



## SOCIAL 30-1 DIPLOMA TEST TAKING STRATEGIES



## I.DISCREET ITEMS

A discreet test item is defined as any question that stands alone. It does not come with a source (i.e. cartoon, map, graph, and reading). These test questions often are seen as KNOWLEDGE questions even though many involve a large degree of higher level skill development such as analysis and/or synthesis.

Only 20% of the diploma /Part B (12 out of 60 multiple choice) will be discreet items.

### Strategy One: Knowing the Vocabulary

The first thing is to ensure that there is an adequate understanding of the task-type words. Students should have an understanding of these terms:

*Advocate*  
*Assumption*  
*Dilemma*  
*Exemplifies*  
*In the context of*  
*Issue*  
*Motivated*  
*Proponent*  
*Strategy*  
*Application*  
*Appropriate*  
*Bias*  
*Consequences*  
*Doctrine*  
*Evaluate*  
*Generalization*  
*Implied*  
*Inferences*  
*Irony*  
*Justify*  
*Perspectives*  
*Significance*  
*Trend*  
*Ultimately*

### Strategy Two: Recognize the Qualifiers

The second thing is for students to recognize the qualifiers-those words which show direction and help eliminate distracters.

- a) Qualifiers of value or degree...These use such terms as:  
most, best, worst, least, strongest, weakest...etc.

*For example...*

The ideologies of fascism and communism differ MOST in their approach to

- a. practicing censorship
- b. holding periodic elections
- c. establishing one-party rule
- d. establishing class structure in society

- b) Qualifiers of Time ...These phrases will usually indicate a specific time period  
Inter-war years, pre-world war one, depression. Cold war era

*For example...*

From the perspective of Japanese political leaders in the early 1940s the invasion of Southeast Asia was necessary to

- a) counter Soviet advances into the same territory
- b) secure a stable supply of desperately needed natural resources
- c) avoid antagonizing the political leadership of the United States
- d) assist the British in attempting to consolidate their colonial holdings

- c) Qualifiers of Place...These phrases will usually indicate a specific place. It is important for students to see if the place is in historical or contemporary setting.

Abyssinia (historical), Weimar Republic (historical), Soviet Union (historical), Russia (contemporary),

*For example...*

The continued use of transfer payments in Canada primarily reflects an attempt by the federal government to enhance

- a) self-reliance
- b) national security
- c) economic equality
- d) individual freedom

- d) Qualifiers of Perspective...There is the use of such terms as supporter of the titles of books, or the names of individuals.

*For example...*

To many western observers, President Gorbachev's policies of perestroika and glasnost represented a shift in emphasis from

- a) domestic production to greater exports of finished products
- b) individual self-reliance to greater group co-operation
- c) national unity concerns greater global commitments
- d) social conformity to greater individual initiative

- e) Qualifiers of Theme or Doctrine and Theory...Students need to be aware of such terms as classical, model, in theory, pure

*For example...*

An important feature of a model public enterprise economy is the

- a) allocation of resources through competitive markets
- b) provision of consumer control of production
- c) provision for increasing business profit
- d) allocation of resources by command

f) Qualifiers of People... Students need to make special note of any historical or contemporary persons that will help to set the historical context of the question.

*For example...*

The Paris Peace Conference settlement that was most acceptable to American president Woodrow Wilson was the

- a) German 'war-guilt' clause
- b) German reparation payments
- c) Self-determination for Central Europe
- d) British and French mandates over former colonies

Sometimes students may come across questions that are obviously over-qualified, such as the following question:

An ironic twist of Soviet history is that individuals who sought to restore the communist state and ideology at the time of the August 1991 attempted coup were viewed by their fellow citizens as being politically

- a) liberal
- b) radical
- c) moderate
- d) reactionary

# SOURCE BASED ITEMS

## I. NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

In this type of source based question, there are usually four newspaper headlines that are related to an issue or to a specific event.

If they are related to an issue two types of questions emerge

1. What is the issue they are addressing?
2. Which newspaper would support a specific position or action?

If they deal with a specific event or number of events the questions that are asked include

1. What is the event?
2. What chronological order did these events occur?
3. Which source would provide the best information on a certain research subject?
4. Which story disagrees with the perspective of the other stories?

For example ...

Use the following newspaper headlines to answer the following questions:



*Question:* These news stories would be MOST useful in researching which of the following developments?

