Question 2

Compare and contrast the economic and social development of Russia with that of the Netherlands in the period 1600–1725.

9–8 Points
• The thesis is clearly stated and compares and contrasts Russia with the Netherlands.
• The organization is clear.
• The essay is well balanced and deals with EITHER economic OR social development in BOTH Russia and the Netherlands.
• Assertions in the essay are supported by at least TWO pieces of relevant evidence and historical specificity.
• The essay makes connections between economic factors and social factors.
• The essay may contain some errors.

7–6 Points
• The thesis is clearly stated and compares and contrasts Russia with the Netherlands.
• The essay is well balanced and deals with EITHER economic OR social development in BOTH Russia and the Netherlands.
• Assertions in the essay are supported by at least ONE piece of relevant evidence or historical specificity.
• The essay makes connections between economic factors and social factors.
• The essay may contain some errors.

5–4 Points
• The thesis is clearly stated but uneven OR just restates the question. It tends to focus too much on similarities OR too much on differences OR too much on Russia OR too much on the Netherlands.
• The organization is unbalanced and not necessarily very effective.
• Assertions tend to be general statements supported by only ONE piece of evidence.
• The historical narrative is mostly factual with little analysis.
• The essay may contain minor errors that do not get in the way of the argument.

3–2 Points
• There is no thesis or the thesis just restates the question.
• The organization is unclear and ineffective.
• The essay shows serious and major imbalance.
• Statements are superficial and general without any factual support.
• There is little historical specificity for analysis.
• There is little or no analysis.
• The essay contains major errors that detract from the argument.
Question 2 (continued)

1–0 Points

- There is no thesis.
- The essay is poorly organized.
- The essay is off task and nonresponsive to the question.
- The discussion is irrelevant.
- The argument is general, superficial, vague and simplistic.
- There is little or no supporting evidence.
- There is no analysis or historical connections.
- Major errors get in the way of the argument
The purpose of this question is to investigate the similarities and differences in Dutch and Russian socioeconomic development from 1600 to 1725. Though the time parameter begins in 1600, the majority of the essays will focus primarily on the periods after 1648 in the Netherlands and after 1689 in Russia. The year 1725 saw the death of Peter the Great, so this is a clue as to the focus of many of the essays. There are obviously more profound differences than there are similarities between the Dutch Republic and Russia. For this reason the essays will appear somewhat unbalanced, focusing more on contrasting than on comparing. In the spirit of the prompt, however, essays that receive scores in the higher ranges must both compare and contrast.

In the 17th century four common themes characterized both the Dutch Republic and Russia:

- Both were faced with the challenge of restive nobility.
- Both were struggling to finance massive military expenditures.
- Both were trying to make their economies modern to compete with powerful neighbors.
- Both were experimenting with ways to increase government revenues.

Because of the common fiscal issues similar to both countries, discussion of similarities will focus much more on economic issues than on social issues.

On closer examination, the Dutch Republic and Russia were far more different than they were similar:

- Russia had a relatively large noble class — 7 percent of the population; the nobility in Holland was restricted primarily to two thousand families out of a population of roughly two million.
- Russia was desperately trying to domesticate a large and dangerous boyar class; the primary challenge to the Dutch government from the nobility was found in the States General.
- Peter the Great was trying to transform the Russian service nobility from a social class based on blood to an aristocracy based on merit; the nobility of the Netherlands was defined by commercial excellence.
- Russia was clamping down on its serfs after numerous Cossack and agrarian revolts; serfdom in the Netherlands had disappeared almost two centuries earlier.
- Russia was a rigidly stratified society divided between noble and serf; the Dutch Republic was socially much more fluid and dynamic.
- Women in Russia were a major source of labor; women in the Dutch Republic were beginning to emerge as a truly modern class of leisure.
- There was no commercial class in Russia; the middle class in the Netherlands was what virtually defined the country.
- Russia was primarily agricultural; the Netherlands was the world’s leader in commerce and mercantilist polices.
- Russia was frozen in a backwater of medieval agricultural practices; the Netherlands was the world’s economic leader.
- Russia was trying to secularize the Church and rein in the Old Believers; the Dutch Reformed Church had been an institution of religious toleration for over a century.
Between 1600 - 1725, the Netherlands was primarily dominated by its Golden Age. Before 1600, the Netherlands were under the thumb of the Catholic Hapsburgs and controlled from a distant place. After Calvinist revolts took place and with aid from England's Virgin Queen Elizabeth, the Netherlands became an independent state. They were a state that progressed from 1600 - 1725 mostly in a time of great prosperity and toleration, however by the middle of 17th century and until 1725, the Netherlands slowly digressed in terms of European power. Russia similarly to the Netherlands also overcame its tyrannical rule of the Mongols prior to 1600. The 1600s in Russia were a time of political instability and it showed economically and socially on the people in their state. However, they were different from Western in that as the Netherlands slowly spiraled out of top tier European power ranks, the Russians, under Peter the Great became more economically and socially similar to the West. Since the years in the early half of 17th century, workshops are thought of as a time of prosperity and wealth for the Netherlands. Due to their sea trade in the Baltic, overseas
colonial exploits in East Asia, and companies such as the Dutch East India Company in the Netherlands were extremely wealthy. They also enjoyed Europe's best banking, which came from their enormous marine trade force. As a result of this, the Netherlands had the highest standard of living in Europe. However, as the century progressed, these trade barriers and other policies, particularly England and France sought to sabotage their success by force. One such act of violence came from Oliver Cromwell in the Protectorate. Another act of violence came from Charles II of England and Louis XIV in France. Louis XIV, the most famous absolute monarch, wanted more territory in the Netherlands and sought to take it from them with the help of Charles II. As a result, Dutch trade ships were destroyed and the Dutch economy was affected and slowly they lost control of their great income.

