Question 5

“Landslide presidential victories do not ensure continued political effectiveness or legislative success.”
Assess the validity of this statement by comparing TWO of the following presidential administrations.

- Franklin Roosevelt (1936)
- Lyndon Johnson (1964)
- Richard Nixon (1972)

The 8–9 Essay
- Contains a clear, well-developed thesis that assesses whether landslide presidential victories ensured continued political effectiveness/legislative success by comparing TWO of the four presidential administrations.
- Develops the thesis with substantial and relevant historical information.
- Provides effective analysis of the TWO administrations and their political effectiveness/legislative success; treatment of the administrations as well as political effectiveness/legislative success may be somewhat unbalanced. (Assessment of the impact of the election itself may be implicit or explicit.)
- May contain minor errors that do not detract from the overall quality of the essay.
- Is well organized and well written.

The 5–7 Essay
- Contains a thesis, which may be partially developed, that addresses whether landslide presidential victories ensured continued political effectiveness/legislative success by comparing TWO of the four presidential administrations.
- Supports the thesis with some relevant supporting information.
- Provides some analysis of the TWO administrations and their political effectiveness/legislative success; treatment may be unbalanced. (Assessment of the impact of the election itself may be implicit or explicit.)
- May contain errors that do not seriously detract from the quality of the essay.
- Has acceptable organization and writing.

The 2–4 Essay
- Contains a weak or unfocused thesis or simply paraphrases the question.
- Provides few relevant facts or lists facts with little or no application to the question.
- Provides simplistic analysis that may be generally descriptive or addresses only one administration.
- May contain major errors.
- May be poorly organized and/or written.
The 0–1 Essay
- Lacks a thesis or simply restates the question.
- Demonstrates an incompetent or inadequate response.
- Has little or no understanding of the question.
- Contains substantial factual errors.
- Is poorly organized and/or written.

The — Essay
- Is completely off topic or is blank.
# AP® UNITED STATES HISTORY
## 2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 5 Fact Sheet

#### Franklin Roosevelt (1936)

**Political Effectiveness/Legislative Success**
- Second New Deal
- Quarantine Speech
- Social Security
- Battle of Britain
- Keynesian Economics
- Election of 1940 (unprecedented third term)
- Southern Democrats
- Atlantic Charter
- Farm Security Administration
- Winston Churchill

**Political Ineffectiveness**
- Supreme Court invalidates the AAA (1936)
- Rise of fascism
- Court packing scheme
- Hitler/Mussolini/Emperor Hirohito

#### Lyndon Johnson (1964)

**Political Effectiveness/Legislative Success**
- Presidential ability to expand Vietnam War
- Great Society
- Bombing of North Vietnam (February 1965)
- "War on Poverty"
- Gulf of Tonkin Resolution
- Job Corps, VISTA, AFDC, Upward Bound
- Robert Weaver (first African American cabinet member)
- Thurgood Marshall appointed to Supreme Court
- Economic Opportunity Act
- Water and Air Quality Acts
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Medicaid

**Political Ineffectiveness**
- Race riots in Watts, Newark, Cleveland, Detroit, and elsewhere
- Tet Offensive
- Black Power movement
- Johnson withdraws from 1968 race
- Opposition to affirmative action
- Split in Democratic Party

**Supplements**
- Alfred Landon
- Neutrality Acts
- National Housing Act
- Cash and Carry
- Second AAA
- Peacetime draft
- Fair Labor Standards Act
- Lend Lease Act (1941)
- Executive Reorganization Act
- “Memorial Day Massacre”
- Munich Conference/ appeasement
- 1937-38 economic collapse
- Medicare
- Highway Beautification Act
- Head Start
- Highway Safety Act
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- Increase in minimum wage (1966)
- Immigration Reform Act (1965)
- Twenty-fifth Amendment
- Voting Rights Act
- Truth-in-Lending Act
- National Endowment of the Arts Act
- Civil Rights Act (1968) (housing)
- Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated
- Violence at Democratic National Convention
- White backlash
- Retreat from Great Society/War on Poverty
- Senate hearing on Vietnam
- Drop in LBJ’s approval rating
- Antiwar protests on university campuses

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Richard Nixon (1972)

Political Effectiveness/Legislative Success
Christmas Bombing of 1972/Paris Peace Accord
China
Vietnamization
ABM Treaty

Political Ineffectiveness
Committee for the Re-election of the President
War Powers Act
Watergate
Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns (tax evasion)
Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox
Nixon’s “I am not a crook” speech
“Saturday Night Massacre”
Subpoena of tapes


Political Effectiveness/Legislative Success
“Teflon” presidency
1986 Tax Reform Act
Glasnost (openness)
INF Treaty (1987)

