

A Practice Document Based Question (DBQ) for Advanced Placement US History

AP Themes Covered:

- Migration, Expansion, and Globalization
- Politics, Government, and Citizenship
- The Changing Economy
- Social and Political Reform

Suggested Background Reading:

- Chapters 32, 33, 35 in *The American Pageant, 13th Edition*
- Chapters 9, 10 in *Hard Road to Freedom: The Story of African America*, James Oliver and Lois E. Horton, 2001
- Chapter 5 in *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890-2000*, Adam Fairclough, 2001

Directions: The following question requires you to construct a coherent essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-K and your knowledge of the period referred to in the question. High scores will be earned only by essays that both cite key pieces of evidence from the documents and draw on outside knowledge of the period.

Essay Prompt: Analyze the causes and results of the migration of African-Americans from rural to urban America. Confine your answer to the time period from 1900 to 1945.

Document A

Source: Pearson Education, Copyright 1995-2010.



AFRICAN AMERICAN MIGRATION NORTHWARD, 1910–1920

Document B

Source: Minutes of the N.A.A.C.P. Executive Board meeting, May 2, 1911. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 3, 1973*

"...a colored man, charged with killing a white man, was taken from the jail at Livermore, Ky., last week, and taken to the town Opera House, and tied on the stage, and...an admission fee was charged to witness the lynching...and [the] feature of the lynching was that the audience was allowed to shoot at the suspended body of the victim, and, as in the words of the Press reports, 'Those who bought orchestra seats had the privilege of emptying their six shooters at the swaying form above them, but the gallery occupants were limited to one shot.'"

Document C

Source: "Along the Color Line", *The Crisis*, December, 1910. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 3, 1973*

"The law [of the State of Alabama] provides that in contracts of service entered into by a laborer, where money was advanced, and the contract broken without just cause, and the money not refunded, the laborer is guilty, and may be sentenced to hard labor until the fine is worked out. The Federal Department [of Justice] contends that the purpose of the law is...to impose compulsory service upon the Negroes who constitute the bulk of the farm labor of the State."

Document D

Source: George E. Haynes, *The Negro At Work in New York City: A Study in Economic Progress*, 1912. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 3, 1973*

"The divorce from the soil in the sudden breaking down of the plantation regime just after the Civil War and the growth of industrial centers in the South, and the call of higher wages in the North, have been unusually strong influences to concentrate the Negro in the cities. It is with him largely as with other wage-earners: the desire for higher wages and the thought of larger liberty, especially in the North...have had a considerable force in bringing him to urban centers. But the Negro's residence in the city offers problems of maladjustment. In domestic and personal service the Negro is poorly paid. And even in skilled occupations, where unions admit him...the Negro must be above the average in speed, in quality of work done, and in reliability to secure and hold places.

Document E

Source: W.E.B. Dubois, *The Crisis*, February, 1914. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 3, 1973*

"First—The new attack on property rights of colored people...is directed toward preventing Negroes from buying agricultural land... Second—The attack on property is the natural child of the refusal of the right to work to Negroes. The worst examples of this are in the contract labor laws of the South which virtually legalize peonage in agriculture. Fifth—The robbery of Negroes' political rights is the cause, and was intended to be the cause, of the invasion of the Negroes' civil, educational, and economic rights."

