

period 3 apush study guide

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The AP United States History (APUSH) exam covers a wide range of topics and periods in American history, with Period 3 being particularly significant. This period spans from 1754 to 1800 and is characterized by the onset of the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the establishment of a new nation through the ratification of the Constitution. Understanding the key themes, events, and figures from this period is essential for success in APUSH. This study guide will provide a comprehensive overview of Period 3, detailing important events, documents, and concepts that students should focus on as they prepare for their examinations.

Key Themes of Period 3

Understanding the key themes of Period 3 is crucial for grasping the complexities of the era. Several overarching themes can be identified:

1. Colonial Resistance and the Road to Independence: The growing dissatisfaction among the American colonists towards British rule led to increasing resistance and eventual calls for independence.
2. The Impact of War on Society: The French and Indian War set the stage for changes in colonial relationships and attitudes towards Britain, while the American Revolution fundamentally altered social and political structures.
3. The Formation of a New Government: Following independence, the United States had to navigate the challenges of creating a functional government, leading to the drafting of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Key Events of Period 3

Period 3 is marked by several pivotal events that shaped American history. Below is a list of some of the most significant events:

The French and Indian War (1754-1763)

- A conflict between the British and French empires in North America, part of the larger Seven Years' War.
- Resulted in British victory, but at a significant financial cost, leading to increased taxation of the colonies.
- The war's outcome altered the balance of power in North America, with Britain gaining control of Canada and Florida.

The Proclamation of 1763

- Issued by King George III, this proclamation prohibited colonial expansion west of the Appalachian Mountains.
- Intended to stabilize relations with Native Americans, it angered colonists eager for land and resources.

The Stamp Act (1765) and the Townshend Acts (1767)

- The Stamp Act imposed direct taxes on the colonies, requiring them to use specially stamped paper for documents.
- The Townshend Acts imposed duties on imported goods, leading to widespread protests and boycotts in the colonies.
- Both acts spurred the development of organized resistance, including the formation of the Sons of Liberty.

The Boston Massacre (1770)

- A confrontation between British soldiers and Boston colonists that resulted in the deaths of five colonists.
- Used as propaganda by revolutionaries to fuel anti-British sentiment.

The Boston Tea Party (1773)

- In response to the Tea Act, which granted the British East India Company a monopoly on tea sales in the colonies, colonists disguised as Mohawk Indians dumped an entire shipment of tea into Boston Harbor.
- This act of defiance led to punitive measures from the British government, known as the Coercive Acts.

The First Continental Congress (1774)

- Delegates from twelve of the thirteen colonies convened to discuss colonial grievances and coordinate resistance against British policies.
- Resulted in the creation of the Continental Association, which called for a boycott of British goods.

The American Revolution (1775-1783)

- Sparked by increasing tensions and the desire for independence, the revolution began with the battles of Lexington and Concord.
- Key figures included George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin, among others.

- The Declaration of Independence (1776) formally articulated the colonies' desire for independence from British rule.

Important Documents of Period 3

Several key documents emerged during Period 3 that played a crucial role in shaping the nation:

The Declaration of Independence (1776)

- Drafted primarily by Thomas Jefferson, this document proclaimed the colonies' separation from Britain.
- It articulated Enlightenment ideals, emphasizing natural rights, the social contract, and the right of the people to overthrow an unjust government.

The Articles of Confederation (1781)

- The first governing document of the United States, it established a confederation of sovereign states with a weak central government.
- The limitations of the Articles, including the inability to levy taxes and regulate trade, became apparent, leading to calls for a stronger federal government.

The U.S. Constitution (1787)

- Drafted during the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, the Constitution established the framework for the federal government.
- Introduced key principles such as checks and balances, separation of powers, and federalism.
- Ratified in 1788, it replaced the Articles of Confederation and provided a more robust system of governance.

The Bill of Rights (1791)

- The first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights was introduced to protect individual liberties and address the concerns of Anti-Federalists.
- It guarantees fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, religion, and the press, as well as the right to bear arms and protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

Key Figures of Period 3

The actions and ideas of several key figures during Period 3 had a profound impact on American

history:

George Washington

- A military leader during the American Revolution and the first President of the United States.
- His leadership and commitment to the new nation helped to unify the country and establish precedents for the presidency.

Thomas Jefferson

- The principal author of the Declaration of Independence and a prominent advocate for democracy and individual rights.
- As the third President, he completed the Louisiana Purchase, which significantly expanded U.S. territory.

James Madison

- Known as the "Father of the Constitution," he played a key role in drafting and promoting the new Constitution.
- His contributions to the Federalist Papers were crucial in securing ratification.

Benjamin Franklin

- An influential diplomat and inventor, Franklin played a significant role in securing French support during the American Revolution.
- He was a key figure in the Constitutional Convention, advocating for compromise and unity.

Conclusion

Period 3 of APUSH is a transformative era in American history that laid the foundation for the United States as an independent nation. The events, documents, and key figures from this period are essential to understanding the complexities of American governance, society, and international relations. By focusing on the major themes and developments outlined in this study guide, students can better prepare for their APUSH exams and gain a deeper appreciation for the historical context that shaped the United States.

Frequently Asked Questions

What major events are included in Period 3 of APUSH?

Period 3 covers events from 1754 to 1800, including the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the drafting of the Constitution.

How did the French and Indian War impact colonial relations?

The French and Indian War strained relations between Britain and its American colonies, leading to increased taxation and resistance from colonists.

What were the primary causes of the American Revolution?

Key causes include taxation without representation, the Intolerable Acts, and the desire for greater autonomy from British rule.

What is the significance of the Declaration of Independence?

The Declaration of Independence articulated the colonies' desire for freedom and outlined Enlightenment ideals of government and rights.

What role did Enlightenment ideas play in the American Revolution?

Enlightenment ideas emphasized individual rights, liberty, and democracy, influencing revolutionary leaders and documents like the Declaration of Independence.

What were the Articles of Confederation and their weaknesses?

The Articles of Confederation served as the first constitution but had weaknesses such as a lack of federal power to tax and regulate trade.

How did the Constitutional Convention address the weaknesses of the Articles?

The Constitutional Convention resulted in a stronger federal government with checks and balances, ultimately leading to the U.S. Constitution.

What was the Federalist vs. Anti-Federalist debate?

The Federalists supported a strong central government and the Constitution, while the Anti-Federalists advocated for states' rights and feared centralized power.

What is the Bill of Rights and why was it added?

The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the Constitution, added to protect individual liberties and appease Anti-Federalist concerns.

How did the outcomes of Period 3 set the stage for future U.S. policies?

The events and debates of Period 3 established foundational principles of governance, federalism, and civil rights that influenced future U.S. policies.

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