
AP United States History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question

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.

Maximum Possible Points: 6

Points	Rubric	Notes
A: Thesis/Claim (0–1)	<p>Thesis/Claim: Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning (1 point)</p> <p><i>To earn this point, the thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.</i></p>	<p>The thesis must make a historically defensible claim that establishes a line of reasoning about how commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism fostered change in the British North American economy in the period from 1660 to 1775.</p> <p><i>Examples that earn this point include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Because of mercantilism . . . This caused very little economic change or deviation between the two, and caused the colonies to become heavily subservient to Britain.” • “This system of exchange [mercantilism] restricted and harmed the British North American economy.”
B: Contextualization (0–1)	<p>Contextualization: Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt (1 point)</p> <p><i>To earn this point, the response must relate the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or a reference.</i></p>	<p>To earn the point, the response must accurately describe a context relevant to the ways in which commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism fostered change in the British North American economy.</p> <p><i>Examples of context might include the following, with appropriate elaboration.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of joint-stock companies • The growth of British imperial power • Increasing trans-Atlantic and worldwide economic connections and trade • Increased British role in international slave trade • European competition in the New World • Extended discussion of mercantilism

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

<p>C: Evidence (0–2)</p>	<p>Evidence: Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt (1 point)</p> <p><i>To earn the first point, the response must identify specific historical examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p>Supports an Argument: Supports an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence (2 points)</p> <p><i>To earn the second point, the response must use specific historical evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt.</i></p>	<p><i>Examples of evidence used might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic activity in three colonial regions: North (shipping, fishing), Middle (grains), South (cash crops such as tobacco, indigo, rice) • African slave trade • Triangular trade/growth of merchant class • Agrarian societies/Plantations • South Atlantic System/West Indies • Indentured servants/Bacon’s Rebellion (1676) • Navigation Acts • Salutary neglect • Woolen Act (1699) • Hat Act (1732) • Molasses Act (1733) • Iron Act (1750) • Currency Act (1751) • Seven Years’ War (French and Indian War), 1754–1763 • Pontiac’s Rebellion/Proclamation of 1763 • Stamp Act (1765)/Stamp Act Congress • Sugar Act (1764) • Townsend Acts (1767–8) • Tea Act (1773)/Boston Tea Party • Intolerable/Coercive Acts (1774) • Colonial boycotts • Committees of correspondence/Sons of Liberty/ Daughters of Liberty
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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

<p>D: Analysis and Reasoning (0–2)</p>	<p>Historical Reasoning: Uses historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity and change over time) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt (1 point)</p> <p><i>To earn the first point, the response must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument, although the reasoning might be uneven or imbalanced.</i></p> <p align="center">OR</p> <p>Complexity: Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question (2 points)</p> <p><i>To earn the second point, the response must demonstrate a complex understanding. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explaining a nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables</i> • <i>Explaining both similarity and difference, or explaining both continuity and change, or explaining multiple causes, or explaining both causes and effects</i> • <i>Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods</i> • <i>Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes</i> • <i>Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence</i> <p><i>This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</i></p>	<p><i>Examples of using historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining how the growth of trade and mercantilist exchange fostered the increased availability of consumer goods in 18th-century British American colonies • Explaining how colonial efforts to avoid mercantilist restrictions helped foster the growth of smuggling and informal trade networks <p align="center">OR</p> <p><i>Ways of demonstrating a complex understanding of this prompt might include the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining a nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables, such as examining how mercantilism and British salutary neglect of the colonies existed simultaneously • Explaining both continuity and change, such as the continued agricultural nature of the economy even as trade expanded and became more important • Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods, such as connecting economic development in the colonial period with that during the market revolution or industrialization in the 19th century • Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes • Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence, such as arguing that mercantilism had both positive and detrimental effects on the British American economy
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If response is completely blank, enter - - for all four score categories: A, B, C, and D.

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Scoring Notes

Introductory notes:

- Except where otherwise noted, each point of these rubrics is earned independently, e.g., a student could earn a point for evidence without earning a point for thesis/claim.
- **Accuracy:** The components of these rubrics require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- **Clarity:** Exam essays should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and practices described below.

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain grammatical errors.

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points)

Responses earn 1 point by responding to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis that establishes a line of reasoning about the topic. To earn this point, the thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt rather than simply restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must suggest at least one main line of argument development or establish the analytic categories of the argument.

The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.

