

Debate Topics
Drawn from the California History-Social Science Content Standards
for California Public Schools
Grades 6-8

Mesopotamia was a greater influence on world history than Egypt.
This House would follow Hammurabi's code.
Athenian democracy is better than representative democracy.
The advancement of civilization through empire did more good than harm.
The caste system was good for Indian society.
When in conflict, Confucianism is better than Taoism.
The invention of gunpowder did more good than harm.
This House regrets the rise of Julius Caesar.
Barbarian invasions caused the fall of Rome.
This House would side with Carthage.
In medieval Europe, the failure to separate church and state did more harm than good.
Feudalism is an effective form of government.
The Crusades were morally justified.
The United States should have a parliamentary government.
Cortez was guilty of crimes against humanity.
Power should be given based on birthright.
Luther's rebellion was justified.
Joan of Arc was a heretic.
The Renaissance was not a Golden Age.
The printing press has done more harm than good.
Marco Polo misrepresented his achievements.
European exploration has done more good than harm.
Economic trade positively influenced democracy.
This House would remain loyal to King George the III.
For securing individual rights, the central government is better than local governments.
This House would support U.S. isolationism.
An enlightened monarch is preferable to a chaotic legislature.
This House would not sign the Articles of Confederation.
Political compromise undermined the ideals of the American Revolution.
Westward state expansion in America was justified.
The principal of judicial review established in Marbury v. Madison has gone too far.
Majority rule does not protect the rights of minorities.
This House would join Shay's Rebellion.
The United States should have more than two political parties.
The free press does more good than harm.
The Constitution should contain a right to privacy.
This House regrets the Monroe Doctrine.
The United States government should not support privateering.
The spoils system is necessary for government.
This House would not have war with Mexico.
In this case, the United States should break a treaty.
The United States should have no restriction on immigration.

This House would not vote for Andrew Jackson.

This House would choose gold over silver.

Texas should remain an independent nation.

The North should have let the South secede.

The cotton gin has done more harm than good.

Conscription is immoral.

The Draft Riots were justified.

The South should supervise its own reconstruction.

A war crimes court should be established for civil war veterans.

Laissez-faire economics do more harm than good.

Urbanization produces misery.

Debate Topics
Drawn from the California History-Social Science Content Standards
for California Public Schools
Grades 10-12

The American Revolution was not justified.
This House regrets the French Revolution.
The Industrial Revolution has done more harm than good.
Socialism is preferable to capitalism.
Slavery was not the primary cause of the Civil War.
In this case, colonialism has done more good than harm.
Nationalism is to blame for the First World War.
The United States should join the League of Nations.
This House believes that Lenin misread Marx.
The United States should intervene to stop the extermination of Armenians.
The Cold War was a “hot war.”
This House would substantially change the Bill of Rights.
In this case, state authority should trump federal authority.
This House regrets the growth of cities.
The federal government should substantially increase the power of labor unions.
Break up the monopoly.
Church and state should be separate.
The United States should build the Panama Canal.
This House would pass the Volstead act.
Prohibition is good social policy.
The assembly line method of production has done more good than harm.
The United States should establish a Federal Reserve.
The United States has not learned the lessons of the Great Depression.
The United States should have a New Deal.
The United States should significantly restructure Social Security.
This House would negotiate with Hitler.
The United States should use atomic weapons against Japan.
The Supreme Court’s decision in *Fred Korematsu v. United States of America* was wrong.
The United States should endorse the Marshall Plan.
The United Nations is obsolete.
The United States should ratify the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
The “Atoms for Peace” program was a failure.
The Alliance for Progress undermined development in the Americas.
NATO prevented a war between the United States and the USSR.
Nuclear weapons have done more good than harm.
The Cold War military buildup was justified.
On balance, the Truman Doctrine did more good than harm.
This House would not fear Communism.
The Korean War was justified.
The United States should not intervene in Vietnam.
This House would threaten Cuba.
The Cuban Missile Crisis promoted international security.

U.S. policies of containment did more harm than good.
Reagan won the Cold War.
This House would build “Star Wars.”
The Supreme Court should reverse the *Bakke* decision.
“Separate but equal” education is justified.
This House would vote “No” on Proposition 209.
To accomplish social change, violence is preferable to nonviolence.
Malcolm X is more responsible for civil rights reform than Martin Luther King, Jr..
The goals of the Voting Rights Act have not been fulfilled.
This House would substantially change public accommodation law.
Separatism is preferable to assimilation.
The two-party system does more good than harm.
Nixon should have come clean.
The Supreme Court should rule for Nixon.
In this case, property rights are more important than environmental protection.
Machiavelli was right.
In this case, promoting the public good is more important than protecting individual rights.
Supreme Court justices should be elected.
The terms of Supreme Court justices should be substantially restricted.
It should be easier to become a United States citizen.
Abolish the electoral college.
The Constitution should be easier to amend.
The President has too much power.
This House would substantially reduce the freedom of the press.
The right to privacy is more important than the public’s right to know.
In this case, the government should intervene in the free market.
This House rejects property rights.
Outsourcing jobs is good for America.
The United States should substantially increase the minimum wage.
Free trade is better than fair trade.