

Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2018 AP[®] United States History Free-Response Questions

• Number of Students Scored	501,530		
• Number of Readers	2,337		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	53,424	10.7
	4	92,518	18.4
	3	114,067	22.7
	2	113,597	22.7
	1	127,924	25.5
• Global Mean	2.66		

The following comments on the 2018 free-response questions for AP[®] United States History were written by the Chief Reader, Dr. Michelle Kuhl, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

Question #1**Task:** Short Answer**Topic:** American Revolution Analyzing Secondary Sources**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.06***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- The question asked students to describe a difference between two excerpts from secondary source texts about the causes of the American Revolution. The first, by Gary Nash, argued that the growth of cities and their transition away from a barter economy destabilized established political traditions. The second, by Pauline Maier, traced the revolutionary impulse to the continued popularity of 17th-century English political ideas about the duty of people to challenge authority. In other words, Nash thought cities led to the Revolution, while Maier thought ideas were the main cause.
- Responses then had to explain how one piece of evidence could be used to support the arguments in each of the excerpts.
- Students had to understand what Nash and Maier argued well enough to describe a difference between the two authors' views, use evidence about the causes of the American Revolution to support Nash's view, and then use evidence about the causes of the American Revolution to support Maier's view.
- This question focused on the reasoning process of Analyzing Primary Sources.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on American and National Identity.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concepts 3.1 and 3.2.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Overall, many students successfully wielded knowledge from this pre-revolutionary period to support claims by Nash or Maier about the cause of the revolution. In the most common pattern, students connected Nash with economic activity and taxes, and matched Maier with ideas from the Enlightenment, such as natural rights.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most common problem was reading comprehension, or lack of ability to demonstrate comprehension. Students often quoted key passages of the excerpts, but did not put the essential ideas in their own words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses addressed both arguments and described differences between the two. • "Nash claimed that American urban, commercial cities were the origins of change, particularly the American War of Independence. In fact, the War for Independence stemmed from urban agitation. In contrast, Maier claimed that the American Revolution stemmed from the history of English revolutions (the English Civil War), which sets a precedent and an example for overthrowing a tyrannical government."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common student misconception of Nash was suggesting he saw a conflict between rural and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better responses asserted that the change in a new commercial system in coastal cities and the rise of new

<p>urban areas of the country or a regional conflict between the North and the South rather than a conflict between cities and the imperial authority. Relatedly, some responses included evidence outside the time period. For example, some responses asserted that the conflict between rural and urban related to the industrialized North and the rural South which eventually led America to the Civil War.</p>	<p>classes caused societal changes in the way that people began to think of one another and challenge mercantilist policies of Great Britain. This would lead to an eventual conflict and revolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nash argues that revolutionary spirit stemmed from the cutting-edge economy of coastal commercial cities. ...Nash’s argument is that it was a newfound innovation in colonies that caused revolutionary sentiment—beginning and perpetuated in the colonies. ...Radical revolutionary groups, like the Sons of Liberty, were formed in and acted mostly in the coastal, urban cities described by Nash.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some responses argued that the Haitian Revolution exemplifies Maier’s argument. This is a difficult connection to make; it was later in time and arose from a different revolutionary origin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses supported Maier by arguing that authors of the Declaration of Independence and “Common Sense” were clearly influenced by Enlightenment writers such as John Locke with “life, liberty.” • “Thomas Paine’s ‘Common Sense,’ written about ideas of reason, liberty, and equality, was immensely popular among colonists at this time and stirred revolutionary spirit. Paine was inspired by and drew upon ideas from British revolutionaries like Locke...”

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Students should practice reading primary and secondary source documents in the classroom. Teachers could have exercises where students put a scholar’s argument in their own words without quoting the author.
- Students should learn to distinguish the main points of an assertion or argument from minor details.
- Students should regularly use secondary source documents that relate to each time period so that the students have adequate practice in analyzing these documents and how they relate to each other and the period.
- Students should learn the concept of historical perspectives.
- Students should practice the skill of causation from multiple themes. In this question, scholars argued for economic and intellectual origins of the revolution.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/

Period 3 Teaching and Assessing Module, Focus on Research and Focus on Teaching. Visit:
cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory

