
AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

Inside:

Long Essay Question 4

- Scoring Guideline**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

Question 4: Long Essay Question, Cultural Effects of the First World War

6 points

General Scoring Notes

- Except where otherwise noted, each point of these rubrics is earned independently; for example, 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the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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.

Evaluate the most significant cultural effect of the First World War during the period 1918 to 1939.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
<p>Row A Thesis/Claim (0–1 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</p>		
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
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The thesis or claim must either provide some indication of the reasoning for making that claim OR establish the analytic categories of the argument. <p>Examples that earn this point:</p> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The war’s most significant cultural effect was to erode many Europeans’ belief in Europe’s cultural superiority.”</i> • <i>“The War’s most significant cultural effect was to undermine nineteenth-century cultural and artistic conventions. The shock of technological warfare led Europeans to try to create new forms of art better suited to the modern age.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt with analytic categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The war’s most important effect was to cause many Europeans to question the certainties of the previous period; some became bitter and disillusioned as a result while others were inspired to create new forms of art.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The horrors of the war created a Lost Generation who questioned Europe’s cultural values.”</i> (Minimally acceptable thesis/claim) </td> </tr> </table>			<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not historically defensible. • Only restate or rephrase the prompt. • Do not respond to the prompt. • Do not establish a line of reasoning. • Are overgeneralized. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Do not focus on the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The most significant effect of the war was that it led to a second, even more destructive war only a few years later.”</i> <p>Do not provide a historically defensible claim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“World War I wiped out an entire European generation and scarred Europe’s culture forever.”</i> <p>Do not establish a line of reasoning although the claim is historically defensible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The most important cultural effect of the war was on the young generation that experienced it firsthand.”</i> <p>Restate the prompt or are overgeneralized</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The experience of war darkened European culture in the interwar period.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a historically defensible thesis or claim about the most significant cultural effect of the First World War in the period 1918 to 1939. 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<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis or claim must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion (which may not be limited to the first or last paragraphs). • The thesis or claim must identify a relevant development(s) in the period, although it is not required to encompass the entire period. 				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
<p>Row B Contextualization (0–1 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.</p>		
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
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<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • To earn this point, the context provided must be more than a phrase or reference. 				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria								
Row C Evidence (0–2 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.	2 points Supports an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.						
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 386 747 686" style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> Responses that do not earn points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a single piece of evidence. • Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic of prompt. • Provide evidence that is outside the time period or region specified in the prompt. • Repeat information that is specified in the prompt. </td> <td data-bbox="747 386 1377 524" style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> Responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Identify at least two specific historical examples</u> relevant to the topic of the cultural effects of the First World War in the period 1918 to 1939. </td> <td data-bbox="1377 386 1965 524" style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> Responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Use at least two specific historical examples</u> to support an argument regarding the cultural effects of the First World War in the period 1918 to 1939. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 686 747 1190" style="vertical-align: top;"> Examples that do not earn points: Provide evidence that is outside the time period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The development and use of the atomic bomb confirmed many Europeans’ belief in the futility of war.”</i> </td> <td data-bbox="747 524 1377 1190" style="vertical-align: top;"> Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interwar artistic movements (e.g., Expressionism, Futurism, Surrealism, Dadaism) • Anti-war literature (e.g., British trench poets, <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i>) • Prowar literature (e.g., <i>Storm of Steel</i>) • Existentialism • Freud and his influence on art and literature • Greater American influence on European culture (e.g., jazz, Hollywood films, Lost Generation) • Changes in gender roles (e.g., ‘The New Woman’) • Social impact of political ideologies (e.g., racism, family structure, anti-Semitism) • State-sponsored art Example of a statement that earns one point for evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Otto Dix’s grotesque images of wounded veterans and the Tombs of the Unknown Soldier built in many countries after the war are both examples of Europe’s cultural response to the war.”</i> </td> <td data-bbox="1377 524 1965 1190" style="vertical-align: top;"> Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Remarque’s unheroic portrayal of alienated young German soldiers was a direct attack on the Romantic nationalism that had influenced much of the pre-war art and literature.”</i> (Functions as part of an argument that the war led to cynicism about pre-war values) • <i>“Some artists and intellectuals saw the war as an opportunity to make a clean break with what they saw as a corrupt pre-war culture. 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Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, statements credited as evidence will be more specific than statements credited as contextualization. • If a response has a multipart argument, then it can meet the threshold of two pieces of evidence by giving one example for one part of the argument and another example for a different part of the argument, but the total number of examples must still be at least two. 									

