

NAME _____ DATE _____

Performance Task – Tying Evidence to Thesis: CCOT & Labor Strategies

Goal of task

Target Concept: I can identify patterns of continuity and change over time in beliefs and debates about the federal government's role in U.S. economic life, particularly debates over laissez-faire policies. I can explain the significance and the reasons for those patterns as they relate to the beliefs and strategies of labor unions during this period. I can use this skill to link evidence to a thesis statement to develop and support a claim.

For this task you will be evaluated on your ability to:

- Identify and explain the significance of patterns of continuity and change over time in beliefs and debates about the federal government's role in U.S. economic life from 1865 to 1898, particularly debates over laissez-faire policies.
- Explain the significance of these patterns to the beliefs and strategies of labor unions during this period.
- Link evidence to a thesis statement and use it to develop and support a claim.
- Explain the reasons for the patterns and change and continuity

Task summary

The three activities in this task will help you check your knowledge of the main arguments for and against economic laissez-faire policies and the beliefs and strategies of labor unions in redefining the role of the federal government in the economy.

Activity 1: Establishing Context: Main Arguments For and Against Economic Laissez-Faire and the Beliefs and Strategies of Labor Unions (homework and whole class)

Homework Part 1

Based on your readings and class notes so far, complete the following T-Chart on the main arguments for and against economic laissez-faire and the role the federal government should play in the national economy. Your task is to identify at least three specific examples under each column.

Table 1: Debate Over Economic Laissez-Faire and the Role of the Federal Government

Arguments For Economic Laissez-Faire The federal government should not interfere in the economy because...	Arguments Against Economic Laissez-Faire The federal government should interfere in the economy because...

Homework Part 2:

As with Part 1 of the homework assignment, based on your readings and class notes so far, complete the following table on the most important national labor unions of the time. Your task is to identify at least three of their main beliefs and strategies and information on membership and their involvement in major labor strikes.

Table 2:
Labor Unions

	Knights of Labor Leader: Terence V. Powderly	American Federation of Labor Leader: Samuel Gompers
Beliefs		
Strategies		
Membership		
Strikes		

Activity 2: Patterns of Continuity and Change on Debates About Economic Laissez-Faire and the Role of Labor Unions (Groups of 7)

Document Analysis

In this activity, you are to analyze one of the documents below, to identify patterns of continuity and change over time. For each pattern you must explain the reason for the change or continuity and its significance in the larger context of American History. In your analysis, you should make connections between the content from Activity 1 (the T-Chart and table) and the document(s) you are responsible for. This analyze must address the prompt below.

Start by reading your document silently to yourself and making notes in the accompanying table. Next, take turns sharing summaries of your documents and discuss the patterns of change and continuity that emerge during this process. Use this discuss to complete your table.

Prompt: Analysis the changes and continuities in beliefs about the federal government's role in the nation's economic life including the impact of these beliefs on political debates and policies.

Document 1: Amasa Walker, an American economist, The Science of Wealth: A Manual of Political Economy (1866)

“Economically, it will ever remain true, that the government is best which governs least. The wants of a people are the sole proper, the sole possible, motives for production. Nothing can be substituted for them. Anything that seems to take their place is merely a debasement of them. The interests of producers, whether laborers or capitalists, secure, better than any other possible means, the gratification of such wants.”

	Change	Continuity
Description:		
Reason		
Significance		
Connections		

Document 2: Daniel Knowlton, a New York City merchant, testimony before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor (September 27, 1883)

“Let us inquire for a moment what are the proper functions of government, and how far, if at all, it may interfere with the natural laws governing commerce, manufactures, and agriculture. Legitimate functions of government I conceive to be to maintain domestic tranquility, defend the people from invasion, and protect them when traveling...to which may be added a few other functions of kindred nature, leaving the individual enterprise untrammelled. For that purpose we maintain an Army, Navy, and civil courts. When these general functions are exceeded the result is generally injurious to the Government. It is better always to leave individual enterprise to do most that is to be done in the country.”

	Change	Continuity
Description:		
Reason		
Significance		
Connections		

Document 3: William Graham Sumner, social scientist, The Challenge of Facts, 1882

“Competition therefore is the law of nature. Nature is entirely neutral; she submits to him who most energetically and resolutely assails her. She grants her rewards to the fittest; therefore, without regard to other considerations of any kind....Such is the system of nature. If we do not like it and if we try to amend it, there is one way in which we can do it. We take from the better and give to the worse....Let it be understood that we cannot go outside this alternative: liberty, inequality, survival of the fittest; not-liberty, equality, survival of the unfittest. The former carries society forward and favors all its best members; the latter carries society downward and favors all its worst members.”

	Change	Continuity
Description:		
Reason		
Significance		
Connections		

Document 4: Andrew Carnegie, “Wealth,” 1889

“There remains, then, only one mode of using great fortunes; but in this we have the true antidote for the temporary unequal distribution of wealth, the reconciliation of the rich and the poor—a reign of harmony....Under its sway we shall have an ideal state, in which the surplus wealth of the few will become, in the best sense, the property of the many, because administered for the common good, and this wealth, passing through the hands of the few, can be made a much more potent force for the elevation of our race than if it had been distributed in small sums to the people themselves. Even the poorest can be made to see this, and to agree that great sums gathered by some of their fellow-citizens and spent for public purposes, from which the masses reap the principal benefit, are more valuable to them than if scattered among them through the course of many years in trifling amounts.”

