

A HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR

TEST INFORMATION

This test was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that which is learned by students taking the course. The school may choose to award college credit to the student based on the achievement of a passing score. The passing score for each examination is determined by the school based on recommendations from the American Council on Education[®] (ACE). This minimum credit-awarding score is equal to the mean score of students in the norming sample who received a grade of C in the course. Some schools set their own standards for awarding credit and may require a higher score than the ACE recommendation. Students should obtain this information from the institution where they expect to receive credit.

CONTENT

The following topics, which are commonly taught in courses on this subject, are covered by this examination.

	Approximate Percent		Approximate Percent
I. Vietnam Before 1940	7-9%	II. World War II, the Cold War, and the First Indochina War (1940-1955)	9-12%
A. Religious and cultural traditions		A. Japanese occupation and the creation of the Viet Minh	
B. Chinese political and cultural domination		B. The effects of World War II on Vietnam	
C. A tradition of resistance to invaders		C. Vietnamese declaration of independence	
D. The expansion of Vietnam		D. Restoration of French rule	
E. French conquest and colonialism		E. Origins of containment	
F. Development of nationalism		F. U.S. geopolitical goals in Europe and Asia	
G. Development of communism		G. The Korean war and NSC 68	
H. Ho Chi Minh		H. Revolutionary war vs. French military strategies	
		I. Eisenhower's "New Look"	
		J. Dienbienphu	
		K. The Geneva Conference	
		L. U.S. national security policy including SEATO	
		III. Diem and Nation-State Building (1955-1963)	7-9%
		A. U.S. support for Diem	
		B. Diem's inadequacies	
		C. U.S. military and economic assistance	
		D. The National Liberation Front and growing insurgency	
		E. JFK's commitment to counter-insurgency	
		F. Internal opposition including the Buddhist crisis	
		G. The coup against Diem	

	<u>Approximate Percent</u>		<u>Approximate Percent</u>
IV. LBJ Americanizes the War (1964-1965)	7-9%	E. Secret negotiations (1969-1971)	
A. Political instability in Vietnam		F. The 1972 Spring offensive	
B. Introduction of the North Vietnamese Army		G. The October agreement	
C. The Tonkin Gulf Resolution		H. The Christmas bombing	
D. The 1964 Campaign		I. Triangular diplomacy: the U.S., the Soviet Union, and China	
E. Flaming Dart to Rolling Thunder		J. Paris Peace Accords (1973)	
F. Introduction of U.S. combat troops (March through April 1965)			
G. U.S. openended commitment (July 1965)		IX. The War at Home	7-9%
V. America Takes Charge (1965-1967)	7-9%	A. Campus unrest	
A. Westmoreland's strategy of attrition		B. Peace activists and moratoria	
B. Measures of success		C. The Miami and Chicago conventions	
C. The continuing air war		D. The counterculture, antiwar movement, and silent majority	
D. The impact on Vietnamese society		E. The Pentagon Papers	
E. Stabilization of the Saigon regime		X. Cambodia and Laos	7-9%
F. America's draft army		A. The Geneva Accords (1954)	
G. War without fronts		B. JFK and Laotian neutrality (1962)	
VI. Homefront USA	7-9%	C. The secret war in Laos	
A. The Great Society: guns vs. butter		D. Sihanouk and Cambodia's neutrality	
B. The credibility gap		E. Lon Nol and the U.S. incursion	
C. Congressional dissent		F. The secret bombing of Laos and Cambodia	
D. Television and the press		G. The Khmer Rouge and the fall of Phnom Penh (1975)	
E. The civil rights movement		H. The communist victory in Laos	
F. The genesis of the new left		XI. "A Decent Interval"	5-7%
G. The draft and draft resistance		A. The cease-fire violations	
VII. Tet (1968)	7-9%	B. Watergate and Nixon's resignation	
A. Vietnamese planning for the Tet offensive		C. Congressional passage of the war powers act	
B. Communist objectives		D. The Great Spring Offensive	
C. The Tet offensive		XII. U.S. Legacies and Lessons	7-9%
D. Reactions in U.S. and Saigon		A. The Vietnam Syndrome	
E. LBJ decides not to run		B. The Cold War consensus	
F. Bombing halt and beginning of peace talks		C. Congress vs. the President	
G. The 1968 election		D. The experience of returning vets	
VIII. Vietnamizing the War (1969-1973)	7-9%	E. Economic consequences	
A. Nixon, Kissinger, and Vietnamization		F. U.S., Soviet, Chinese relations	
B. Justifications for Vietnamization (troop withdrawal)		G. The impact on the U.S. military	
C. Pacification and the Phoenix program		H. The impact on the media	
D. My Lai and the deterioration of the U.S. military		I. POWs and MIAs	
		J. Indochina refugees (boat people)	
		K. Collective national amnesia	

