



AP[®] European History 2003 Sample Student Responses

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2

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The Agricultural Revolution in the 18th century had many social and economic consequences. ~~It~~ It began through improved methods of farming and techniques, and improving how the farming community was organized. One of the major problems of the pre-agricultural revolution was the dead fallow lands. Fallow lands were lands that didn't have anything grown in them, so the soil wouldn't be depleted after a few years. This would reduce the amount of food produced on the land dramatically, as every few years a new spot of land would be fallow. There wasn't much food ~~was~~ to be produced by acres anyway before the agricultural revolution, comparing to the amount produced afterward. The agricultural revolution began when fallow lands were replaced with crop rotation. Instead of fallow lands, different crops would be grown in different areas of the field, or fields, in a yearly rotation, or ~~these~~ ~~lands~~. Different plants had different effects on the soil. Some depleted, and others replenished, the vital ~~with~~ nutrients in the soil needed to grow plants. The potato was one plant that was increasingly used as a crop as the agricultural revolution were on. It was easy to grow, beneficial to the soil, and very very healthy for people to it. ~~It~~ It quickly became a

Staple food for the poor of Europe, ~~was~~ replacing grain. However all classes had ~~interest~~, ~~growing~~ economic interests in it, as it quickly became a cash crop of Europe for the farming landowners.

As there was more food grown ~~on~~ on the farms and fields, there was more food to be eaten. The diets of the people improved as they grew more things, as well as the diets of their farm animals. Farm animals were given what they could eat, usually scraps ~~of~~ or what the humans they were owned by couldn't possibly eat, before the agricultural revolution. The animals weren't healthy for that reason, and made poor food themselves when slaughtered. But as more food was produced, ~~the~~ animals also ate more, and became healthier. Some oxen, ^{and cattle, even} were ~~grown~~ claimed to grow to the size of a house, provided rich meat for the rich people to eat, and money for the cattle raisers. The animals also produced more fertilizer, which helped the growth of the plants and farms.

One strange aspect of the Agricultural Revolution was that as ~~the~~ farmers and field tenders made more money, parts of their diet actually got worse. The pre-agricultural ~~revolution~~ peasant's diet was

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2

mainly of a very healthy brown or dark bread, vegetables, and milk. That diet is actually better than ~~the~~ most people eat today, and has the rich society to eat back then. The rich people, the aristocracy, ate wine and meat, and a lot of it. They were keen to overeating and wasting, and they did not give themselves ~~the~~ subsequent nutrition. For once, the poor were better off than they were. However when the poor began to make more money, they began to spend it on ~~the~~ luxuries of the aristocracy. White, nutritional bread replaced the healthy brown, and sugar became a popular decoration in many foods. The better off economically people became, ~~the~~ their diet declined.

While the Enclosure Acts of some countries only legalized what many farming communities were already doing, the enclosures had a dramatic effect on the society. The organization of a farming community in the ~~pages~~ before the agricultural revolution had been that the entire town worked on an open field, all together, to produce the food, and take care of the animals. The common lands were used for the ~~the~~ villages animals to graze. With the ~~enclosure~~ Enclosures of the open fields and

Common laws, many peasants lost the only land they had. The enclosures were meant to separate fields, that ~~they~~ now ^{were} to be farmed by only certain people, and it made farming more efficient in the eyes of the landowners and government. While productivity didn't necessarily increase thanks to the enclosures, it did change the way the society of the farming village lived.

With no land to farm, many families became employed in the cottage industry, or putting out system. Merchants would bring raw materials to a home and family, and then, the family would make the materials into a product. It changed the way the family lived, because they didn't live by the seasons anymore, but by the deadline of their merchant employer. This eventually evolved into the main product of this system was textiles, and this eventually evolved into the Industrial Revolution. People were able to leave their farming villages and work for merchants and owners in cities and factories, because the farming organization and methods had ~~been~~ improved & made, it took less people to grow more food, and those that no longer farmed had to go look for their own work/revolution somewhere else.

The Agricultural revolution of the eighteenth-century spawned many changes throughout Europe. Beginning in Holland, the methods of new agriculture quickly came about in England. In response to the increase in population, the agricultural revolution was one of technique rather than technology. The revolution impacted Europe both economically and socially.

As the result of better farming techniques, production of crops increased. With the increase of production, agriculture became increasingly more market-oriented. With the introduction of fodder crops and the idea of four-course rotation by Charles Townsend, less land each year layed fallow. This in return allowed for more production of certain crops increasing the profits for landowners and the market. Also, the flooding of lands became common during the agricultural revolution. When these lands dried, fresh grass would be available. This allowed for more cattle to be raised in conjunction with animal husbandry. These improvements increased the economy, aiding the circulation of money and food. An increase

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in animals, resulted in the increase of manure fertilizer. The fertilizer became cheaper and provided an immense amount of nutrients for the crops. In result, these improvements resulted in a booming agriculture and market. The agricultural revolution greatly favored the economy.

Socially, the agricultural revolution also had a large impact. At the start of the revolution land had been divided into strips, each family responsible for all crops. However, with the introduction of the 4-course rotation, the community divided up the different crops. As a result, agriculture became communal rather than individual. Each member in the community depended on one another for resources. However, this change allowed for less people to be involved. The lower class suffered when they were now unable to produce their own crops to provide sustenance for their family and could not afford market prices. The middle class, along with the lower class also did not benefit as much due to the decisions of the Parliament which was composed of wealthy landowners. Therefore the middle and lower classes were exempt from

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decision making at this time. The Agricultural revolution impacted Europe socially and favored the higher class.

Throughout the Agricultural Revolution all of Europe experienced great change. Simultaneous with the Industrial Revolution, Europe was effected both economically and socially. England at this time was at the head of the game with the rest of Europe on it's tail.