



## AP<sup>®</sup> United States History 2003 Sample Student Responses Form B

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As the progressive era approached many government officials and political leaders decided on reform. They wanted the nation as a whole to participate in the reform in all different aspects. The reform came slowly but surely.

On June 4, 1906 an article came out about a meat factory and how they handled their meat. "Filthy wooden floors, piled on tables rarely washed, pushed from room to room in rotten box carts" is an exact statement from the article. Government officials in this area had to address the situation because it was affecting the nation.

Presidents during this time such as Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson were for the people of the nation they were governing. Roosevelt began to realize that the country is for the people and by the people. On February 22, 1912 he stated he believes there should be direct nominations for presidential primaries and election of US Senate by direct vote. He opened his eyes and mind to the people. In November of 1914 an article was produced about Wilson and his ways. The article criticized how Wilson "seriously asserts that the fundamental wrongs of a modern society can be easily and quickly rightened." Wilson was a fast acting president, he saw problems and found solutions. He helped make our nation a better place.

As great accomplishments such as these were in place problems began to occur that nobody had dreamed of. In "The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets" Mrs. Adams addresses the fact that in school teachers prepare children mentally and physically to work in factories.

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Education was what brought our leaders to what they are and these leaders were allowing children to be pulled out of school to work eight hour days six to seven days a week. Another problem that was being addressed was people bringing issues that could have been dealt with locally to higher courts. In the case of Hammer v. Dugenthart they wanted Congress to regulate commerce among the States so they could stop the production of manufactured goods by children. The higher courts came to a decision that it would go against authority of Congress and it is a power that only local courts and authority have.

One great event that forever changed our country was the drafting of black men into the service during WWI. It forced our country to be integrated and accept others during our country's time of need.

The reform of our nation during 1900-1920's made a large impact on society forever. More voting rights of the people, clean and sanitary meat conditions, presidents finding problems and getting solutions, the fights for youth education not labor and integrating our society are just some of the ways the governments decisions have changed many people's lives forever.

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The United States entered the twentieth century to face the first Great War, and amidst the chaos of war emerged new programs and distinct leaders that characterized the Progressive Era. From 1900 to 1920, reformers such as Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft, and Woodrow Wilson led the country with efforts that proved to be both successful and limited. Issues brought to question included hygiene in food, child labor, monopolies, and civil rights.

The first president of the beginning of this New Era, Theodore Roosevelt and his New Nationalist ideals contributed to the successes of the period. A crisis in the squalid condition of butchering houses and meat markets (Doc. B) was exposed in food reports and books such as Upton Sinclair's The Jungle, which Roosevelt felt inclined to respond to. He did so through acts such as the Pure Food and Drug Act which examined the quality of food products in an effort to make better the poor conditions. Roosevelt was also a firm supporter of trust-busting (Doc. A), and the Clayton Antitrust Act was successfully established after his presidency (Doc. E). ~~However~~ the Act was a reaffirmation of the previous Sherman Anti-trust Act, which had been ambiguous and loosely constructed. Though effective in reality, the Clayton Antitrust Act did not completely resolve the issue of large company corporations and trusts.

Equally, the issue of "trust busting" was as much of a failure as a success, with the Clayton Anti-trust Act. The years following 1920

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would lead to the nation's worst depression in 1929, wrought on by problems such as maldistribution of resources and wealth, which Progressive reformers had obviously not countered effectively. The issue of child labor was also broached by both feminist voices (Doc. C) and in a court case (Doc. G) the voices express conflicting opinions. Jane Addams speaking out her contempt for the use of child labor and the court declaring an act issued to prevent interstate commerce in the products of child labor as "unconstitutional". Such conflicting views would make overcoming the issue difficult. A final and major issue was that of civil rights, and honoring the rights of blacks and women. Despite the efforts of president Wilson to work for world peace in light of the war, he failed to recognize and bring about effective reforms to support domestic issues at home. Document H reflects resentment in women towards "kaiser Wilson". Document F criticizes Wilson's idealistic views, ~~and~~ for social reform, and W.E.B. DuBois also criticizes the federal government's attention towards foreign affairs rather than problems at home (Doc. I). The country was telling its president that there was no use in being a champion of international peace if the same attitude was not reflected towards <sup>his own</sup> "oppressed" people. Thus civil rights remained largely at question and the struggle continued far into the years succeeding the Progressive Era reformers.

