate along North Korean–South Korean border" is correct	At the end of the Korean War, a demilitarized zone (border) was established between North and South Korea, even though a formal peace treaty was never signed.

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Item Position	Rationale	
46	Option B is correct	The Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in response to the spread of nativist concerns regarding competition for jobs and an increased rate of Chinese immigration.
	Option A is incorrect	The act did not enhance business ownership and expand ethnic communities for Chinese immigrants; rather, it meant to exclude Chinese immigrants from being allowed into the United States.
	Option C is incorrect	The act was not intended to force Chinese immigrants into internment camps to maintain national security; rather, it meant to exclude Chinese immigrants from being allowed into the United States.
	Option D is incorrect	The act was not intended to prevent Chinese immigrants from building self-sufficient communities; rather, it meant to exclude Chinese immigrants from being allowed into the United States.

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Item Position	Rationale	
47	Option D is correct	World War I was started in part because of a growing sense of nationalism among European countries.
	Option A is incorrect	Nationalism, not isolationism, was common in pre-World War I Europe.
	Option B is incorrect	There was not a communist revolution in pre-World War I Europe.
	Option C is incorrect	Europe before World War I was not in economic decline.

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Item Position	Rationale	
48	Option B is correct	The excerpt discusses dollar diplomacy, a policy that involved spreading U.S. influence around the world through investment and the promotion of American enterprise.
	Option A is incorrect	The goal of dollar diplomacy was to extend U.S. business opportunities abroad and did not relate to tariffs.
	Option C is incorrect	While the excerpt discusses commercial enterprise, dollar diplomacy was not focused on reducing U.S. manufacturing regulations.
	Option D is incorrect	The policy of dollar diplomacy did not mean that there would be a reduction in support for U.S. businesses.



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Item Position	Rationale	
49	Option C is correct	The amendments shown all deal in some way with expanding participation in the democratic process, namely by extending voting rights to new groups and expanding the role of voters in the United States.
	Option A is incorrect	The amendments shown are not established procedures but rather the results of policy changes and public opinion about the liberties guaranteed to U.S. citizens.
	Option B is incorrect	Most of these amendments guarantee the natural rights of U.S. citizens rather than dealing with elections or terms of office.
	Option D is incorrect	These amendments played a role in expanding the power of U.S. citizens to participate in the democratic process, not in expanding the power of publicly elected officials.

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Item Position	Rationale	
50	Part A: Option C is correct	Because of the Bessemer process, steel was cheaper to produce and stronger than iron. Steel was increasingly used to construct infrastructure, buildings, and bridges in the United States.
	Part A: Option A is incorrect	More workers were needed to keep up with the ever-increasing demand for steel.
	Part A: Option B is incorrect	The technology was imported, not the machinery or the finished products.
	Part A: Option D is incorrect	The Bessemer process required hard and dangerous work and did not lead to better working conditions.
	Part B: Option A is correct	This phrase supports the answer to Part A. Steel was increasingly used to construct infrastructure, buildings, and bridges in the United States.
	Part B: Option B is incorrect	This phrase does not support the answer to Part A.
	Part B: Option C is incorrect	This phrase does not support the answer to Part A.
	Part B: Option D is incorrect	This phrase does not support the answer to Part A.

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Item Position	Rationale	
51	Option D is correct	Stock-market speculation, which created a false sense of prosperity, lured the public to buy shares at inflated prices while investors made money from the purchases.
	Option A is incorrect	After the stock market crashed, Americans feared that banks would fail. Only then did they begin to withdraw funds from their accounts.
	Option B is incorrect	Investors bought company shares, often with no consequences for the business itself. Speculation did not benefit businesses directly.
	Option C is incorrect	After the stock market crashed, the government tried to discourage speculation by taxing the frequency of selling and buying shares.

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Item Position	Rationale	
52	Option C is correct	The antiwar movement spread throughout the United States as the Vietnam War escalated. Many people, including veterans, took part in the growing opposition to these policies, including participating in protest.
	Option A is incorrect	The veterans in the photograph were not celebrating victory in the Vietnam War, since the war ended eight years after this photograph was taken, and not with a U.S. victory.
	Option B is incorrect	The Vietnam War was fought partially to stop the spread of communism. The veterans in the photograph would not be marching to support a communist victory.
	Option D is incorrect	This photograph shows a protest that was opposing the Vietnam war. The protesters were not specifically protesting drug use during the war.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
53	Option D is correct	Being shaped by many cultures with different characteristics best represents “Out of many, one.” When the motto was written, it symbolized attempts to unify a country from a collection of diverse states with different backgrounds and goals.
	Option A is incorrect	Being formed by revolting against a former government does not represent “Out of many, one.”
	Option B is incorrect	Believing all people are equal does not represent “Out of many, one.” Different states and cultures could all be equal and still be unable to unify.
	Option C is incorrect	This references the wars and other struggles in U.S. history. It does not describe the motto.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
54	Drop-Down 1: Option "lied under oath" is correct	President Clinton lied under oath.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "authorized an unsuccessful military mission" is incorrect	Authorizing an unsuccessful military mission was not a factor that led to Bill Clinton's impeachment.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "was unpopular with the American public" is incorrect	Clinton's popularity did not affect his impeachment.
	Drop-Down 1: Option "gave favors to close friends" is incorrect	Clinton was not impeached because he gave political favors to close friends.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "lose trust in the political system" is correct	Clinton's action of lying under oath did lead to people losing trust in the political system.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "abandon democratic values" is incorrect	Clinton's action of lying under oath did not lead people to abandon democratic values.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "feel confident in his administration" is incorrect	Clinton's action of lying under oath did not lead people to feel confident in his administration.
	Drop-Down 2: Option "resign from the armed forces" is incorrect	Clinton's action of lying under oath did not lead people to resign from the armed forces.

