

AP U.S. HISTORY

UNIT 9

Period 9: 1980–Present



4–6%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~8
CLASS PERIODS

The icon consists of a white circle containing a blue square with the letters 'AP' in white. Below the square is a small blue horizontal bar with two white vertical lines extending downwards from its center.

Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 9

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Short-answer: 2 questions

- Secondary source
- No stimulus

Free response: 1 question

- Document-based


Period 9: 1980–Present

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Thematic Focus	Topic	Reasoning Process	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
				~8 CLASS PERIODS
	9.1 Contextualizing Period 9	Continuity and Change	4.B Explain how a specific historical development or process is situated within a broader historical context.	
PCE	9.2 Reagan and Conservatism	Continuity and Change	3.C Compare the arguments or main ideas of two sources.	
WOR	9.3 The End of the Cold War	Causation	1.B Explain a historical concept, development, or process.	
WXT	9.4 A Changing Economy	Causation	1.B Explain a historical concept, development, or process.	
MIG	9.5 Migration and Immigration in the 1990s and 2000s	Causation	2.C Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.	
WOR	9.6 Challenges of the 21st Century	Causation	2.C Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.	

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UNIT AT A GLANCE *(cont'd)*

Thematic Focus	Topic	Reasoning Process	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
	9.7 Causation in Period 9	Causation	<p>6.D Corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument using diverse and alternative evidence in order to develop a complex argument. This argument might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables. ▪ Explain relevant and insightful connections within and across periods. ▪ Explain the relative historical significance of a source's credibility and limitations. ▪ Explain how or why a historical claim or argument is or is not effective. 	~8 CLASS PERIODS
	<p> Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 9. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.</p>			

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 217 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	9.2	<p>Debate</p> <p>This topic in the culminating unit offers students an opportunity to debate and discuss thematic focus PCE, which focuses on the role of the federal government over time. Encourage students to prepare by looking at different time periods and turning points in U.S. history when the role of the federal government changed. Teachers can debrief with students about the extent to which this role changed or continued under Ronald Reagan’s presidency.</p>
2	9.3	<p>Match Claims and Evidence</p> <p>Now that students are near the end of the course and have had many opportunities to practice argumentation, this activity can be used as early preparation for the AP Exam. Ask small groups of students to write claims and supporting evidence statements on individual note cards based on the causes and effects of the end of the Cold War and the Cold War’s legacy. Have groups trade claims and evidence and revise or modify the claims (if necessary), match the claims and evidence, and write statements explaining why the evidence supports the claim.</p>
3	9.5	<p>Making Connections</p> <p>Write concepts related to the course theme of Migration and Settlement (MIG) and related concepts on index cards, place them in a box, and have students pick a card at random. Incorporate concepts from Topic 9.5 as well as from previous topics that addressed immigration and migration. Give students a few minutes to gather and recall information about the theme or concept and then pair students and ask them to find the connection between the theme or concepts. Finally, ask the pairs to write a brief explanation of how the concepts are related.</p>

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to pace the unit; which specific historical figures, groups, or events you will use to illustrate the concepts noted in the historical development statements; where you will incorporate writing assignments; and which primary and secondary sources you will use.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

 Contextualization

4.B

Explain how a specific historical development or process is situated within a broader historical context.

TOPIC 9.1

Contextualizing Period 9

Spend a class period helping students understand some contexts for this unit. Considering this unit's key concepts (previewed below), select one or two for which your students will most need context.

To understand context, your students could examine:

- Change from and/or continuity with preceding historical developments.
- Similarities and/or differences with contemporaneous historical developments in different regions or geographical areas.

Whenever possible, draw upon students' relevant prior knowledge, and anchor this contextualization lesson in historical source material of varying formats such as visuals, data, or written texts, or conduct an activity that engages students in exploring context.

Required Course Content

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Unit 9: Learning Objective A

Explain the context in which the United States faced international and domestic challenges after 1980.

PREVIEW: UNIT 9 KEY CONCEPTS

KC-9.1

A newly ascendant conservative movement achieved several political and policy goals during the 1980s and continued to strongly influence public discourse in the following decades.

