



## Sample Selected Response Items for MCAP Social Studies Grade 8 Assessment

One of the item types on the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) Social Studies Grade 8 assessment is the selected response (SR) question. These items measure students’ understanding of United States History content identified in the assessment limits of the grade 8 framework. Below are examples of the formatting for SR question types.

### Question 1

Read the excerpt and answer the question.

“I honor those good men and women for their noble daring, and applaud them for willingly subjecting themselves to bloody persecution [mistreatment], by openly avowing [stating] their participation in the escape of slaves . . . ”

~ Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*

Which action is Frederick Douglass referring to in this excerpt?

- (A) the establishment of the Ku Klux Klan
- (B) the decision in the *Dred Scott* case
- (C) the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law
- (D) the use of the Underground Railroad

### Question 2

Which statement was **most likely** made by a Federalist during the debates over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution?

- (A) “A bill of rights is necessary to protect people’s liberties.”
- (B) “A strong central government is necessary for our country.”
- (C) “The states must retain their original powers.”
- (D) “The states must determine whether slavery will exist.”

**Question 3**

Read the information.

**Resources of the Union and Confederacy**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Union</b>	<b>Confederacy</b>
Population	21 million free and 500,000 enslaved	5.5 million free and 3.5 million enslaved
Number of Factories	110,000	21,000
Miles of Railroad	21,700	9,000

Source: National Park Service

Which conclusion is supported by the table?

- (A) The Confederacy had a larger army and a greater number of weapons than the Union.
- (B) The Union had a greater ability to move troops and supplies than the Confederacy.
- (C) The Confederacy had a greater number of factories that employed the majority of its citizens.
- (D) The Union had a larger number of enslaved people that could work in the factories.

**Question 4**

What was the subject of the federal court case *Ex parte Merryman* (1861)?

- (A) the president's power to suspend the writ of habeas corpus
- (B) the judicial branch's ability to determine the constitutionality of laws
- (C) the government's power to create a national bank
- (D) the government's ability to regulate economic transactions

**Answer Key**

- 1. D
- 2. B
- 3. B
- 4. A