



PERIOD 5 (1844-1877) ➔ As the United States expanded and its population increased, regional tensions, especially over the slavery question, led to civil war—the course and aftermath which transformed American society.

The College Board has identified the following **KEY CONCEPTS** for Period 5 (1844-1877). The total items (multiple-choice, short answer, and longer essay) related to Period 5 on the APUSH National Exam comprise approximately 13 percent of the test. Use the concepts to strategically frame and guide your personal review plan. Are you able to “make sense” of each statement? Could you generate a written response (short-answer or long) to each statement? Can you add meaningful supportive data to each statement? Can you recall a certain episode in history that would serve well as an example of the situation described by each statement? The bold-faced concepts are generally more encompassing; the others seem to lean toward specificity. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated. You cannot possibly know every square inch of the material.

The United States became more connected with the world as it pursued an expansionist foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere and emerged as the destination for many migrants from other countries.

Enthusiasm for United States territorial expansion, fueled by economic and national security interests and supported by claims of American racial and cultural superiority, resulted in war, the opening of new markets, acquisition of new territory, and increased ideological conflicts.

Westward expansion, migration to and within the United States, and the end of slavery reshaped North American boundaries and caused conflicts over American cultural identities, citizenship, and the question of extending and protecting rights for various groups of United States inhabitants.

Intensified by expansion and deepening regional divisions, debates over slavery and other economic, cultural, and political issues led the nation into civil war.

The institution of slavery and its attendant ideological debates, along with regional economic and demographic changes, territorial expansion in the 1840s and 1850s, and cultural differences between the North and the South, all intensified sectionalism.

Repeated attempts at political compromise failed to calm tensions over slavery and often made sectional tensions worse, breaking down the trust between sectional leaders and culminating in the bitter election of 1860, followed by the secession of southern states.

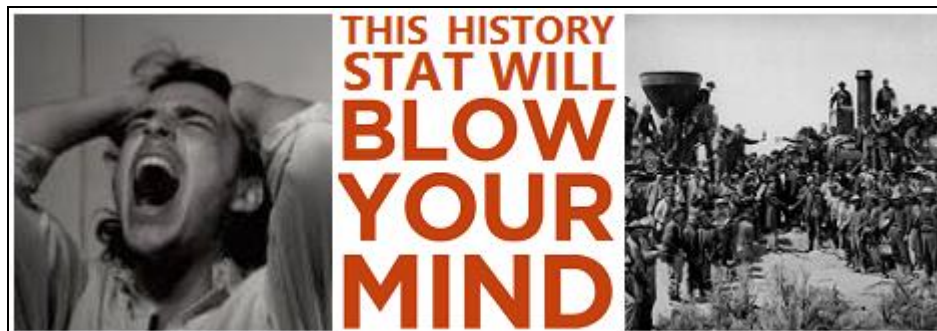
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The Union victory in the Civil War and the contested Reconstruction of the South settled the issues of slavery and secession, but left unresolved many questions about the power of the federal government and citizenship rights.

The North's greater manpower and industrial resources, its leadership, and the decision for emancipation eventually led to the Union military victory over the Confederacy in the devastating Civil War.

The Civil War and Reconstruction altered power relationships between the states and the federal government and among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, ending slavery and the notion of a divisible union, but leaving unresolved questions of relative power and largely unchanged social and economic patterns.

The constitutional changes of the Reconstruction period embodied a Northern idea of American identity and national purpose and led to conflicts over new definitions of citizenship, particularly regarding the rights of African Americans, women, and other minorities.



Following America's victory in the War of 1812 (aka America's "Second War for Independence"), the nation embarked on a massive wave of expansion on all fronts, not the least of which was significant movement westward in what would become known as "manifest destiny." Although the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803 had doubled the size of the United States, there was still plenty more land to acquire (most of it would come at the expense of war with Mexico in 1846-8). Once the vast territory had been secured to form the present shape of the continental 48 states—the final puzzle piece was the 1853 Gadsden Purchase—the government aggressively pursued settlement and economic development of the West. A crucial ingredient was the railroad industry. Since it was initially unprofitable for companies to construct and operate railways through the desolate West, the government would offer subsidies to entice railroads to extend westward. This financial aid came in the form of land. The Pacific Railway Act of 1862 set the precedent by granting to the Central Pacific and Union Pacific five alternate sections (square miles) of public domain on both sides of the track for every mile of track laid. Thus, America's first "transcontinental" railway, stretching practically 1,800 miles from Omaha to Sacramento, was completed in 1869. The gift of free land worked once; why not continue the practice? Before the end of the century, three more government funded railway routes will cross the West. **In total, the government gave in excess of 175 million acres of land to various railroads. The sum acreage is equivalent to the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and the New England states combined—or an area one-tenth the size of the United States!** The federal government contributed about 70 percent; the states roughly 30 percent. Again and again, land was the government's currency of motivation.