8th Grade American History Review Questions

UNIT 1

* What motivated many Europeans to migrate to North America?
* What was significant about the establishment of Jamestown in 1607 and Plymouth in 1620?
* What was characteristic of the physical geography of New England, the Middle Colonies and the Southern Colonies and how did that affect economic activities in each region?
* What was characteristic of population patterns in the American colonies?
* What was characteristic of the human-environmental interactions in the American colonies?

* How were the daily lives of colonists different depending on where they lived?
* What contributions were made by women to the development of the American colonies?
* What was characteristic of religious patterns in the American colonies?
* Why was slavery characteristic of social patterns in the American colonies?

UNIT 2

* How did the ideas from historic documents influence the leaders in the American colonies?
* What unalienable rights are listed in the Declaration of Independence?

UNIT 3

* Why did the British begin to intervene in the economic affairs of the colonies following the French and Indian War?
* How did the economic policies of the British government cause tensions to rise in the American colonies?
* How did many in the colonies respond to the British policies?
* What was significant about the colonists issuing a document declaring independence?
* What grievances did the colonists include in the Declaration of Independence?
* What significant battles were fought by the Patriots to gain independence?
* How did the war for independence eventually end?
* What contributions to American independence were made by military leaders and statesmen?
* In what ways did women contribute to the American independence movement?
* Why were the Articles of Confederation created?
* What was characteristic about the type of government established by the Articles of Confederation?
* How did artists during this time period contribute to the emergence of a distinctly American culture?

UNIT 4

* Why did the Constitutional Framers come to believe it was necessary to create a new constitution?
* What issues of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 were resolved by compromises?
* What compromises were eventually reached at the convention?
* What arguments divided the Federalists and Anti-federalists?
* Who were the prominent Federalists and Anti-federalists?
* Do opposing political parties serve as a “check” on government power?
* In what ways does the U.S. Constitution reflect principles of constitutional democracy including limited government, republicanism, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, and individual rights?
* How were the grievances of the American colonists addressed in the U.S. Constitution?
* How is the U.S. Constitution amended?
* What rights are guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution?

UNIT 5

* What actions were taken by the leaders of the early republic to establish a system of justice?
* What actions were taken by the leaders of the early republic to provide for the common defense and maintain national security?
* How did the addition of the Louisiana Purchase affect the early republic?
* In what ways did the Supreme Court decisions of *Marbury* v. *Madison, McCulloch* v. *Maryland* and *Gibbons* v. *Ogden* impact federal authority?
* Why did federal leaders take a role in regulating the economy and raising revenue?
* What arguments were made for and against the use of protective tariffs and the establishment of a national bank?
* How did issues about the interpretation of the U.S. Constitution lead to the creation of new political parties?
* What led to the outbreak of the War of 1812?
* What major events are associated with the War of 1812?
* How did the War of 1812 affect economic patterns in the United States?
* How did U.S. foreign policy change from the presidency of Washington to the presidency of Monroe?

UNIT 6

* What groups of people formed the base of support for Andrew Jackson’s election?
* What policies were changed to expand suffrage to more Americans?
* What was significant about the creation of the “spoils system”?
* Why did many Americans want access to Indian lands?
* What steps were taken by Andrew Jackson to resettle the American Indian tribes east of the Mississippi?
* How did Cherokee leaders respond to passage of the Indian Removal Act of 1830?
* What issues led President Jackson to not renew the charter of the National Bank?
* What issue led to the Nullification Crisis and how was the crisis resolved?

UNIT 7

* Why did the concept of Manifest Destiny develop in the United States?
* What procedures were established by the Northwest Ordinance?
* What role did Lewis and Clark play in the expansion of the United States?
* What motivated many pioneers to migrate to the American West?
* Which trails became popular routes for westward migrants?
* What was characteristic of human interactions with the environment at this time?
* How did westward expansion affect the American Indians in the West?
* How did the United States use treaties with American Indian societies?
* What caused the outbreak of the U.S-Mexican War?
* What land did the United States gain in the peace settlement of the U.S.-Mexican war?
* What territories were acquired that reflect the current organization of the United States?

UNIT 8

* What new inventions promoted the growth of the factory system?
* What was characteristic of free enterprise in the United States in the early nineteenth century?
* How did the building of factories, railroads and telegraph lines change the way goods were marketed?
* How did new innovations in transportation and communication contribute to urbanization?
* What were the positive and negative consequences of urbanization?
* What was the relationship between urbanization and immigration in the early nineteenth century?
* Why did many Irish immigrants come to the United States in the mid-1800s and what was their urban experience like?
* How were Americans daily lives changed by industrialization?
* How did new technologies transform farming in the southern United States?
* How did industrialization in the northern United States influence the practice of slavery and the plantation system and in the southern United States?
* How did new innovations in transportation lead to the spread of the plantation system?
* Why and how did the abolitionist movement develop?
* What impact did the reform movements have on bringing about social change?
* Who were the prominent leaders of the reform movements?
* Who were some of the prominent authors and artists in early nineteenth century America?
* In what ways did the art and literature produced in early nineteenth century America reflect a unique American culture?

UNIT 9

* How did physical geography impact the regional economic differences in the United States?
* What was socially characteristic of regional differences regarding enslaved and free blacks in the United States?
* Why were there regional differences in regards to tariff policies?
* Why did slavery become a critical issue when territories wanted admission to the United States union?
* What compromises were created to address the issue of admitting states that allowed the practice of slavery to join the union?
* How successful were legislative compromises at relieving regional tensions?
* How did the *Dred Scott* v. *Sandford* decision affect regional tensions?
* How did regional differences lead to the creations of new political parties?

UNIT 10

* How did the election of Abraham Lincoln further divide the United States?
* What event marked the beginning of the American Civil War?
* What reasoning did Jefferson Davis use to justify secession of the southern states?
* How did Lincolns’ ideas in his first inaugural address compare to those of Jefferson Davis?
* Who were the military and political leaders of the Union and the Confederacy and what role did they have in fighting the Civil War?
* What military decisions/battles affected the fighting the Civil War?
* How did signing the Emancipation Proclamation affect the course of the Civil War?
* What was significant about General Lee’s surrender?
* What changes did Lincoln argue for to preserve the union?
* How did Lincoln’s assassination affect the people of the United States?

UNIT 11

* What pressing political, economic, and social problems did the southern states face following the end of the Civil War?
* How was the U.S. Constitution amended because of the Civil War?
* How did the U.S. legislature address the problems in the southern states following the Civil War?
* What conditions were established for readmission of the southern states to the Union?
* What compromise was made to eventually reconstruct the Union?
* How did Reconstruction policies change the social patterns of southern states?
* How did passage of the Homestead Act, Morrill Act and Dawes Act affected social and geographic patterns in the West?

UNIT 12

* What steps must be taken by immigrants to become naturalized citizens in the United States?
* What are unalienable rights?
* What rights are specifically guaranteed to Americans in the Bill of Rights?
* What responsibilities are expected of American citizens?
* Why is it important for Americans to understand their rights and responsibilities?