

**United States History and Government**  
**Content-Specific Rubric**  
**Thematic Essay—August 2006**

**Theme: Migration of Peoples**

Throughout our nation's history, important migrations or movements of people within the United States have occurred. These migrations have had a significant impact on both the people who moved and on American society.

**Task:** Identify *two* migrations or movements of people within the United States and for *each*

- Discuss the historical circumstances that led to the migration of these people
- Discuss the impact of the migration on the people who moved *and/or* on American society

You may use any important migration or movement of people from your study of United States history. Some suggestions you might wish to consider include the forced migration of Native American Indians (1800–1880), the westward movement (1840–1890), the migration of African Americans from the South to cities in the North (1900–1929), the Puerto Rican migration to the North after World War II (1945–1960), the westward migration from the Dust Bowl (1930s), suburbanization (1945–present), and the migration to the Sun Belt (1950–present).

**Scoring Notes:**

1. This thematic essay has a minimum of *four* components (the historical circumstances of *two* migrations or movements of people within the United States **and** the impact of these *two* migrations or movements on the people and/or on American society)
2. The response may discuss the impact of the migration on the people who moved *or* discuss the impact of the migration on American society, *or* the response may discuss the impact on *both* the people and American society.
3. The topic of the essay must be a migration or movement of people *within* the United States. Responses that focus on immigration *to* the United States should not receive credit. However, a response may discuss the movement of an immigrant group *within* the United States *after* the groups' arrival in the United States, e.g., the movement of German immigrants to farms in the Midwest *or* the movement of Polish immigrants to cities along the Great Lakes, such as Buffalo and Chicago.

**Score of 5:**

- Thoroughly develops *all* aspects of the task evenly and in depth by identifying *two* migrations or movements of people within the United States, discussing the historical circumstances that led to those migrations and the impact on the people who moved and/or American society
- Is more analytical than descriptive (analyzes, evaluates, and/or creates information), e.g., *westward movement*: the government encouraged migration through legislation such as the Homestead Act and through land grants to the railroads; the greater numbers of whites in the West greatly increased the tensions with Native American Indians; the influx of whites into western territories heightened the issue of slavery in the territories; *migration of African Americans to the North*: the continued discrimination and lack of economic opportunity in the South motivated many African Americans to move North where there were factory jobs, especially during World War I; the presence of more African Americans in northern cities contributed to increasing racial tensions
- Richly supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details, e.g., *westward movement*: Indian wars; cattle kingdoms; lure of gold and silver mines; building of transcontinental railroads; *migration of African Americans to the North*: Harlem Renaissance; Langston Hughes; growth of Northern industry; growth of labor unions
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme

**Score of 4:**

- Develops *all* aspects of the task but may do so somewhat unevenly by discussing both aspects of the task for one migration more thoroughly than for the the other migration *or* by developing one aspect of the task for two migrations more thoroughly than the other aspect of the task
- Is both descriptive and analytical (applies, analyzes, evaluates, and/or creates information), e.g., *forced migration of Native American Indians*: Americans began to think that minorities were subordinate; life on the reservation was much harsher for the Native American Indians because of corruption in the Bureau of Indian Affairs; *westward migration from the Dust Bowl*: due to bad conditions and great wind, the top soil on the land got blown away; migration caused tension between the people of California and the Okies because jobs were scarce for both groups)
- Supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details, e.g., *forced migration of Native American Indians*: Andrew Jackson; *Worcester v. Georgia*; Trail of Tears; reservations; *westward migration from the Dust Bowl*: migrant farm workers; *The Grapes of Wrath*; Great Depression
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme

**Score of 3:**

- Develops *all* aspects of the task with little depth *or* develops *at least three* aspects of the task in some depth
- Is more descriptive than analytical (applies, may analyze, and/or evaluate information)
- Includes some relevant facts, examples, and details; may include some minor inaccuracies
- Demonstrates a satisfactory plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that may be a restatement of the theme

**Note:** If *at least two* aspects of the task have been thoroughly developed evenly and in depth and if the response meets most of the other Level 5 criteria, the overall response may be a Level 3 paper.

