

Chapter 15 Test, Document-Based Questions



The Spirit of Reform

DIRECTIONS: Short Answer Answer each of the following questions.

“I am aware, that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm. . . . [U]rge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD.”

—William Lloyd Garrison, *The Liberator*, 1831

1. What issue is Garrison describing in this excerpt?

2. How did many white people react to Garrison's views on slavery?

“What, to the American slave, is your Fourth of July? . . . To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass-fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are, to Him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States, at this very hour.”

—Frederick Douglass, Independence Day speech,
Rochester, New York, 1841

3. Why does Douglass say that the Fourth of July celebration is a “sham” to enslaved people?

Copyright © McGraw-Hill Education. Permission is granted to reproduce for classroom use.