	Change	Continuity
Description:		
Reason		
Significance		
Connections		

Document 5: Preamble and Declaration of Principles of the Knights of Labor of America (1878)

“TO THE PUBLIC:

The alarming development and aggressiveness of great capitalists and corporations, unless checked, will inevitably lead to the pauperization and hopeless degradation of the toiling masses.

It is imperative, if we desire to enjoy the full blessings of life, that a check be placed upon unjust accumulation, and the power for evil of aggregated wealth....

In order to secure these results, we demand at the hands of the State:

VI The adoption of measures providing for the health and safety of those engaged in mining and manufacturing, building industries, and for indemnification to those engaged therein for injuries received through lack of necessary safeguards.

VII The recognition, by incorporation, of trades' unions, orders and such other associations as may be organized by the working masses to improve their condition and protect their rights.

XI The prohibition by law of the employment of children under 15 years of age in workshops, mines and factories.

XIII That a graduated income tax be levied.

And we demand at the hands of Congress:

XIV The establishment of a National monetary system, in which a circulating medium in necessary quantity shall issue direct to the people, without the intervention of banks; that all the National issue shall be full legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private; and that the Government shall not guarantee or recognize any private banks, or create any banking corporations.

XVI That the importation of foreign labor under contract be prohibited.

XVIII That the Government shall obtain possession, by purchase, under the right of eminent domain, of all telegraphs, telephones and railroads, and that hereafter no charter or license be issued to any corporation for construction or operation of any means of transporting intelligence, passengers or freight.

	Change	Continuity
Description:		
Reason		
Significance		
Connections		

Document 6: Samuel Gompers, Vol. 1: Testimony, U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Education and Labor, Aug. 16, 1883

“I do say that the Government of the United States ought to be in advance of its people. It is the duty of a legislator, as I understand it, to frame and adopt measures for the welfare of the people. I believe that the duty of the legislature is to propose laws for the benefit of the people. The Constitution of the country, I believe, does not give our National Government the right to adopt a law which would be applicable to private employments; yet for its own employs it out to be in advance....The selfish, mercenary, or other such motives which govern individuals in their struggles to accumulate wealth out not to exist in our Government....”

	Change	Continuity
Description:		
Reason		
Significance		
Connections		

Document 7: Samuel Gompers, *What Does Labor Want?* An address before the International Labor Congress in Chicago, August 28, 1893

“Labor demands and insists upon the exercise of the right to organize for self and mutual protection. The toilers want the abrogation of all laws discriminating against them in the exercise of those functions which make our organizations in the economic struggle a factor and not a farce.

That the lives and limbs of the wage-workers shall be regarded as sacred as those of all others of our fellow human beings, that an injury or destruction of either by reason of negligence or maliciousness of another, shall not leave him without redress simply because he is a wage worker. We demand equality before the law, in fact as well as in theory.

The right to appear by counsel guaranteed by the constitution of our country is one upon which labor is determined.

To prescribe narrower limits to the wage workers and urge as a special plea that right is accorded before the courts, is insufficient. The counsel of the toilers have earned their diplomas by sacrifices made and scars received in the battle for labor’s rights rather than the mental acquirements of legends and musty precedents of semi-barbaric ages. The diplomas of labor’s counsel are not written on parchment, they are engraved in heart and mind. The court our counsels file their briefs in and make their pleas for justice, right and equality in are the offices of the employers. The denial to labor of the right to be heard by counsel—their committees—is a violation of the spirit of a fundamental principle of our republic.

And by no means the least demand of the Trade Unions is for adequate wages.”

	Change	Continuity
Description:		
Reason		
Significance		
Connections		

Activity 3: Apply your understanding – Linkage Statements

For this final activity, work with one partner to write two claim statements that accurately support the thesis given below. Follow each with sentences that provide specific evidence (data) and explanations of the significance and the reasons for the patterns of change and continuity identified (warrant). You may refer to the examples in your T-Chart or information from any of the documents for relevant evidence. Remember to explain how your evidence supports the thesis.

Thesis Statement

In the debate over economic laissez-faire, the labor movement played an essential role in convincing others about the need for the federal government, under certain circumstances, to intervene and regulate the financial system to protect members of the working class and secure the public interest. In the process, it fundamentally changed the way Americans viewed the appropriate role of the federal government in the national economy, while still maintaining some of the long-standing precepts of a “hands off” approach based on a free enterprise and natural law.

Claim	Sentence 1: Claim sentence that directly supports the given thesis	
Data	Sentence 2: Prove THIS claim only with evidence from a document or the T-Chart.	
Warrant	Sentence 3: Explain why this is significant in the larger context of American History Sentence 4: Explain this changed or stayed the same	

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