
AP United States History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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2018 SCORING GUIDELINES

Short Answer Question 1

“Although eighteenth-century America was predominantly a rural, agricultural society, its seaboard commercial cities were the cutting edge of economic, social, and political change. . . . In America, it was in the colonial cities that the transition first occurred from a barter economy to a commercial one. . . . The cities predicted the future. . . . Urban people, at a certain point in the preindustrial era, upset the equilibrium of an older system of social relations and turned the seaport towns into crucibles of revolutionary agitation.”

Gary B. Nash, historian, *The Urban Crucible*, 1986

“The colonist’s attitudes toward civil uprising were part of a broader Anglo-American political tradition. In the course of the eighteenth century, colonists became increasingly interested in the ideas of seventeenth-century English revolutionaries . . . and the later writers who carried on and developed this tradition. . . . By the 1760s . . . this . . . tradition provided a strong unifying element between colonists North and South. It offered, too, a corpus of ideas about public authority and popular political responsibilities that shaped the American revolutionary movement. Spokesmen for this English revolutionary tradition were distinguished in the eighteenth century above all by their outspoken defense of the people’s right to rise up against their rulers.”

Pauline Maier, historian, *From Resistance to Revolution*, 1991

Using the excerpts above, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- Briefly describe ONE major difference between Nash’s and Maier’s historical interpretations of the origins of the American Revolution.
- Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development from the period 1754–1800 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Nash’s argument.
- Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development from the period 1754–1800 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Maier’s argument.

Scoring Guide

0–3 points

Score 3

Response accomplishes **all three** tasks set by the question.

Score 2

Response accomplishes **two** of the tasks set by the question.

Score 1

Response accomplishes **one** of the tasks set by the question.

Score 0

Response accomplishes **none** of the tasks set by the question.

Score NR

No response. Response is completely blank.

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Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

Question-Specific Scoring Guide

- ONE point for describing one major difference between Nash’s and Maier’s historical interpretations of the origins of the American Revolution
- ONE point for explaining how one specific historical event or development from the period 1754 to 1800 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Nash’s argument
- ONE point for explaining how one specific historical event or development from the period 1754 to 1800 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Maier’s argument

Scoring Notes

Introductory notes:

- Each point is earned independently.
- **Accuracy:** These rubrics require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, responses 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 responses 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: Students may refer to intellectual developments, cultural trends, or events that precede the time period specified in the question (i.e., the Great Awakening, Lockean political philosophy, Whig political traditions, Bacon’s Rebellion). Students should be credited for responses where the context of the reference makes clear that they are referring to the continued aftereffects or reverberations of these events or ideas into the period specified by the question.

Note: The same example can be used to respond to more than one section of the prompt, but the response needs to provide specific and explicit explanations for how the example provides evidence to answer each section.

Note: Merely mentioning an event will not result in the awarding of points in parts (b) and (c). Responses must specifically explain how the events represent evidence that can support the author’s claim.

Examples of responses to (a) that would earn credit:

- Nash argues that:
 - The social changes that contributed to the American Revolution emerged from coastal seaports in British North America, particularly out of the commercial and free-market activity generated in these seaports.
 - New social and commercial relations made it more likely that colonists would revolt against Great Britain to create a more democratic social and political order.

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Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

- While Maier argues that:
 - Older Anglo-American (trans-Atlantic) political ideas and writings that the colonists shared with Great Britain, dating back to the 17th century, were the root of revolutionary traditions and thought in the colonies.
 - Ideas crossing the Atlantic, going back to the 1600s, helped bind together the northern and southern colonies and were the primary shapers behind the American revolutionary movement.

Credited responses must explicitly address the substance of both excerpts.

Examples of responses to (b) that would earn credit:

- Many protests occurred against taxation and commercial laws such as the Townshend Duties, the Tea Act, and the Coercive (Intolerable) Acts in colonial cities.
- Mechanics, artisans, laborers, and seaport day laborers in colonial seaports (including women) formed the core of the grassroots revolutionary protest.
- Growing class formations in the seaport towns (i.e., free laborers, workers, financiers, merchants) fostered conflict and protest by upending traditional social relations.
- Some people called for the abolition of slavery during the American Revolution in New England colonies with fewer slaves.
- Sections of the United States with fewer slaves (New England) had greater participation in the Revolution.
- The Great Awakening started in New England towns and coastal seaports and quickly spread inland and southward, thereby encouraging the emergence of new ideas about individual liberty and freedom and anti-authoritarianism that became more commonplace by the start of the Seven Years' War.
- Printed material by Thomas Paine and other Enlightenment thinkers circulated more quickly in coastal cities.
- Laborers and artisans participated in the independence movement.
- Coastal trade centers benefited greatly from mercantilism during the first half of the 18th century — the so-called period of salutary neglect; however, the Navigation Acts became more problematic in and around those centers as the British government imposed taxes to raise revenue after 1763.

Examples of responses to (c) that would earn credit:

- A renewed interest in republicanism and republican ideals spread across the Atlantic.
- Whig political ideas and writings, such as those of John Locke and other Enlightenment thinkers, spread across the Atlantic where they influenced many in the colonial elite.
- The Articles of Confederation represented many political ideas that had originated across the Atlantic.
- The first president and the author of the Declaration of Independence were both from the Virginia elite.
- Colonists in the later 18th century shared Anglo-American revolutionary traditions originating in the English Civil War.
- The First Great Awakening encouraged the emergence of new ideas about individual liberty and freedom and anti-authoritarianism.
- Religious ideas and writings of the First Great Awakening, such as those of George Whitefield, spread across the Atlantic where they influenced many.

