

# US History II Final Essay - Summer 2009 (online)

For Professor Kristopher Nelson

## Question

Drawing on the principles, reasoning, and evidence in Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech to the Democratic National Convention in 1936 (in our reader) and/or Ronald Reagan's inaugural address in 1981 (also in our reader), 1. explain which twentieth-century leader's approach, based on specific quotes from their speeches and information in our readings, would have been *most* effective in reuniting the country in the aftermath of the Civil War and, 2. using historical evidence and data from our textbook and reader, explain *why* that leader's approach would have worked better than what was actually done during the late nineteenth century, as it is presented in our class materials.

You do not need to address all the ideas found in either speech; pick quotes (not generalities) that you think are most important for this essay.

In terms of writing and analysis, the focus should be on clearly responding to both parts of the prompt, your reasoning, and your evidence. I will

primarily be looking for clarity and the effective use of evidence drawn from our class materials. Except as it matters for clarity and my understanding, I won't be grading on style or grammar.

Submit your paper electronically via Canvas on or before the last scheduled day of class.

## **Requirements of the Paper**

1. Your essay must be between 750 and 1000 words (about 3–4 pages of double-spaced, 12-point type).
2. You must have a title (can be very simple and straightforward).
3. You must have a thesis and a plan (tell me what you are going to show me) in your introduction
4. Each body paragraph must deal with one idea/claim that connects to your thesis—you will need to decide if an idea is big enough that it needs to be broken down into smaller sub-ideas or subclaims.
5. In each body paragraph, you should back up your idea/claim with evidence, especially from our written materials, along with logical reasoning.
6. For each body paragraph, you need to say how/why that paragraph connects to your thesis. In other words, why are you telling me this?
7. At least one body paragraph (but up to 2) must deal with a counter-argument/ counter-thesis (that is, a position that is contradictory to the thesis in your intro, not just to one small part of it) and rebut/explain/deal

with it in some way (not necessarily “destroy” it, but deal with it).

8. Your final paragraph must consist of a summary and a conclusion.

# Rules

1. You can talk to anyone and read anything you wish in order to prepare to write.

2. You must do your own writing using your own ideas and thoughts.

3. You may only use evidence listed drawn from our readings (and your own logical reasoning using that evidence).

4. You must cite (at least author and page number) all the textual evidence you use, whether you quote it or paraphrase it (nothing fancy needed, just the basics, and no need for footnotes or bibliographies).