

Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2021 AP[®] World History: Modern Free-Response Questions

• Number of Students Scored	302,232		
• Number of Readers	1,482		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	29,287	9.7
	4	55,967	18.5
	3	72,444	24.0
	2	87,233	28.9
	1	57,301	19.0
• Global Mean	2.71		

The following comments on the 2021 free-response questions for AP[®] World History: Modern were written by the Chief Reader, Jodi Eastberg, Professor of History, Alverno College. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

Question #1**Task:** Short Answer
Question**Topic:** von Laue on Westernization
Secondary Text**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.20***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

For this question, students were expected to analyze a secondary source document by identifying a nationalist leader whose actions might be used to illustrate the author’s argument. Next, they were asked to explain one way the “world revolution of Westernization” disrupted non-Western societies. Lastly, the question prompted students to explain a reason why historians in the late twentieth century reinterpreted Western Imperialism. The question primarily addressed Topics 6.3, 7.1., and 8.1 of the AP World History: Modern Course and Exam Description.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

This question asked students to demonstrate their knowledge of the role of imperialism, Westernization, and nationalism in a global context. All three of these are tied directly to the course, and students were able to demonstrate their understanding of the topics, frequently citing nationalist leaders in South Asia and Africa and demonstrating an understanding of the ways in which Westernization disrupted non-Western countries through technological, political, social, and cultural influence. Students frequently were able to accurately identify the importance of Mohandas Gandhi, Ho Chi Minh, and Nelson Mandela as non-Western nationalist leaders whose actions supported von Laue’s argument. Students understood the causal relationship between Westernization, imperialism, and the disruption of traditional political and economic systems in many non-Western countries.

While some students understood that historians were interested in reinterpreting Western imperialism because of the effects of decolonization or in order to reevaluate the legacy of Western rule, most student responses tended not to explain one reason why historians in the late twentieth century reinterpreted Western imperialism. They did not explain the role of decolonization, the Cold War, nor globalization and instead provided answers that did not address the question.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

Some students identified European leaders for part (a). Whether this was simply because they were the only nationalist leaders they could think of or if they misunderstood the prompt is unclear.

Students had difficulty with explaining how events or processes in the late twentieth century led historians to reinterpret Western imperialism. Many responses identified trends in the late twentieth century (“gender inequality” or “warfare”) without connecting those trends to reinterpretations of imperialism in the way the passage from von Laue discusses it.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One non-Western nationalist leader whose actions might be used to illustrate the author’s argument in the passage is Karl Marx.” (<i>Karl Marx was not a non-Western nationalist leader.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “A non-Western nationalist leader who supports the author’s argument is Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi was a well-known figure who led peaceful demonstrations and protests against British rule.” (<i>The response identifies a non-Western nationalist leader who reflects von Laue’s arguments about the use of Western ideals of freedom and self-determination.</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One reason why historians reinterpreted western imperialism was because of the world wars. During and after the world wars, lots of things changed like gender roles or types of government.” (<i>The allusions to the world wars and gender roles do not explain why historians would have reinterpreted Western imperialism.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Overall, decolonization caused historians to reinterpret Western imperialism because it causes historians to think about it differently.” (<i>The response includes an event or process from the second half of the twentieth century—decolonization—that is connected to historians reinterpreting Western imperialism.</i>)

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Students need practice identifying what is Western and what is non-Western. Some of this involves geography: Western European leaders will generally not fit into the category of “non-Western.” The term, though, takes on specific meaning with regard to imperialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Teachers should emphasize the nature of this designation as more than simple geography. A number of students correctly identified Latin American leaders as non-Western nationalists despite the orientation in the Western hemisphere. Introducing students to the extensive historiography on the concept of “the West” can help them not only to understand the category of “the West” but also to practice reading and analyzing secondary sources.

Students also need more familiarity with historiography. Specifically, teachers can further emphasize why historians change the way they understand and explain events and processes after a number of years. Students can better perform this kind of task when they understand that the events and processes happening around historians influence the history they create. Having students create a timeline not only of events, but also of “common historical interpretations” will help them with this type of analysis.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a SAQ on the topic of imperialism, Westernization, and nationalism:

- Unit 6, Topic 6.3, “Indigenous Responses to State Expansion from 1750 to 1900,” addresses the topic of anti-imperial resistance and how nationalism contributed to anticolonial movements. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 7, Topic 7.1, “Shifting Power After 1900,” addresses the topic of new states, the communist and Mexican revolutions, and other challenges to the existing political and social order. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.