Examples of acceptable theses:

- “Commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism fostered change in the British North American economy from 1660 until the beginning of the Revolutionary War by pushing the colonies away from a simple, bartering lifestyle that is dependent on British goods to a complex, commercialized economy that was self-sufficient.” (*The response suggests an evaluative line of argument development.*)
- “Commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism fostered a great deal of change in the British North American economy because it meant an increase in the shipping industry, a single yet ready market for the colonies, and an increase in the use of slavery in the colonies.” (*The response establishes the analytic categories for the argument.*)

Examples of unacceptable theses:

- “The switch to mercantilism created a bad economy for the colonies but not Britain.” (*This mentions the economic situation in the colonies but does not suggest a line of reasoning about how commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism contributed to that claim.*)
- “The British North American economy fostered change to a great extent due to commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism.” (*This example largely restates the prompt.*)

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

B. Contextualization (0–1 points)

Responses earn 1 point by describing a broader historical context relevant to the topic of the prompt. To earn this point, the response must accurately and explicitly connect the context of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occurred before, during, or continued after the time frame of the question. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or reference.

To earn the point the response must accurately describe a context relevant to the ways in which commercial exchange systems such as mercantilism fostered change in the British North American economy.

Examples might include the following, with appropriate elaboration:

- The development of joint-stock companies
- The growth of British imperial power
- Increasing trans-Atlantic and worldwide economic connections and trade
- Increased British role in the international slave trade
- Reduction in Puritan rules and beliefs
- Commercial revolution of 18th century
- Seven Years' War between Britain and France
- Increased intercolonial trade

Example of acceptable contextualization:

- “As soon as the first settlers landed in the New World it was an opportunity for economic gain. The Spanish had the intention of finding gold in Mezoamerica. The French also had the intention of making money in the north through the all-important fur trade. Many English settlers came to the New World in search of economic gain, mostly the wealthy.” *(The response earned 1 point for contextualization because it has a short but accurate description of the economic motivations of three empires in the age of mercantilism.)*

Example of unacceptable contextualization:

- “Under the system of mercantilism, a colony, such as America, is only able to buy and sell resources and products from its mother country, Britain. *(The response did not earn the point for contextualization because it does not fully explain a broader historical situation relevant to the prompt. Instead it provides only a straightforward definition for the term “mercantilism.”)*

C. Evidence (0–2 points)

Evidence

Responses earn 1 point by providing at least two specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. Responses can earn this point without earning the point for a thesis statement.

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

These examples of evidence must be different from the information used to earn the point for contextualization. Typically, statements credited as **contextualization** will be more general statements that place an argument or a significant portion of it in a broader context. Statements credited as **evidence** will typically be more specific information.

Examples of evidence used might include:

- Navigation Acts of 1660, 1663, 1673, and 1696
- Staple Act (1673)
- Woolen Act (1699)
- Hat Act (1732)
- Molasses Act (1733)
- Iron Act (1750)
- Currency Act (1751)
- Smuggling/piracy
- Stamp Act (1765)
- Seven Years' War (French and Indian War), 1754–1763
- Sugar Act (1764)
- Townshend Acts (1767–8)
- Tea Act (1773)/Boston Tea Party
- Intolerable Acts (1774)
- Colonial boycotts of British goods
- Committees of correspondence/Sons of Liberty/Daughters of Liberty

Example of acceptably providing evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt:

- The end of salutary neglect would lead to “the establishment of acts like the Tea and Stamp Act. These acts hindered the colonist’s economy as they were forced to be taxed on everyday goods. This appalled Americans as they were restricted of also their trade with other nations due to Britain.” *(The response earned 1 point for evidence. The response correctly identifies legislation and its impact on the colonial economy. The evidence is not used to advance an argument about changes in the British North American economy, so it did not earn the second point.)*

Example of unacceptably providing evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt:

“The invention of the cotton gin increased revenue and allowed mercantilism to enter into the trade between the colonies and Great Britain.” *(The response incorrectly identifies the cotton gin as having relevance to the era of mercantilism. Not enough specific and relevant information was provided to earn the point.)*

OR

Supports an Argument

Responses earn 2 points if they support an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Example of acceptable use of evidence to support an argument:

- “For example, the Molasses Act put a tariff on foreign goods that limited the ability of colonists to buy cheaper goods, while measures such as the Woolen Act prevented them from manufacturing within the colonies because English manufacturers depended on their markets.” *(The response correctly identifies two specific pieces of relevant information, which are then used to develop the larger argument that mercantilism prioritized the colonial production of raw goods.)*

Example of unacceptable use of evidence to support an argument:

- “Then as events such as the French and Indian War destroyed the British economy, it looked to the colonies. . . . This marked the overturning of the economy as the colonies were now seen as a source of income.” *(The response earned 1 point for providing examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. The response did not earn a second evidence point because the example is not used to fully develop an argument about economic change.)*

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points)

Historical Reasoning

Responses earn 1 point by using historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt. To earn this point the response must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument, although the reasoning might be uneven or imbalanced.