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
Row D Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Uses historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity and change) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.	2 points 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.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			

Mandatory
Question 1

Question 2

Choose one
Question 3

Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In the years leading up to World War I, romantic nationalism coated the tongue of ~~the~~ the European continent. The ~~romantic~~ rise of Romanticism in the nineteenth century, ~~as though~~ followed by Realism, influenced strong national sentiments and pride. People felt a purpose and an obligation to their country, as evidenced by the quick and enthusiastic beginning to ~~start~~ citizens adorned rifles with flowers in military parades across Europe, and they were excited for a quick, easy ~~victory~~ like victory for their country. The Russo-Japanese War, an exceedingly brief loss to Russia, colored this perception of quick and triumphant warfare. ~~It~~ occurred just 13 years prior to ~~start~~, of course. The Great War that ensued, however, was a catastrophe ~~and~~ for all involved parties, and it left Europe in shambles. The biggest impact of World War I on European culture was the advent and the continuity of ~~the~~ ~~and~~ ~~an~~ anxiety and meaninglessness expressed in art, the New Sciences, and existentialist thoughts. After ~~start~~, the art world took a turn for the avant-garde. Surrealism, encapsulated in a poignant painting of dripping clocks by Salvador Dalí, created a distorted and freaky lens through which to see the world. World War I had diluted the meaning of traditional expression, and this strange new artwork represented a wild turn away from prewar Realism. Dadaism and Impressionism also emerged, the latter being closely related to Expressionism, and none of them looked like anything the world had seen before. This rapid, sudden shift showed a harsh break and large change from prewar art. Cubism, ~~inspired~~ ~~and~~ emulated

Mandatory
Question 1

Question 2

Choose one
Question 3

Question 4



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especially influentially through the work of Pablo Picasso, used harsh lines and geometric shapes to ~~start~~ begin molding the 20th century's abstract art movement. Gone were the representative figures of Romanticism and the clear-cut calls of Realism; the war had demonstrated life's cruelty and indiscriminate disregard for human life, so avant-garde artists demonstrated the same through their odd work. The art world was irreparably and undoubtably changed due to the intellectual impact of World War I.

The New Sciences, which had begun their rise in the ~~late~~ end of the nineteenth century and just before the war, came to the forefront after the war to represent popular feelings about life. Albert Einstein, the brilliant German ~~theoretical~~ physicist, published his Theory of Relativity. This document declared that, due to the properties of the speed of light, everything in the universe, and especially time, are relative to the observer. There is no absolute basis on which we can measure and in which we can live, as previously thought. Werner Heisenberg, a chemist, came out with a similarly disconcerting theory when he published his Uncertainty Principle. According to this principle, one cannot know both the position and velocity of a particle in three dimensional space at the same time. From Heisenberg's conclusion came the damning realization that science isn't as full of absolute truths and perfect predictions - it's simply humans' best guess on the nature of an unpredictable, unknowable universe. For disillusioned citizens in the ~~post-war~~ post-~~war~~ era, science no longer served as a comforting

Mandatory
Question 1
Question 2
Choose one
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Question 4

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guiding light. World War I had torn apart infrastructure and entire cities - why wouldn't science's credibility be shredded too? Hopelessness and meaninglessness grew from ~~the~~ the new, disconcerting scientific discoveries as well as the war, and the anxiety of the age was encapsulated in its changing scientific beliefs. While the New Physics ~~movement~~ era of discovery began before World War I, the war had a huge impact ~~in~~ in making the public more sullen and susceptible to hopeless, terrifying ideas.