- Unit 8, Topic 8.1, “Setting the Stage for the Cold War and Decolonization,” addresses the topic of the rise of anti-imperialist sentiment after the Second World War, the dissolution of empires, and the restructuring of states. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 8, Topic 8.7, “Global Resistance to Established Power Structures After 1900,” addresses the topic of nationalism, nationalist leaders, and resistance to imperialism. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include SAQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the required skills needed to successfully answer a secondary source SAQ.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching the skill of analyzing secondary sources and include handouts for students.
- The Online Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be searched by disciplinary practices, skills, content, and resource type. Visit <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apworldhistory/resource-library/>

Question #2**Task:** Short Answer Question**Topic:** Women Professions French Poster Primary Image**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.67***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

Students were asked to evaluate an image of women in different social positions in France in the late nineteenth century to answer three questions. First, students were asked to identify one way in which the views reflected in the image represented a continuity with traditional notions of gender roles. Next, they were asked to identify one way in which the views reflected in the image represented a change from traditional gender roles. Lastly, they were asked to explain one way in which the format or intended audience of the source may have influenced the way in which gender roles were portrayed in the image. The question primarily addressed Topics 5.1., 5.9., and 9.5. of the AP World History: Modern Course and Exam Description.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Many students were able to identify the representation of gender inequality or patriarchy as a continuity depicted in the image. Students also recognized that the late nineteenth century produced changes in France as a result of the Industrial Revolution and the ways in which modernization and urbanization as well as factory work changed women’s lives. Many student responses identified gender inequality—often termed “patriarchy”—as a significant continuity in European history. There was less grounding in the development of proto-feminist or cultural changes that led to the changes in traditional gender roles.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

The most common misconception that students held about women’s roles in the late nineteenth century and in general was that women “didn’t work” until the modern period. Moreover, they seemed to believe that peasant classes were a new phenomenon represented by the image. Many students lacked the knowledge of context about France during the nineteenth century. They either wanted to talk about the French Revolution in the eighteenth century or the Great War in the twentieth. Context for France in the nineteenth century did not seem to be something the students were able to access from their learning.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The views shown in the image show a change in traditional gender roles because the poster shows women working in a field, a very drastic change in the traditional ideology during the nineteenth century.” (<i>The response incorrectly identifies women engaged as agricultural workers in the nineteenth century as reflecting a change in traditional notions of gender roles.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One way in which the views in the image represent a change from traditional notions of gender roles is the fact that women are not bound to the house. Some of the women represented are working in factories.” (<i>The response correctly identifies that the late nineteenth century allowed women to gain employment in a wider range of occupations, including that of a factory worker.</i>)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Those who started the industrial revolution influenced how women became. Because the factories and other jobs required men, women had to take care of the jobs other men used to do.” (<i>The response describes the impact of the Industrial Revolution on women’s roles but does not explain how this is connected to the format or intended audience of the poster.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The intended audience of the poster influenced the way women and gender roles are portrayed because this poster was sold to the masses. During the late nineteenth century, many French people still believed that women were meant to serve their husband, and children. This influenced the gender roles in the poster because the poster would’ve been largely controversial if it was not formatted to please the masses.” (<i>The response correctly explains that because the poster was intended for sale to individuals and institutions in France, it reflected more traditional gender roles so that it would have been controversial to the sensibilities of a wide audience.</i>)
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Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Students struggle with identifying continuities in modern European history. They typically demonstrate knowledge of important themes like changing gender roles or the emergence of different social classes, but their command of how far back certain processes stretch is more limited. Teachers should continue to emphasize the importance of long-term understanding of social forces in society and the context surrounding those changes.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a SAQ on the topic of gender roles, patriarchy, and how modernization and urbanization affected views of women:

- Unit 5, Topic 5.1, “The Enlightenment,” addresses the topic of the Enlightenment, women’s suffrage, and an emerging feminism that challenged political and gender hierarchies. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 5, Topic 5.9, “Society and the Industrial Age,” addresses the topic of new social classes and the differences between working- and middle-class women. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 9, Topic 9.5, “Calls for Reform and Responses After 1900,” addresses the topic of rights-based discourses that challenged old views about gender. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include SAQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the required skills needed to successfully answer a primary source SAQ.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching the skill of analyzing primary sources and include handouts for students.
- The Online Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be searched by disciplinary practices, skills, content, and resource type. Visit <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apworldhistory/resource-library/>

Question #3**Task:** Short Answer Question**Topic:** Chinese Political System 1200–1750 No Stimulus**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.18***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

Students were asked to identify one continuity in the political system of China in the period 1200–1750. They then were asked to identify one change in the political system of China in the period 1200–1750. And, lastly, they were asked to explain one way in which political continuities in China influenced the development of the global economy in that same period. The question primarily addressed Topics 1.1., 2.1., and 4.4. of the AP World History: Modern Course and Exam Description.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

The students did quite well on this question. Teachers are clearly doing good work to introduce China during this period to students as their answers were strong. In part (a) the students frequently and accurately identified the civil service exam and the claim of The Mandate of Heaven as continuities. For part (b) they noted that China came to be ruled by non-Chinese dynasties like the Jin, Yuan, and Qing. Finally, students who successfully explained the global economic impact caused by the political continuities drew from their knowledge of global trade during the period and accurately identified the production of luxury goods for export and the global flow of silver from Japan and the Americas that was caused in part by China’s successful economy.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

While the overwhelming majority of students scored the first point, they still struggled with periodization for the question. The most common incorrect response indicated Communism as a continuity or change during the period. Many students also did well on part (c), but the biggest hurdle was explaining the how or why of events like Zhen He’s voyages or how the Mongols helped to expand the global economy.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One continuity in the political system of China in the period 1200–1750 was their communist run government. They never strayed from it for they believed that it was the best way to govern over the people.” (<i>The response identifies Communism as a continuity in China’s government, but this is outside of the time period.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One continuity in the political system in China in the period 1200–1750 would be the centralization of governance and power to the emperor and the large imperial bureaucracy which ran the nation.” (<i>The response correctly identifies a centralized state with a large imperial bureaucracy as a continuity in China’s government.</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One change in the political system of China in the period 1200–1750 is Mao’s use of totalitarianism during his reign. Mao impelmented many economic, cultural, and political reforms at this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One change in the political system of China in the period 1200–1750 was momentarily getting rid of the civil service exam during the Mongols rule. They did not like how this dictated who helped run the government and so they saw it fit

time.” (*The response identifies changes during Maoist period in China, but this is outside of the time period.*)

to be changed.” (*The response correctly identifies the interruption of the exam system during the Yuan Dynasty as a change in China’s government.*)

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Students continue to struggle with the “explain” part of the short answer questions. Working with students to develop clear how and why statements can help them to better prepare for the exam. Assist students in developing an understanding of the difference between summarizing or identifying and explaining or telling the story of how or why something occurred. Asking open-ended questions and giving students multiple opportunities to debate or engage in Socratic seminars can help them to understand that to explain is more than to identify accurately.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a SAQ on the topic of continuity and change in the political system of China and the impact on the global economy in the period 1200–1750:

- Unit 1, Topic 1.1, “Developments in East Asia from c. 1200 to c. 1450,” addresses the topic of Confucianism and bureaucracy in Song China and the continuation of Chinese cultural traditions. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 2, Topic 2.1, “The Silk Roads,” addresses the topic of luxury goods and the increase in interregional trade and the expansion of iron and steel manufacturing in China. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 4, Topic 4.4, “Maritime Empires Established,” addresses the topic of Asian states that tried to limit the disruptive economic and cultural effects of European-dominated long-distance trade as well as intra-Asian trade which continued to flourish during this period. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include SAQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the skills needed to successfully answer a SAQ without a stimulus.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching the skills of comparison and continuity and change and include handouts for students.
- The Online Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be searched by disciplinary practices, skills, content, and resource type. Visit <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apworldhistory/resource-library/>

