



AP[®] U.S. History 2001 Sample Student Responses

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In the early 1900's the United States was overwhelmed by an influx of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe. Millions of them arrived in droves from Italy and especially from Russia, where many Jews were fleeing to escape persecution at the hands of the Russian Czar.

The new immigrants that arrived in America were the opposite of those that had arrived in the Early Migration of 1830's. The early immigrants had mostly ~~come~~ ^{come} from Northern and Western Europe and had either spoken English or been well-educated enough to integrate themselves into American society. Their appearance and customs were in many ways very similar to those in America as was their belief in Christianity, whether Protestant or Catholic.

The new wave of immigrants were mostly poor, uneducated rural farmers. They had no grasp of the English language and were not educated in their own. Urban life bewildered them and so they lived together in various sections of the cities rather than integrating themselves into American society. Their customs and way of life differed obviously from those of Americans. Most new immigrants were ^{Italian} Catholics ^{or} Russian Jews who found it difficult to hide their ~~often~~ ^{often} obvious nationality.

Americans resented the new immigrants in urban areas. They resented the competition for work and the fact that ~~the~~ immigrant workers dragged down wages by

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accepting next to nothing in payment. They also resented the rise of slums and unsanitary conditions that arose as a result of the overcrowding of immigrants into insufficient housing. Many Americans began to view the new immigrants as ~~stupid~~ ^{unintelligent} and dirty, and essentially inferior.

Following WWI, immigrants felt the brunt of America's Red Scare, a fear of communism as a reaction to the Bolshevik revolution in Russia during the war. FBI leader Palmer led "Palmer raids" to ferret out communists and anarchists. He arrested about 600 potential rebels but only a ~~few~~ handful were ever found to merit deportation.

The case of Sacco and Vanzetti is a clear illustration of the anti-immigrant views that Americans held during the Red Scare. Sacco and Vanzetti were two Italians that were accused of murder during an armed robbery. They were also, coincidentally, anarchists. At their trial, they were attacked more for their ^{race and} political convictions than ~~for~~ ^{than} for their supposed ~~crime~~ crime. They were found guilty, but died still protesting their innocence.

In the 1920's there was a strong revival of racist attitudes. The findings of Social Darwinism implied that people of Western European stock were

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naturally superior to other races because of their success in the U.S. The KKK also began its revival in the 1920's attacking Jews, Catholics, and all non-natives ~~and~~ or non-western Europeans. Anti-immigrant sentiment grew so strong that in 1924, Congress passed a law limiting the number of immigrants allowed into the U.S. The law stated that ~~the~~ ^{only} 3% of the number of foreigners of a particular nationality living in U.S. in 1910 would be permitted to enter the U.S. A few years later the law was changed so that only 3% of immigrants living in the U.S. before 1890 would be allowed in. This law made immigration of Eastern Europeans impossible because few came to America before 1905. Japanese, ^{who Americans also perceived as inferior,} were also prevented from sending more than a handful of settlers to the U.S. The law instead favored Western and Northern Europeans similar to those who had arrived in the first waves of immigration. The law showed Americans' desire to maintain a homogenous white society. Few Western and Northern Europeans wanted to come to the U.S., however, and immigration slowed to a trickle.

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Between 1900 and 1930, Americans experienced a progressive movement, a world war ~~and then~~ followed by disillusionment, + then a depression. At this time, America was ~~trying~~ bouncing through good + bad periods + trying to do what was best for the country. Many Americans saw immigrants as a threat to government as well as to their own well being + economic security; ^{this insecurity} ~~which~~ contributes to ^{the rise of} a nativist sentiment among Americans.

Beginning in the 1900's, progressives were looking to accomplish things at home. They wanted to end corruption in big business + to do this, they pushed for anti-monopolies + established unions to improve working conditions, hours + wages. Immigrants threatened these ~~movements~~ reform movements because they would accept less pay for work + could take away jobs.

After WWI, all of society faces disillusionment. Entering war, Americans wanted to save the world; after the war,

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they wanted very little to do with outside affairs. This same sentiment leads to the passing of Immigration Quota Acts. The Sacco - Vanzetti trial also signifies the growing animosity towards immigrants, as the trial is basically decided on the basis of their being immigrants & therefore guilty. The Red Scare of post-war also develops this idea of nativist sentiment; people are very afraid of the corruption & anarchy that they think immigrants are responsible for causing in their government. Fitzgerald's the Great Gatsby depicts this post-WWI disillusionment & nativism especially through Mike who makes anti-immigrant slurs.

In the Depression, the American economy is suffering. ~~As seen in the progress~~ Immigrants are found, now more than ever, as a threat. There are not enough jobs to go around, and immigrants are seen as people ~~stealing~~ who steal U.S. jobs.

Thus, Americans feel like not only their government is in danger of anarchy &

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corruption w/ communism, but also their economic well-being.

During the 19th century, waves of immigrants came to American soil. The US citizens displayed a sort of beginning ~~to~~ nativist beliefs once these immigrants started coming from Southern and Eastern Europe. ~~A~~ The Americans could handle the "old immigrants" from Eastern and Northern Europe because they ~~to~~ looked similar, shared the same alphabet, and were generally easier to assimilate. In response to the "New Immigrants" Americans indeed displayed a nativist attitude most directly seen ~~in~~ from 1900-1930.

One of the first reasons these new immigrants were received so harshly was because they were associated with unions. They were associated with unions because immigrants generally became part of the labor force in big cities and factories. There is no doubt that they dealt with numerous abuses ^{and} ~~to~~ were right to organize unions, but, the truth was, unions were considered socialistic and therefore, very unpopular.

Although this was hard to overcome, it was even harder ^{for a} ~~to~~ get along once the Bolshevik Revolution occurred in Russia. This revolution set America into a frenzied state of xenophobia. It was known as the Red Scare. Thus, many immigration laws were passed to allow minimal immigrants from each country. Also, the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 and the Immigration Act of 1924 clearly showed favoritism towards the immigrants coming from Northern and Eastern Europe. The laws only let a small percentage of the immigrants

who entered in 1890, mainly all Northern and Eastern, to be allowed to enter again. Furthermore, A. Mitchell Palmer ~~for~~ extended the country's fear of foreigners by holding "Palmer raids" and deporting immigrants.

Although America used to pride itself on being the world's "melting pot" and encouraged immigration to its shores, notably Emma Lazarus's the "New Colossus" on the Statue of Liberty, it was shutting its doors. It preferred isolation. ~~It would not~~ It would not come out of its state of isolation until Pearl Harbor in 1941.