- a. The increased role of the media
- b. The privatization of public enterprises
- c. The redistribution of wealth in society
- d. The inflationary trends of a boom economy

## II. GRAPHS

Graphs can be of any type from line graphs to bar graphs but all graphs provide information using the two axis or poles.

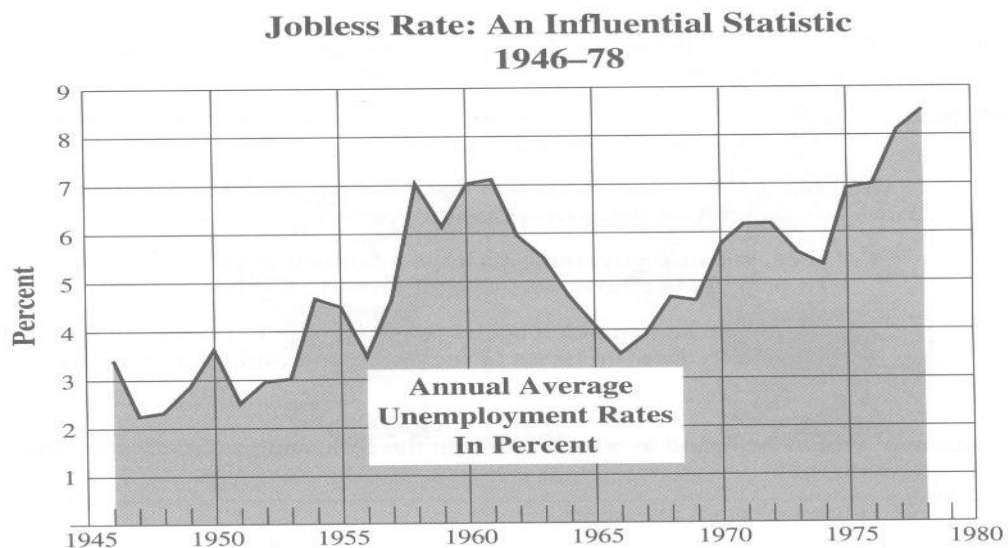
The keys to understanding graphs are to

1. look for a title to the graph ....this goes a long way to determining the focus of the information you get from the graph
2. determine what the axis are measuring one is almost always time while the other is almost always amounts
3. the lines/bars on the graph then are labeled to show comparative performances over time

Usually the questions ask...who got the most, least or to measure specific performances or trends (conclusion/generalization).

For example ...

Use the following graph to answer the following questions:



1. Given the information in the graph, a Keynesian economist would MOST likely have recommended an increase in government spending on public works between the years
  - a. 1946 and 1950
  - b. 1954 and 1957
  - c. 1960 and 1966
  - d. 1975 and 1978
2. According to the in the graph, consumer spending would MOST likely have shown an increase between the years
  - a. 1956 and 1958
  - b. 1961 and 1965
  - c. 1966 and 1972
  - d. 1975 and 1978

## II.CHARTS

Charts are the same as graphs except that they usually use words instead of numbers to convey their information. Charts, however, can present a variety of information from timeline of events to statistics to speaker viewpoints.

Therefore, the keys to charts are similar to those for graphs

1. look for a title, if there is one. If not, a specific question might ask you to come up with an appropriate title (*requires you to figure out the commonalities*)
- 2.

For example ...

Use the following chart to answer the following questions:

Some Important Events of the Cold War	
The Truman Doctrine.....	1947
The Korean War.....	1950
The Cuban Missile Crisis.....	1962
The SALT I Agreements.....	1972

*Question:* The events of this time-line BEST REFLECT the shift in American foreign policy from

