

9.2 Reagan and Conservatism

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to explain **the conservative ascendancy** 保守派的兴起.

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

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

2 Practice

2.1 State what the 1980 election allowed conservatives to enact. [2]

2.2 State the conservative argument and the force of "counterproductive". [2]

2.3 Efforts to reduce government met an obstacle.

(a) State it and its cause. [2]

(b) Name two continuing policy debates. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Efforts to reduce the size of government met inertia and liberal opposition because many programs [1]

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

3.2 "Counterproductive" claims that liberal programs were [1]

- **A** self-defeating
 - **B** merely slow
 - **C** successful
 - **D** never enacted
-

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

(a) State the reason the CED gives. [1]

(b) Explain the tension this creates.

[2]

4 Go further

- work through the **9.2 Reagan and Conservatism** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Period 9: 1980-Present** section of the AP US History handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 significant tax cuts and continued deregulation of many industries.

2.2 that liberal programs were counterproductive in fighting poverty and stimulating growth; "counterproductive" claims they were self-defeating rather than merely ineffective.

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

3.1 A. popular with voters.

3.2 A. self-defeating.

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