

# **SOCIAL STUDIES**

# **Grade 8**

**2011 Released Test Questions**

These released questions represent selected TEKS student expectations for each reporting category. These questions are samples only and do not represent all the student expectations eligible for assessment.

1

Your Highnesses . . . resolved to send me . . . to the said parts of India to see the said princes, and the cities and lands, and their disposition, with a view that they might \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_; and ordered that I should not go by land to the eastward, as had been customary, but that I should go by way of the west, whither up to this day, we do not know for certain that any one has gone.

—Christopher Columbus

Which of the following completes the excerpt?

- A teach us how to craft their goods
- B be converted to our holy faith
- C be brought to our country as slaves
- D teach us about the stars and planets

2

Of the complicated European systems of national polity we have heretofore been independent. From their wars, their tumults, and anxieties we have been, happily, almost entirely exempt. Whilst these are confined to the nations which gave them existence, . . . they can not affect us except as they appeal to our sympathies in the cause of human freedom and universal advancement.

—President Franklin Pierce, inaugural address, 1853

These remarks best reflect a confirmation of which U.S. president's foreign-policy goals?

- A George Washington
- B James Madison
- C James Monroe
- D John Quincy Adams

3

Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory, and shed American blood upon the American soil.

And whereas this House desires to obtain a full knowledge of all the facts which go to establish whether the particular spot of soil on which the blood of our *citizens* was so shed was, or was not, *our own soil*, at that time . . .

This is no war of defence, but one unnecessary and of offensive aggression.

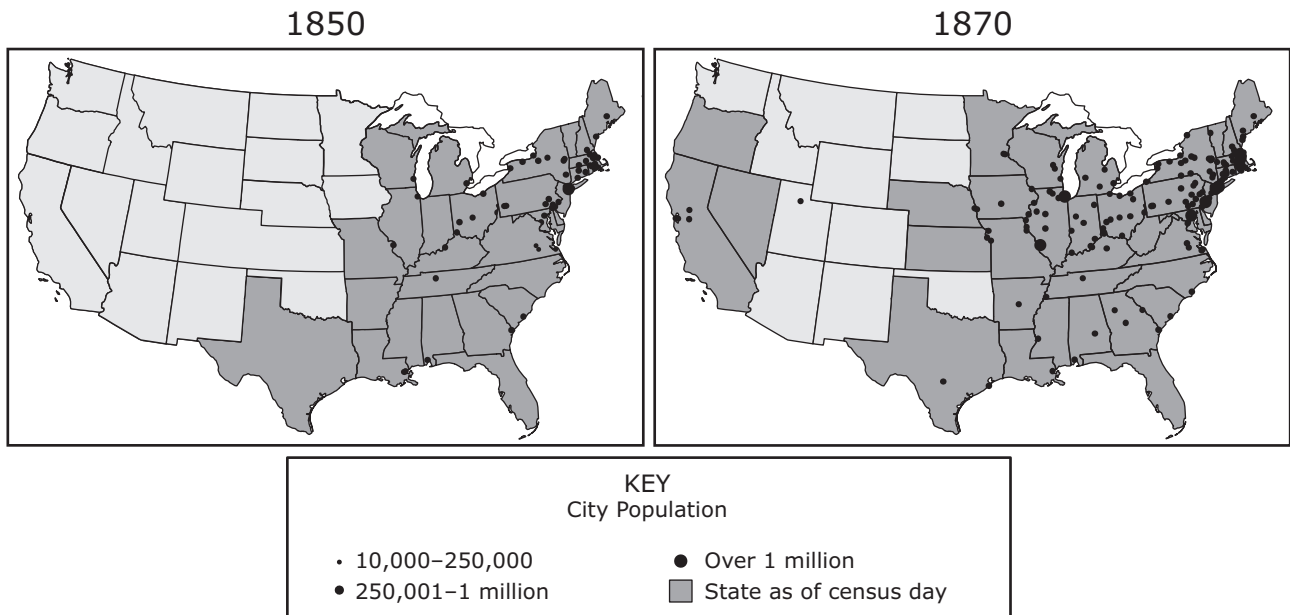
Such a "conquest," stigmatize it as you please, must necessarily be a great blessing to the conquered.