Finally, World War I lent itself to the existentialist movement ~~at~~ between the end of the war and the start of ~~war~~ war. Philosophers like Nietzsche, having seen the destruction of the war, proposed that there was no ultimate meaning to life, and humans must define their own meanings. Much like old art and shifting science, absolute morality and meaning were thrown out the window. "Make your own meaning" is a scary proposal to a continent so long mired in religious purpose and guiding light. Meanwhile, ~~the~~ Sigmund Freud, a psychologist, similarly undermined human rationality and meaning. In Freud's model, the conscious self (ego) balances the cautious nature of the human (the id) and the impulsive, irrational nature (the superego). Thus, humans were no longer inherently rational, but simply caught up in a balancing act. Both Freud and Nietzsche showed the public that humans have to decide what to do with their situation. Whether they make war and destruction or peace and harmony, it's ultimately

Mandatory
Question 1

Question 2

Choose one
Question 3

Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

up to them. The war, of course, bucked up this terrifying new precedent,

From art to psychology and even science, the First World War left no part of European culture untouched. The disillusionment soon left Europeans more susceptible to these ideas of terrifying propulsion, but some facets, of course, were already in motion before the war even started.

Mandatory
Question 1

Question 2

Choose one
Question 3

Question 4

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Before WWI, there was the German unification led by Bismark of Prussia, he ~~just~~ ^{merged} Prussia and Germany ~~and~~ ~~came~~ come together as one to be a stronger nation, ~~and~~ ^{and} because their countries had very similar cultures. Bismark then got south Germany to also join Germany by starting the Franco Prussian war, bringing them closer together with their victory. ~~As~~ ~~to~~ Before WWI countries were competing in the industrial revolution and ~~was~~ ~~to~~ ~~do~~ on the eve of WWI countries people were very Nationalist and encouraged the war ~~because~~ because they thought it was going to be a short war, like most wars in the past. ~~The~~ The most significant cultural changes after WWI was an overall ~~the~~ sadness and anger in some countries. In many countries they went through this thought of Extensidism, which basically means people thought life had no meaning, which makes a lot of sense because so many ~~families~~ families had ~~lost~~ lost their sons, brothers, and fathers in a pointless war of ~~showing off~~ ~~the~~ countries showing off their new technology. Other countries like Germany and Italy were ~~to~~ mad. Italy was ~~was~~ angry because the allies promised ~~that~~ Italy ~~so~~ that they would give them land if they fought with the allies. At the Treaty of Versailles Italy was left out of most of the decision making and didn't get any land.

Mandatory
Question 1
Question 2
Choose one
Question 3
Question 4

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an overall sadness and meaningless existence felt by many people in Europe. The other huge impact of WWI was the anger towards the loss ^{of WWI} and ~~the~~ from the conditions of the Treaty of Versailles, that led to the rise of the Nazis in Germany causing WW2.

Mandatory
Question 1

Question 2

Choose one
Question 3

Question 4



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World War One was the first war of its kind. A brutal war in which every country that participated was sucked wholly. The young men who fought in its battles came out both mentally and physically scarred. Civilians were attacked, villages burnt to the ground and fearsome new weapons used. It was truly worthy of the title of "The Great War." Out of the smoke and dust came a new age of expression. The most significant cultural effect of World War was the new art and belief that came after.

The cultural change in art was sudden and strange. It came as a belief system of sorts: all logic is gone in the world, why should it still be in painting? What followed was the invention of dada art, which was lawless and bizarre, reflecting the times of the Interwar Period. People felt unsure and uneasy in these times, and the artwork felt the same: a shovel, a defaced Mona Lisa; the old artists were all gone and blown to bits.

Another change was in people's belief systems. Some people began to look away from religion and toward science. Psychology began to make a breakthrough with Freud, and physics with Einstein. People were desperate for something to believe in during the dark Interwar, and science and people, like Hitler, unfortunately, gave them a small hope for the future.