Political Ineffectiveness
Widening income disparity between rich and poor
Massive budget deficits, trade deficits, national debt
Challenger disaster
Democrats regain control of U.S. Senate
Iran-Contra Scandal/Tower Commission Report
Abortion and affirmative action controversies
Administration scandal: Edwin Meese, Michael Deaver, Samuel Pierce (HUD), and so on

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Many candidates who are running for the office of the President desire sweeping victories in the polls, because they believe that this guarantees success as a President. This has not been the case for two of America's Presidents, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Richard Nixon. Franklin D. Roosevelt was nominated as a Democratic President in 1932, in the midst of America's worst economic depression in history. He had a policy of "relief, recovery, and reform," and was effective in implementing much of his New Deal legislation. Richard Nixon, who won the presidency as a Republican in 1972, began his presidency successfully implementing his "Vietnamization" policy and his creation of détente, or "relaxed tensions," with the Soviet Union. Despite these Presidents' many victories and initial legislative and political success, their popularity and success waned.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was so popular with the American people that he broke the customary two-term presidency rule when he won an astounding 4 elections. Many people believed Roosevelt had saved the country with his New Deal programs. Many of these programs, such as the CCC and the WPA, were successful in giving jobs to Americans in need of them and money. But some of the reforms that Roosevelt
truly supported were shot down by the Supreme Court during the latter half of the 1930s. The "hundred Days Congress" passed the Agriculture Adjustment Act, which essentially paid farmers not to grow crops. Roosevelt believed this would help because overproduction and underconsumption was one of the most serious problems before and during the stock market crash in 1929. The Supreme Court declared this Act unconstitutional, along with the NIRA, which was another New Deal agency that Roosevelt fully supported. Roosevelt was losing the governmental and legislative support that he had so thoroughly enjoyed during 1933, and the "hundred Days Congress." Roosevelt chose to deal with these new challenges to his New Deal by packing the Supreme Court. He essentially wanted to change the Constitution and the way the Supreme Court was handled solely to pass his New Deal legislation. Because of this, Roosevelt lost most of the political and popular support that he had enjoyed so much of during the beginning of his first term.

Richard Nixon became President of the US when the country was involved in the Vietnam War. A very unpopular and deadly war. Americans questioned why we were fighting "somebody else's war," and Nixon's response was "Vietnamization."
proposed a gradual withdrawal of American troops
while simultaneously increasing the amount of South
Vietnamese troops to fight the war. This was a very
popular policy among the many protesters of the war.
Nixon also lessened the nuclear war threat by
improving relations with the Soviet Union; the era of détente. These two very popular and good
policies were completely overshadowed by Nixon's
secret war. While preaching a decreased amount of
troops, Nixon actually increased the
amount of American troops in Southeast
Asia by secretly bombing Cambodia. When this
secret was revealed to the largely anti-war American
public, Nixon lost rapidly lost support. He lost
even more support when the 1974 Watergate scandal
swept the country. When members of the Committee to
Reelect the President were found to break into
the Watergate Hotel, a crew of investigations clouded
the Nixon administration. Nixon worsened the situation
and decreased his public approval ratings by
claiming executive privilege to not release tapes.
Nixon resigned, and his once popular presidency
ended in shame and corruption.

When politicians were elected by a vast majority
of the population, their continued success as a
President is not secured. FDR lost support when
he tried to change the nature of democracy with the Supreme Court, and Nixon's successes with the Cold War and initial popularity was entirely forgotten when his presidency ended in corruption.
"Landslide presidential victories do not ensure political effectiveness or legislative success."
This quote is deemed not only ironic, but also ironic when applied to the presidencies of Richard Nixon (1972) and Ronald Reagan (1984).
Both of these presidents gained immense popularity among the American people and formed their own political and economic legacies. Yet Nixon and Reagan served at a crucial time in American history, dealing with the Vietnam War, communism, and nuclear technology.
However, the actions of these men proved that popular victory does not guarantee success or excellence in the Oval Office.
Richard Nixon first entered the political arena during the famous Senate Hearings on Communism during the 1950s. As a junior statesman, Nixon provided false evidence which proved Alger Hiss to be a communist sympathizer.
Meanwhile, during this time, Ronald Reagan, a Hollywood actor, accused other fellow movie industry members of communist activities falsely, leading to the unlawful arrest of Letham.
Nixon ran against John Kennedy during the presidential election of 1960 and lost by one of the closest margins in history. He continued to serve as senator afterwards. Reagan continued to act in "B" movies and was elected as governor of California — a glamorous, movie-star man unfit for a real political office.