Question #2**Task:** Short Answer**Topic:** Theodore Roosevelt Causation**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.82***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- The responses were expected to demonstrate the ability to analyze a primary source image of a Progressive Era political cartoon of Theodore Roosevelt and describe how it conveys a perspective about government. Next, responses needed to use the skill of Causation to examine what prior events led to the situation in the cartoon. Finally, responses were expected to use Causation to show how Progressive Era debates had an effect.
- Students were expected to demonstrate knowledge of Progressive Era reform movements and the public's expectations in regard to government involvement and regulation.
- Responses could have touched on laissez-faire approaches to government involvement in business, investigative journalism's exposure of corruption in economics or the business sector, concepts of government regulation in the Progressive period, and later iterations of the role of government in regulating society.
- Responses could have looked either at immediate outcomes of the meat scandal within the Progressive Era, such as the Meat Inspection and Pure Food and Drug Acts, the establishment of the FDA, or broader ranging regulations of business and society, such as the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.
- This question focused on the skill of Causation and the reasoning process of Analyzing Primary Sources.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on Politics and Power.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concept 7.1.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Skills Required: Analysis of primary source image, causation, contextualization
- Students were most successful with identifying that the principles of the Progressive Era were focused on uncovering social corruption and a desire to reform, but did struggle with specifics, connection to the image, or emphasizing the artist's perspective.
- Responses were able to identify the means by which these reforms were going to take place but struggled with explaining causation.
- For example, they identified muckraking or *The Jungle* as relevant but were not always able to explain how it directly connected to Roosevelt and the image.
- Continuity over time was a more difficult concept for students, often conflating two different time periods without explaining the connection.
- Responses could often identify the immediate outcome but struggled to connect it to the broader role of government in society.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students incorrectly analyzed the image as the president or government hiding and covering up the meat scandal. Students assumed that President Theodore Roosevelt is refusing to investigate or the investigation “smells bad” but they are ignoring it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses established the artist’s perspective by showing that society wanted the government to get involved with regulation of the meat scandal and while the government was reluctant, it ultimately had a responsibility to do so. “The artist is a muckraker, trying to expose the scandals and unfair conditions in industries. He is making a comment about Theodore Roosevelt in that the federal government has begun to crack down on health codes and make new legislations to protect people. The role of the government is coming out laissez-faire and beginning to make reforms to the country.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students argued that the Meat Inspection Act and FDA were examples of events that caused the historical situation depicted in the political cartoon, rather than effects of government involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses emphasized how the development of investigative journalism produced works such as <i>The Jungle</i> and muckraking exposed the conditions of food production which led to the government having to step in and institute reforms. “The development of Upton Sinclair’s book called <i>The Jungle</i> exposed the corruption within the meat-packing industry for its unsanitary conditions. This development led to stricter laws such as with the FDA that oversaw meatpacking sanitization and inspected the meats before they were sold.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students conflated Theodore and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Students used the New Deal as a specific outcome of Progressive Era debates, but failed to specifically connect it back to the image or the specific role of government. Students provided broad Progressive reforms, but did not provide a specific connection to how they were an outcome from the image, or did not specifically connect to the role of government in society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the New Deal or other broad Progressive reforms were used correctly, the student made a clear and direct connection between the Progressive Era government regulation reforms that developed as a consequence from the historical events in the image “As a result of the Progressive Era debates, there was more regulation. The Pure Food and Drug Act was passed and child labor laws. Many reforms were made to fix the industries.”

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Use more primary source images from earlier time periods to teach students how to analyze and use an image to support an answer. Scaffold by starting with description of an image and then adapt into analysis.
 - Reverse engineer the question by giving students the concepts first and then having them identify which image represents those concepts from a series of images.
- Emphasize the importance of always addressing the “how and why” of an answer and practice adding that addition into their answers. Students did a good job by providing specific terms for the answers, but stopped there.
- Make sure that students can accurately establish connections between time periods. Students struggled with causation in part (c). They either provided broad Progressive Era debates but failed to connect them to the image and governmental reform, or they provided the outcomes of those debates but did not connect them back to the Progressive Era, image, or governmental reform.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/
- Critical Interpretation of Images and the AP History Classroom Visit: apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-united-states-history
- Period 7 Teaching and Assessing Module, Focus on Research. Visit: cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory

Question #3**Task:** Short Answer**Topic:** Religion in Spanish & New England Colonies Comparison**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.39***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- The responses were expected to explain a difference in the role of religion between the Spanish and New England colonies in the period from 1500 to 1750. Next, the responses were expected to explain a similarity in the role of religion between the Spanish and New England colonies in the period from 1500 to 1750. Finally, the responses were to explain a specific example showing an effect of religion in either the Spanish or New England colonies between 1500 and 1750.
- This question focused on the skills of Comparison and Causation.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on Culture and Society.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concept 2.2.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- When finding a difference between the Spanish and New England colonies on the basis of religion, the students had adequate knowledge of the basic differences.
- When asked to find the similarities between the Spanish and New England colonies in terms of religion, the students demonstrated a broad general understanding of the similarities but many struggled to discuss similarities in a concrete manner.
- When asked for a specific example of an effect of religion on either the Spanish or New England colonies, the students had an adequate knowledge and most could briefly explain their example.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two of the most common misconceptions to this question were identifying the correct religion and the geography of the Spanish and New England colonies. In particular, responses confused the geographic constraints of the New England colonies. Some responses tended to place both the Middle (particularly Pennsylvania) and the Southern (particularly Jamestown) colonies in the New England region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses recognized the correct religion and geography for each colony. • “In New England, people who came to North America came in regard to religious persecution. There is a major protestant group that settles in this area during the 1600s and 1700s to escape the Church of England. ... In the New England colonies, religion plays a huge role in the bringing up of colonies around Massachusetts for example. Although those who came from England wanted to escape religious persecution, they still shunned free thinkers like Ann Hutchinson and Roger Williams (who goes on to Rhode Island. ...”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students did not recognize that both Catholicism and Protestantism (Puritanism) are part of Christianity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses demonstrated an implicit awareness that Catholicism and Protestantism were both parts of Christianity. “The Spanish’s goal was to convert natives to Christianity. ... The difference in regard to religion in N.E. was that many people flooded to N.E. for religious refuge after occurrences like the Protestant Reformation in Europe.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses did not see the difference between the First and Second Great Awakening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses demonstrated an understanding of the distinct nature of the First Great Awakening. “An effect of the Puritan way of life was the First Great Awakening. This caused new and different types of Christianity with Jonathon Edwards leading the way.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses did not fully explain specific examples such as the Salem Witch Trials or Halfway Covenant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses gave details to flesh out their examples. “Religion played a major role in lives of the New England colonies. Puritan rules were very strict and those who went outside the rules were dealt with harshly. For example, the Salem Witch Trials were based on some people not conforming to society and were proclaimed to be “demonic” and killed.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses did not adequately explain Puritan ideals and society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses developed a fuller explanation that distinguished them from minimal or inaccurate discussions. “Puritan society was based upon the strict understanding of the Bible. The main leaders were ministers. Education was very important to them, so they could read the Bible and follow the laws.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses did not differentiate between religious freedom and religious persecution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses went beyond a mere mention of terms and developed definitions using historically accurate information. “The Puritans wanted to set up a colony that had religious freedom for Puritans only as they were being persecuted in England for wanting reform the Church of England.”

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

1. One of the major problems with responses to this question was the geographical reasoning of the students. For example, students frequently put Pennsylvania and Maryland in the New England colonies. To help students understand this better, the teachers could assign map awareness exercises and assessments for each of the time periods in American history.
2. Students are confused about the idea of religious freedom and assume all the New England white colonists had it. One way to teach this concept is to use primary sources that show one group's freedom is another group's persecution. One exercise to address this could use the writings of John Winthrop and Roger Williams as counterpoints to each other. Teachers may deploy writings from other colonial regions and thinkers, as well.
3. Students had a difficult time explaining a similarity between the Spanish and New England colonies in terms of religion. To remedy this, teachers could have students create a chart listing different qualities of life in the "New World" and how individuals are treated by the Spanish, English, Dutch, and French in the different colonies.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/
- Period 2 Teaching and Assessing Module, Focus on Research. Visit: cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory

Question #4**Task:** Short Answer Question**Topic:** Internal Migration Comparison**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.28***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- The question asked students to describe a difference between the internal migration patterns in the United States in the period 1910–1940 and the internal migration patterns in the period 1941–1980. Next, it asked them to describe a similarity between the internal migration patterns in these same two periods. Finally, it asked them to explain one impact of the internal migration patterns in either period.
- This question focused on the skills of Comparison and Causation.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on Migration and Settlement.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concepts 7.2 and 8.3.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Most responses were able to identify differences between eras (before 1940 and after 1940) and earned the first task point. A common pathway was to describe reasons for migrations, such as push and pull factors. Similarly, many students discussed reasons for migrations as grounds for similarity, such as the lure of war-time industrial jobs.
- The third task was more challenging but still many students understood that the third task asked for an effect and correctly linked migration to an impact in the appropriate time period such as the Harlem Renaissance, blight in urban areas, or how population growth led to more political clout.
- Overall, the responses showed student ability to apply the skills of comparison and causation to key twentieth century developments.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some responses confused internal migration with international immigration. • “In 1910-1940 many immigrants were coming from many different places like Greece, Germany, Italy, etc. They all came to America for a better life, better jobs.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students correctly stayed within the domestic United States and identified movement patterns. • “During the 1910s-1940s urbanization of the North leads to migration movements from predominantly the South to the North. During the 1940s-1980s a migration usually done by white people moved from urban cities to the suburbs.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some responses made overly general statements that flattened out historical specificity in order to find similarity between the two time periods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better responses used details to describe pull factors for movement and found ways of looking at the big picture to establish similarity.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Many women and African Americans moved to the cities to find work. Both of these groups moved in this pattern in both time periods.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Both movements were used as an escape. The southerners went to the North for jobs to escape poverty and unemployment in the South. Whites moved out of the cities in a movement called white flight to escape city slums and mostly AA who lived there.”
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Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Be sure to integrate skill-building exercises with content. Many students knew correct information about migrations but were unable to appropriately use that information for the skill requested.
- Conversely, refer to the content framework and be sure your lesson plans connect with key concepts. Many students had confusion about major historical developments such as World War I, World War II, the Great Migration, and suburbanization.
- A strategic way to think about short-answer questions are short drills, not a full essay. Some students still try to develop each task as a mini-essay with a thesis and development. These do earn points but probably cost students too much time. Other students can write brief, two-sentence responses that adequately fulfill the task and earn the same point.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/
- Teaching and Assessing Modules. Visit: cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory

**Document-Based
Question #1**

Task: Document-Based
Question

Topic: Expanding US Role in the
World, 1865–1910

Max. Points: 7

Mean Score: 2.42

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- The question required students to analyze the reasons for the actions and policies of the United States overseas. The content expectations of the question originated principally from Period 7 of the curriculum framework, which focuses on reasons for and outcomes of the rising prominence of the United States as an international power. Additionally, in the later elements of Period 6 of the framework, teachers are pointed in the direction of examining the role that rising American industrialization had in moving the United States toward securing foreign markets.
- The intention of the question was to determine if students could accurately evaluate why America’s role in the world expanded and weigh the relative importance of each cause during the period from 1865 to 1910. This question allowed for flexibility in approach, either through a chronological form of organization or a more thematic approach.
- The documents clearly pointed toward the following causes for America’s expanding role in the world: to increase trade markets for businesses, to build America’s prestige and power among other foreign powers, to uplift the races perceived as inferior by spreading American religious and economic principles, and to bring stability to countries and regions beyond the borders of the United States.
- This question focused on the skill of Causation, as well as Contextualization, Analyzing Primary Sources, and Argument Development.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on the role of America in the World.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concepts 6.1 and 7.1.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Overall, most students were able to clearly examine the causes of American imperialism, but the depth of their historical narratives varied greatly. It was obvious that teachers around the country had prepared them well in this area for it was a mainstream question that was very approachable to virtually all the students. Sometimes the students failed to take ownership of the question and fell into simply describing the content of the documents. Additionally, at times students didn’t answer the question asked. Some students turned the question into a late nineteenth century foreign policy question and simply described events of the period without examining American intentions and reasons for expanding abroad. These responses often bumped into reasons for imperial behavior but did it unintentionally and with very limited analysis.
- The historical reasoning skill of causation was required in this question. This is one of the most approachable skills in the AP course and students did well overall in performing it. Sometimes the chronology of students was off with the introduction of World War I occurring within the time frame, but for the most part responses did not have as many chronological issues as they have in the past. However, students did have difficulty with the expectation of relative importance and proving that in a meaningful way. Many of the responses did not attempt to contain this element in their response. Additionally, some responses showed a tendency to fall in to a pattern of simply describing American foreign policy or actions taken by the United States abroad without centering their response in terms of causes for these actions and policies.
- Appropriate understanding of historical political cartoons was not plentiful. Many students simply described the cartoons literally and did not introduce the satirical undertones the cartoons represented. The better responses, however, did show that this skill is being taught. Top answers correctly tied these cartoons to the intention of the artists by connecting America’s preconceived notions of race and exceptionalism to how these assumptions influenced America’s treatment of conquered peoples.
- Many students did an admirable job of establishing a thesis either at the beginning or conclusion of their responses. Likewise, many students accurately contextualized the question before, during and sometimes after

the period. The most common contextualization was an explanation of Manifest Destiny and how the ending of this internal expansion acted as a catalyst for expansionism abroad. However, there were many other forms of contextualization including the moral righteousness of the “White Man’s Burden” and its importance to moving abroad or the rising tide of industrialization and the need for overseas markets.

