The Ultimate AP® US History Unit 6 Cheat Sheet

6.2–6.3 Westward Expansion

Economic Development

Transcontinental Railroad (1869): Union Pacific (Irish workers) + Central Pacific (Chinese workers) meet at Promontory Summit, UT → coast to coast in ~1 week.
Federal support: land grants to railroads; **Homestead Act** (1862) 160 acres; Morrill Act colleges.
Mining (gold, silver: Comstock Lode) → boomtowns; **cattle drives** (Chisholm Trail) end w/ barbed wire & harsh winters.
Farming: new tech (steel plow, reapers) + debt + falling prices → farmers squeezed by railroads & banks.
Frontier closed (1890 Census); Turner's **Frontier Thesis** (1893): frontier shaped U.S. democracy & individualism.

Native Americans

Event/Policy	Year	Result
Sand Creek	1864	CO militia massacre
Little Bighorn	1876	Custer defeated
Nez Perce flight	1877	Chief Joseph surrenders
Dawes Act	1887	Split tribal land
Wounded Knee	1890	Lakota massacre

Buffalo slaughter: ~30M → ~1,000 by 1889 (hide hunters, RRs) → Plains Native economies destroyed.
Reservations: shrinking land; broken treaties (Fort Laramie 1868 → Black Hills gold rush 1874 → Great Sioux War).
Assimilation: **Dawes Act** gives 160-acre plots to families, sells "surplus" → tribes lose ~⅔ of land. Boarding schools (Carlisle): "Kill the Indian, save the man."
Ghost Dance (Wovoka): spiritual revival promising return of buffalo → feared by Army → Wounded Knee (1890).
Diverse West: Mexican Americans, Chinese, Black "Exodusters" (Kansas, 1879), Mormons (Utah).

⚠ The Dawes Act was framed as reform but cost Native nations most of their land (ended by the 1934 IRA).

✓ Causation: railroads + federal policy → settlement → Native displacement + farm crisis (→ Populism).

6.4 The "New South"

Economic Vision

Henry Grady (Atlanta editor): "New South" of factories, railroads, textiles, tobacco, steel (Birmingham).
Reality: still mostly agricultural; Northern capital controls industry; low wages; little change for most.
Sharecropping & tenant farming: crop-lien system → cycle of debt for Black & poor white farmers.

Jim Crow & Disfranchisement

Jim Crow laws: legal segregation of schools, transport, public spaces after Reconstruction ends (1877).

Tool	How it blocked Black voters
Poll tax	Fee to vote
Literacy test	Unfair reading test
Grandfather clause	Exempts whites
White primary	Excludes from Dem. primary
Violence	Lynching, intimidation

Plessy v. Ferguson (1896): "**separate but equal**" upheld → legal segregation until 1954 (7–1; Harlan dissents).
Civil Rights Cases (1883): 14th Amend. doesn't cover private businesses → Civil Rights Act of 1875 struck down.

Black Responses

Ida B. Wells: anti-lynching journalism (*Southern Horrors*, 1892); exiled from Memphis; NAACP co-founder.
Booker T. Washington: Tuskegee; "**Atlanta Compromise**" (1895) → vocational training, accept segregation for now.
W.E.B. Du Bois (critic, Period 7): demand full civil & political rights now (Niagara Movement 1905, NAACP 1909).

⚠ Industry grew, yet Jim Crow + sharecropping kept most Black Southerners poor & unable to vote.

✓ Compare Washington vs Du Bois strategies for a complexity point (accommodation vs protest).

6.5–6.6 Technology & Industrial Capitalism

Innovation

Bessemer process (Carnegie Steel): cheap steel → railroads, skyscrapers, bridges (Brooklyn Bridge 1883).
Edison: light bulb, power plants, research lab. **Bell**: telephone (1876). **Westinghouse**: AC power grid (w/ Tesla).
Railroads: standard time zones (1883), national markets, biggest businesses of the era (Pennsylvania RR).

Big Business

Tycoon	Industry	Strategy
Carnegie	Steel	Vertical integ.
Rockefeller	Oil	Horizontal integ.
J.P. Morgan	Banking	Consolidation
Vanderbilt	Railroads	Mergers

Vertical integration: control every stage (mines → mills → shipping). **Horizontal**: buy out competitors in same stage.
Trusts & holding companies → monopolies (Standard Oil, a trust from 1882, had ~90% of refining).
Corporations raise capital via stock; national brands, advertising, mail-order (Sears, Montgomery Ward).