KC-9.1.I

Conservative beliefs regarding the need for traditional social values and a reduced role for government advanced in U.S. politics after 1980.

KC-9.2

Moving into the 21st century, the nation experienced significant technological, economic, and demographic changes.

KC-9.2.I

New developments in science and technology enhanced the economy and transformed society, while manufacturing decreased.

KC-9.2.II

The U.S. population continued to undergo demographic shifts that had significant cultural and political consequences.

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Unit 9: Learning Objective A

Explain the context in which the United States faced international and domestic challenges after 1980.

PREVIEW: UNIT 9 KEY CONCEPTS

KC-9.3

The end of the Cold War and new challenges to U.S. leadership forced the nation to redefine its foreign policy and role in the world.


KC-9.3.I

The Reagan administration promoted an interventionist foreign policy that continued in later administrations, even after the end of the Cold War.

KC-9.3.II

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, U.S. foreign policy efforts focused on fighting terrorism around the world.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Claims and Evidence in Sources***3.C**

Compare the arguments or main ideas of two sources.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Professional Development
> [Teaching and Assessing Module—Period 9: 1980–Present, Focus on Research “A Conservative Era?”](#)

TOPIC 9.2

Reagan and Conservatism

Required Course Content

THEMATIC FOCUS**Politics and Power** **PCE**

Debates fostered by social and political groups about the role of government in American social, political, and economic life shape government policy, institutions, political parties, and the rights of citizens.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE**Unit 9: Learning Objective B**

Explain the causes and effects of continuing policy debates about the role of the federal government over time.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS**KC-9.1.I.A**

Ronald Reagan's victory in the presidential election of 1980 represented an important milestone, allowing conservatives to enact significant tax cuts and continue the deregulation of many industries.

KC-9.1.I.B

Conservatives argued that liberal programs were counterproductive in fighting poverty and stimulating economic growth. Some of their efforts to reduce the size and scope of government met with inertia and liberal opposition, as many programs remained popular with voters.

KC-9.1.I.C

Policy debates continued over free-trade agreements, the scope of the government social safety net, and calls to reform the U.S. financial system.

KC-9.1.I

Conservative beliefs regarding the need for traditional social values and a reduced role for government advanced in U.S. politics after 1980.

KC-9.2.II.C

Intense political and cultural debates continued over issues such as immigration policy, diversity, gender roles, and family structures.

TOPIC 9.3

The End of the Cold War

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Developments and Processes*

1.B

Explain a historical concept, development, or process.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Professional Development > [Teaching and Assessing Module—Period 9: 1980–Present, Focus on Research “The Cold War and Beyond”](#)

Required Course Content

THEMATIC FOCUS

America in the World **WOR**

Diplomatic, economic, cultural, and military interactions between empires, nations, and peoples shape the development of America and America’s increasingly important role in the world.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Unit 9: Learning Objective C

Explain the causes and effects of the end of the Cold War and its legacy.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

KC-9.3.1.A

Reagan asserted U.S. opposition to communism through speeches, diplomatic efforts, limited military interventions, and a buildup of nuclear and conventional weapons.

KC-9.3.1.B

Increased U.S. military spending, Reagan’s diplomatic initiatives, and political changes and economic problems in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were all important in ending the Cold War.

KC-9.3.1.C

The end of the Cold War led to new diplomatic relationships but also new U.S. military and peacekeeping interventions, as well as continued debates over the appropriate use of American power in the world.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Developments
and Processes***1.B**

Explain a historical concept, development, or process.

TOPIC 9.4

A Changing Economy

Required Course Content

THEMATIC FOCUS

Work, Exchange, and Technology **WXT**

The interplay between markets, private enterprise, labor, technology, and government policy shape the American economy. In turn, economic activity shapes society and government policy and drives technological innovation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Unit 9: Learning Objective D

Explain the causes and effects of economic and technological change over time.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

KC-9.2.I.A

Economic productivity increased as improvements in digital communications enabled increased American participation in worldwide economic opportunities.