**Score of 2:**

- Minimally develops all aspects of the task *or* develops *at least two* aspects of the task in some depth
- Is primarily descriptive; may include faulty, weak, or isolated application or analysis
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, and details; may include some inaccuracies
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; may lack focus; may contain digressions; may not clearly identify which aspect of the task is being addressed; may lack an introduction and/or a conclusion

**Score of 1:**

- Minimally develops some aspects of the task such as stating some information for both aspects of the task for one migration of people or stating some information for one aspect of the task for two migrations of people within the United States
- Is descriptive; may lack understanding, application, or analysis
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, or details; may include inaccuracies
- May demonstrate a weakness in organization; may lack focus; may contain digressions; may not clearly identify which aspect of the task is being addressed; may lack an introduction and/or a conclusion

**Score of 0:**

Fails to develop the task or may only refer to the theme in a general way; *OR* includes no relevant facts, examples, or details; *OR* includes only the theme, task, or suggestions as copied from the test booklet; *OR* is illegible; *OR* is a blank paper

As a dynamic and ever changing society, America has gone through many phases in its development when groups of people migrated within the United States. Historical circumstances, including technology advancements, popular beliefs of the time period, the influence of government, and the continuing development of American culture have all contributed toward sparking these migrations. Two migrations, the Westward Expansion of the 1800s and the ~~Great Migration of the early 1900s~~ <sup>category of migration of Japanese descent in the 1900s</sup> ~~Great Migration of the early 1900s~~, were two such major movements. These migrations had impacts on both the groups who moved and American society.

Westward expansion, a migration from Eastern cities to the Great Plains, was an important historical event which shaped United States American culture. Following the Civil War, the United States experienced a great economic boom in its cities on the Eastern seaboard. Accompanying this ~~was~~ were great advancements in the field of technology, including the production of the steel plow, windmill, and barbed wire, electricity, and machines. During this economic boom, the cities were becoming becoming crowded, as the East coast was a popular destination for many European immigrants.

Families making appropriate wages saw fit to leave the cities to begin a new life in the West. They were encouraged by government land give-aways, including the ~~20~~ over 200 acres provided in the Homestead Act of 1862, and the fact that the Great Plains were now made viable by the advancements in technology. The government and society itself pushed them, as many believed in Manifest Destiny, that the United States would eventually expand westward. These factors all summed up led to ~~the~~ the great migration.

Western Expansion impacted American society on several levels. Big Business began to expand rapidly as such monopolies as the railroad companies used advertisements to lure people to the frontier. As people began to settle, they fueled not only the economic well-being of the railroads and the crop and animal processing factories, but the expansion of the Eastern cities. Big Business thrived in the East as raw materials flooded the market. People in the cities began to have a better quality of life, as food became more readily available as well as other products. However, the settlers soon began to feel upset at their treatment by the railroads. This caused the birth of the Granger and Populist movements, among

the first "union" for the common laborer. ~~These~~ The leaders of these movements reformed the government itself by being the first the lobby politicians, a select them for change in the laws, and cause the creation of many new laws ~~supposed~~ designed to crack down on big business. These people were the first progressives. Thus, the ~~creation~~ Expansion had multiple effects on society.

Another movement which affected the face of American society was the Great Migration, <sup>Northward</sup> the movement of African Americans. Many conditions of the Post-reconstruction South contributed towards African Americans' desire to go Northward. Economic hardship faced by Blacks were ~~great~~ many, including the system of sharecropping (in which farmers would give a share of their crop to the landowner). Many Blacks were barred from attaining any well-paying jobs. ~~Racist~~ Society attitudes toward Blacks were harsh as well. The "Jim Crow" laws were put into place enforcing segregation, or separation of black and white facilities. Daily, African Americans dealt with discrimination and were even denied basic human dignity by whites. In addition, the Klu Klux Klan (KKK) ~~was~~ a white supremacist organization, carried out lynchings and missions of terror. All of these factors made Blacks feel they ~~the~~ need to migrate, as they could not succeed in life.

The Great Migration had numerous effects on American society. With the movement to Northern cities, the population in urban areas surged. Blacks began to seek jobs in the factories, but they were lower-paying than the jobs of whites. Coupled with ~~the~~ <sup>steadfast</sup> beliefs in discrimination, race tensions began to soar to new heights. In certain regions, race riots erupted and violence occurred. Despite ~~discrimination~~ <sup>discrimination</sup>, Blacks continued to have increased opportunities. More African Americans were receiving at least a secondary education and some even attended college. Those who were educated became the artists and writers of the Harlem Renaissance. This time period saw the first wide-spread interest in the music, poetry, writings and paintings of the Black community. Famous writers such as Langston Hughes and musicians as Duke Ellington were popular. The growth of Black culture began to spur some respect for the Black community, which later encouraged the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Indeed, the Great Migration had great impact.

America's society was shaped and developed by the developments, both ~~direct~~ <sup>direct</sup> and indirect, which were born of the migration of the American people. Certain historical factors brought about such migrations as Westward Expansion and the Great Migration. These migrations in turn ~~continue~~ <sup>continue</sup> to influence the face of ever changing American culture.