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Item Position	Rationale	
55	Option B is correct	Opponents frequently criticized New Deal programs for being wasteful and needlessly spending taxpayers' money. They believed that government-sponsored art programs exceeded the proper role of government.
	Option A is incorrect	This statement describes reasons for New Deal proponents' support for the work of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), but conservatives would have criticized this program.
	Option C is incorrect	Opponents would have criticized the program, and this statement describes reasons for New Deal proponents' support for the WPA's goal of putting people to work, including artists.
	Option D is incorrect	This poster advertises a political comedy to entertain the citizens and was not intended to educate citizens about the structure of the government.

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<b>Item Position</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
56	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.



STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
57	Option D is correct	The Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 was passed during the Progressive Era, with the intent to protect the health and safety of the American people. This act regulated private businesses to protect consumers.
	Option A is incorrect	Progressive reforms of the early 1900s restricted corporations from forming trusts.
	Option B is incorrect	Although setting tariff rates on foreign goods is an action taken by the federal government, this action does not regulate private businesses to protect consumers.
	Option C is incorrect	The purchase of gold and silver to back currency was not an action taken by the federal government to regulate private businesses to protect consumers.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
58	Option C is correct	Jim Crow laws created a mandated system of racial segregation, including seating restrictions for African Americans on public transportation. Segregated transportation systems, both public and private, were the norm throughout the South and in many parts of the United States.
	Option A is incorrect	While the price of automobiles may have been out of reach for many people, there were no laws prohibiting African Americans from owning automobiles.
	Option B is incorrect	While the price of buying buses and starting a bus company may have been out of reach for most people, there were no laws prohibiting African Americans from this type of ownership.
	Option D is incorrect	Driving or riding in personal automobiles was not restricted by Jim Crow laws.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
59	Option D is correct	Bryan was concerned that low farm prices ruined the finances of farmers and caused massive poverty in rural America.
	Option A is incorrect	Farmers suffered from low crop prices; this negatively affected their profits.
	Option B is incorrect	While urban sprawl was increasing in the Northeast, the Great Plains were still widely available for agriculture.
	Option C is incorrect	Tractors replaced the manual labor force, and many rural towns declined in population as former farmhands departed for other opportunities.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
60	Option C is correct	More babies meant more consumption of products, especially from baby and childcare industries, which contributed to the economic prosperity of the 1950s.
	Option A is incorrect	For the first time in the United States, there was a massive push to live in the suburbs, where housing markets soared as new building methods provided more affordable housing on more available land. However, this was a result of changes in the birth rate rather than a reason for them.
	Option B is incorrect	As baby boomers grew older, schools were erected and built in high volumes to account for the increased number of children. Thus, decreased prosperity due to lack of education was not a result of changes in the birth rate.
	Option D is incorrect	Economic prosperity increased during this time and was not affected by people relying on social welfare programs.

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Item Position	Rationale	
61	Option “boundless field to human activity, and inexhaustible materials for industry” is correct	This selection demonstrates de Tocqueville’s belief that U.S. citizens are free to pursue economic opportunities without much interference.
	Option “you are stunned by a kind of [commotion]” is incorrect	This selection does not demonstrate de Tocqueville’s belief about the freedom that U.S. citizens have to pursue economic opportunities.
	Option “voices demand the immediate satisfaction of their social wants” is incorrect	This selection does not demonstrate de Tocqueville’s belief about the freedom that U.S. citizens have to pursue economic opportunities.
	Option “the election of a representative is going on” is incorrect	This selection does not demonstrate de Tocqueville’s belief about the freedom that U.S. citizens have to pursue economic opportunities.
	Option “American Union has no enemies to contend with” is incorrect	This selection does not demonstrate de Tocqueville’s belief about the freedom that U.S. citizens have to pursue economic opportunities.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
62	Option D is correct	The primary objection to the Sedition Act of 1918 was that it violated freedom of speech and freedom of the press provided by the First Amendment.
	Option A is incorrect	The law did not block ratification of the Treaty of Versailles.
	Option B is incorrect	Actions of the Socialist Party that criticized the government were illegal, but membership in the party itself was not.
	Option C is incorrect	Violation of the First Amendment was the primary objection to the Sedition Act, not the degree of fines for offenders.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 9 Social Studies Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
63	Option C is correct	Groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and the National Urban League have contributed to U.S. culture by expanding economic opportunities for minority groups.
	Option A is incorrect	Groups such as the NAACP, LULAC, and the National Urban League have not lobbied for voter ID laws; they have worked to expand opportunities for minorities.
	Option B is incorrect	Groups such as the NAACP, LULAC, and the National Urban League have not contributed to U.S. culture by encouraging free trade policies. They have worked to expand opportunities for minority groups.
	Option D is incorrect	Groups such as the NAACP, LULAC, and the National Urban League have contributed to U.S. culture by expanding economic opportunities. They have not encouraged limits on immigration.

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Item Position	Rationale	
64	Option A is correct	A coach requiring (forcing) team members to say a prayer would likely violate the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution because the coach is an employee of the public school system, making it a school-sponsored prayer. Voluntary prayers led by the coach or the players would not violate the Constitution.
	Option B is incorrect	Students expressing their religious beliefs as part of a student club are not engaging in a school-sponsored activity that would violate the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution.
	Option C is incorrect	A church renting or using space at a school is not a school-sponsored activity that would violate the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution.
	Option D is incorrect	A student praying individually is not a form of school-sponsored prayer that would violate the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution.