



AP[®] Government & Politics: Comparative 1999 Scoring Commentary

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Question 1

Sample S - 6 Points

This student identifies two similarities and two differences (two points). The two discussions of similarities (both are heads of their respective parties and parliament and both lead policy initiatives) provide specific illustrations from each country (two points). The discussion of the difference of accountability refers to policy issues for illustrations, while the essay also discusses the process of removal from office in both countries (two points).

Sample DD - 3 Points

The essay presents two differences, and one similarity (one point). Another similarity is identified as the PM's being "the most important" in their systems; this does not receive credit because it is too generic. Discussions of the two differences are developed with supporting information how PM's share power with their respective heads of state and their role as leaders of the majority party in each country (two points).

Sample W - 1 Points

The essay identifies both PM's roles as leaders of their Parliaments and their leadership of majority parties as two general similarities (one point). The two differences are inaccurate, e.g., "the National Assembly is the Upper House," "the British Prime Minister can do whatever he wants." There is no developed discussion.

Question 2

Sample GG - 6 points

The student introduces the essay very well by describing examples of ethnic conflict for both nations (Chechnya in Russia and Chiappas in Mexico) (two points). The student identifies the use of military force by both countries to resolve this conflict (two points). When discussing the impact on political stability, the student provides a thorough assessment for both countries (two points).

Sample Z - 5 points

Chiapas is described as an ethnic conflict in Mexico (one point) and the use of troops as a method for resolving the conflict is identified (one point). The student also explains the impact of this ethnic conflict on stability within Mexico (one point). The description of the Chechnyan conflict in Russia is too generic to receive credit but the student identifies the use of the military as one method to resolve the conflict (one point). Credit is also given for the assessment of its impact on political stability in Russia (one point).

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Question 2 (cont'd.)

Sample M - 4 points

The student describes the ethnic conflict in Chiapas for the Mexican case (one point) but he does not discuss a method used by the government or the impact of this ethnic conflict on political stability. The Russian ethnic conflict is adequately discussed (one point) and the use of the military is identified as a method (one point). There is a discussion of the impact on stability (one point).

Question 3

Sample S - 5 Points

The student identifies two patterns shown in the graph (one point). A market economy is described and is linked back to information on the graph (two points). The open door policy is described and linked to the patterns in the graph (two points). The attempt at a political consequence does not receive credit.

Sample T - 3 Points

The student identifies the decline of percentage of state ownership and the increase in the percentage of individual ownership (one point). The reform of privatization is described with a link to reducing state owned industry (two points). The information on foreign ownership is just a re-statement of the pattern and earns no points. No discussion on political consequences is given.

Sample W - 2 Point

The two patterns are a direct reading of the graph (one point). The open market system is discussed but no link to the patterns in the graph is given (one point). The discussion on the peasant is irrelevant to the question.

Question 4

Sample GG - 7 points

This essay begins with the correct identification of three factors contributing to legitimacy: political stability, economic development, and national identity (one point). All three are discussed in a general sense (three points). The linkage of these three factors to Nigeria is exceptional (three points). The factual material fits very well with the conceptual discussion and shows a high degree of specific knowledge about Nigeria.

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Question 4 (cont'd.)

Sample S - 4 points

Another variant in the middle-range of responses is illustrated in this example. The student correctly identifies three factors—the rule of law, responsiveness (“desire of the masses”) and citizen confidence—as contributing to legitimacy (one point). The general discussion of these three factors is strong (three points). However, the final section—linkage to Nigeria—is weak and no points were given. This essay was strong on the conceptual side, but very weak in the empirical application of these concepts.

Sample V - 3 points

In this essay three factors contributing to legitimacy were **not** correctly identified—“improvement and peace among the people”—were not scored as two separate factors and so no points were earned. The general discussion of the accepted factors was mixed; the election and economic improvement were adequate (two points). The discussion of the Indian case is weak with only citizen involvement linked sufficiently (one point).