Question #4**Task:** Short Answer
Question**Topic:** South or Southeast Asia
Political Systems 1750–1900
No Stimulus**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.08***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This question asked students to identify one continuity in the political systems of South or Southeast Asia in the period 1750–1900. Then students were asked to identify one change in the political systems of South or Southeast Asia during the period. Finally, they were asked to explain a way that changes in the global economy led to changes in the political systems of these regions during the period. The question primarily addressed Topics 4.5., 5.8., and 6.1. of the AP World History: Modern Course and Exam Description.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Far fewer students selected this question than Question 3. It is likely that students felt far less confident answering questions about the political systems of South and Southeast Asia during this period. For part (a) many students effectively identified the nature of European control over South Asia (India in particular) as a continuity. Some students accurately alluded to continued local leadership in the face of centralized control by the Mughals or the British. For part (c) many students explained the connection between the emerging global manufacturing economy and the increased colonization and European political control of South and Southeast Asia.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

Accurate identification of region continued to be an issue for students. In many responses, part (a) and part (b) focused on China, Japan, or Korea—states in East Asia rather than South or Southeast Asia. Another significant gap in knowledge was the timing of independence for colonies in South and Southeast Asia. Responses frequently alluded to India breaking free of British control or the creation of a Pakistan from India, both of which occurred well after 1900.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One continuity of the political system of South and Southeast Asia was their strong sense of imperialism. During this time, empires like the Ming and Qing dynasties used conquering to sustain control. This control stayed strong through this time period because of the places they took over.” <i>(The response incorrectly identifies imperialist impulses of the Ming and Qing dynasties as a continuity of political systems in South or Southeast Asia, but China is included in East Asia.)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Kingdoms in South Asia like India, were still largely governed by princely states like the province of Bengal that were still officially ruled by the Nawab even after the collapse of the Mughals.” <i>(The response correctly identifies the continued authority of local rulers like the Nawab of Bengal during and after the Mughal Empire.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “One change in the political system of South Asia was the separation of India 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “India’s government was controlled by the British for much of the 1750–1900 period. Initially, India was

<p>and Pakistan. The regions were politically divided so they split.” (<i>The response identifies the split between India and Pakistan as a political change from 1750–1900, but this is outside of the time period.</i>)</p>	<p>controlled by companies based in Britain, but violent rebellions led to full British control of India.” (<i>The response correctly identifies that while Britain maintained power in India during the entire period, the nature of government changed from indirect to direct or “full control.”</i>)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As the economy changed in Southeast Asia, many countries realized they could be close to, or fully-independent. Therefore giving countries such as India and Singapore reasons to break imperial ruling over their nations and branch out into an independent state which was self-sufficient.” (<i>The response attempts to connect economic self-sufficiency for states in South and Southeast Asia with political independence, but this is outside the time period.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Industrial Revolution led to the building of factories and mass manufacturing of goods. However, the British required more raw materials, and so began establishing colonies in order to retrieve these raw goods. India was ripe with raw materials, so the British set out to take control, eventually taking over the government and altering Indian political systems.” (<i>The response correctly explains how the emergence of mass production during the Industrial Age led Britain to colonize India for the purposes of securing raw materials to produce manufactured goods.</i>)

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Students struggled with correctly identifying the states included within South and Southeast Asia. Teachers can continue to emphasize the relevant divisions within Asia as a way to better understand the implications of the development of global connections in this period. The different experiences for China and India, for example, with regard to European contact in this period might be a useful way of further clarifying how geography plays an important role in understanding the historical processes at work in these regions. Likewise, students continued to mistakenly identify decolonization movements as occurring before the twentieth century. Some of this is no doubt due to the various nationalist or reform movements in East Asia during the nineteenth century (particularly in China and Japan), and teachers might use these as a way to contrast the different context in South and Southeast Asia. In particular, teachers can continue to emphasize the impact of the Second World War (perhaps more firmly rooted in the mid-1900s in students’ minds) on British, French, and Dutch colonial control as a way to help students correctly contextualize independence in South and Southeast Asia.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a SAQ on the topic of continuity and change in the political systems of South or Southeast Asia and the role of the global economy in the period 1750–1900:

- Unit 4, Topic 4.5, “Maritime Empires Maintained and Developed,” addresses the topic of mercantilist policies, European expansion, the new global circulation of goods, and Chinese demand for silver. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 5, Topic 5.8, “Reactions to the Industrial Economy from 1750 to 1900,” addresses the topic of the spread of socialism and communism and the rise of modernization and reform movements in China. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 6, Topic 6.1, “Rationales for Imperialism from 1750 to 1900,” addresses the topic of imperialism and ideologies used for its justification. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.