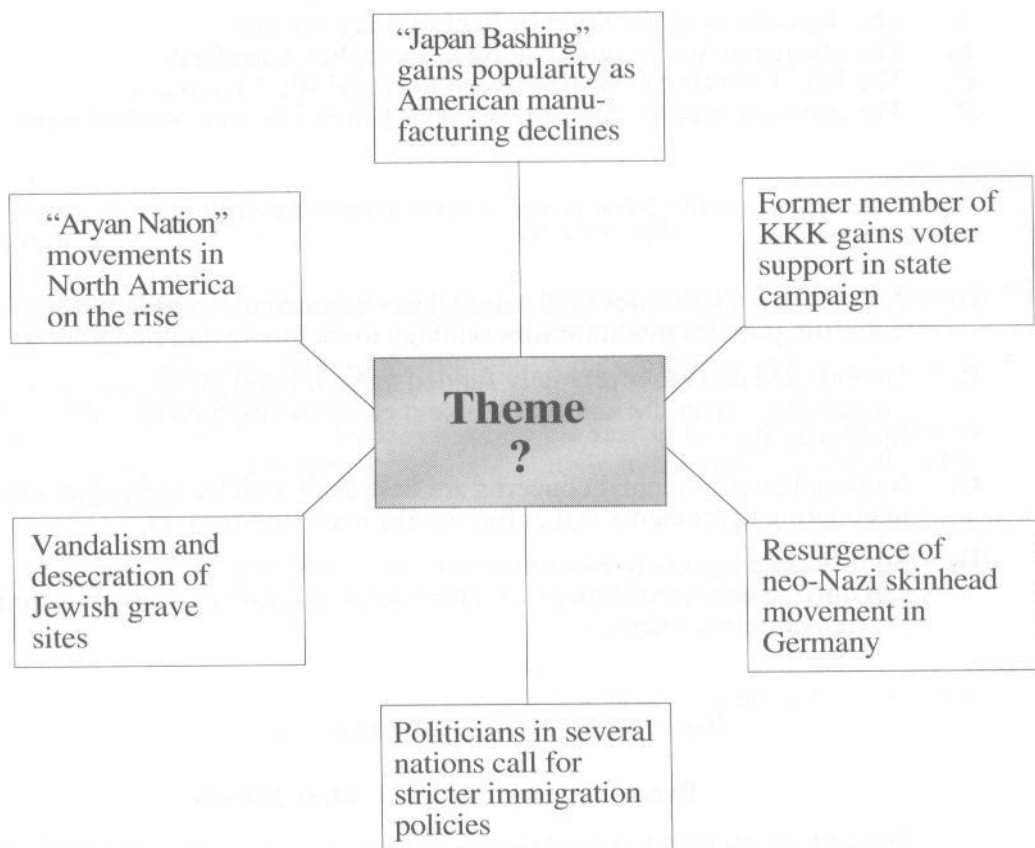
- a. appeasement to détente
- b. containment to détente
- c. containment to brinkmanship
- d. brinkmanship to appeasement

#### IV. DIAGRAMS

Diagrams are simply graphic representations usually in boxes or circles that are in some way connected. I.e. arrows, lines, etc. Many diagrams have a missing part such as a flow chart with a step missing and it is the purpose of the question to identify what is missing. This is usually a matter of determining the common characteristic or theme shared by the other completed boxes/circles and matching this to the choices the questions give you. Other diagrams show the characteristics of specific systems or philosophies and ask the student to identify the system or philosophy. Other diagrams can use characters or figures which serve to represent positions or attitudes and the students are asked to find the issue to suggest a course of action that these individuals would favour.

For example ...

Use the following diagram to answer the following questions:



*Question:* What theme would be appropriate to describe the developments shown in this diagram?

- a. Decline in the attraction to Marxist-Leninist ideologies
- b. Growth of public apathy toward current political issues
- c. Results of state-sponsored and –controlled indoctrination
- d. Re-emergence of extreme reactionary political philosophers

