



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

United States History

Short Constructed Response Scoring Guide

Sample

General Information

Beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, social studies assessments will include a short-constructed response at every assessed grade level. Students will be asked to provide a short response to a question. Responses will be scored using a prompt-specific two-point rubric.

This State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) constructed response scoring guide provides student exemplars at all score points for a short-constructed response question from the STAAR United States History stand-alone field test. The question is presented as it appeared on the field test, and responses were scored based on the two-point rubric that was developed with the input of Texas educators. A response earns a specific score point based on the completeness of the response provided as measured against the rubric.

The responses in this guide are actual student responses submitted online during the testing window. To protect the privacy of individual students, all names and other references of a personal nature have been altered or removed. Otherwise, the responses appear as the students wrote them and have not been modified.

United States History Prompt

Prompt: What was President Theodore Roosevelt’s Big Stick policy **AND** what was an example of this policy?

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 2

Response includes specific details in reference to a description and one example:

Description:

- The Big Stick policy used military readiness and diplomacy to protect the Western Hemisphere from foreign intervention.

Examples:

- Roosevelt used this diplomacy to restrain European countries from threatening Latin American countries.
- Roosevelt issued this policy to enforce the Monroe Doctrine and become the international police power of the Americas.
- The United States increasingly used force to justify intervention in several countries, including securing the Panama Canal Zone, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic.

Score: 1

Response provides only half of the correct details.

Score: 0

Does not provide a response, or the response is incorrect or irrelevant.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0s

President Theodore Roosevelt's Big Stick policy was to take down harmful monopolies to help the common American. An example of this policy was to put in place anti-trust laws.

Score Point 0

The student response: "take down harmful monopolies" does not correctly explain President Theodore Roosevelt's Big Stick policy. The student provides an example, "put in place anti-trust laws," which is also incorrect.

His policy was created in order to help the citizens of the United States.

Score Point 0

The student response: "to help the citizens of the United States" is irrelevant and does not receive credit. The response does not offer an example of President Theodore Roosevelt's Big Stick policy.

The Big Stick policy was used to maintain or gain territory by using force. For example, Roosevelt used force to protect the Mediterranean Sea.

Score Point 0

The explanation of the policy being presented by the student: "used to maintain or gain territory using force" is incorrect. The principle behind the Big Stick policy was to avoid using force, when possible, by peacefully displaying military or diplomatic strength. The student provides an example: "Roosevelt used force to protect the Mediterranean Sea" but it is also incorrect.

Score Point 1s

His policy was that if we showed our militaristic force and showed our power countries would be less likely to attack us or disobey things we said.

Score Point 1

The student adequately explains President Roosevelt's Big Stick policy: "if we showed our militaristic force . . . countries would be less likely to attack us or disobey things we said." The response does not provide an example of the Big Stick policy.

Roosevelt's Big Stick policy is based on his saying that you sneak quietly but always carry a big stick meaning that you should always be ready to attack. An example of this is the foreign policies where we are helping the other smaller countries but are gaining something in return.

Score Point 1

The student response: “soak quietly but always carry a big stick meaning that you should always be ready to attack” correctly explains President Theodore Roosevelt’s Big Stick policy. The student provides an example: “we are helping the other smaller countries but are gaining something in return” but it is too vague and does not receive credit. It does not identify a country, situation, or confrontation.

President Theodore Roosevelt’s Big Stick policy was a threat. It threatened those who thought it may be a good idea to attack America. So, he made America seem big and frightening, and the Big Stick policy means: If you attack us, we’ll attack you. A good example of this is very recent such as the constant conflict with Korea. However, we won’t attack them, unless they strike first.

Score Point 1

The student presents a correct explanation of Roosevelt’s Big Stick policy as “It threatened those who thought it may be a good idea to attack America. . . made America seem big and frightening.” The student also provides a relevant example of the policy, “the constant conflict with Korea” that is irrelevant to the question posed in the prompt.

Score Point 2s

Roosevelt’s Big Stick policy was a foreign policy that was intervention only when it was needed, but when it comes it’ll come hard. An example of this policy would be the Spanihs-American War when America fought to liberate Cuba from Spanish control.

Score Point 2

President Roosevelt’s Big Stick policy is correctly explained as “intervention only when it was needed, but when it comes it’ll be hard.” The student also provides a correct example of the policy: “Spanihs-American War when America fought to liberate Cuba from Spanish control.”

President Roosevelt’s speak softly and carry a big stick policy means try to negotiate peacefully but have a strong army behind you. An example of this policy was when Roosevelt try to negotiate with Columbia on building the Panama canal, so when Columbia said now he used his military to back him up.

Score Point 2

The student response correctly explains President Theodore Roosevelt’s Big Stick policy as “try to negotiate peacefully but have a strong army behind you.” The student also provides a relevant example of the policy: “Roosevelt try to negotiate with Columbia on building the Panama Canal, so when Columbia said now he used his military to back him up.”

United States History
Short Constructed Response Scoring Guide

Roosevelt had a policy of negotiating quietly and carrying a 'big stick'. This meant that he kept a powerful and influential source that was able to intimidate other nations into complying with his will. An example of this policy would be the Great White Fleet which was a fleet of steel battleships that helped the US gain control of many parts of Latin America.

Score Point 2

The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of Roosevelt's Big Stick policy as "he kept a powerful and influential source that was able to intimidate other nations into complying with his will." The response includes a relevant example of the policy: ". . . helped the US gain control of many parts of Latin America."