- The thesis point was frequently awarded. It was earned by approximately 59 percent of students.
- Many students also received the evidence point for using three documents. Virtually all the students that understood the question were able to attain this point. However, some students failed to get the second point for evidence from document use. This generally wasn’t due to an inability to correctly introduce evidence from six documents; but rather, from the failure to attach these to clear arguments or claims. To put it another way, they accurately presented content from at least 6 documents, but they simply did not use them to support a larger argument. Teachers need to make sure that they expect their students to elaborate more on the evidence and link it back to the argument.
- The most common and effective sourcing presented the historical situation for a document. For example, students might set up the Puck cartoon with a brief connection to the ongoing American-Filipino War. However, many students struggled with how to integrate point of view into their essays. This sourcing point was a challenge for many, especially in relation to the cartoons. Students tended to identify that a cartoon was biased and thus showed exaggeration. This example of point of view introduction fails to accurately connect to a larger argument and thus does not qualify for sourcing. Simply identifying one of the sourcing elements—point of view, audience, purpose or historical situation—also does not allow them to get over the threshold for sourcing. Overall, teachers are encouraged to emphasize linking the sourcing element to the argument in a more explicit manner.
- The complexity point was received by relatively few students. These essays showed a deeper, more sophisticated understanding of the prompt. They received this for a variety of reasons. Many received it for illustrating contradictions between documents and historical events or by showing a deeper understanding of the political cartoons as representative of elements within this country that saw hypocrisy in America’s actions. Deeper historical narratives also tended to integrate the historical evidence outside of the documents with more meaning and impact. These responses took ownership of the question and used their knowledge of the time period, blended with insights from the documents to blend a rich historical narrative. This tended to be the hardest point to achieve. It was not given out for good essays that were clearly written and organized with no historical errors. The response needed to show a deeper, more complex understanding of the question.
- There was no one document that presented more of a challenge than others. However, the lack of depth of insights presented concerning the cartoons illustrates that many students struggle with satire. Though not unusual, this is a higher historical thinking skill that documents are intended to elicit.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses used the content of evidence (either documents or outside evidence) but did not successfully demonstrate how and why that evidence supports the argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses connected the evidence to the argument. “Newspapers had risen in popularity among the public, a majority who could read, and many companies competed to attract the public’s attention. Yellow journalism created outrageous attitudes with dramatized accounts of Spanish mistreatment of the Cubans.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many times the purpose sourcing point simply stated the content of the document and did not explain the author’s purpose in writing it. Point of view sourcing in relation to the cartoons was often not related to the claim and simply stated that the source was unreliable and biased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses not only identified the sourcing but also demonstrated how it was relevant to the argument. “Puck, being a satire magazine, likely published this cartoon with the purpose of showing the hypocritical nature of the Spanish-American War; it was fought to liberate Cuba but it ended with the oppression of the Philippines.” “...The artist is actually critical of America’s policy of imperialism, seeing it as a sign of America’s ego in its superiority and greed.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The complexity was awarded for a deeper more insightful understanding of the prompt, not simply for a clearly structured and written essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The US took many efforts to try to assimilate the Filipinos to make them have the same political and societal views as they did. This reflects the ongoing trend of that time of racial superiority which is synonymous to how the US treated newly freed slaves at home. However, despite the imposing negative shadow the US cast over conquered lands due to nationalism, this feeling came from a sense of morality and genuine care for other people.”

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Students must not lose sight of the question throughout the length of their essay. To achieve this, students need to take the time at the beginning of the question to consider their approach to the question and determine ideas centered on exactly what the question is asking. This will allow them to take ownership of the question. Following this, they need to brainstorm and organize the documents and their outside evidence into categories. Time spent on the front end for careful consideration will give the students more clarity and focus on the question while they write it. Document-driven essays more often than not turn into descriptions of the documents that handicap the best students’ abilities to earn all 7 rubric points.

- Teaching students how to prove an argument is central to this course. Students need to be continuously cognizant of how their evidence, documents, and outside information prove their thesis or their argument. This interpretive commentary centered on how and why evidence or documents prove their point is the critical difference between analytical essays and essays that merely describe the documents. This is particularly critical for the Outside Evidence point and the Contextualization point. Students must elaborate on these two by tying the idea, fact, event or historical trend to how it proves the point. Many students drop in specific factual information, but without an explanation as to how or why it proved their point. This strategy does not receive the point. As noted previously, brief historical snippets operate more as historical situations for documents and are relevant only to the sourcing point. The quality of explanation of how the piece of outside evidence or contextualization backs their assertions determines whether they receive the Outside Evidence point or the Contextualization point.
- Students need to continue to attempt sourcing. Students must also be reminded to link the sourcing to the claim or argument made. The response cannot simply present what the sourcing is. Many of the students who did attempt purpose would oftentimes simply state the content of the document as the purpose. For example, the purpose of Document 7 is to explain that America needs to bring peace and stability to other countries. This is only content in the document. The purpose is the intent of the document writer. Many students would explain the bias of the document to establish point of view. For example - the document is biased because it is written in a satirical magazine and thus is exaggerated. This does not receive the point for it does not relate the point of view to the argument. The perspective of the document must be linked to the argument. For example, Document 6 illustrates the hypocrisy of American actions in the Philippines by illustrating forced assimilation on the Filipinos.
- Overall, continue to encourage your students to think more deeply about historical issues by digging for contradictions in evidence and by articulating these contradictions in essays. Continue to make associations and parallels through time periods by expecting them to relate the presence of historical trends through time with deep elaboration and qualification. However, most importantly, encourage them to preserve the past by seeking to understand and appreciate it.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/
- Critical Interpretation of Images and the AP History Classroom Visit: apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-united-states-history/classroom-resources/critical-interpretation-images-ap-history
- Period 6 Teaching and Assessing Module. Visit: cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory
America on the World Stage: Essays from the American Organization of Historians and AP. Visit: apcentral.collegeboard.org/series/america-on-the-world-stage

Question #2

Task: Long Essay
Question
Max. Points: 6

Topic: Commercial Exchange Systems,
1660–1775
Mean Score: 2.69

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- The question asked students to “evaluate the extent to which commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism fostered change in the British North American economy in the period from 1660 to 1775.”
- This question expected students to demonstrate an understanding of the economic relationship between Great Britain and its North American colonies in the period from 1660 to 1775, as well as knowledge of the economic developments that were utilized in that era. Undergirding this question was an expectation that students understand how economic choices and policies impact historic developments and how the development of economies can be influenced by both external and internal factors.
- This question focused on the skill of Continuity and Change Over Time, as well as Contextualization and Argument Development.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on Work, Exchange, and Technology.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concept 2.2, which specifically mentions “economic exchanges” between Great Britain and its colonies.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- Most responses were awarded one point for evidence, which indicates that students effectively utilized evidence relevant to the question. Commonly, this information included a solid understanding of mercantilism, the navigation laws, accurate information on the economic activity of the various British North American colonial regions, and the relevance of the French and Indian War in ending salutary neglect. However, responses tended to be far more descriptive than analytical. Similarly, responses were overgeneralized in their presentation of information; many only had a vague sense of laws and acts. A major weakness of responses was confused chronology, especially when attempting to utilize the Columbian Exchange. Many students identified this as a formal exchange system and believed it was widely used in the time period.
- Better responses utilized both a wider range of evidence and provided a deeper understanding of relevant details for that evidence. This commonly included the changing nature of labor in the colonies, reviewing the transitions from indentured servants to slavery due to Bacon’s Rebellion, and then linking the growth in the use of slave labor to the expansion of the Atlantic slave trade and/or Triangular Trade. Also utilized by stronger responses was the inclusion of specific legislation relevant to the growth of British controls over the colonial economy, such as the Woolen Act, Hat Act, Molasses Act, Iron Act, and/or Currency Act. Still other responses effectively utilized events related to the revolutionary period (Stamp Act and Stamp Act Congress, Tea Act and the Boston Tea Party, non-importation and the Sons and Daughters of Liberty) by linking that evidence to its economic consequences on Britain and/or the colonies.
- Most students earned a point for contextualization, so they were able to successfully establish the question into larger developments or processes, either broadly with European goals in the Age of Exploration and settlement (often specifically mentioning the Spanish, Dutch, and/or French) or more narrowly to the establishment of the British North American colonies, noting both economic motivation for joint stock companies in the South and the religious motivation for those in the North.

- While the question most clearly expects the historical thinking skill of Continuity and Change Over Time, students often chose to utilize the historical thinking skill of Causation to frame a response linking the economic developments of this era into the beginnings of the American revolutionary period. When students utilized Continuity and Change Over Time, responses tended to focus primarily on change; continuity was only minimally addressed. In addition, there were frequent attempts at synthesis, despite the fact it is no longer required by the rubric.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<p>Students used this as an opportunity to write a response on the causes of the American Revolution, which was not the intent of this question.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses focused on economic change. • “By refusing to buy goods manufactured in Britain or subject to any taxes by Britain, the colonies were able to strike back using their economic power. North America’s industry changed once again as the revolution neared.”
<p>Students confused mercantilism with the Columbian Exchange or Columbian Exchange and Triangular Trade.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses that addressed the Columbian Exchange distinguished it from mercantilism and other forms of commercial exchange. • “The Columbian exchange of foods and animals supported early North American colonization. By the time Jamestown was established in 1607, the European belief in mercantilism had been developed. The tenet of mercantilism was that there was a fixed amount of wealth in the world of which each empire should compete to obtain the largest portion.”
<p>Students demonstrated a limited understanding that certain phenomena (i.e. salutary neglect) can exist within a system such as Mercantilism; the common view was that these were discrete events and that salutary neglect ended with the navigation acts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses articulated the relationships between different systems of commercial exchange. • “With the exception of the loosely-enforced Navigation Act, the colonies were free to expand and prosper independently, producing raw materials which benefited England and making it more willing to avoid involvement and regulation. Merchants were able to secretly trade with other countries without the restraints of the Navigation Act, but colonists weren’t seen by other countries as a threat, economically or politically period. This salutary neglect ended after the British helped the colonists to defeat the French and Native American troops in the 7 years war.”
<p>Many students wrote an overview of the American Revolution rather than tracing the development of the colonial economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses focused on economic change. • “Britain considered it imperative to produce as many manufactured goods as possible, using its colonies as a producer of raw materials and an end market for its own products. To this end, Britain encouraged production of cash crops such as sugar and tobacco, as well as raw materials such as lumber and iron and agricultural products. Britain also discouraged domestic industry in the colonies, preferring that colonists purchase British goods.”