Russia, on the other hand, was an extremely backward state at the beginning of the 17th century. Although they had a vast amount of land and resources, the Russians were plagued by tyrants such as Ivan the Terrible and social and political unrest such as
assassinations. As a result, Russia was behind the times at the early 17th century, looked more like a nation in the Middle Ages than one in the Early modern period. However, this changed with naming of Tsar Peter the Great. Peter the Great's main goals were to westernize Russia and pull it from the dark ages and backwardness of time. One way he did this was reforming the Russian nobility and creating rules to westernize them such as limiting traditional dress and making them shave. He also established a fantastic army and made noble conscripted as officers nearly for life. This army even defeated Charles X of Sweden in the Battle of Parnawa and gained Peter respectable territory to add to his state. Most importantly, is that he built his “Window to the West” which was St. Petersburg. As a part and his new capital city, he organized St. Petersburg all along western lines and drew in thousands of Russians and building his westernized city. His plan worked and Russia be came to the forefront of Europe’s most powerful nations. Where the Dutch started off strong in the early 17th century, the Russians were a backward and non-existent European power.
As time went on, nations carved away at the Dutch Netherlands through war at trade interruption and made the Netherlands significantly less powerful by 1725. Russia, however, grew in power mostly thanks to Peter the Great’s exploits at goals of becoming a more Great Western State.
In the early 1600s, while the Dutch were fighting a series of wars with England over trade routes (the Anglo-Dutch wars), the Russian Muscovites were fighting a different kind of war— a war with the Boyars, the Russian nobility. Following the pattern of development in western versus Eastern Europe, while the Netherlands was forming a strong, liberal republic, Russia was consolidating authoritarian power under a single ruler. The reasons for the differences in development of the Netherlands and Russia were largely economic; whereas the Dutch had a thriving international economy, the Russians had been ruled for 200 years by the Mongols and were socially and economically backward. Thus, from 1600-1725, the Netherlands became increasingly liberal and prosperous (until about 1700), while Russia became more oppressive and autocratic.

The thriving economy of the Netherlands allowed it to devolve power, eventually eliminating the need for a monarch at all and forming the Dutch Republic. By 1600, the Dutch had established a vast trade empire in the Indies; advanced naval tactics, such as mounting cannon on the fast caravels, had allowed joint-stock companies, such as the Dutch East India Trading Company, to set up outposts across the Indian Ocean. The vast wealth accumulated by
popular luxury goods—especially spices—went straight into the purse of the Dutch middle class. Thus, the thriving economy built by a prosperous international empire facilitated the growth of the middle class. This prosperity was further augmented by natural geographical advantage: the Netherlands were the logical crossroads between Western Europe and the resource-rich Baltic states, and Dutch fishermen were highly successful. A large middle class paves the way for republican rule, as the increasingly large number of educated men became aware of the ideas of men like Thomas More and John Locke. It has been seen throughout history that the more educated a population is, the less likely it is to put up with authoritarian rule.

This was not the case in Russia. In Russia in 1600, the vast majority of people were poor, illiterate peasants. Only the "Great Prince" of Moscow had any great claim to power, as they had built up wealth as servants of the Mongol Khan. In the early 1600s, Ivan III of Moscow felt strong enough to stop paying tribute to the Khan. His son, Ivan IV, known as "Ivan the Terrible," assumed the throne and became the first tsar. He quickly began to consolidate power, taking it from the nobles through coercion and terror. The tsar's power was augmented by
state control of the Russian Orthodox Church. As a loyal supporter of the tsar, the Orthodox Church was one of the few ways the tsar could reach and influence the sefs. Desperately poor and almost completely uneducated, the Russian sefs swapped hard work for one rule to another who the Muscovite prince took power. In return for greater political support, the tsar had agreed to give the boyar greater and greater control over the sefs, until Russian peasant was little better than slaves chained to the land.

