
AP[®] World History: Modern

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Long Essay Question 4

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Question 4: Long Essay Question, Economic Responses to the Great Depression

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the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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.

In the twentieth century, governments responded to economic crises in various ways.

Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which governments (other than the United States government) changed their economic policies in response to the Great Depression.

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		
<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 economic crisis of the Great Depression facilitated the rise of fascist regimes such as Hitler’s Nazi Germany.”</i> <p>Provide a historically defensible claim, but do not establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Stock market speculation was one of the main causes of the Great Depression.”</i> <p>Provide a claim that is not historically defensible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Governments across the world joined in the Bretton Woods Conference to create the IMF and the World Bank in response to the Great Depression.”</i> 		<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a historically defensible thesis or claim about the extent to which governments (other than the United States government) changed their economic policies in response to the Great Depression, with some indication of the reasoning for making that claim. <p>Note: The thesis does not need to mention two separate nations.</p> <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>“Although many governments in the West made some changes to their economic policies by introducing socialist measures, most continued to rely on free-market policies to guide economic development.”</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>“In many parts of Asia and Africa, governments only made minimal economic changes in response to the Great Depression because European colonial authorities were unwilling to introduce costly social welfare programs or implement policies that could reduce the profits of their companies.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Governments across the world responded to the Great Depression by making their economies more socialist.”</i> (Minimally acceptable thesis/claim)
<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</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>
<p>(0–1 points)</p>	<p>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</p>	
<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. Provide a passing phrase or reference. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Provide historically inaccurate contextualization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The devastation of the Second World War led directly to the economic crisis that became known as the Great Depression.”</i> <p>Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The twentieth century experienced many economic crises.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurately describe a context relevant to the Great Depression. <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Roaring ‘20s” The fear of communism in the West following the creation of the Soviet Union Neocolonialism in Latin America Great Power competition that limited free trade Excessive speculation that led to the stock market crash of 1929 <p>Example of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The responses to the Great Depression by many western European countries reflected their fear of growing power of the Soviet Union as well as of the influence of socialist political parties in many European countries.”</i> 	
<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		
<p>Row C Evidence (0–2 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.</p>	<p>2 points Supports an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
<p>Responses that do not earn points:</p> <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. 		<p>Responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Identify at least two specific historical examples</u> relevant to government responses to the Great Depression. 	<p>Responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use at least two specific historical examples to support an argument regarding how governments changed their economic policies in response to the Great Depression.
<p>Examples that do not earn points:</p> <p>Provide evidence that is outside the time period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“After the Second World War communism spread rapidly across Eastern Europe in regions occupied by the Soviet Union.”</i> 		<p>Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The crash of the Dow Jones in 1929 High levels of unemployment across Europe Severe declines in gross domestic product (up to 40% decline) in many world regions Restrictive trade policies imposed by governments around the world, such as the imposition of tariffs on imports by Great Britain <p>Example of a statement that earns 1 point for evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“In Germany gross domestic product declined dramatically during the early 1930s, and the government increased its import tariffs.”</i> 	<p>Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The severity of economic decline in Germany during the Great Depression was greater than in many other countries because Germany was still under obligation to pay war reparations and relied on foreign investment. As a result of widespread unemployment and poverty, the new Nazi government in Germany embarked on a new policy of economic self-sufficiency (autarky).”</i> (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argument that the German government changed its economic policies as a result of the Great Depression) <i>“Great Britain’s economy stagnated during much of the 1920s. Labor unrest and strikes raised fears of class conflict and political instability. The government policies of protectionism and abandoning the gold standard were only partially effective in addressing the crisis.”</i> (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argument that the British government changed its economic policies as a result of the Great Depression)
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <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. <p>(For example, most governments in Asia and Latin America did not change their economic policies much because they were either under colonial rule, dominated by European or American companies, or they did not have the resources to provide significant government assistance; governments in Western Europe changed their economic policies significantly by imposing greater regulations on the financial sector, sponsoring large public works projects, and creating welfare programs.)</p>			

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

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualifying an argument by demonstrating that the responses of many governments to the Great Depression evolved over time, for example in Great Britain the government initially adopted measures to raise taxes, hold down wages, and support the Gold Standard before switching course and adopting a more active role in promoting employment and wage stabilization measures as well as deficit spending. (Qualifies an argument)• Corroborating an argument by demonstrating how governments' responses to the Great Depression co-evolved with changing economic theories, such as the transition from free-market laissez-faire philosophy to Keynesian economics. (Corroborates an argument, considers both causes and effects)
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This demonstration of complex understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.			