In the late 1960s, Nixon was nominated by the Republican party for the presidency, and with lots of popular support for a "traditional, peaceful America," he defeated his opponent. It was later revealed to the American public that Nixon received several monetary and settlement kick-backs illegally from party contributors.

Nixon resigned the presidency. The most notorious scandal of his presidency and the American presidency at large, occurred when security and staff at the Watergate Hotel in Washington D.C. had reported numerous break-ins to the Democratic National Committee offices. It soon became clear that Nixon had ordered his advisors to "bug" the Democratic offices and was listening in on private conversations. One after another of Nixon's cabinet and administrators resigned, and Nixon soon followed, shaming...
the presidency disgracing his administration, and losing the trust of the American people.

Ronald Reagan also won huge support from the public, who admired the tall, handsome actor, who promised to lead America with traditional values. Once elected, Reagan proved to be incompetent, unaware of the political process, and easily influenced by the unwarranted advice from Republican party contributors. He gave huge tax cuts for the wealthy and increased military spending, creating a large deficit and raising taxes for middle class America. The Reagan unfamilies with the federal system. I medical and welfare benefits fell, the poor cut funding for these projects and forced thousands out of their jobs and homes. President Reagan blindly and selfishly made the wealthy richer and the poor even poorer, dividing the classes and leading America into a deep socioeconomic recession.

Both President Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan proved that popularity is no sure sign of political knowledge or success. Although both men enjoyed landslide...
victories, they both served foolishly and selfishly, concerned only with their wants and needs and disregarding the American people who had voted them in. As a result, the presidencies of Nixon and Reagan left a shameful and embarrassing legacy on the executive office.
The statement that "landslide victories do not ensure continued political effectiveness or legislative success" can be clearly noted in the presidential administrations of Roosevelt and Nixon. Both of the presidents had landslide elections but only one received continued support.

Franklin Roosevelt did many productive and essential things during his presidential administration to keep continued support. Franklin Roosevelt was elected during the Great Depression by a landslide election against Hoover. Roosevelt, while in office, put many new deal programs into action some of which are still active today. He successfully pulled the United States out of the Great Depression. He was the president responsible for the creation of this nation's highway system. He also established the National Park Service for the maintaining of the National Parks be set preserved. Yet one of the greatest things he did in office he did within just a few days of being placed there. He closed all of the banks in the US, and reestablished a public trust in the bank through a program called FDIC. It was things like that; becoming personal with the nation that kept him loved by most all.

Richard Nixon was not a bad president he just did some things that the public disagreed with.
and he lied. Some of the better things he did were to establish a free trade system to open up trade with China, and to remove our soldiers from Vietnam. For most people the thing he did bad like always seem strange to protrude out just a little farther. It was mostly because of the water gate scandal that he was disliked. He would not have been so harshly disliked if he would not of lied to the faces of the American people.

It is not what a president does but how he communicates and projects him or herself to the American people.
Overview

This question required students to analyze the accomplishments of two different second-term administrations, using their “landslide” electoral victories as a basis of comparison. They were asked to draw conclusions about the relationship between these electoral victories and each president’s subsequent political effectiveness and legislative success. Further, the question invited students to demonstrate their ability to analyze the complexities of electoral politics as they intersected with external events. The stronger students were able to show that, in most of these cases, the success of the administration was determined, at least in part, by the effectiveness of the president’s response to these challenges.

Sample: 5A
Score: 8

This essay features a clear, well-developed thesis that assesses the successes that followed landslide elections. It contains effective analysis of the complexity of each administration’s actions, supported by substantial and relevant evidence—for example, it clearly distinguishes Franklin D. Roosevelt’s first term accomplishments from his second term challenges. The essay, however, is chronologically vague in some places: Nixon’s first term is not clearly noted, and the Supreme Court’s challenge to the New Deal is located in “the latter half of the 1930s.” These are minor problems that do not detract from the overall strength of this essay.

Sample: 5B
Score: 5

This essay’s thesis addresses the question and develops a concrete answer by examining two presidents. The student provides background information to explain each landslide victory as well as relevant but limited information to support the thesis (e.g., Nixon was undermined by Watergate; Reagan’s economic policies created class divisions). Too much of the information is extraneous and mainly descriptive (e.g., the description of Nixon’s fight against communism in the 1950s), thus the essay could not be placed in the top score category.

Sample: 5C
Score: 2

This student’s thesis statement demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the question. The essay contains little supporting information and is marred by errors (e.g., Franklin Roosevelt is credited with creating the National Park Service; bank closures are located in his second term). Analysis is simplistic—the student claims that Roosevelt pulled the United States out of the Great Depression and that Nixon was unpopular only because “he lied.”