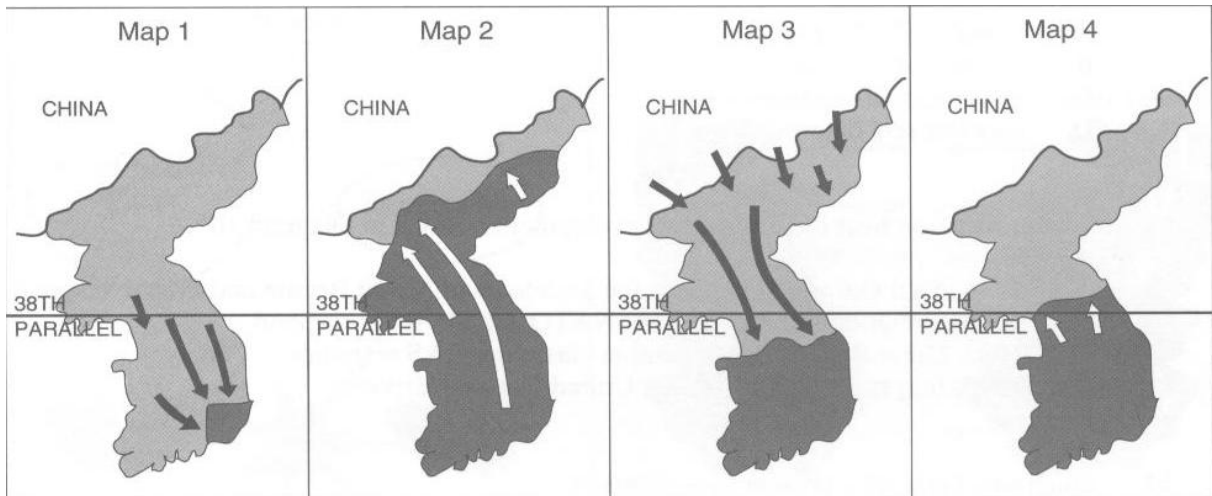
## V. MAPS

In the diploma maps may appear in a group of sources (multiple set). It will be EXTREMELY rare to find a map source by itself with this new diploma. To analyze a map, students must consider the following questions:

- What is the title of the map, if provided?
- What are the symbols found on the map? (*look to the legend*)
- What is the historical event/time period this map deals with?
- How does the map relate to the other sources found in the source set?

For example ...

Use the following map to answer the following questions:



**Question:** Which method of preserving international stability was used to halt the initial event shown in the maps?

- The appeasement of aggressive dictators
- The secret diplomacy of communist leaders
- The collective security of a world organization
- The granting of sovereignty for former spheres of influence

**Question:** The developments illustrated in the maps ultimately reveal a

- decisive victory for UN forces
- decisive victory for communist forces
- massive defeat for both sides in the conflict
- stalemate between both sides in the conflict

## VI. POLITICAL CARTOONS (contemporary)

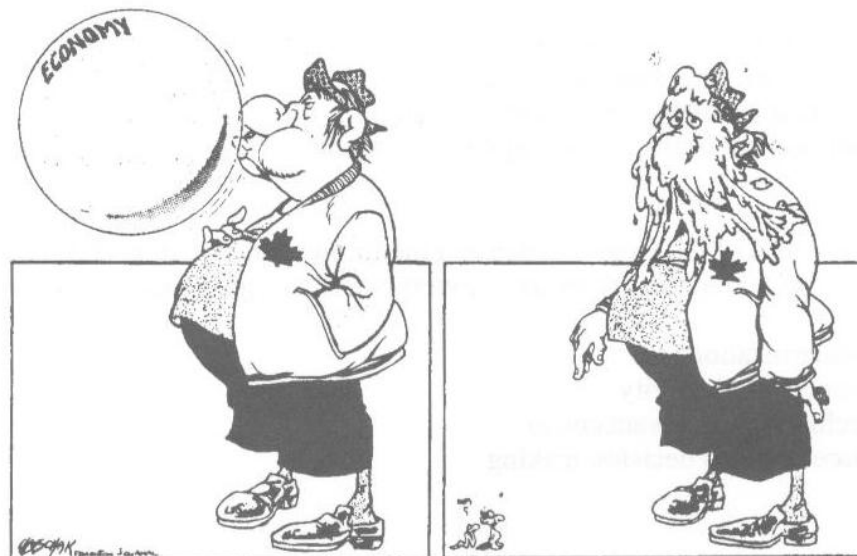
Political cartoons often deal with a single issue such as questions of war and peace, corruption in government, ideologies. The cartoonist will frequently use exaggerated likeness, or caricature, of a well-known person or institution as the main focus of attention. Symbols to represent an important idea (i.e. eagle for United States) are also frequently used. Reading is kept to a minimum so students are tested on their visual literacy. The cartoonist will also present his/her point of view on the issue under discussion.

To analyze a contemporary cartoon, students should follow these suggestions:

- identify the caricatures and symbols (*become aware of current symbols*)
- identify the issue being exposed or criticized by the cartoonist
- determine the perspective or point of view of the cartoonist (*look for clues within the cartoon such as choice of symbols, placement, size, etc.*)

For example ...

Use the following cartoon to answer the following questions:



*Question:* This cartoon illustrates a stage in a market-oriented economy when

- inflation follows deflation
- inflation follows recession
- recession follows growth
- expansion follows contraction

## VII. CARTOONS (historical)

Historical cartoons are slightly different from the contemporary political cartoons. There is still an issue that the cartoonist is commenting upon. The cartoonist will still use symbols and caricatures to get the message across. The cartoonist will still be expressing his/her point of view on the issue BUT the key difference is that the event is in the past.

