

Exercise walk-through

Reagan and Conservatism ■ 9.2

eXercise

You must be able to

- state what the 1980 election allowed conservatives to enact
- state the conservative argument about liberal programs
- state what their efforts to reduce government met with and why
- name the continuing policy debates

Method — 1980

Ronald Reagan's victory in the presidential election of 1980 represented an important milestone, allowing conservatives to enact significant tax cuts and continue the deregulation of many industries.

Method — The argument

Conservatives argued that liberal programs were counterproductive in fighting poverty and stimulating economic growth. “Counterproductive” is a strong claim: not merely ineffective but self-defeating.

Method — The obstacle

Some of their efforts to reduce the size and scope of government met with inertia and liberal opposition, as many programs remained popular with voters.
The programmes' popularity is given as a cause of the limit.

Method — Continuing debates

Free-trade agreements, the scope of the government social safety net, and calls to reform the U.S. financial system, alongside immigration policy, diversity, gender roles, and family structures.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State what the 1980 election allowed conservatives to enact.

Solution 2.1

Method: 1980

Worked steps

significant tax cuts **B1** and continued deregulation of many industries **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

State the conservative argument and the force of “counterproductive”.

Solution 2.2

Method: The argument

Worked steps

that liberal programs were counterproductive in fighting poverty and stimulating growth (B1); “counterproductive” claims they were self-defeating rather than merely ineffective (B1).

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

Efforts to reduce government met an obstacle.

- (a) State it and its cause.
- (b) Name two continuing policy debates.

Solution 2.3

Method: The obstacle

Worked steps

(a) inertia and liberal opposition **B1**, because many programs remained popular with voters **B1**. (b) any two of: free-trade agreements; the scope of the social safety net; financial reform; immigration policy; diversity; gender roles; family structures **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

Efforts to reduce the size of government met inertia and liberal opposition because many programs

- A** remained popular with voters
- B** had been abolished
- C** were unconstitutional
- D** were foreign

Solution 3.1

Method: The obstacle

A remained popular with voters



B had been abolished

C were unconstitutional

D were foreign

Worked steps

A. popular with voters.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

“Counterproductive” claims that liberal programs were

A self-defeating

B merely slow

C successful

D never enacted

Solution 3.2

Method: The argument

A self-defeating



B merely slow

C successful

D never enacted

Worked steps

A. self-defeating.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A movement wins an election and cannot remove programmes it opposes.

- (a) State the reason the CED gives.
- (b) Explain the tension this creates.

Solution 3.3

Worked steps

(a) that many programs remained popular with voters **B1**. (b) an electoral majority for reducing government in general **B1** can coexist with majorities for keeping each particular programme **B1**.