Ideology

Laissez-faire: gov't stays out of the economy, no regulation (but tariffs & land grants helped business).
Social Darwinism (Spencer, Sumner): "survival of the fittest" justifies inequality and opposes aid to the poor.
Gospel of Wealth (Carnegie): rich have duty to give back → ~1,700 U.S. libraries, universities, Carnegie Hall.
"Robber barons" vs "captains of industry": same men, two views (exploiters vs job-creating builders).

⚠ Laissez-faire was never pure: tariffs, land grants and court rulings favored business, + troops broke strikes.

✓ Use the robber baron vs captain debate for an argument or complexity point (show both sides w/ evidence).

6.7 Labor in the Gilded Age

Working Conditions

Long hours (10–12/day, 6 days), low pay, dangerous factories & mines, no safety nets, injury pay or pensions.
Child labor widespread (~1.75M kids aged 10–15 working, 1900); women in textiles & domestic work, paid less.
Wage slavery fear: workers lose independence; company towns (Pullman) control housing & stores.

Unions

Union	Leader	Approach
Knights of Labor	Powderly	All workers; reform
AFL (1886)	Gompers	Skilled; wages, hours
Amer. Railway U.	Debs	Industrial union

Knights: open to women, Black workers, unskilled; peak ~700K members in 1886, then collapse after Haymarket.
AFL: "bread and butter" unionism (pay, hours); skilled craft unions, mostly white men; survives long term.

Major Strikes

Great Railroad Strike (1877): rail wage cuts → nationwide walkout, ~100 killed; federal troops end it.
Haymarket Riot (1886, Chicago): bomb at 8-hour rally → anarchists blamed → unions linked to radicalism.
Homestead Strike (1892): Carnegie Steel (Frick); Pinkertons vs strikers, ~10 killed → union crushed.
Pullman Strike (1894): Debs's ARU; federal injunction + troops; **In re Debs** upholds injunction.
Pattern: gov't & courts side w/ owners; Sherman Antitrust Act turned on unions as "restraint of trade".
Socialists & anarchists: small but feared; Debs later leads the Socialist Party (~6% of 1912 presidential vote).

⚠ Most strikes in this era failed. Unions grew slowly; real gains came in the Progressive & New Deal eras.

✓ Use strikes (Homestead, Pullman) as evidence of government siding with business in an LEQ or DBQ.

6.8–6.9 Immigration & Responses

"New" Immigrants

	Old (pre-1880)	New (1880+)
From	N. & W. Europe	S. & E. Europe
Religion	Protestant (mostly)	Catholic, Jewish, Orth.
Settled	Farms, cities	Cities

Push: poverty, persecution (Jewish pogroms), overpopulation. **Pull**: jobs, freedom, family networks.
Ellis Island (1892, NY) for ~12M Europeans; **Angel Island** (1910, CA) for Asians, w/ long detentions of Chinese.
Ethnic neighborhoods: Little Italy, Chinatown, the Lower East Side; tenements; mutual aid societies keep culture.
Internal migration: rural → urban; Black Southerners begin moving north (before the Great Migration, 1910+).

Responses

Nativism: fears over jobs, religion, radicalism → anti-Catholic **American Protective Association** (1887).
Chinese Exclusion Act (1882): first law banning immigration by nationality (Chinese laborers); renewed until 1943.
Political machines (Tammany Hall, Boss Tweed): jobs & aid for immigrant votes; corruption (Tweed stole millions).
Settlement houses (Jane Addams, Hull House 1889): classes, childcare, Americanization for immigrants.
Assimilation vs pluralism: "melting pot" ideal vs keeping ethnic identity, language, churches & newspapers.
Labor tension: employers used immigrants as strikebreakers → conflict w/ native-born workers, nativist unions.
Literacy test (Immig. Restriction League) to limit new immigrants passed Congress (1897) but vetoed by Cleveland.
Urban growth: immigrants fuel cities' rise (NYC, Chicago).

⚠ Machines were corrupt but provided real services (jobs, food, coal) immigrants couldn't get elsewhere.

✓ CCOT: compare nativism here w/ Know-Nothings (P4) and 1920s quota laws (P7: Acts of 1921 & 1924).

6.10–6.11 Middle Class & Reform

Middle Class & Culture

New middle class: managers, clerks, salespeople, professionals → salaried white-collar office work.
Consumer culture: department stores (Macy's, Marshall Field's), mail-order catalogs, brands, advertising.
Leisure: pro baseball (National League 1876), vaudeville, amusement parks (Coney Island), parks (Central Park).
Women: more education (Vassar, Smith & other women's colleges), clerical jobs; women's clubs push reform.