These excerpts offer different points of view about —

- A** the Texas War of Independence
- B** the admission of California to the Union
- C** the U.S.-Mexican War
- D** the acquisition of the Gadsden Purchase from Mexico

- 4 In 1854, Anthony Burns, a fugitive slave from Alexandria, Virginia, was arrested in Boston and returned to Virginia. Which federal legislation provided the basis for Burns’s arrest?
- A The Kansas-Nebraska Act
  - B The Homestead Act
  - C The Compromise of 1850
  - D The Gadsden Purchase

5



Which of these best explains the change in population and distribution of U.S. cities from 1850 to 1870?

- A The passage of homesteading legislation
- B The admission of new states to the Union
- C The expansion of the railroad system and increased industrialization
- D The emancipation of slaves after the Civil War

6

Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester, New York



Which of these resulted from the modification to the environment shown in this illustration?

- A** The surrounding area became more industrialized.
  - B** Community parks were established to preserve wildlife.
  - C** Property was damaged by increased flooding.
  - D** Crop irrigation declined because of water pollution.
- 
- 7** Although many farmers fought in the Civil War, farms in both the Union and Confederacy were able to continue operating because —
- A** military officers assigned troops to work on farms
  - B** new farm machinery was imported from overseas
  - C** women often managed farm operations
  - D** relief organizations provided emergency farm labor

- 8 Which excerpt from the Constitution expresses the principle of federalism?
- A "All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States. . . ."
  - B "The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate. . . ."
  - C "The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour. . . ."
  - D "The powers not delegated to the United States . . . are reserved to the States respectively. . . ."

---

9

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof. . . .

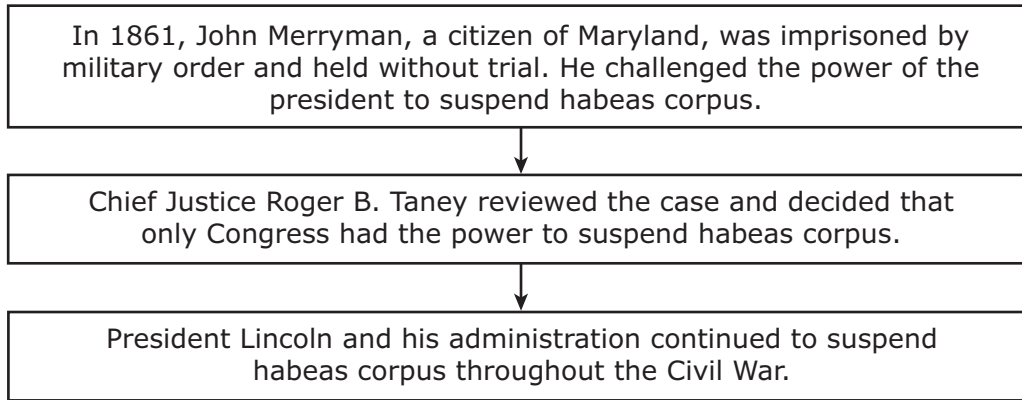
—Article V of the U.S. Constitution

Article V, excerpted above, is included in the U.S. Constitution to allow for the —

- A adaptation of laws to reflect changes in society
- B revision of laws by the executive branch
- C resolution of conflicts through the judicial system
- D validation of elections by a national authority

- 10** A writ of habeas corpus requires an official to bring a prisoner before a civil court to justify the prisoner's arrest. President Abraham Lincoln authorized the suspension of habeas corpus during the Civil War.