KC-9.2.I.B

Technological innovations in computing, digital mobile technology, and the internet transformed daily life, increased access to information, and led to new social behaviors and networks.

KC-9.2.I.C

Employment increased in service sectors and decreased in manufacturing, and union membership declined.

KC-9.2.I.D

Real wages stagnated for the working and middle class amid growing economic inequality.

TOPIC 9.5

Migration and Immigration in the 1990s and 2000s

Required Course Content

THEMATIC FOCUS

Migration and Settlement **MIG**

Push and pull factors shape immigration to and migration within America, and the demographic change as a result of these moves shapes the migrants, society, and the environment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Unit 9: Learning Objective E

Explain the causes and effects of domestic and international migration over time.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS


KC-9.2.II.A

After 1980, the political, economic, and cultural influence of the American South and West continued to increase as population shifted to those areas.

KC-9.2.II.B

International migration from Latin America and Asia increased dramatically. The new immigrants affected U.S. culture in many ways and supplied the economy with an important labor force.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Sourcing and Situation*

2.C

Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Professional Development > [Teaching and Assessing Module—Period 9: 1980–Present, Focus on Research “Social Changes Since 1980”](#)

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Sourcing and Situation*

2.C

Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.

TOPIC 9.6

Challenges of the 21st Century

Required Course Content

THEMATIC FOCUS

America in the World **WOR**

Diplomatic, economic, cultural, and military interactions between empires, nations, and peoples shape the development of America and America's increasingly important role in the world.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Unit 9: Learning Objective F

Explain the causes and effects of the domestic and international challenges the United States has faced in the 21st century.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

KC-9.3.II.A

In the wake of attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, the United States launched military efforts against terrorism and lengthy, controversial conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

KC-9.3.II.B

The war on terrorism sought to improve security within the United States but also raised questions about the protection of civil liberties and human rights.

KC-9.3.II.C

Conflicts in the Middle East and concerns about climate change led to debates over U.S. dependence on fossil fuels and the impact of economic consumption on the environment.

KC-9.3.II.D

Despite economic and foreign policy challenges, the United States continued as the world's leading superpower in the 21st century.

TOPIC 9.7

Causation in Period 9

The final topic in this unit focuses on the skill of argumentation and so provides an opportunity for your students to draw upon the key concepts and historical developments they have studied in this unit. Using evidence relevant to this unit’s key concepts, students should practice the suggested skill for this topic.

Required Course Content

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Unit 9: Learning Objective G

Explain the relative significance of the effects of change in the period after 1980 on American national identity.

REVIEW: UNIT 9 KEY CONCEPTS

KC-9.1

A newly ascendant conservative movement achieved several political and policy goals during the 1980s and continued to strongly influence public discourse in the following decades.

KC-9.1.I

Conservative beliefs regarding the need for traditional social values and a reduced role for government advanced in U.S. politics after 1980.

KC-9.2

Moving into the 21st century, the nation experienced significant technological, economic, and demographic changes.

KC-9.2.I

New developments in science and technology enhanced the economy and transformed society, while manufacturing decreased.

KC-9.2.II

The U.S. population continued to undergo demographic shifts that had significant cultural and political consequences.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 Argumentation

6.D

Corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument using diverse and alternative evidence in order to develop a complex argument. This argument might:

- Explain nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables.
- Explain relevant and insightful connections within and across periods.
- Explain the relative historical significance of a source’s credibility and limitations.
- Explain how or why a historical claim or argument is or is not effective.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- External Resource > [Gilder Lehrman Institute’s AP U.S. History Study Guide](#)

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE**Unit 9: Learning Objective G**

Explain the relative significance of the effects of change in the period after 1980 on American national identity.

REVIEW: UNIT 9 KEY CONCEPTS**KC-9.3**

The end of the Cold War and new challenges to U.S. leadership forced the nation to redefine its foreign policy and role in the world.

KC-9.3.I

The Reagan administration promoted an interventionist foreign policy that continued in later administrations, even after the end of the Cold War.

KC-9.3.II

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, U.S. foreign policy efforts focused on fighting terrorism around the world.