To analyze a historical cartoon, students should follow many of the same suggestions as for a contemporary cartoon EXCEPT the FIRST STEP is to identify the historical event (*look for clues both within the cartoon and outside it such as the title, date of the cartoon etc.*). Then proceed with the next steps:

- identify the caricatures and symbols (*become aware of historical symbols*)
- determine the perspective or point of view of the cartoonist (*look for clues within the cartoon such as choice of symbols, placement, size, etc.*)

**For example ...**

Use the following cartoon to answer the following questions:



—from *The Modern World 1914–1980*

*Question:* This cartoon from the British magazine *Punch* in 1935 drew attention to the

- ineptitude of Mussolini in dealing the French and British leaders
- inappropriateness of threatening war against an economic power like Italy
- ineffectiveness of certain Great Powers in preventing Italian aggression
- inability of Britain and France to form a permanent military alliance against Italy

### VIII. TEXT SOURCES (Historical)

Interpreting historical documents means reading them carefully and deciding what is the main purpose behind the document and/or the ideological perspective. Students must pay attention to any vocabulary words that may be mentioned in the text source.

The key to understanding and analyzing historical texts/documents is to

- identify what the main idea of the source is (*usually found in the first line and often restated in the last line of a longer source*)
- identify the perspective of the source (*see if it credited; otherwise, look for key words or phrases within the source*)
- identify individuals/groups who would agree or disagree with the source and why

**For example ...**

Use the following source to answer the following questions:

#### **Preamble to the Covenant of the League of Nations, 1919**

##### *The High Contracting Parties*

In order to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security—

by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,  
by the prescription of open, just, and honourable relations among nations,  
by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and  
by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for  
all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

—from *Internationalism: Opposing Viewpoints*

**Question:** What factor largely motivated the inclusion of this Covenant preamble into the Treaty of Versailles?

- a. President Wilson's fear that secret diplomacy made the possibility of war by miscalculation more likely
- B. Premier Clemenceau's overriding concern for reparations and France's future security
- c. Prime Minister Lloyd George's desire for a moderate settlement to allow Germany's economic recovery
- d. Premier Orlando's demand for a readjustment of Italy's frontier along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

### IX. TEXT SOURCES (contemporary)

Contemporary text sources on the diploma exam can be varied in format. One type can be a list of four speaker opinions, each representing a different ideological perspective. Another type can be a longer excerpt from a secondary source (*encyclopedia, textbook, etc*).

Interpreting contemporary text sources means reading them carefully and deciding what is the main purpose behind the document and/or the ideological perspective. Students must pay attention to any vocabulary words that may be mentioned in the text source.

The key to understanding and analyzing contemporary texts/documents is to

- identify what the main idea of the source is (*usually found in the first line and often restated in the last line of a longer source*)
- identify the perspective of the source (*see if it credited; otherwise, look for key words or phrases within the source*)
- identify individuals/groups who would agree or disagree with the source and why

**For example ...**

Use the following source to answer the following questions:

At 57.7% in 1990, Sweden's tax revenue as a share of Gross Domestic Product was almost 10% higher than Denmark's, and 18% higher than the average for members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In view of its effects on economic performance, this burden should no longer be borne. Yet Sweden's new minority non-socialist coalition government is not launching a crusade to destroy the legacy of social democratic rule. It plans to trim, rather than roll back, the welfare state.

—from *The Financial Post*, October 1991

**Question1:** This editorial comment was likely made by a writer who is ideologically

- a. opposed to deregulation and privatization
- b. in favour of greater individual self-reliance
- c. opposed to fiscal restraint and deficit reduction
- d. in favour of greater government humanitarian concern

**Question2:** In making the comment "In view of its effect on economic performance, this [tax] burden should no longer be borne," the writer assumes that government tax revenues

- a. need to be increased
- b. discriminate against the poor
- c. reduce potential investment capital
- d. are a major cause of hyperinflation