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Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

- There were traditions of revolt amongst colonists and enslaved people operating outside the bounds of coastal seaports (e.g., the Paxton Boys, Regulators, slave rebellions, Shays' Rebellion, Puritans, Pilgrims, Bacon's Rebellion, etc.).
- Printed materials by Thomas Paine and other English writers circulated widely throughout the colonies and greatly influenced colonial thought.
- The actions of the First Continental Congress reflected the continuation of English revolutionary traditions by representatives from throughout the colonies, not merely seaports.
- The signing of the Declaration of Independence represented the acceptance of Enlightenment and English revolutionary thought by a wide range of representatives from throughout the colonies.

Write your answer to **SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1** on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box.

(a) Nash claimed that the American urban, ~~and~~ commercial cities were the origins of change, particularly the American ~~Revolution~~ War of Independence. In fact, the War for Independence ~~was the~~ ~~not~~ 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.

(b) The Boston Massacre could support Nash's argument. In the Boston Massacre, British soldiers fired upon colonists for self-defense, but colonists depicted it as if the British were massacring innocent colonists. This propaganda led to greater discontent toward British rule in North America. Since this event occurred in the city of Boston, it contributes to Nash's claim that urban colonists were a major contributing factor to the American Revolution.

(c) The publication of Common Sense by Thomas Paine supports Maier's argument. Paine attacked the legitimacy of a monarchy based on the idea that monarchy as a political institution will inevitably produce injustices due to the excessive power of a monarch. Similarly, the British Parliament were discontent about King Charles I ~~because~~ because of the king's tyrannical rule. This fact in the English Civil War ~~could be~~ ^{was} a justification for Paine's argument.

End of response area for Q1

Write your answer to **SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1** on this page only. Do **NOT** write outside the box.

- a) One major difference between Nash's and Maier's historical interpretation of the origins of the American Revolution is where the ideas of ~~rebellion~~ independence began. Nash sees the cutting edge commercial cities as the place of economic, social, and political exchange where the crucibles of revolutionary agitation began. Maier sees the Revolution in a broader view stating that the colonist attitudes were shaped ~~by~~ by English revolutionaries such as Thomas Paine, who instilled the ideas of rising up against the British rule.
- B) A historical event from 1754 to 1800 that could support Nash's argument is the Boston Tea Party. The Boston Tea Party saw the citizens rise up together and throw tea off the ships into the port. The colonists used their seaport towns ~~as a platform~~ where many colonists lived as a platform to agitate the British and also hopefully gain supporters.
- C) A historical event from 1754 to 1800 that could support Maier's argument is Thomas Paine's "Common Sense". Thomas Paine's book was inspired by the Enlightenment ideas of individual freedom. It drew upon colonists to rise up and rebel against the king of England by justifying the right for a colony to be free and not controlled by a king who is several thousand miles away.

End of response area for Q1

Write your answer to **SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1** on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box.

a) A major difference between Nash's idea & Maier's idea is that Maier's idea focused on tradition while Nash's idea was based new ideas. Maier ~~started~~ the Revolution began because they were used to see revolutions against leaders. ~~Maier's~~ ^{Nash's} idea was based off of the new ~~(economy in America)~~ urban cities in America.

b) The Boston Tea Party could be used to support Nash's idea. The Tea Party was against the taxing of tea in the American ~~(colonies)~~ colonies. The newer cities wanted to not pay high taxes for tea so they rebelled against England. This led to the American Revolution.

c) The Boston Massacre was an example of American colonists rising up against Britain. They weren't ok with the new British soldiers in the U.S. so they rebelled which led the soldiers to fight back. The colonists were trying to stick to tradition of rebelling against rulers. This supports Maier's idea because ~~(the Massacre wanted tradition in America being)~~ the colonies rose up against their ruler in another country.

End of response area for Q1

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2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

Short Answer Question 1

Overview

- 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.

Sample: 1A

Score: 3

The response to (a) earned 1 point as it addresses both Nash's and Maier's arguments and describes differences between the two.

The response to (b) earned 1 point as it gives the example of the Boston Massacre as a propaganda tool to spread discontent to other colonies, which supports Nash's argument.

The response to (c) earned 1 point as it gives the example of "Common Sense" and the influence of the English Civil War on the Revolution, which supports Maier's argument.

Sample: 1B

Score: 2

The response to (a) did not earn a point because it merely quotes the excerpt directly from Nash's argument and does not connect Maier's argument to previous revolutionary thought.

The response to (b) earned 1 point by connecting the Boston Tea Party to seaport towns and rebellion of the urban citizens in support of Nash's argument.

The response to (c) earned 1 point by connecting Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" to Enlightenment thought in support of Maier's argument.

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Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

Sample: 1C

Score: 1

The response to (a) did not earn a point because it does not adequately describe the arguments of Nash and Maier. It merely lists the idea that Maier believed the Revolution emerged from old ideas, and Nash believed the Revolution was based on new ideas.

The response to (b) earned 1 point by providing evidence that the Boston Tea Party was a specific event that demonstrated the colonists' rebellion against Great Britain's taxation, which supports Nash's argument.

The response to (c) did not earn a point because the Boston Massacre does not support Maier's argument that the Revolution originated from earlier revolutionary thought.