

Middle School American History Quiz

American History · Answer Key · 19 Questions

1. What was the primary purpose of the Stamp Act of 1765, passed by the British Parliament?

- A) To regulate trade between the colonies and France
- B) To raise revenue from the American colonies to help pay for the Seven Years' War**
- C) To establish a new colonial currency
- D) To grant colonists greater representation in Parliament

2. Which of the following was a major cause of the War of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain?

- A) Disputes over westward expansion into Mexican territory
- B) British impressment of American sailors and interference with American trade**
- C) A trade war over cotton exports
- D) A disagreement over the Louisiana Purchase

3. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 addressed the issue of slavery by:

- A) Banning slavery in all western territories
- B) Admitting Missouri as a free state and Maine as a slave state
- C) Allowing territories to vote on slavery through popular sovereignty
- D) Admitting Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, and prohibiting slavery north of the 36°30' parallel**

4. What was the main goal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806)?

- A) To negotiate a peace treaty with Native American tribes
- B) To explore and map the territory gained from the Louisiana Purchase and find a water route to the Pacific Ocean**
- C) To establish new trading posts with European powers
- D) To survey land for the construction of a transcontinental railroad

5. The 'Trail of Tears' refers to the forced relocation of which Native American tribe from their ancestral lands in the Southeast to territory west of the Mississippi River?

- A) Sioux
- B) Navajo
- C) Cherokee**
- D) Iroquois

6. Which amendment to the U.S. Constitution officially abolished slavery throughout the United States?

- A) 10th Amendment
- B) 13th Amendment**
- C) 15th Amendment
- D) 19th Amendment

7. What significant event marked the beginning of the American Civil War?

- A) The Battle of Gettysburg
- B) The Emancipation Proclamation
- C) The attack on Fort Sumter**
- D) The election of Abraham Lincoln

8. The principle of 'Manifest Destiny' in the 19th century fueled American expansion by:

- A) Encouraging isolationism and avoiding foreign entanglements
- B) Promoting the belief that the United States was destined to expand across the North American continent**
- C) Advocating for limited government intervention in the economy
- D) Opposing the acquisition of new territories

9. Who was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence?

- A) George Washington
- B) Benjamin Franklin
- C) John Adams
- D) Thomas Jefferson**

10. The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 is considered a landmark event for which social movement?

- A) Abolitionism
- B) Temperance
- C) Women's Rights**
- D) Labor Reform

11. The 'Gilded Age' in American history is best characterized by:

- A) A period of widespread economic equality and social harmony
- B) Rapid industrialization, immigration, and significant wealth inequality**
- C) A focus on agrarian reforms and the abolition of slavery
- D) The decline of big business and the rise of small, independent farmers

12. What was the main objective of the Progressive Era reforms in the early 20th century?

- A) To expand colonial territories overseas
- B) To address social and economic problems caused by industrialization and urbanization**
- C) To repeal all government regulations on businesses
- D) To restore the nation to an agrarian way of life

13. The attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan on December 7, 1941, directly led to:

- A) The United States withdrawing from World War II
- B) The United States entering World War II**
- C) A declaration of neutrality by the United States
- D) The signing of a peace treaty with Japan

14. Which amendment to the U.S. Constitution granted women the right to vote?

- A) 17th Amendment
- B) 18th Amendment
- C) 19th Amendment**
- D) 20th Amendment

15. The Cold War was a period of geopolitical tension primarily between the United States and what other global superpower?

- A) Germany
- B) Japan
- C) China
- D) The Soviet Union**

16. What landmark Supreme Court case in 1954 declared state-sponsored segregation in public schools unconstitutional?

- A) Plessy v. Ferguson
- B) Marbury v. Madison
- C) Brown v. Board of Education**
- D) Gideon v. Wainwright

17. The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, declared:

- A) All enslaved people in the United States to be immediately free
- B) Enslaved people in Confederate-held territory to be free**
- C) All people to have equal rights regardless of race
- D) Slavery to be legal only in the border states

18. What was the purpose of the Monroe Doctrine, announced in 1823?

- A) To encourage European colonization in the Americas
- B) To oppose European interference in the affairs of the Americas and warn against further colonization**
- C) To establish trade routes between European nations and the United States
- D) To create a military alliance between the United States and Canada

19. The 'Iron Curtain' was a term used to describe the division between Eastern and Western Europe during the Cold War. Which country was largely on the 'Eastern Bloc' side?

- A) France
- B) United Kingdom
- C) Poland**
- D) Spain