<p>Many students referred to events outside the time period such as railroads, cotton/cotton gin, industrial revolution/textiles as developments of the era.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger responses demonstrated an understanding of chronology. • “Other European countries traded with the colonies as well, which meant that they had access to a variety of different goods from different places. New inventions like the cotton gin, which came along later, made the cultivation of crops simpler and more efficient.”
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Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Your response should:

- Move away from “social, political, economic” as a standardized framework for a thesis, and rather develop thesis statements with direct relevance to the content of the prompt.
- Break down the various parts of an essay and explicitly teach those components to students.
- Ensure students read and understand what the question is asking.
 - As a warm-up, provide students with a sample question. Have students circle operative words, like evaluate, and underline topics which need to be addressed in the response. Then have students rewrite the question in their own words to ensure they understand what the question is asking.
- Teach students to write a clear thesis statement and clear topic sentences which demonstrate a clear line of reasoning and transition.
 - Show students examples from released responses and have them identify/sort the thesis statements and/or topic sentences into “example” and “non-example” categories. For the “non-example,” have students work with a partner to revise/rewrite the thesis or topic sentences so they become acceptable examples.
- Encourage students to utilize specific historical evidence.
 - Provide students with a sample response, which is only a generalized description, and have them revise it so that it is shorter, more concise, and uses specific historical evidence.
- Utilize the College Board rubrics for all writing assignments in class.
 - Prior to submitting an essay, have students use the rubric to self-evaluate their work (highlight thesis, underline context, circle specific evidence, bracket historical reasoning).
- Teach contextualization; differentiate between evidence and context
 - Create lessons that expand on the main theme by connecting to another theme during the same time period, but addressing this in its own separate paragraph.
 - Create pre-writing lessons on the direct cause(s) of the main theme of the essay prompt. Then, follow with direct effect(s) of the main theme.
 - Conclude a unit by having students brainstorm how the events/themes they have just covered will be important in the next time period. Use this to write a contextualization statement for the next unit. Revisit and revise the contextualization statement at the end of the following unit. Repeat this process for each unit.
 - Using the statement, “context is relevant to your discussion but not essential to proving your argument,” explain that if the context is removed, the proof of the argument remains. Then have students create a visual metaphor for the difference (like Jenga).
- Emphasize chronology over dates to ensure students have a mastery of the general “flow” of history.
 - Give students a set of 10 events and have them put them in proper chronological order
 - Have students make thematic timelines related to a particular unit of study.
- Teach how to approach the Historical Thinking Skills, so that students can earn the second analysis point.

- Continuity and Change Over Time: Require students to write one “However” statement at the end of every body paragraph. (“Changes . . . However, one continuity was . . .”)
- Compare/Contrast: Require students to write one similarity or difference at the end of every body paragraph. (“Similarities . . . However, one difference was . . .”)
- Cause/Effect: Require students to write one “Therefore” statement at the end of every body paragraph.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question.

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/
- Period 2 and 3 Teaching and Assessing Module. Visit: cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory

Question #3**Task:** Long Essay

Question

Max. Points: 6**Topic:** Civil War changes in US

Economy, 1861–1900

Mean Score: 2.46***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- This question asked students to evaluate the extent to which the Civil War fostered change in the United States economy from 1861 to 1900. In general, students began with events during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Some extended their time frame to include the Gilded Age. A few mentioned imperialism, Populism, and the Progressive movement.
- This question focused on the skill of Continuity and Change Over Time, as well as Contextualization and Argument Development.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on Work, Exchange, and Technology.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concepts 5.3 and 6.1.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- In general, students knew a lot about this period. Specific evidence included examples from the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Gilded Age. Predominant themes included political, social, and economic factors; the transcontinental railroad; internal migration (north and west, rural to urban), and international immigration; slavery versus free labor; industrialization and the expansion of markets; and technological developments. A plethora of additional historical examples included the Emancipation Proclamation, sharecropping and tenant farming, the New South, Black Codes and Jim Crow, robber barons/captains of industry, and the “Gospel of Wealth.”
- Almost two-thirds of the students (63 percent) made a defensible thesis/claim, and the majority earned the point for contextualization (58 percent). Evidence was abundant, but not present in every essay. Students continue to struggle in using specific and relevant examples to support an argument and in using historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument. Only the best students demonstrate a complex understanding of the issues in relation to the question.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many responses talked in general terms about an industrial North and an agricultural South. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective responses noted factors such as that northern manufacturing was stimulated/expanded by the war, that fledgling industry existed in the South, and that railroads facilitated westward movement. • “In the South, the lack of slave labor caused a need for a transition toward a less agrarian based economy. Industrial centers like Birmingham, Alabama grew and become important centers for industries like logging.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Market Revolution and Great Migration as proper nouns places those events outside the time period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best responses addressed the process of developing markets and the migration of freed peoples to the North and West. “Throughout the first half of America’s 19th century, the country was going through the market revolution. The nation was developing a national economy as internal improvements sprung up, connecting the country with canals and roads. Amidst this economic change however, sectional tensions between the North and South developed and grew.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses referred to Eli Whitney and the cotton gin, as well as Henry Ford and the assembly line, thereby addressing inventions or developments that fall outside the time period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best responses addressed cotton production in the South and the development of innovations in northern industries such as the assembly line and Taylorism. “The Northern half of the United States moved forward following the Civil War, increasing industrialization. The practices of the assembly line and Taylorism increased factory efficiency by breaking up production into smaller and simpler tasks.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses referred to slavery as “free labor.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best responses indicated an understanding of the nature of labor within the national economy and noted that former plantation owners had to pay wages for post-war labor but often found low-wage substitutes such as sharecropping. “The Southern half of the US stayed rooted in its agricultural traditions following the Civil War. The agricultural economy had relied on slave labor which was no longer available, Southern farmers turned to slavery-like practices such as sharecropping to keep African Americans bound to work for very little pay.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses confused the Civil War with other American wars, stating that women moved into industrial jobs, per World War II. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best responses placed the Civil War in the proper mid-nineteenth century context. “The Civil War period is an era that is characterized by its constant debate over whether or not the power of the government