- Unit 6, Topic 6.2, “State Expansion from 1750 to 1900,” addresses the topic of European establishment of settler colonies. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include SAQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the skills needed to successfully answer a SAQ without a stimulus.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching the skills of comparison and continuity and change and include handouts for students.
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Question #1**Task:** Document-Based Question **Topic:** Mexican Revolution**Max. Points:** 7**Mean Score:** 2.81***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The intent of this question was to assess students' ability to articulate and defend an argument based on evidence within historical documents. This Document-Based Question (DBQ) asked students to evaluate the extent to which economic factors led to the Mexican Revolution of 1910–1920. The question addressed Topic 7.1: Shifting Power After 1900 of the AP World History Course Framework, and specifically Key Concept KC-6.2.II.D. The question provided opportunities for students to demonstrate all four of the historical reasoning skills, with a central focus on the skill of Causation. Responses were also expected to demonstrate the disciplinary practices of Analyzing Historical Evidence (primary sources) and Argument Development. The six text-based documents and one image provided evidence of causes of the Mexican Revolution. They provided students with multiple perspectives on the origins of the event, allowing students to develop their own argument as to the extent of economic influence on the origins of the revolution. Responses were expected to evaluate the sources, to add relevant historical detail, and to utilize the pieces of evidence to support and qualify an argument. Students also were asked to contextualize their essays by providing a larger historical framework within which the Mexican Revolution was situated. Responses were asked to provide explanation or description of the primary source documents' point of view, historical situation, intended audience, and/or purpose. Students could also demonstrate complexity by creating nuanced arguments, extended discussions of key developments, and/or consistently corroborating documents by analyzing their commonalities and differences.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Students were generally able to evaluate the sources provided to identify the extent of the impact of economic situations on the Mexican Revolution. For example, they regularly identified working conditions or labor relations in Mexico as an important factor in the development of the revolution.

Most responses also successfully described historically relevant information from at least three documents. Many students were also able to use at least six documents as evidence in support of claims or arguments about the economic factors that led to the revolution. Students who were unsuccessful with this point frequently did not attempt to use at least six documents, and others combined documents into one vague statement that did not provide sufficient evidence of understanding to earn the point.

Credit for Evidence Beyond the Documents was less frequently awarded in student responses. This was due mainly to students' infrequent attempts at providing evidence that extended beyond what was provided in the documents. When students did attempt the point, they were successful when they referenced specific instances of European imperialism or made connections to other revolutions. Students very rarely were able to provide specific evidence beyond the documents of Mexican history that was relevant to the prompt.

Student sourcing attempts were inconsistent. Students oftentimes merely restated the information provided in the source line or simply identified the source. When students were able to provide additional information or explanation about the source, they achieved the point. Teachers have clearly worked with students to understand that purpose is a form of sourcing. Purpose was found to be the most frequently successful attempt by students at the sourcing point. Many responses included a request for an additional document, seemingly unaware that the requirement to do so is no longer part of the task for the Document-Based Question. Finally, very few responses were able to demonstrate complexity. However, when they did, students were most likely to achieve this point when they created nuanced, developed arguments that showed understanding that the Mexican Revolution was happening in a global context.

These students frequently described that global phenomena and compared the Mexican Revolution to that in Russia at about the same time.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

Though students were successful in creating lines of reasoning and comprehending the documents, their lack of understanding of Mexican history and chronology were the most frequent misconceptions or gaps in their knowledge. For example, students frequently did not distinguish between the Mexican Revolution (the topic of the prompt) and Mexico’s independence from Spain. Not only were these two separate historical events, but they happened in different centuries. Working with students to develop their chronological skills and their understanding of the specific nature of Central and Latin American independence and revolutionary movements might assist students in avoiding these gaps or misconceptions.

