



AP[®] European History 2001 Sample Student Responses

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AA1

Throughout the ages children have played a role in the way families were structured. Society, however, dictated the ways many children ~~were~~ lived and ^{were} raised. In the period from 1750 to 1900 increased urbanization and industrialization changed European attitudes towards children and child rearing.

In the mid eighteenth century western Europe was still largely an agriculturally dominated area. In such an area nobles were often the only ones who could afford to have children raised in a similar fashion as today. For example, the children of nobility were raised by wet nurses, seen as heirs to their parents, and usually educated in some way. However, for the majority of European men and women children equaled labor. Working on large farms, or subsistence farming both required many hands. Children were a liability, but they were far more help. Family ties were not strong in either class of society because children were either raised by nurses, or sent out to work at very young ages, and then they married. No compulsory education was established, therefore children did not often surpass the knowledge of their parents. This is not to say that parents did not love their children, but the familial ties did not bind too strongly in mid eighteenth century Europe.

However, by the turn of the century changes in technology were changing the way children were thought of and raised. Tools such as the hand loom and the cotton gin began to draw people away from the agricultural life and into work in either a domestic system, or factory. No longer did children of peasants become laborers. Now for the first few years of life children were more of a liability. This led to delayed time between marriage and birth, and a closer relationship between mothers and children. The concept of nobility began to dwindle as a "middle class" swiftly rose. Now children of all classes became closer to their parents as an attitude of "providing" for children began to take hold. Some compulsory education and child labor laws were established which further closed the gap between nobility and peasantry, and strengthened family ties as children were forced to live at home longer without leaving to work or marry. The attitudes toward children and child rearing were beginning to move in the direction of stronger family ties, and a smaller family as the nineteenth century reached its midpoint.

Halfway through the nineteenth century western Europe saw the full effects of full blown industrialization. Factories and urbanized

Cities were now common place, and home to much of Europe's populace. Family size was now only two to four children, as children no longer equated to labor. Children of nobility remained educated, but now stood to inherit more than land and title. Furthermore, the distinction between "nobility" and "peasantry" was a very fine line. Child labor laws and compulsory education for all made middle and lower class children closer to their "privileged" peers. A desire to raise children to have a better life than their parents began to shape. Many middle class and lower families wanted their children not for labor, but to be educated and have more opportunities than their parents. As a result marriage now tended to be delayed, and the time between marriage and the birth of a first child remained delayed as well. Planned families led to stronger family ties and relationships in all classes and children became an emotional fulfillment for parents rather than a sole source of labor.

In short, The new technologies of industrialization and urbanization of countries led to the shift from children as commodities to children as loving family members in the period 1750-1900.

B, 2.

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BB1

② European attitudes toward children and child-rearing changed drastically in the period from 1750 to 1900. Greater interest in child-rearing developed as time progressed and importance increased. These changes were aided by the advancement of medicine as well as knowledge gained through specialized books. Child-rearing also differed among the classes.

Europeans began to take much more of an interest in the wellbeing of their children throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. Old methods of child-rearing such as swaddling the baby and the use of wet nurses decreased as new knowledge was gained. Women ^{often} began to breast feed ~~more~~ and relied less heavily on nurses ~~and nurses~~ to take care of the children. Specialized books on child-rearing popped up everywhere ~~in~~ Women also began to have fewer children for economic reasons, ~~being~~ being that a large family is much more difficult to support. Therefore women had more attention to place on each individual child.

Because of medical advancements, fewer babies were dying, allowing mothers to establish a closer rapport with their newborns without fear of emotional attachment. ~~This~~ This greater interest in child-rearing developed mainly among the middle and upper classes. Because of this great interest in childhood development, the lives of these classes of children were somewhat restricted and they required greater dependence on their parents.

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BB2

However, in the working classes, child-rearing differed in that the Industrial revolution interfered with normal familial relations. Many children worked in the factories and were thereby granted much more independence than the restricted middle and upper class children. Because they earned their own wages, working class young adults ~~sometimes~~ would often live ~~to~~ independently of their families. In addition, many of the working class families continued to have large numbers of offspring ~~to~~ due to the wages they could receive until child labor laws prevented children from working.

In conclusion, methods of child-rearing gradually improved in Western Europe over the 18th and 19th centuries. New knowledge paved the way for this improvement, abolishing old child practices and instituting new ones. In addition, child-rearing attitudes varied among the classes due to the influence of the Industrial Revolution on family relationships.