Despite promises and attempts to reorganize society and deal with problems in general, the Progressive Era did not yield as much success as may have been envisioned by its leaders. Though Roosevelt and Wilson

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had successes in their own manner. The latter part of the period from 1900-1920 reflected too much of an emphasis on foreign affairs and reconstruction after the Great War to leave the nation satisfied at the reforms made to improve its own conditions.

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The reforms of the Progressive Era sought to rectify many of the evils that had grown up in the new American society of the Industrial Revolution. Although many had worked avidly for change early, ~~most~~ <sup>most</sup> of their significant victories occurred between 1900 and 1920 in legislation against corruption, ruthless economics and social issues, though not all groups profited.

Political corruption had run rampant at all levels of government since the Civil War. Weak presidents and the superficial issues of politics in the Gilded Age had allowed fraud and deceit to flourish. Political machines grew up in cities, controlled by <sup>powerful</sup> ~~powerful~~ city bosses. Sometimes this system proved beneficial because the bosses ensured badly needed civil services to the poor immigrants who kept them in power. Many, however, unscrupulous abused their power for personal, such as Abe Ruef in <sup>San Francisco</sup> California.

Reformers <sup>seeking</sup> ~~sought~~ to stop the crime sometimes found they had to change the system. The most successful was the city manager system which required a trained, non-partisan manager to carry out the city council law. The Wisconsin led the US in state reform under ~~his~~ Follette who instituted non-partisan commissions and corrupt practices laws. After Wisconsin's success many states followed suit. Teddy Roosevelt also sought to reform government as he supported election of senators by direct vote (which later became an amendment) (Doc. D).

Some of Roosevelt's ~~are~~ most impressive and successful reforms, however, were directed at the uncontrolled capitalism that had the economy in <sup>its</sup> unyielding grip. Known as a trust-buster as well

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as a big game hunter (Doc. A), Roosevelt became a campaign against the huge monopolies of the US. He was not a fanatic, however, only demising the most dangerous and compromising to keep others under control. Roosevelt ingeniously avoided trying to pass legislation through a stubborn, conservative congress by using law suits against monopolies. He gave the Sherman Anti-Trust Act teeth and Woodrow Wilson later installed the Clayton Anti-trust Act which <sup>(Doc. E)</sup> empowered the Federal government against trusts. In *Hammer v. Dagenhart*, the court ruled that the Constitution exerted "a power as to a purely local matter." (Doc. G)

Roosevelt also helped unions and the environment during his administration. During a coal miners strike, he played on public opinion well, until he was able to take the side of the miners instead of the traditional side of their managers. <sup>This became known as square dealing.</sup> Roosevelt also supported conserving natural resources leading to many environmental reforms.

Another leap taken by Roosevelt was the establishment of the <sup>(FDA)</sup> Food and Drug Administration. After reading Upton Sinclair's novel, *The Jungle*, Roosevelt had ordered an investigation into the meat packing industry. The Neil-Reynolds Report (Doc. B) was so horrifying that the FDA was established to control cleanliness and inspections.

Social reform also made headway, Jane Addams, founder of Hull House, in Chicago, decried the apathy of the <sup>nation's</sup> youth (Doc. C). She and others called for education that focused as much



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on hygiene and good citizenship as reading and writing. Some minimum hours <sup>laws</sup> were passed, however, the movement for help in urban slums continues even today.

Women's rights ~~seemed to~~ take a huge step in 1920, although it proved to be only the beginning of a new struggle. The women's suffrage movement that had begun in Seneca Falls finally triumphed in 1920 with the passing of the 19th Amendment. As black suffrage after the Civil War had angered feminists, so did the ignoring of women's suffrage during WWI when the US had entered a foreign war for freedom. (Doc. H) Unfortunately, the right to vote was not the monument <sup>women's rights</sup> many leaders believed it to be. Most women voters simply voted as their husbands did and job opportunity and wages were far from equal.

Some groups were completely left out of the Progressive Era's reformer's ambitions. Blacks gained not rights and indeed continued to suffer under racism and hatred. W.E.B. Du Bois denounced America for its shameful treatment of its African American citizens. (Doc. I) Native Americans were also ignored by the progressive movement. They were seen by most reformers as backwards people groups who were more of a stain to society than a culture to be appreciated.

Still, the Progressive Era achieved much in twenty years that had been defeated ~~in~~ in the previous century. Corruption and economics with dealt with <sup>and frequently successfully</sup> forcefully by the Federal government. Although minorities were unaided and women won only a partial