Examples of using historical reasoning might include:

- Explaining how the growth of trade and mercantilist exchange fostered the increased availability of consumer goods in 18th-century British American colonies
- Explaining how American efforts to avoid mercantilist restrictions helped foster the growth of smuggling and informal trade networks

Example of acceptable use of historical reasoning:

- “Commercial exchange systems led to a change from the headright system to an increased use of slavery. . . . In addition, the Navigation Acts led to increased economic dependence of the colonies upon Britain.” *(The response earned 1 point because it identifies the ways in which commercial exchange systems affected the British North American economy and its role in mercantilism; however, this is not developed in a complex fashion to earn the additional analysis point.)*

Example of unacceptable use of historical reasoning:

- “British North American colonies focused on planting food crops to support themselves and their economy. However, the soil was terrible, so they turned to other methods.” *(This did not earn the first point for historical reasoning because the argument is too vague and the language does not indicate change, continuity, comparison, or causation.)*

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

OR

Complexity

Responses earn 2 points for demonstrating a complex understanding of the topic, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify that argument.

Demonstrating complex understanding might include:

- Explaining a nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables, such as examining how mercantilism and British salutary neglect of the colonies existed simultaneously
- Explaining both continuity and change, such as the continued agricultural nature of the economy even as trade expanded and became more important
- Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods, such as connecting economic development in the colonial period with that during the market revolution and industrialization in the 19th century
- Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes
- Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence, such as arguing that mercantilism had both positive and detrimental effects on the American economy

This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.

Example of acceptable demonstration of a complex understanding:

- *The response earned the point for complexity as the argument makes relevant and insightful connections by building from the economic freedom of the early colonial period to later colonies in “defiance of English rule.” The response notes that “England paid very little attention to its colonies due to its own inner turmoil.” The response then expands on this by discussing the “loosely-enforced Navigation Acts” which allowed the colonies “to expand and prosper independently.” It then connects this to the end of salutary neglect and the French and Indian War. Finally, the response builds toward the act that “taxed colonists and that put some restraint on their economic independence . . . and infringed on colonial independence in other ways.”*

Example of unacceptable demonstration of a complex understanding:

- *This response earned 1 point for historical reasoning because it presents a straightforward change over time argument about the colonies becoming an increasing source of wealth for Great Britain. It does not earn the complexity point, however, because it does not demonstrate a nuance, explain continuity as well as change, explain relevant connections across periods, or achieve the other criteria for complexity. “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 industries in the colonies, preferring that colonists purchase British goods.”*

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one ② or 3 or 4
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2A
1 of 4

When the first European colonists settled in Jamestown, it's unlikely they knew how historically important their actions were. Since they were ruled by England, the colonies they founded and land they discovered belonged to the Crown. As more and more people settled in this new world, they began to start industries and businesses. Once England realized the profitable potential of their new territory, they began to set up and manipulate commercial exchange systems. They controlled the colonies economically through ~~the~~ mercantilism, taxes and tariffs, and trade restrictions. Commercial ~~exchange~~ exchange systems like mercantilism ~~the~~ created change in the British North American economy through restrictive trade, increased prices, and unfair taxes and tariffs which ultimately led to colonial resistance through smuggling, boycotting goods, and an anti-Britain sentiment. Mercantilism was established early in the colonies, a system in which Britain bought a certain amount of goods from the colonies and sold them back at higher prices. At first, it was not that big of an issue as the colonies were just beginning and finances were not the most

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one ② or 3 or 4
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2A
2 of 4

important issue, Britain was reasonable with their prices and turned a blind eye, or practiced salutary neglect, when the colonists traded with other countries or didn't meet selling quotas to Britain. Then, after the 7-years-war, Britain suddenly started becoming very strict with the system, colonists were forced to pay increased prices for goods that they produced or face fines and jail time. This led to an increase in smuggling goods out of the country where they could be sold to places other than Britain. This ultimately harmed the British economy as they were now receiving less goods and could not sell as many. While boosting the colonist's pockets.