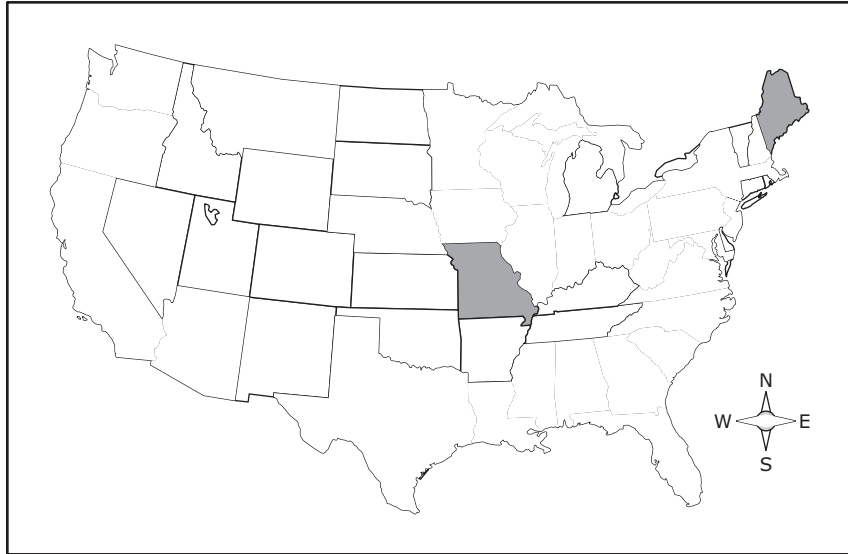
*Ex parte Merryman*



By ignoring Chief Justice Taney's ruling, President Lincoln —

- A** exercised a constitutional check on judicial power
- B** disregarded the principle of judicial review
- C** upheld the concept of federalism
- D** invoked the principle of separation of powers

11



The two shaded states on this map were admitted to the Union under the terms of a compromise involving the —

- A resolution of a boundary dispute with Great Britain
- B expansion of slavery into western territories
- C relocation of American Indians to western territories
- D counting of the slave population for purposes of representation



12

- Canal networks
- Swiftly flowing rivers
- Extensive railroad systems
- Banking and investment centers

In the nineteenth century, the availability of the resources in this list resulted in —

- A** an increase in the number of factories in the Northeast
- B** the development of industrial labor unions in the South
- C** an increase in the number of immigrants moving to the South
- D** the expansion of commercial agriculture in the Northeast

---

**13** How did the disruption in Atlantic shipping prior to and during the War of 1812 significantly affect the U.S. economy?

- A** Imports of raw materials increased in the Northeast.
- B** Americans emigrated to Europe to find manufacturing jobs.
- C** Cotton sales from southern states to Europe increased.
- D** American industries expanded to provide replacements for foreign goods.

14

Factors Contributing to the Industrial Revolution in the United States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The flow of imported goods is cut off during the War of 1812.</li><li>• Manufacturers invest in industrial technology.</li><li>• River water provides power to run factory machines.</li><li>• ?</li></ul>

Which of the following best completes the table above?

- A** Immigration expands the labor force.
- B** The government seizes control of factories.
- C** Overland trade routes become obsolete.
- D** A scarcity of raw materials causes prices to rise.

Item Number	Reporting Category	Readiness or Supporting	Content Student Expectation	Process Student Expectation	Correct Answer
1	1	Readiness	8.2(A)	8.29(B)	B
2	1	Readiness	8.5(E)	8.29(B)	A
3	1	Readiness	8.6(D)	8.29(E)	C
4	1	Readiness	8.7(C)		C
5	2	Readiness	8.10(B)	8.29(J)	C
6	2	Supporting	8.11(B)	8.29(C)	A
7	2	Supporting	8.23(E)		C
8	3	Readiness	8.15(D)		D
9	3	Readiness	8.16(A)	8.29(B)	A
10	3	Readiness	8.18(A)	8.29(C)	B
11	3	Supporting	8.21(C)	8.29(C)	B
12	4	Supporting	8.12(C)	8.29(B)	A
13	4	Supporting	8.13(A)		D
14	4	Readiness	8.13(B)	8.29(B)	A

For more information about the new STAAR assessments, go to  
[www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/).