Questions on the test require candidates to demonstrate the following abilities. Some questions may require more than one of the abilities.

- Knowledge of basic facts and terms (about 55-65% of the examination)
- Understanding of concepts and principles (about 15-25% of the examination)
- Ability to apply knowledge to specific cases or issues (about 10-20% of the examination)

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. For which of the following reasons did Ho Chi Minh, a confirmed Communist, seek United States support in 1945?
 - (A) He did not trust the Soviet Union
 - (B) He was a pragmatist, principally preoccupied with Vietnam's salvation, and he would accept help where he could get it.
 - (C) He knew that he would be turned down by the Americans, and then he could appeal more convincingly to the Soviets.
 - (D) He had no hope of United States aid, but others in his administration urged him to appeal to the Americans.
2. The Chinese Communist victory in 1949 significantly altered the situation in Indochina because it resulted in
 - (A) the introduction of large numbers of Chinese Communist troops into Indochina
 - (B) provisions of war material and equipment to the Viet Minh
 - (C) a shift of French military forces to the northern Indochina border
 - (D) a formal military alliance between the Chinese and Vietnamese Communists
3. Which of the following was one of the important reasons why the United States military effort in South Vietnam was unsuccessful?
 - (A) The United States attempted to fight a conventional war against a guerrilla force that avoided large battles.
 - (B) The United States measures only attracted the support of the peasant masses and failed to gain the support of the local elites.
 - (C) Counterinsurgency could not have been adapted to the terrain in Vietnam.
 - (D) Counterinsurgency was unpopular politically in the United States.
4. One of the major counterinsurgency programs undertaken by the Diem government and the Kennedy administration was the
 - (A) Phoenix program
 - (B) Food-for-Peace program
 - (C) Open Arms program
 - (D) strategic hamlet program
5. In early 1964, which of the following best describes the Vietnamese Communists' position in South Vietnam?
 - (A) They were weakened by the strategic hamlet program.
 - (B) They were stronger in the cities than the South Vietnamese.
 - (C) They controlled approximately 40% of the countryside.
 - (D) Their military successes outweighed their political successes.
6. When the United States took charge of the war, a major impact on Vietnamese society was a dramatic
 - (A) reduction in religious intolerance
 - (B) expansion of political democracy
 - (C) influx of money and technology
 - (D) improvement in education

7. What was the immediate reaction of President Johnson's military and civilian advisors to the outcome of the Tet offensive?
- I. They were divided over what course of action to follow.
 - II. They presented a united front in support of the President's policies.
 - III. They were unanimous in recommending the start of negotiations with the Communists.
 - IV. They urged the President to commit more troops to Vietnam.
- (A) I and IV only
 (B) II and III only
 (C) III and IV only
 (D) II, III and IV only
8. Who were the Khmer Rouge?
- (A) Supporters of Prince Sihanouk
 (B) Cambodian Communists
 (C) The Cambodian non-Communist nationalists
 (D) The pro-American faction in Cambodia
9. "Credibility gap" was the phrase used to identify the
- (A) victory claims of the Vietnamese Communists
 (B) propaganda of the Vietnamese Communists
 (C) distance between events and official United States statements
 (D) disagreements between the United States and its allies over United States policy in Vietnam
10. The shooting of students at Kent State University came during demonstrations against the
- (A) war in general
 (B) renewed bombing in the North
 (C) mining of Haiphong Harbor
 (D) invasion of Cambodia
11. From the American perspective, one advantage of the 1973 Vietnam Agreement was that it
- (A) allowed the return of United States prisoners of war
 (B) allowed some North Vietnamese troops to stay in South Vietnam
 (C) settled the political issues that caused the war
 (D) ended the war

