**Study Guide: “What Is an American?”** by St. Jean DeCrevecoeur

# Text: Handout

1. According to the author, how does America compare to Europe in terms of social classes and wealth?

2. a) What occupation were most Americans engaged in during the 1770s?

b) What are a couple of other occupations mentioned by DeCrevecoeur?

3. a) According to DeCrevecoeur, how do Americans view the law?

b) Why do they feel this way?

4. DeCrevecoeur says that in America, man is free, and he describes America as “the most perfect society now existing in the world.”

a) Was he correct, do you think? Explain.

b) Have things in America improved since the 1770s, or have they deteriorated? Explain.

5. Was making North America “entirely peopled” a good idea? Explain.

6. DeCrevecoeur describes America as an “asylum,” a place people go to escape danger, etc. Is this still the case today? Explain how it is or is not.

7. According to DeCrevecoeur, why did people come here from other nations?

8. What does DeCrevecoeur say has been the effect of becoming Americans on immigrants?

9. What is the problem of DeCrevecoeur’s definition and description of “an American” in the sixth paragraph? Whom does it leave out?

10. a) Do you agree that in the U.S., “individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men”? Why or why not?

b) How was DeCrevecoeur using the term “race” in this statement?

11. What does DeCrevecoeur say about religion in the U.S.?

Whose rights does he seem to be ignoring in this statement?