## X. MULTIPLE SOURCES

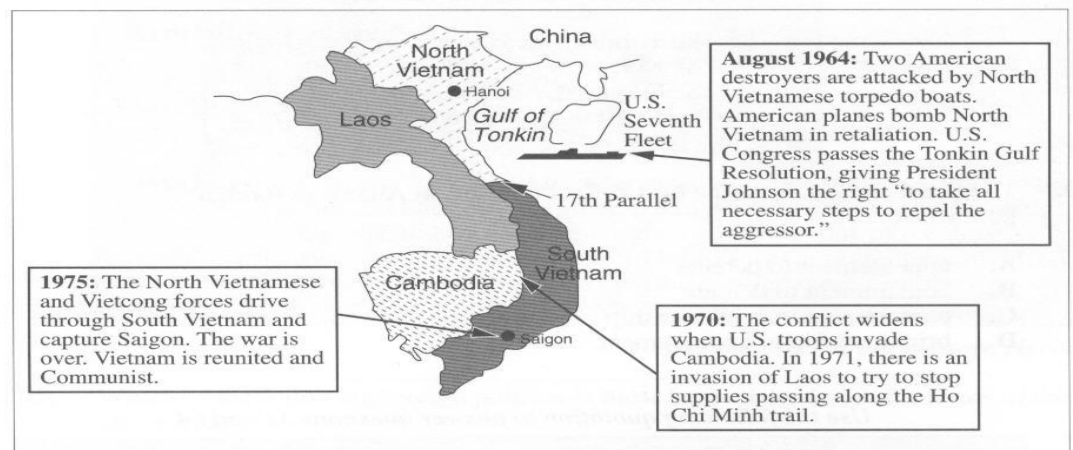
With this new program and new diploma, most of the source-based questions will be a set of sources, often including a couple of text sources and a visual. The maximum number of sources will be four but a set of two or three sources is most common.

Students need to understand these multiple source sets by figuring out what the common topic/issue/theme is. What is it that links all the sources together? Then students need to proceed to handle each source individually using the appropriate strategies described on previous pages.

### **For example ...**

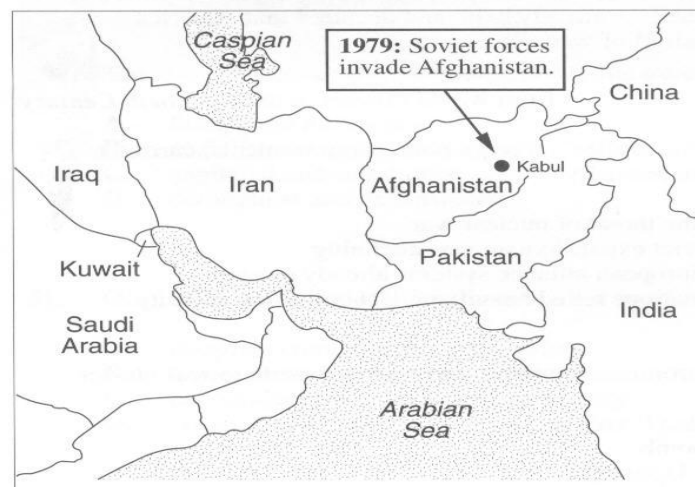
Use the following sources to answer the following questions:

**Source I**



—from *The Modern World Since 1917*

**Source II**



—from *The Contemporary World*

**Source III**

The theory of war demands that at the outset of a war its character and scope should be determined on the basis of its political probabilities. It is imperative that one does not take the first step without considering the last.

—Karl von Clausewitz

—from *On War*

*Question 1:* Which issue did the events described in Sources I and II raise for all concerned at the time they occurred?

- a. Should appeasement and diplomacy replace policies of neutrality?
- b. Should the superpowers invite United Nations intervention to preserve peace on their borders?
- c. Should the decision to continue armed conflicts be determined by economic developments?
- d. Should the superpowers violate the sovereignty of other nations in pursuit of their national interests?

*Question 2:* The conflicts referred to in sources I and I were similar in that both were characterized by extensive

- a. guerilla warfare
- b. naval and air force engagements
- c. diplomatic efforts to resolve differences
- d. military battles between superpowers

*Question 3:* The events identified in sources I and I were primarily attempts by the superpowers to

- a. upset the balance of power
- b. control important spheres of influence
- c. appease each other's national interests
- d. use alliances to achieve foreign policy objectives

*Question 4:* The author of Source III would have criticized the actions described in sources I and II because

- a. each action represents a selfish motive for foreign intervention
- b. the actions were clear violations of the principle of national sovereignty
- c. the actions illustrate a lack of consideration of their likely outcomes
- d. each action allowed the superpowers to avoid confronting each other militarily