12. The War Powers Act was designed to ensure that
- (A) the President would have to obtain congressional support for long-term use of United States troops abroad
 (B) Congress would decide when and where to send United States troops
 (C) the President's power to wage war would be virtually eliminated
 (D) a national referendum would have to be held before United States troops could be sent abroad

STUDYING FOR THE EXAMINATION

The following is a list of reference publications that were being used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. Appropriate textbooks for study are not limited to those listed below. If you wish to obtain study resources to prepare for the examination, you may reference either the current edition of the following 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** included on the front page of this Fact Sheet **before** selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study. Textbooks may be found at the campus bookstore of a local college or university offering a course on the subject.

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

The Public Broadcasting System video course, *Vietnam: A Television History*.

Berman, Larry. *Planning a Tragedy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., current edition.

de Benetetti, Charles. *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era*. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, current edition.

Duiker, William J. *Sacred War: Nationalism and Revolution in a Divided Vietnam*. New York, McGraw-Hill, Inc., current edition.

Gardner, Lloyd, C. *Approaching Vietnam: From World War II through Dienbienphu 1941-1954*. New York, W.W. Norton & Co., current edition.

Gelb, Leslie, and Richard Betts. *The Irony of Vietnam The System Worked*. Washington, DC: Brookings, current edition.

Hearden, Patrick, ed. *Vietnam: Four American Perspectives*. West Lafayette: Purdue, current edition.

Herring, George C. *America's Longest War: The U.S. and Vietnam 1950-1975*. New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., current edition.

Hess, Gary R. *Vietnam And The United States: Origins and Legacy of War*. Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, current edition.

Issacs, Arnold. *Without Honor: Defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia*. New York: Vintage Books, current edition.

Kahin, George McTurnan. *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam*. New York: Knopf, current edition.

Karnow, Stanley. *VIETNAM: A History*. New York: Penguin USA, current edition.

Kimball, Jeffrey P. *To Reason Why: The Debate About Causes of U.S. Involvement in the Vietnam War*. New York: McGraw-Hill, current edition.

Krepinevich, Andrew. *The Army and Vietnam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, current edition.

Maclear, Micharl. *The Ten Thousand Days War: Vietnam, 1945-1975*. New York: St. Martin's, current edition.

McMahon, Robert J. *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War*. Lexington, MA, D.C. Heath and Co. current edition.

Moss, George Donelson. *Vietnam: An American Ordeal*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, current edition.

Olson, James S., and Randy Roberts. *Where the Domino Fell: America and Vietnam, 1945 to 1995*. New York, St. Martin's Press, current edition.

Palmer, General Bruce, Jr. *The 25-Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam*. Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, current edition.

Pratt, John Clark. *Vietnam Voices: Perspectives on the War Years, 1941-1982*. New York: Viking-Penguin Books, current edition.

Race, Jeffrey. *War Comes to Long An*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, current edition.

Rotter, Andrew J. *The Path to Vietnam: Origins of the American Commitment to Southeast Asia*. Ithaca: Cornell, current edition.

Schulzinger, Robert D. *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975*. New York: Oxford, current edition.

Sheehan, Neil. *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam*. New York: Random House, current edition.

Williams, William Appleman, Thomas McCormick, Lloyd Gardner, and Walter LaFeber. *America in Vietnam: A Documentary History*. New York: W. W. Norton, current edition.

Current textbook used by a local college or university for a course on the subject.

CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Center For Adult Learning and Educational Credentials of the American Council on Education (ACE) has reviewed and evaluated the DSST examination development process. The American Council on Education has made the following recommendations:

Area or Course	
Equivalent:	A History of the Vietnam War
Level:	Lower-level baccalaureate
Amount of Credit:	Three (3) semester hours
Source:	ACE Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials

INFORMATION

Colleges and universities that would like additional information about the national norming, or assistance in local norming or score validation studies should write to: DSST Program, Mail Stop 11-P, The Chauncey Group International, 664 Rosedale Road, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

It is advisable that schools develop a consistent policy about awarding credit based on scores from this test and that the policy be reviewed periodically. The Chauncey Group will be happy to help schools in this effort.

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