Reform Ideas

Social Gospel (Walter Rauschenbusch): Christians must fix social problems, not just save individual souls.
Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890): photos of tenement poverty → spurs NY tenement reform.
Henry George, *Progress and Poverty*: single tax on land.
Bellamy, *Looking Backward*: utopian socialism.
Temperance: Woman's Christian Temperance Union (Frances Willard) → 18th Amendment (1919).
Suffrage: NAWSA (1890; Stanton, Anthony); Wyoming first w/ women's vote (1869 territory, 1890 state).

Early Federal Regulation

Law	Year	Purpose
Pendleton Act	1883	Merit civil service
Interstate Commerce	1887	Regulate railroads
Sherman Antitrust	1890	Ban monopolies

Weak enforcement: courts limit ICC & Sherman Act (**U.S. v. E.C. Knight**, 1895: manufacturing isn't interstate commerce).
Urban problems: tenements, disease, crime, pollution → push for clean water, sewers, police, fire services.

⚠ Gilded Age regulations existed on paper but had little bite until the Progressive Era (Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson).

✓ Link Riis, Social Gospel & settlement houses → Progressive Era muckrakers & reforms (Period 7).

6.12–6.13 Government & Politics

Gilded Age Politics

Close elections, high turnout (~80%); parties evenly matched; weak presidents, Congress dominant.
Big issues: tariffs, currency (gold vs silver), civil service vs patronage (spoils system), immigration, temperance.
Garfield assassinated (1881) by disappointed office seeker → **Pendleton Act** (merit exams for federal jobs, 1883).
Scandals: Crédit Mobilier, Whiskey Ring (Grant era).

Farmers Organize

Grange (1867): co-ops; "Granger laws" regulate RRs. **Munn v. Illinois** (1877) upholds; **Wabash** (1886) limits → ICC.
Farmers' Alliances: Southern & Northern; Colored Farmers' Alliance (claimed ~1M); co-ops, subtreasury plan.
Populist (People's) Party: **Omaha Platform** (1892): free silver, graduated income tax, gov't ownership of railroads, direct election of senators → Weaver wins 22 EVs.

Money Debate & 1896

	Gold standard	Free silver
Supporters	Bankers, business	Farmers, debtors
Effect	Tight money	Inflation
1896	McKinley (R)	Bryan (D/Pop.)

Panic of 1893: depression; Coxey's Army marches on DC.
Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech; McKinley wins (urban workers, money from Mark Hanna) → Populists fade.
Tariffs: high (McKinley Tariff 1890) protect industry; farmers pay more for goods & face foreign retaliation.
Silver laws: Bland-Allison (1878) & Sherman Silver Purchase (1890) allow limited silver coinage; repealed 1893.

⚠ Populists lost, but many of their ideas became law in the Progressive Era (16th & 17th Amends.).

✓ Argue: Populism as a failure (1896) vs success (income tax, direct election of senators, RR rules).

6.14 Continuity & Change, Strategy

Period 6 Big Themes

Industrialization: U.S. becomes world's top industrial economy by 1900 (surpasses Britain in output).
Inequality: huge fortunes vs urban poverty & farm debt.
Who belongs: immigration, Jim Crow, Native assimilation redefine citizenship & who counts as American.
Role of gov't: laissez-faire vs calls for regulation.

Key Dates

Year	Event
1869	Transcontinental RR
1877	Great RR Strike
1882	Chinese Exclusion Act
1886	Haymarket; AFL forms
1887	Dawes Act; ICC
1890	Sherman Act; Wounded Knee
1892	Omaha Platform; Homestead
1896	Plessy; Bryan vs McKinley

Essay Moves

CCOT: Period 5 → 6: sharecropping, federal retreat from civil rights, continued westward expansion, industry.
Contextualize w/ Civil War laws (Homestead Act, Pacific Railway Act, tariffs) that set up the Gilded Age boom.
Comparison: Knights vs AFL; Washington vs Du Bois; old vs new immigrants; Gilded Age vs Progressive reform.
Complexity: industrial growth brought prosperity for some & crisis for others (farmers, workers, Native nations).
Links: Gilded Age reformers (Riis, Jane Addams) → Progressives; Populist ideas → 16th & 17th Amends.

⚠ Period 6 ends 1898; Spanish-American War, Hawaii's annexation & imperialism are Period 7 (1890–1945).

✓ DBQ: pair a tycoon's view (Carnegie) w/ a worker's or reformer's source (Gompers, Riis) for POV.