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 twentieth century, the ~~use~~ inability of numerous countries to pay off their debts, which accumulated as a result of World War I, led to the infamous New York Stock Exchange crash. The effects of ^{great} unemployment ~~also~~ spread from the United States outward, affecting almost every country. ~~Due to~~ ~~different~~ differences in the nature and situation of each country after World War II, governments around the world altered their economic policies ~~at different~~ ~~times~~ in order to respond to the ever-looming Great Depression. Governments changed their economic policies in response to the Great Depression by finding interesting ways to increase employment rates. However, there are cases in ~~which~~ where economic policies were not altered due to ~~the~~ unrelated concerns of a unique advantage.

In order to combat the rampant unemployment ~~forced~~ forced upon by the Great Depression, governments sought to use creative ways to create new jobs. To illustrate, in Germany, ~~Hitler~~ Hitler bolstered the military ^{weapons production} in order to create millions of new jobs. Hitler's reforms were effective as unemployment rates significantly dropped in response to military expansion. Despite his clear violation of the Versailles Treaty, which ended World War I, the powers of Britain and France did not encroach upon his endeavors given the dire economic ~~situation~~ situation of the Great Depression. Thus, ~~the~~ the German government changed its economic policies through the finding of weapons production ~~in~~ in response to the Great Depression. This ~~was~~ ^{symbolizes a} significant shift in economic policy given the restraints placed on her by the Versailles Treaty.

Although governments, such as in Germany, greatly altered their economic policies, in ~~some~~ some cases no economic change

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was necessary as the Great Depression did not threaten to compromise the economic power of the state. For example, Russia ~~did not~~ did not alter their economic policy, in contrast to Germany, ~~because~~ because ~~there was a focus on~~ Russia did not engage as significantly in a global, interconnected ~~the~~ manner economically. Instead, Russia's ^{the} government during the 20th century was focused on building up Communism in their nation, ~~the~~ reflected by policies such as Stalin's Five Year plans, which focused on heavy industry and the collectivization of lands. Economic policies such as Stalin's Five Year Plans were ~~not~~ great amplifications ^{of} Communist ideals, but they did not come as a response to the Great Depression but rather ~~as~~ as a reaction to Lenin's New Economic Policy, which allowed for some privatization. Furthermore, South Africa's economic policies were not changed "in response to the Great Depression. This ^{can be} attributed to the abundance of gold and diamonds, which kept their economy stable during the economic crisis. Thus, South Africa's ^{economic} policies did not change because there was no incentive for any change.

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

WWI is directly related to most of the events during the 20th century. WWI caused Germany to go into a deep ~~the~~ depression after they lost the war. In response, Germany had to change their economic policies in order to continue as a nation. Germany's economic policies after WWI completely changed in order to survive as a nation during their depression.

The ~~the~~ Treaty of Versailles ordered Germany to pay war debts in reparation to the Allied powers for their war efforts. This put Germany in debt as high as in the millions. To try and pay it off, Germany started to print more money. In turn, this completely devalued their dollar because there was more printed money than in their treasury. The Treaty also called for all of Germany's colonies be given over to the Allies. This meant that the income and resources that Germany was gaining from its territories stopped. This is what put Germany into a depression. These reforms and punishments to Germany's economy led to other reforms which eventually caused WWII.

Because of the economic crisis at hand, Germany also had a political reform that benefited its economy. A Fascist government was put in charge with the majority vote at the height of the depression. The Fascist government was an extremely conservative group that allowed for economic help and assistance to the struggling nation. The ~~the~~ Fascist government was known as the Nazi party. It was controlled by a man named Adolf Hitler who is credited with pulling the country out of depression.

The Nazi party completely reformed the economics of the nation. Where as government assistance and interference on the economic side was not used widely before, the Nazis were known for doing so. The Nazis lowered the unemployment rates of Germany by creating fine paying jobs. For those that could not work, the Nazis gave benefits to. They did this by adapting the taxation rates. They lighted the

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taxation of Jews, whom they blamed for the issues in the country, and the rich. The Nazis also invested money into the schools and medical fields which had not been done before. These reforms pulled Germany out of the depression.

WWI put Germany into a deep economic depression. They lost the war and had to pay greatly for it. Because of the depression, Germany had to reform its economics. The people that successfully performed reforms that pulled them out of a depression was the Nazi party, despite their extremist beliefs.

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Question 1

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Choose one
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Question 4



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

~~During the~~
 Right after WWI came a great time to party. The roaring 20s, women wore short dresses and cut their hair short as well. People lived in luxury. But soon after, the great depression hit, no one could afford to live their old luxurious life. In Germany they took a unique approach on trying to fix the economy. Germany decided to cause mass inflation. Prices were so high that money meant nothing. People would use German money as wallpaper because there was no value. Comparing the United States to Germany during this time is astounding. In Germany money would be just in the streets, in America people lived in the streets, due to not being able to lay their hand on money. There is a saying that "a man drove a wheelbarrow full of money for a loaf of bread". That was a true eye opener, to think a loaf of bread now is so cheap. In both Germany and America they would have soup lines, but once again for complete opposite reasons. The great depression was just the result of the roaring 20s and people had money to invest. Ultimately Germany would blame the great depression fully on Jews and anyone different. In following years multiple leaders worldwide would use the great depression for votes, giving ^{false} promises to fix the economy.

