

You are to write a four- to six-page essay (1000–1500 words) on one of the following topics. Your essay must include a thesis statement.¹ Use the resources referenced on my Web site² to support your statements. You may (and should) quote from the source materials themselves, but not from the introductory material. All quotes must be footnoted, using the Turabian footnote style,³ and must include a bibliography.⁴

Your paper must be typed or printed from a computer or word processor, double-spaced, with one-inch margins on all four sides. If you use a computer or word processor, please use 12-point type in some standard “text” font, such as Times or Century Schoolbook. Put a cover page on your paper containing the title of your paper, your name, the name of this class (U.S. History 117B), and the date. Do not waste your money on a plastic cover—just staple the paper together in the upper left-hand corner.

You must submit the following progress milestones on the dates indicated below. Failure to submit one of the milestones on the indicated date, and in acceptable form, will reduce your final grade by 1/3 of a grade.

Thursday, September 25	Selection of topic and <u>at least three</u> primary sources
Thursday, October 2	Thesis statement and outline
Thursday, October 9	Rough draft, complete except for proofreading and references
Thursday, October 16	Final paper due, with footnotes and bibliography

1. Compare the situation faced by farmers in the late 19th century with the conditions faced by wage workers (factory workers, miners, railroad workers, etc.). What problems, if any, did the two groups have in common? How did they differ? Compare the tactics the two groups used to achieve their goals. See if you can find records of a specific farmer and a specific wage worker on which to base your comparison.
2. On balance, did the entrepreneurs of the late 19th century, such as Carnegie, Rockefeller, and J.P. Morgan, improve or worsen the lives of average Americans? Compare their contributions, both positive and negative, with those of union leaders such as Powderly, Gompers, and Haywood. Which group did most to improve the life of the average working man or woman? Of the average American consumer? Compare the accomplishments of a specific entrepreneur with those of a specific labor leader to give your paper concreteness.

¹ See Robert Frakes, *Writing for College History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), §2.4 for a discussion of the thesis statement and good and bad examples.

² <http://www2.ohlone.edu/people/shanna>

³ These rules are available on my Web site. Use the “Notes and Bibliography” version.

⁴ Frakes, Appendix 3.

3. A common theme of this course is the struggle to assimilate different groups into society. Compare the problems faced by African-Americans with those faced by Native Americans in becoming part of “mainstream” American society during the latter half of the 19th century. What specific problems or opposition did they face? How did they deal with these problems? How successful were they? Personalize this: Use the experience of a particular African-American leader, such as Douglass, Washington, or DuBois (or others) with the experience of a particular Native American leader in your essay.
4. The United States is often referred to as a “nation of immigrants,” and the heyday of immigration was from 1890 to 1910. What brought immigrants to America? What problems did they face? What problems did they cause? How did American social institutions respond to these problems? What reform movements arose primarily to deal with problems of immigrants and immigration?

If you wish, you can put this question in personal terms. If your ancestors came to America and landed at Ellis Island between 1894 and 1924, you can probably find all the details of their arrival at <http://www.stevemorse.org/>, which is a search engine for the Ellis Island database. This was created and is maintained by my friend, Dr. Stephen P. Morse of San Francisco. Answer the questions above as they relate to *your* ancestors, and compare their experiences with those you read about in other sources.

5. How do you account for the rapid growth of cities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries? What factors caused the cities to grow? What factors influenced the way cities grew? What problems did city growth cause? Show how a particular large city, such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, etc., responded to these challenges.
6. “Expansion overseas is a logical extension of Manifest Destiny—America must have new frontiers to conquer if it is to remain great.” Attack or defend this statement. Consider the motives for Westward expansion in the years following the Civil War, and the reasons put forth for entering the Spanish-American War, in your paper. Consider also the effects of American expansion on resident native populations. As with other questions, support your arguments with citations from appropriate primary sources, and use as much specific evidence (such as quotes from individuals on both sides of the issue) in your paper.