

DSST® THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

EXAM INFORMATION

This exam was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that learned by students taking the course. This examination includes the Civil War from pre-secession (1861) through Reconstruction. Includes causes of the war; secession; Fort Sumter; major battles; the political situation; assassination of Lincoln; end of the Confederacy; and Reconstruction.

The exam contains 100 questions to be answered in 2 hours.

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

The following is an outline of the content areas covered in the examination. The approximate percentage of the examination devoted to each content area is also noted.

- I. **Causes of the War – 16%**
 - a. United States Society in the Mid-Nineteenth Century
 1. Industrialization
 2. Religiosity
 3. Standard of living
 4. Demographics
 - b. Slavery
 - c. Anti-Slavery and Abolition movement
 - d. Westward Expansion of Free and Slave Territory
 1. Missouri Compromise
 2. Mexican War
 3. Compromise of 1850
 4. Kansas - Nebraska Act
 5. Birth of Republican Party
 6. Bleeding Kansas
 7. Dred Scott decision
 - e. John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry
 - f. Political situation in 1860
- II. **1861 – 11%**
 - a. Secession
 - b. Formation of Confederacy
 - c. Fort Sumter
 - d. Lincoln's Call for Volunteers
 - e. First Manassas (Bull Run)
 - f. Union Army versus Confederate Army
 - g. Lincoln versus Davis leadership
- III. **1862 – 17%**
 - a. Southern Strategy
 - b. War in the East
 - c. War in the West
 - d. Major Battles
- IV. **1863 – 19%**
 - a. Casualties
 - b. Role of women in the War
 - c. Black Americans and the War
 - d. Major Battles
- V. **1864 – 15%**
 - a. Political situation
 1. Northern demoralization
 2. Presidential election in north
 3. South cut in half and isolated
 - b. War in the West
 1. Capture of Atlanta
 2. Sherman's march to the sea and total war
 - c. War in the East
 1. Grant and the Army of the Potomac
 2. Lee and the Army of northern Virginia
 3. Major battles- the rise of modern warfare
- VI. **1865 - 7%**
 - a. Sherman's Carolina Campaign
 - b. Fall of Richmond
 - c. Lee's Surrender
 - d. Assassination of Lincoln
 - e. End of the Confederacy
 - f. Cost of the War
- VII. **Reconstruction - 15%**
 - a. Presidential Reconstruction Plans
 - b. Southern Response
 - c. Congressional Reconstruction Plans
 1. Radical Republicans
 2. Reconstruction acts
 3. Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments
 4. Impeachment
 5. Freedmen's Bureau
 6. Civil Rights Act
 - d. Military Reconstruction
 1. Response to Johnson's policies
 2. Elected black office-holders
 3. Scalawags and carpet-baggers
 4. Secret terrorist societies
 - e. End of Reconstruction
- VIII. **Emancipation proclamation**

REFERENCES

Below is a list of reference publications that were either used as a reference to create the exam, or were used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. You

may reference either the current edition of these titles or textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference **more than one textbook** on the topics outlined in this fact sheet.

You should **begin by checking textbook content against the content outline** provided before selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study.

Sources for study material are suggested but not limited to the following:

1. Foner, Eric (2011). *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*. New York, NY: Harper and Row, current edition.
2. Goodwin, Doris Kearns (2005). *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. Current edition.
3. McPherson, James (1988). *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, current edition.
4. McPherson, James & Hogue, James K. (2010). *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 4th Ed.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and three incorrect options. These are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the exam. Other sample questions can be found in the form of practice exams by visiting our website at www.getcollegecredit.com/testprep.

1. The last major Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River was
 - a. Memphis
 - b. Vicksburg
 - c. New Orleans
 - d. Fort Donnellson
2. Under the fourteenth amendment, many of those who had served in the Confederate government or army were
 - a. automatically reinstated as full citizens of the United States
 - b. forbidden to bear arms
 - c. forbidden to hold public office
 - d. interned for a minimum of six months
3. The Union general in command of the Shenandoah Valley campaigns of 1864 was

- a. Philip Kearny
 - b. Philip Sheridan
 - c. William T. Sherman
 - d. George A. Custer
4. When the southern states began to secede, Kentucky's response was
 - a. enthusiastic support for the south, followed by Kentucky's secession
 - b. reluctant support for the south, followed by Kentucky's secession
 - c. a declaration of neutrality, followed by a gradual shift to Unionism
 - d. a firm resolve to remain in the Union, followed by an enthusiastic response to Lincoln's call for troops
 5. Of those who died as a result of the war, the majority were
 - a. civilians deliberately or accidentally killed by hostile troops
 - b. soldiers killed outright in combat
 - c. soldiers who died later of wounds received in battle
 - d. soldiers who died of disease
 6. Prior to his attack on Harper's Ferry, John Brown was a
 - a. free-state agitator in Kansas
 - b. publisher of a leading abolitionist newspaper
 - c. slave owner in Missouri
 - d. station owner on the underground railroad
 7. The South's naval strategy was to use its
 - a. large navy to attack northern ports and bring the war to the north
 - b. large navy to defend its ports and prevent a Union blockade
 - c. relatively small navy to protect its ports and keep them open for blockade runners
 - d. relatively small navy to convoy supply ships from Europe and South America
 8. Which of the following nearly caused the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Great Britain?
 - a. Britain's willingness to receive the Confederate cruiser *Alabama* in its ports
 - b. British gunrunning to the Confederate states through the union blockade
 - c. British reactions to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation
 - d. British objections to the seizure of two confederate diplomats traveling on a British ship
 9. Grant's confrontation with Lee at Petersburg can best be described as a
 - a. confederate rout of the union army
 - b. swift, decisive victory for the union army

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- c. tragic blunder on the part of the union high command
 - d. prolonged siege ending in union victory
10. Through the course of the Civil War, which of the following was true of Jefferson Davis's cabinet?
- a. It remained stable in makeup and firm in support of the president
 - b. It remained stable in makeup but opposed to the president on many issues
 - c. Its members changed considerably but remained constant in support for the president
 - d. Its members changed considerably and were divided in their support for the president
11. Which of the following correctly states a major difference between the population of the North and South at the middle of the 19th century?
- a. In the north, the vast majority of the adult white population was literate, while in the south less than half the adult white population could read and write
 - b. In the south, people were much more religious than people in the north, attended church more frequently, and often participated in religious reawakening
 - c. In the north, the white population included large numbers of immigrants, while in the south the white population was largely of British descent
 - d. In the south, a larger proportion of the white population had traveled extensively within the region, while the northern white population remained familiar only with the area in which they were born
12. Which of the following is a true statement about the Union presidential election of 1864?
- a. It was the first presidential election ever held by a nation involved in a civil war

- b. It attracted little public interest because the people of the north were occupied with the war effort
- c. Lincoln's reelection was considered a certainty because the nation did not want to change governments in the middle of the war
- d. Lincoln's reelection was considered unlikely because Lincoln had failed to support abolition prior to the war

CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated the DSST test development process and content of this exam. It has made the following recommendations:

Area or Course Equivalent	The Civil War and Reconstruction
Level	Upper-level baccalaureate
Amount of Credit	Three (3) semester hours
Minimum Score	400
Source	American Council on Education – College Credit Recommendation Service

Answers to sample questions: 1-B; 2-C; 3-B; 4-C; 5-D; 6-A; 7-C; 8-D; 9-D; 10-D; 11-C; 12-A.

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