



## AP<sup>®</sup> United States History 2003 Sample Student Responses Form B

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Kennedy was shown as a man of change. He was depicted as a family man; having exactly what every body would like to be at the time. The media was helpful for Kennedy because on a nationally televised debate with Nixon he was seen as the energetic younger who had a lot of charisma while Nixon was old and had a raspy voice. This helped Kennedy win the election and because of his frequent televised broadcasts he was seen as a man who brought change but in fact he continued on the same path as his predecessor. ~~After~~

After Kennedy's assassination Lyndon B Johnson became president. He had come up from nothing and therefore was for the common people. He advocated many social reforms and tried to improve conditions for the poor. His presidential power however was increased by the Gulf of Tonkin resolution that was passed after American destroyers were supposedly fired upon. Johnson tried to improve American society but most of his media coverage was about the war in Vietnam. The conflict in Vietnam overshadowed some of his accomplishments and took away money from Johnson's reform programs.

When Nixon came to power he began to move more towards international affairs. He traveled to China and started a détente with ~~the~~ in the Soviet-American relations. He however was ~~a shy and meek~~ the man who invited the Watergate scandal. This is when men

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snuck into the Democratic campaign office in the Watergate office building. When they were caught and interrogated they ended up leading to Nixon because he tried to cover it up. This huge scandal got a lot of media coverage and after tapes were found connecting Nixon and his cabinet directly to the scandal he ~~was~~ resigned because he was about to be impeached. Nixon in this obviously stepped over his presidential powers and therefore was almost impeached.

The media had a huge affect on all three of these presidents in some ways helping them to get to power and in others bringing them down. Their presidential powers changed over the times according to certain situations but sometimes, as with Nixon, this boundary was overstepped.

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Throughout American History, the President has been viewed as the Father figure of our nation. Kennedy's presidency marked for the first time that Americans viewed their president as almost the royal family of an European country. Kennedy's "camalot" mystic, his beautiful wife and family as well him being Catholic brought about a change in American views toward the Presidency. No longer was the President old, ~~serious~~ serious, and unconnected from everyday American society, but for the first time the President was a symbol of the changing times, the revolting youth of the country, and the turmoil that was facing our country. Kennedy was appealing because he looked like, and was ~~as~~ just your average American in the eyes of the American public.

After Kennedy's abrupt and unfortunate death an older more typical Lyndon B. Johnson tried to play off of this Kennedy mystic in memory of the late presidency. He passed legislation that benefited ~~and helped~~ poor Americans and helped raise the quality of life ~~of~~ of Americans as part of his "Great Society". Johnson tried to identify with and gain Kennedy's popularity through identifying the Great Society programs with the late compassionate President. Johnson was never able to gain the popularity that Kennedy had and Johnson was never able to identify with the American people as Kennedy had.

The media was a major factor in the Americans perception

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and gave the president great power to manipulate the public.  
of their president. The 1960 election marked the first time television debates were held and this gave the public their first impression of the cool and calm, young Kennedy. The media helped prop up Kennedy through creating the compassionate image of Kennedy that the public grew to love. The media was able to do the reverse with Johnson. Johnson would convince the country that they were winning the war, but then the media would show footage of Vietnamese capturing the embassy during the Tet Offensive and of the atrocities being committed against the Vietnamese, making Johnson and his cabinet look like liars. Johnson found himself unable to clear his name and win back support for his party, leading to the election of Nixon, previously defeated by the "Camelot" Kennedy.

Nixon was known for his tough stance on communism and by Vietnamization of the war was able to remove the U.S from Vietnam. Nixon didn't identify as Kennedy did with the American public, but he was a great politician and able to maintain a majority of support until the "muckraker" like media helped expose the Watergate scandal again humiliating Nixon, like Johnson. In the end the Johnson, Nixon era left the American public sick of the dishonest Washington politics and looking for someone outside of Washington.

The media had a major role in the Presidency for the first time. The media showed the presidents in their everyday life and the president

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Who could keep their cool and befriend the media got the good images and support from the public, but the presidents like Johnson and Nixon who couldn't deal with the media failed. Never before had Americans gotten such a close up view of their presidents through the media and most importantly television. These three presidents marked a change from the Royalty like Kennedy to the dishonest and shy presidents of Nixon and Johnson in public opinion. These changes are a direct product of the changing times in America and the changing views of the president and Washington.

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During the years of 1960 and 1975 the American presidency was marked with three very distinct presidents: Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon. As a result, ~~namely~~ the presidencies ~~were~~ <sup>transitioned</sup> from a somewhat inept foreign policy, a focus on internal reform and finally war and scandal. Throughout these unique presidencies, the media played a large role informing the public of world affairs, ~~reporting~~ revealing juicy controversies as well as ~~examples~~ paint an ideal American life.

Kennedy's "Camelot" presidency focused on international relations. Tensions increased with Russia and the spread of communism which resulted in the Bay of Pigs incident and the Cuban Missile Crisis. The bay of Pigs was an extremely unsuccessful and embarrassing attempt to overthrow the Cuban government by instigating a coup. It resulted in the immediate slaughtering of all those involved. Luckily for Kennedy, he was able to redeem himself during the Cuban missile crisis with Russia. The U.S captured on photos missiles <sup>in Cuba</sup> planted by Russians pointed directly at the U.S. The U.S then put missiles in Turkey pointing at Russia and what resulted was the brink of war. Kennedy refused to back down and what resulted was a showdown

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ended when the missiles were removed and Kennedy agreed not to ~~enter~~ invade Cuba. The president had much power and the Kennedys were ~~seen~~ very popular. Much of their popularity was due to the way media portrayed them. Jackie, his wife, was a national icon of the ideal woman with elegant style and they ~~were~~ <sup>symbolized</sup> the perfect family. When Kennedy was assassinated, the country mourned.

Following Kennedy, Johnson took office. Although there was still tension with Russia, Johnson's presidency was more of a shift towards internal reform and improvements. He immediately declared a "war on Poverty." He dreamed of a "Great Society" with ~~better~~ more rights for everyone. He wanted to distribute the affluence of society and care for the common man. <sup>Moreover</sup> He wanted to spread democracy and contain communism. The media had a larger role in this aspect by showing the atrocities of the Vietnam war, fight to limit the spread of communism. For the first time, the media viewed real images of the war ~~and~~ and the result of the My Lai massacre where U.S. soldiers killed Vietnamese villagers. The war propelled a massive anti-war movement\* and college campuses erupted with protests. The democratic\* especially after seeing the outcome of the Tet-offensive,



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was split over the war. Subsequently, Nixon promised a truculent society that he would pull troops out and restore peace.

~~the~~ During Nixon's presidency, although the Vietnam war ~~the~~ received media coverage the president's powers and corruption quickly led to the revelation of the Watergate Scandals. In this scandal, Nixon's party members broke into a democratic office and stole campaign and party strategies and secrets. These documents were quickly shredded but not before the public knew the truth. He was later impeached and this scandal ended Nixon's presidency.

These three presidencies were very different and the presidents exercised their different powers. Whether it be through foreign affairs, domestic affairs, or personal affairs. However, ~~that~~ this time marked a period where the media played an important role to idealize the Kennedys and increase nationalism or uncover the truth about war and stimulate opposition. Ever since the media has ~~been~~ <sup>become</sup> an important political tool.