	should lie in the states or in the central government. This argument became so heated due to things such as the nullification crisis that states began to secede from the Union in 1860, the year Abraham Lincoln was elected president.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students attempted to gain a synthesis point by relating their responses to other time periods without integrating this comparison into their arguments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best responses expanded the argument beyond economic factors or indicated complexity and nuance in their discussion of continuity in the North and/or change in the South.

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Ensure that students can focus their responses based on the scope of the question rather than merely categorizing political, social, economic, and cultural factors.
- In teaching Cause and Effect, ensure that students understand that correlation does not necessarily equate to causation.
- Many students tend to write descriptive narratives based on generalizations rather than framing an argument supported by specific, relevant examples.
- Reinforce Thematic Learning Objectives to train students in identifying themes that cross time periods.
- Ensure that students and teachers know a quick comparison to another time period will not earn a complexity point.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question.

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/
- Special Focus: Urbanization. Visit: apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/us-history-urbanization-sf.pdf?course=ap-united-states-history
- Period 6 Teaching and Assessing Module, Focus on Research. Visit: <https://cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory>

Question #4**Task:** Long Essay Question**Max. Points:** 6**Topic:** Science & Technology Changes in Economy, 1950–2000**Mean Score:** 2.35***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

- Student responses were expected to demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which scientific and technological innovation impacted or changed the United States economy during the period from 1950 to 2000. Stronger student responses emphasized the shift from a manufacturing to a service economy, the impact of the Cold War on the development of the military-industrial complex and globalization, and the rise of the information age.
- This question focused on the skill of Continuity and Change Over Time, as well as Contextualization and Argument Development.
- The Learning Objective assessed in this question focused on Work, Exchange, and Technology.
- This question mainly addressed Key Concepts 7.3, 8.2, 8.3, and 9.2.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

- While many student responses provided specific evidence to support an argument, many did not understand the definition of “economy,” instead providing a list of inventions or scientific developments without an explicit connection to economic change. Many student responses did not show command of chronology, weaving in inventions from outside the time period (i.e. the cotton gin, Henry Ford, the Model T, radios) and explaining them as if they were created between 1950 and 2000. Stronger student responses tended to provide context in terms of the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many responses displayed chronological confusion, i.e. the Cotton Gin, Henry Ford, the assembly line, the Model T, radios, smartphones, which were used without recognition that they fall outside the time period of the prompt. Responses attempted to employ these as evidence and as contextualization within the time period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective responses used World War II and the rise of the Cold War to contextualize scientific and technological innovations in the time period of the question. The advent of smartphones and the rise of e-commerce provided appropriate, relevant, and insightful connections within and across periods. • “Starting with the Space Race between the United States and the Soviet Union, an immense amount of jobs at NASA and many other institutions were created. ...The Cold War fueled huge amounts of spending into the military, and this in turn stimulated all kinds of jobs, from aerospace engineers to something as simple as a mechanic.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many responses became a catalogue of scientific discoveries or technological inventions, making no attempt to discuss the effect these things had on the United States economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best responses blended general narrative with specific evidence to construct a thoughtful, analytical argument. • “By the 1980s, the American technology industries began to flourish. Traditional giants like IBM and newer companies like Apple began to make personal computers that soon replaced traditional typewriters to become an office staple.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many responses displayed confusion about globalization as a cause or an effect of technological innovation, such as automation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective responses chronicled how automation impacted the United States economy, including increased outsourcing and the availability of cheaper products. • “One example of technological innovations’ impact on the economy was in the creation of new industrial-manufacturing technologies. As manufacturing tech improves in the 1960s and 1970s, other nations began to take America’s share of manufacturing profits, as creating factories became cheaper, and more competition was fostered between manufacturers.”

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Give more attention to chronology (practice, assess, practice) especially as it relates to technology and economics in United States History that students tend to conflate or collapse together.
- Promote writing skills—
 - Support generalizations with specific, relevant examples.
 - Substantiate evidence with direct connection to the prompts.
 - Structure and organize the response to support the argument in paragraph form.
- Give students more opportunities to appropriately connect discrete time periods and themes.
- Instruct students how and when to employ various analytical lenses.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- The Online Line Teacher community includes a library of resources that can be searched by AP History Disciplinary Practice and Reasoning Skill, Theme, and resource type. Visit: apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/
- Period 6 Teaching and Assessing Module, Focus on Teaching. Visit: cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/ushistory