Due to the war debt's acquired from the 7-years-war, Britain also began taxing the colonies for various items. The Stamp and Tea Acts were two of the most famous, although there were many others. Many colonists complained ~~and~~ that the new taxes were unfair as they did not receive any representation in the British parliament. While complaining led to the repeal of some taxes, it wasn't enough for many. Colonists organized boycotts in which they would refuse to purchase British goods. This

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3 or 4
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2A
3 of 4

harmd both the colonial economy and the British one as Britain was not making money and the colonists weren't receiving their desired goods. These boycotts ultimately led to the repeal of several taxes, including the Stamp Act. Protests were also used by the colonists in order to voice their displeasure over the taxes. When the Tea Tax was passed, colonists responded by throwing a large amount of tea off of a ship that had imported in from Britain and was now sitting in the Boston Port. This protest became known as the Boston Tea Party and harmed the British economy as they never received compensation for the destroyed goods.

Restrictive trade also changed the economy from profitable for the British to negative. While Britain had always had regulations in the colonies requiring them to trade a certain amount of goods with Britain, it was loosely enforced in the period of salutary neglect prior to the 1760's. Colonists traded with who they pleased when they pleased. They were outraged when Britain began to enforce these restrictions which once again led to increased smuggling, harming the British economy.

~~It~~ The argument could also be made that it

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3 or 4
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2A
4 of 4

harmed the economy of other countries who had been previously involved with the U.S., as they now received less goods.

The system that was originally in place for the economy benefitted both sides. It was profitable for Britain and loose on the United States. Once Britain decided they needed more money to pay war debts, it quickly went downhill. Their new rules and enforcement of them led to a backlash from the colonies that decreased the profitability of the exchange. This ultimately led to the two countries separating and a major economic loss for Britain.

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3 or 4
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2B
1 of 2

As soon as the first settlers landed in the New world it was an opportunity for economic gain. The Spanish had the intentions of finding gold in Mezoamerica. The French also had the intention of making money in the north ~~through~~ through the allimportant fur trade. Many English settlers came to the New World in search of economic gain, mostly the wealthy. Thus it cannot be difficult to see how economic ideas such as mercantilism changed economies of the British and the colonies from 1660 to 1775 a lot.

Initially the colonies were free to do almost whatever they wanted, many lived there for religious freedom from the Church of England. The local government was appointed by England, and both of them traded freely with anyone. Then as time went on the southern colonies became the huge exporter of cash crops such as tobacco and cotton. The English colonies became more economically profitable as time went on, the British economic policy was their own, trading freely as goods were needed.

Then as events such as the French and Indian war destroyed British economy, it looked to the colonies. It was seen that, because the English colonies were under British rule they should help pay off the war debt.

Many taxes such as the Stamp Act, as well as high tariffs were implemented. This marked the overturning of the economy as the colonies were now seen as a source of income.

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3 or 4
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2B
2 of 2

As more time passed, laws were enacted by the British that only allowed trade with Great Britain.

They had their prices low, so that they could make as much profit as possible off of the colonies' goods.

This is directly in line with the idea of mercantilism where you export more than you import, as power is measured more in wealth. This completely

changed British economic policy for a very long time, because they repeated this in India in the future. This also

changed North American economy by creating a place where the entire economy was revolved around the exportation of raw materials to foreign markets. This caused North America to adopt the ideas of mercantilism in their own systems as well.

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one ② or 3 or 4
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2C
1 of 2

In the Colonial Period, the colonies' economy evolved greatly. The colonies exchange system grew into an industrial giant. The economy of the colonies sparked independent feelings that led to the revolution. The British North American economy evolved from simple farm crops to manufactured goods. The colonies' economy grew due to cash crops, slaves, and industrialization.

When colonists first settled in the New World, their main goal was to find valuable resources and gold to send back to England. When they arrived they did not find gold, but found very nutrient rich soil to grow crops. They grew cash crops such as tobacco, indigo, and cotton. The colonists' first economy was shaped around traditional trading with Britain and the Native Americans.