Question 4 — Long Essay Question

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

Overview

The LEQ asked students to formulate a thesis/argument, to utilize evidence, to address historical context, and to display an ability to employ historical thinking skills in response to a prompt about a particular historical development or episode in European history. In 2021 each LEQ asked students to determine the most significant effects of historical events or processes in European history. In the case of LEQ 4, responses were expected to demonstrate historical reasoning, specifically analyzing the most significant cultural effect of the First World War during the period 1918–1939 (Key Concept 4.4.I.A). Students were expected to provide a line of reasoning about why this was the most significant effect and to relate the topic of the prompt to the broader historical events, developments, or processes that occurred before, during, or continued after the time frame specified in the prompt. Responses were expected to provide specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the First World War and to use this evidence to support an argument. Responses were expected to demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or to structure an argument that addressed the prompt. Although the prompt directed the students toward the historical reasoning skill of causation, responses could also frame their arguments around other types of historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, continuity and change over time). Responses were expected to demonstrate complex understanding, which could be achieved in various ways. For instance, responses could discuss the thematic preoccupations of the arts and philosophies of the interwar period or the impact of other cultural effects, such as the fears of a second military conflict or the emergence of radical ideologies. Responses might also explain relevant and insightful connections across time by discussing cultural upheavals in other periods, such as the emergence of critical thought during the Enlightenment or the Romantic era. All are ways to display complex understanding. Responses were assessed on the extent to which they performed in the following four categories: thesis and/or claim, contextualization, evidence, and analysis and reasoning.

Sample: 4A

Score: 6

Thesis/Claim: 1

Contextualization: 1

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 2

Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim because, in the first paragraph, it connects the advent and continuity of anxiety expressed in art, science, and existential thought to the First World War.

Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization as it addresses a worldview colored by Romanticism during the Belle Epoque that set the stage for an age of anxiety after the First World War.

Question 4 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Evidence (0–2 points): 2

Providing Specific Examples of Evidence

The response earned 1 point for mentioning the specific intellectual/cultural trends in the interwar period (e.g., Surrealism, Expressionism, psychoanalysis, relativity) and the individuals who contributed to those movements.

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response earned 1 point for using specific evidence in support of an argument because it marshals those pieces of evidence to create a causal effect between the war and feelings of meaningless and uncertainty.

Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 2

Using Historical Reasoning

The response earned 1 point for using historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument that analyzes an intellectual shift in the arts and sciences away from reason, realism, and absolute morality to the irrational and the abstract because of the First World War's devastating effects.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

The response earned 1 point for demonstrating a complex understanding with a nuanced explanation of the effects of the First World War that draws from multiple disciplines. The response analyzes how prewar intellectual trends culminated in a decisive break with the past, giving rise to modern cultural forms and ideas as a result of the war.

Sample: 4B

Score: 4

Thesis/Claim: 1

Contextualization: 1

Evidence: 1

Analysis and Reasoning: 1

Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim because it identifies sadness and anger and the emergence of existentialism as significant cultural effects of the First World War.

Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization because it identifies the political and economic effects of the First World War, as well as prewar nationalism.

Evidence (0–2 points): 1

Providing Specific Examples of Evidence

The response earned 1 point for providing specific examples of evidence by referring to existentialism and anti-Semitism as effects of the First World War.

Question 4 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response did not earn a point for using specific evidence in support of an argument because its coverage of anti-Semitism is minimal and not clearly related back to the argument.

Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 1

Using Historical Reasoning

The response earned 1 point for using historical reasoning (causation) to frame an argument because it demonstrates how existentialism was the most significant cultural consequence of the First World War.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

The response did not earn the point for demonstrating a complex understanding because it does not offer a nuanced analysis, corroboration of the evidence in the argument, or insights across periods or geographical regions.

Sample: 4C

Score: 2

Thesis/Claim: 1

Contextualization: 0

Evidence: 1

Analysis and Reasoning: 0

Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for a minimal thesis/claim because it links the destruction of the First World War to the creation of new art and beliefs.

Contextualization (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn a point for contextualization because its mention of the physical and mental effects experienced by soldiers during the First World War is merely a passing phrase or reference.

Evidence (0–2 points): 1

Providing Specific Examples of Evidence

The response earned 1 point for providing specific examples of evidence as expressions of postwar disillusionment (e.g., Dadaism and Freudian analysis).

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response did not earn a point for using specific evidence in support of an argument because only Dadaism as a cultural effect is sufficiently linked to the First World War. Although other evidence is provided, it is not adequately linked to an argument about cultural effects of the war.

Question 4 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 0

Using Historical Reasoning

The response did not earn a point for using historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument because it fails to evaluate, explain, or make logical connections among the examples provided.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

The response did not earn a point for demonstrating a complex understanding because it does not use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument or to explain insightful connections between the First World War and culture.