By 1650, both the Netherlands and Russia had taken a turn for the worse. The Dutch Republic, so dependent on its wealth for its support, was fighting against of wars with the Protectorate (England under Oliver Cromwell). Previously unrivaled, the Dutch merchant marine was once threat from the powerful English navy. Economic rivalry, in addition to the costs of involvement in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), promised to cause trouble for the Republic. However, the Glorious Revolution of 1689 placed the Dutch prince, William of Orange, on the English throne. Naturally, dispute between England and the Netherlands ended, and the Netherlands returned to its previous stability (though its economy was harmed). Russia, on the other hand, went through a period of uneasy

bitterness roughly 1654-1700 called the 'Time of Troubles.'
Ivan IV's son had died childless. However, the restoration of the tsar was the Romanov family restored once again, as Peter I, or Peter the Great, once again consolidated power. Support for the regime was greatly strengthened when Russia won the Great Northern War with Sweden, and western technology was adopted as Peter worked to modernize the army. The construction of the city of St. Petersburg is a testimony to tsarist power at the time, and the tsar has the unchallenged role.

For economic reasons, the Netherlands, or the Dutch Republic, was a highly successful republic. For many years, the standard of living in the Netherlands was the highest in Europe. While the Anglo-Dutch wars and the Thirty Years' War threatened republicanism, the ascension of William of Orange to the throne of England seemed to reverse this bad fortune, and once was restored once more. In Russia, on the other hand, the tsar witnessed the birth of a powerful tsarist regime, Chaotic, made possible by the renewal of rights for nobles and Jews alike.
Both Russia and Netherlands developed a lot in the period 1600–1725. The progress on the developments show a lot of similarities is similar in that both countries adopted religious toleration and liberal government. However, two countries differed in that Russia chose militaristic method to additionally expand its influence, whereas Netherlands chose commercial method.

To analyze both countries' common points, they both had a successful result in religious toleration. Catherine the Great of Russia, whom called to be the Enlightened Despot, was inspired by enlightened notions, so she gave tolerance on Calvinists living in Russia and stopped irritating them. As a result, Russia developed a lot with synergy effect on economy and society, under the name of "enlightened despotism". Very similar to Russia, the United Province of Netherlands at its height in Seventeenth Century was innately tolerant to religious minorities. It adopted the same policy in different nations brought about harmonious results. Furthermore, they both had liberalized government. Although partially liberalized, Russia lost its rigidity through the Westernization policy of Peter the Great and enlightened policy of Catherine the Great. Netherlands had an unrestricted government, which boomed up its economy to be called "Golden Age" in Seventeenth Century. Hence, there were two common points that Russia and Netherlands shared.
Russia and Netherlands were not, however, all the same in other aspect of policies. Peter the Great of Russia, in first-half of his reign, had many aims to expand and to gain territories. It was only last-half of his reign when he had liberated policies. Catherine the Great, furthermore, paraled enlightened policy with expansionist policy. She acquired Poland through war during her reign.

On the other hand, Netherlands, so called United Province of Dutch Republic, was as aggressive as unrestrictive. Its laissez-faire based policy made merchants to rule the country, unlike Russia where strong despot ruled the country.

Hence, Russia and Netherlands are similar in their developments in religious tolerance, and liberated policies. However, Russia was based on dull and strong power of military, whereas Netherlands had mild power of mercantilism.
Question 2

Sample: 2A
Score: 7

This essay provides a good thesis. It considers both Russia and the Dutch Republic, treating both the similarities and the differences between them well. It demonstrates extensive knowledge of economics in the Dutch Republic and also shows a good general understanding of Russia. It did not earn a higher score because there are too many chronological errors concerning Russia. It shows a more sophisticated understanding of Russian and Dutch Republic history and includes a more extensive discussion of economic and social differences between the two than essays that earned lower scores.

Sample: 2B
Score: 5

This essay provides a good thesis and a solid discussion of economic differences between Russia and the Dutch Republic. However, it only considers economic differences between the two. It did not merit a higher score because it did not consider similarities. The essay is better than a typical essay that earned a lower score because of the quality of the thesis and the amount of detail included.

Sample: 2C
Score: 1

The thesis of this essay is not acceptable. Neither the discussion of religious toleration nor the discussion of enlightened despotism is acceptable. The only redeeming feature of the essay is the brief second paragraph that includes a factual statement about the Netherlands. It did not earn a higher score because too much of it is off task, irrelevant and factually wrong.