Question 4 — Long Essay Question

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

Overview

This question addressed Topic 7.4: Economy in the Interwar Period and Topic 7.6: Causes of World War II of the AP World History Curriculum and Framework. The question was open geographically to allow responses from any nation outside of the United States, though the vast majority of responses focused on developments in Germany and Russia. The question was designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the Great Depression and its global impacts, with the specific exclusion of the United States helping to focus responses on global issues. With the close proximity to the First World War and the Second World War, two topics about which students tend to have extensive knowledge, the question provided opportunities for ample content and context. Students were expected to present a historically defensible thesis, describe a historical context relevant to the prompt, use at least two specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt, use that evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt, use historical reasoning skills to frame or structure their argument, and demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt. Students were able to use any historical thinking skill to demonstrate this understanding, and we saw successful responses that compared the impact of the Great Depression on two areas (most commonly a comparison of Russia and Germany), discussed how specific elements of the Great Depression (such as inflation) led to specific government responses, or responses that addressed how government responses changed as the twentieth century progressed.

Sample: 4A

Thesis: 1

Contextualization: 1

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 2

Total Score: 6

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned the point for the last two sentences of the introductory paragraph, where it states that some governments “changed their economic policies in response to the Great Depression by finding interesting ways to increase employment rates,” while other governments’ “economic policies were not altered.”

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned the point in the introductory paragraph for discussing “the inability of numerous countries to pay off their debts, which accumulated as a result of World War I.”

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

The response earned 1 point for identifying Hitler’s “violation of the Versailles Treaty” and his “weapons production.” The response also provides numerous additional pieces of relevant evidence throughout.

The response earned the second evidence point by using Hitler’s violation of the Treaty of Versailles and increase in weapons production to support an argument that Hitler’s economic policies in response to the Depression led to the creation of new jobs. The factually accurate discussion of Russia’s continuation of the Five-Year Plans also provides examples of evidence being used to support an argument.

Question 4 — Long Essay Question (continued)

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

The response earned the point for historical reasoning by structuring a solid causation argument in the case of Germany’s response to the Great Depression. In addition, the response provides a comparison of the response in Germany to a lack of a response in Russia.

The response earned the point for demonstrating complex understanding through its nuanced analysis of the lack of an international response to German militarism in the context of the recovery after the First World War. In addition, the response provides additional analysis of a government response in its discussion of Russia’s economic policies being a reaction to Lenin’s NEP and not necessarily to the Great Depression.

Sample: 4B

Thesis: 0

Contextualization: 1

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 0

Total Score: 3

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0

The response attempts a thesis in the first paragraph but did not earn the point, as it does not move past a rephrasing of the prompt. No specific economic policy is identified.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned the point at the beginning of the second paragraph with its discussion of the Treaty of Versailles’ impact on the German economy. The response continues by identifying hyperinflation and the loss of colonies as additional elements that negatively impacted Germany.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

The response earned 1 point in the third paragraph, where it states that “[a] fascist government was put in charge” and in the fourth paragraph by where it states that “[t]he Nazis lowered the unemployment rates of Germany by creating fine paying jobs.” There are additional pieces of evidence regarding Nazi economic policies further into the response.

The response earned the second evidence point in the third and fourth paragraphs, by using the evidence provided to support claims that the German Nazi government “allowed for economic help and assistance to the struggling nation” and that “[w]here as government assistance and interference on the economic side was not used widely before, the Nazis were known for doing so.”

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

The response did not earn the point for historical reasoning because its arguments are one-dimensional and focused exclusively on German responses to the Depression. While addressing more than one country is not necessary for answering the question, many of the usual pathways to earning the historical reasoning point include comparing different governments’ responses or addressing global impacts of the economic changes brought about by the Great Depression.

The response did not earn the point for demonstrating a complex understanding, as it does not offer a complex or nuanced analysis or make insightful connections to other periods or historical contexts.

Question 4 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Sample: 4C

Thesis: 0

Contextualization: 1

Evidence: 0

Analysis and Reasoning: 0

Total Score: 1

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point as it does not address an economic policy.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned the point for its discussion of the Roaring Twenties in the first three sentences.

C. Evidence (0–3 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for using evidence as it provides only one piece of evidence (regarding German hyperinflation). No second piece of evidence is provided.

The response did not earn the second evidence point as only one piece of evidence is used in support of an argument.

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

The response did not earn the point for historical reasoning, as it only provides a description of the Great Depression in Germany and not an analysis of a German government response to the Great Depression.

The response did not earn the point for demonstrating complex understanding as it does not demonstrate a complex or nuanced understanding or provide insightful connections to other periods or historical contexts.