Mercantilism and triangle trade evolved from cash crops. The colonies now had a commercial exchange system that led to expansion. The colonies acquired more land westward. The need for cheap labor was needed to keep up with the flourishing economy. The Middle Passage supplied colonists with slaves. Slaves were an essential part of colonial economy. In the Southern colonies slaves were used to farm, harvest, and prepare all products. Slavery played a crucial role in the economy of the colonies.

Industrialization in the North led to a self sufficient economy in the colonies. Northerners used wage labor to manufacture and sell goods to England. The colonies

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3 or 4
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2C
2 of 2

now had an efficient government and economy. The colonies' economy started to deter the colonies from British control.

The colonies' economy changed immensely from 1660 to 1775. From simple cash crops to a vast economy the colonies flourished into a nation. Mercantilism and industrialization fostered change in North America. The colonies increasing independence resulted in a war that established the colonies as an independent nation: the United States of America.

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question

Overview

- 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.

Sample: 2A

Score: 6

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for a strong thesis that can be found in the final sentence of the opening paragraph. The claim cites taxes, tariffs, trade restrictions, and prices as causes of colonial resistance which took the forms of “smuggling, boycotting goods, and an anti-Britain sentiment.” The response goes on to develop the thesis throughout the essay.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization because it describes the profitability of mercantilism in the introductory paragraph. It begins by pointing out the people that settled in the “new World” on land that “belonged to the Crown” and started their own businesses. But, “Once England realized the profitable potential of their new territory, they began to set up and manipulate commercial exchange systems.”

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points for using an abundance of evidence, which includes references to the Seven Years’ War, the Tea Tax, and the Boston Tea Party, as well as more general citations throughout the essay. This response earned the second point for use of evidence by supporting its argument about mercantilism causing colonial protest. For example, in the second paragraph the response connects the shift from salutary neglect to the increase in colonists “smuggling goods.” In the third paragraph, the response also connects the new taxes to a rise in boycotts and other protests.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points for using the historical reasoning skill of continuity and change over time. The strong analysis and reasoning appears throughout the second paragraph where the response traces the shift away from salutary neglect stemming from the end of the Seven Years’ War. The response earned the additional point for demonstrating a complex understanding, for using evidence to show how mercantilism and

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

salutary neglect could exist at the same time and both could shape the colonial economy as “Britain was reasonable with their prices and turned a blind eye ... when the colonists traded with other countries.”

Sample: 2B

Score: 4

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for thesis. In the last sentence of the introduction the claim that “economic ideas such as mercantilism changed economies of the British and the colonies ... a lot” is a restatement of the prompt and does not establish a line of reasoning. The qualifying phrase “a lot” does not provide enough direction about how or to what extent commercial exchange systems fostered economic change.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization because the introduction has a short but accurate description of the economic motivations of three empires: the French and the fur trade, the Spanish and gold, and the English and wealth-seeking.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points for providing examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. The response explains English colonial commercial exchanges such as the tobacco trade, with the additional observation that profits increased over time. The response also describes the financial cost of the French and Indian War and how England increased revenues with the Stamp Act and other taxes. It then builds on this evidence by noting, “This marked the overturning of the economy as the colonies were now seen as a source of income.”

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for using the historical reasoning skill of change over time. The last paragraph has an abstract but accurate summary of how North America had to “adopt the ideas of mercantilism” where “the entire economy was revolved around the exportation of raw materials to foreign markets.” Though minimal, this demonstrates an understanding of how British imperatives caused change in colonial economies. The response did not earn a second point for complexity.

Sample: 2C

Score: 2

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for thesis. The first paragraph includes various phrases that point toward the idea of the prompt but do not make a historically defensible claim or establish a clear line of reasoning about how commercial exchange systems fostered change in the British North American colonies.

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Question 2 — Long Essay Question (continued)

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization because the second paragraph provides a clear summary of the early colonial period relevant to the topic of the prompt, including the motives for settlement and the growth of a cash crop-based economy.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for use of evidence. In the third paragraph the response explains the connection between the “triangle trade” and “cash crops.” The response also explains the need to gain “more land westward” as well as the use of slave labor. The response did not earn the second point because the evidence is limited and does not build support for argumentative claims in response to the prompt. In addition, the statement, “The colonies now had a commercial exchange system that led to expansion,” is too vague.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for using historical reasoning. It provides a brief description of an increased reliance on cash crops and slavery (“The colonies’ economy changed immensely [*sic*] from 1660 to 1775. From simple cash drops to a vast economy”), but it is too vague and does not frame a meaningful argument that demonstrates historical thinking skills.