
AP Comparative Government and Politics

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

2018 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3

3 points

One point is earned for EACH correct identification of an indicator of democracy (2 points total).

Acceptable indicators include:

- Free and fair elections
- Regular or frequent elections
- Competitive elections or competitive party system
- Free civil society
- Civil liberties
- Civil rights
- Independent judiciary
- Free or independent media
- Rule of law
- Peaceful alternation of power
- Popular sovereignty or representation of the will of the people
- Civilian control of the military
- Checks on executive power
- All citizens eligible to run for office
- Government accountability to the public
- Acceptance of election results
- Transparency of government actions
- High political efficacy

One point is earned for correctly describing when democracy is consolidated.

Acceptable descriptions include:

- Durability or permanence of democracy over time
- Widespread acceptance of democracy by citizens
- Broad adherence to, or implementation of, main democratic principles throughout political system
- Reduced or minimal risk of reversion to authoritarianism

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that earns no points or for an off-task answer.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank.

3. Identify two indicators of democracy. Describe when a democracy is considered consolidated.

3A

Two indicators of democracy is having fair and free elections and having civil liberties to a country's citizens.

Democracy is considered consolidated when it's accepted ~~and embedded~~ ~~in~~ a by the whole nation, even the regional level, and embedded in the citizen's every day life.

3. Identify two indicators of democracy. Describe when a democracy is considered consolidated.

3B

Two indicators of democracy are competitive democratic elections in which candidates all have a chance of winning and the provision of Rule of Law. A democracy is consolidated when it provides for civil society, civil liberties, an independent judiciary, rule of law, and civilian control of the military.

3. Identify two indicators of democracy. Describe when a democracy is considered consolidated.

3C

Two indicators of a democracy are ~~1) competitive and fair~~
competitive elections and political socialization. A democracy
is considered consolidated when there aren't many
political activities and is more of an illiberal democracy
where there are competitive elections, but no political activities.
~~like~~

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2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 3

Overview

The intent of this question was to assess students' knowledge of the principal indicators of democracy and when democracies are considered consolidated. The skills tested were descriptive. Students had two tasks: to identify two indicators of democracy and to describe when a democracy is considered consolidated.

Sample: 3A

Score: 3

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying an indicator of democracy as “fair and free elections.”

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying a second indicator of democracy as “civil liberties.” The response correctly identifies two key components of democracy. Some additional acceptable responses of indicators of democracy would include rule of law, competitive elections, and regular elections.

The response earned 1 point for describing when a democracy is considered consolidated by stating that it is “when it’s accepted by the whole nation.” The student correctly describes that democracy is consolidated when it has widespread acceptance by citizens. Additional acceptable responses include the permanent or durable nature of democracy over time.

Sample: 3B

Score: 2

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying an indicator of democracy as “Competitive ... elections.”

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying a second indicator of democracy as “Rule of Law.” The response correctly identifies two key components of democracy. Some additional acceptable responses of indicators of democracy would include free and fair elections, civil liberties, and regular elections.

The response did not earn a point for describing when a democracy is considered consolidated as “when it provides for civil society, civil liberties, an independent judiciary, rule of law, and civilian control of the military” because it simply lists additional indicators of democracy rather than describing the permanent or durable nature of democracy.

Sample: 3C

Score: 1

The response earned 1 point for correctly identifying an indicator of democracy as “competitive elections.”

The response did not earn a second point for identifying an indicator of democracy because “political socialization” is not a key component of democracy as it happens in both democracies and nondemocracies. Some additional acceptable responses of indicators of democracy would include free and fair elections, civil liberties, and regular elections.

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Question 3 (continued)

The response did not earn a point for describing when a democracy is considered consolidated. The statement, “A democracy is considered consolidated when there aren’t many political activities and is more of an illebral [*sic*] democracy” did not earn a point because it describes illiberal democracy rather than consolidated democracy.