Document F

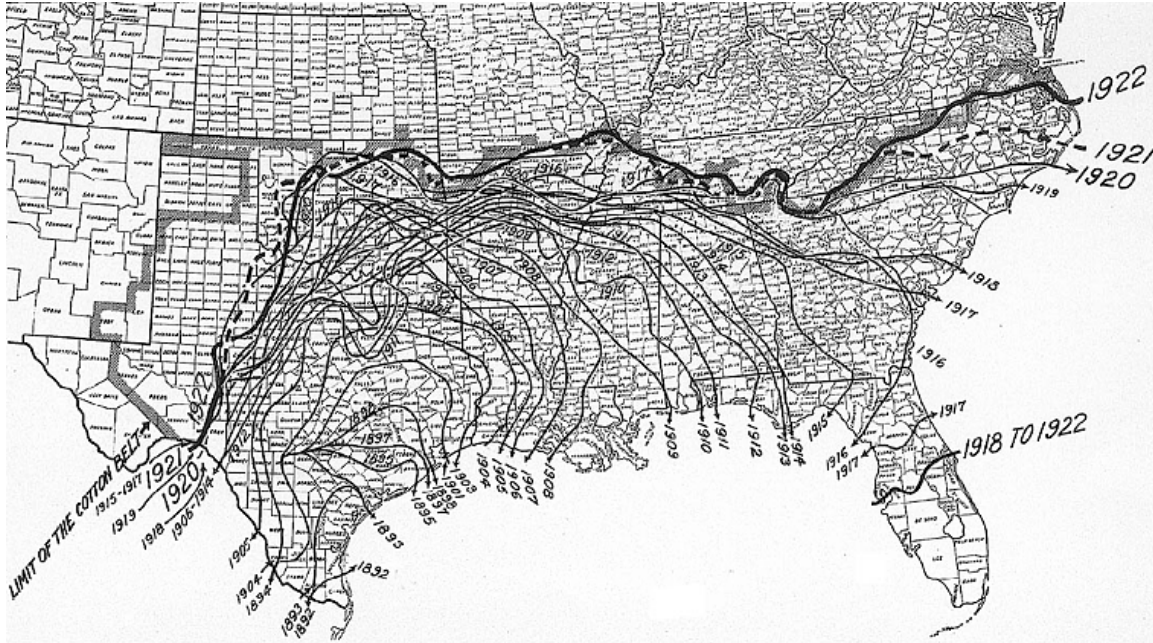
Source: Editorial, *The Messenger*, January, 1918. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 3, 1973*

"The hanging of thirteen Negro soldiers for the shooting up in Houston, Texas, a few months ago marks the acme of national indiscretion, on the one hand, and the triumph of Southern race prejudice, on the other. On the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of July in East St. Louis, white troops from Illinois, in broad daylight, under the eyes of tens of thousands of people, shot, wounded and killed over one hundred Negroes without...provocation. Evidence against the soldiers was...direct. Yet,...no white soldier was even apprehended or tried. Shortly after that Negro troops...provoked by the worst race prejudice in the world...were alleged to have shot up the town of

Houston, Texas, killing a few people. The Negro soldiers were tried; the verdict was withheld from the public; they were denied the right of appeal, and in medieval fashion, were hustled of to the scaffold."

Document G

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Map of the Boll Weevil Invasion," Farmers' Bulletin, #1329, June, 1923



Document H

Source: Louise Thompson, *The Crisis*, November, 1934. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 4*, 1974

"A word or two about the White Legion, this openly Fascist organization in Birmingham [Alabama] whose stated purpose is to fight communism and any move to lift oppression from the backs of the Negro people. During the height of the terror against the Negro and militant white workers, the White Legion issued highly inflammatory leaflets seeking to provoke white against Negro workers. One such leaflet included this statement: "How would you like to awaken one morning and find your wife or daughter attacked by a Negro or a Communist!" During the planning of action against the class-conscious workers of Birmingham, one wing of the Legion was for riding through the Negro neighborhood and shooting indiscriminately into the homes of innocent Negroes".

Document I

Source: Alain Locke, "Harlem: Dark Weather-Vane", *Survey Graphic*, August, 1936. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 4*, 1974

"Eleven brief years ago Harlem was full of the thrill and ferment of sudden progress and prosperity. Today, with that same Harlem prostrate in the grip of the depression and the throes of social unrest, we confront the sobering facts of a serious relapse and serious setback. For there is no cure or saving magic in poetry and art, an emerging generation of talent, or in international prestige and interracial recognition, for unemployment or precarious marginal employment, for high rents, high mortality rates, civic unrest, capitalist exploitation on the one hand and radical exploitation on the other."

Document J

Source: John P. Davis, "A Black Inventory of the New Deal", *The Crisis*, May 1935. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 4*, 1974

"The Agriculture Adjustment Administration has used cruder methods in enforcing poverty on the Negro farm population. It has made violations of the rights of tenants under crop reduction contracts easy; it has rendered enforcement of these rights impossible. The reduction of acreage under cultivation through the government rental agreement rendered unnecessary large numbers of tenants and farm laborers. Although the contract with the government provided that the land owner should not reduce the number of his tenants, he did so. The federal courts have now refused to allow tenants to enjoin such evictions."

Document K

Source: Earl Brown, *Why Race Riots: Lessons from Detroit*, 1944. *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, Volume 4*, 1974

"On Sunday, June 20, 1943, one of the most serious race riots in American history broke out in the city of Detroit. The forces which led to the outbreak in that city exist...in most of our cities. But racial feeling was the most alarming of all. Groups of Negro zoot-suiters were brawling with gangs of white toughs; the determination of Negroes to hold the war jobs they had won was matched by the determination of numerous white groups to oust them."