Moreover, students continue to struggle with contextualization. Working with students on chronology and periodization will additionally assist these students. Students seem to not be able to effectively move from knowledge of what is merely happening at the same time, for example, the Russian Revolution, to proper historically relevant contextualization of the developments addressed in the prompt. Students were most likely to get context when they connected Enlightenment thought and previous revolutionary thinking to the events of the Mexican Revolution.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The Mexican Revolution established Mexico’s independence from Spain.” <i>(Attempted contextualization.)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Mexico won its independence from Spain in the nineteenth century after a series of calls for an end of oppression. However, even with independence social structures continued to hinder economic progress, with Creoles on the top of the economic and social ladders and the lower classes suffering and remaining unhappy. This led eventually to the Mexican Revolution.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Document 2 was a newspaper drawing that showed people being beaten.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Document 2 was intended to illustrate the violence and oppression of the government on the working classes in order to draw attention to the need for a political or revolutionary response.”

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

Teachers have clearly worked with their students on reading comprehension, understanding important themes such as revolution and modernization. Teachers might consider spending time developing intentional practices that help students to develop a toolbox of understanding strategies related to themes such as the economy as appeared in this question. Other common themes that students struggled with are understanding humans in the environment and social interactions and organization. Teachers could easily introduce contemporary examples of the economy to help students understand the key features of an economy such as taxes, monetary systems, and trade. Creating a word wall in the classroom with these themes at the top and having students fill in specific key terms and examples under the theme during the course of a unit could help them to create a visual memory of the features of these themes.

As stated earlier, students were most often successful when they provided the purpose of a source by showing the link between the document and the economic factors of the revolution. AP classroom has excellent daily personal progress checks and instructor videos that can develop a scaffolded approach to this skill. Students need practice with sourcing

and especially sourcing that moves beyond a mere identification and into an explanation of why the sourcing matters for understanding the document's connection to the argument.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a DBQ on the topic of the Mexican Revolution:

- Unit 7, Topic 7.1, “Shifting Power After 1900,” addresses the topic of the Mexican Revolution and the collapse of older land-based Ottoman, Russian, and Qing Empires. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include DBQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the required skills needed to successfully answer a DBQ.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison and continuity and change and include handouts for students.
- The Online Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be searched by disciplinary practices, skills, content, and resource type. Visit <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apworldhistory/resource-library/>

Question #2**Task:** Long Essay
Question**Topic:** New Economic and
Commercial Practices, 1200–1450**Max. Points:** 6**Mean Score:** 2.40***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

Responses to this question were expected to demonstrate students' ability to analyze the role that economic and/or commercial practices played in affecting trade between 1200 and 1450 C.E. It prompted students to address topics included in 2.1: The Silk Roads, Topic 2.3; Exchange in the Indian Ocean, Topic 2.4; Trans-Saharan Trade Routes; and/or 2.7, Comparison of Economic Exchange in the AP World History Curriculum and Framework. The question was open geographically to allow responses about multiple regions and a time period that guided students to the topics listed above, but also open to student responses that demonstrated familiarity with developments in European trade toward the end of the period.

The question was designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the impact of economic and commercial practices on trade, and the students were expected to present a historically defensible thesis, describe a historical context, use at least two specific examples of evidence, use the evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt, use historical reasoning skills to frame an argument, and demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical development. Students could use any historical thinking skill to demonstrate this understanding, and we saw successful responses that compared the developments of different trade routes, discussed effects of specific developments on individual trade routes, or evaluated the extent of the changes and impact on trade routes over time.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Students frequently chose this question, demonstrating a level of familiarity and confidence with their knowledge of major trade routes during the period 1200–1450 C.E. Students who chose Question 2 typically focused on identifying specific commercial practices or technological innovations that impacted trade on the three main routes listed in the prompt. Students were generally successful in making a claim or fashioning a thesis to frame their argument, although these were at times too vague to earn points. Teachers have done an admirable job of exposing students to these trade routes, and many students had specific examples to provide as evidence such as the use of caravanserais, the camel and camel saddle, and improved maritime technologies. Students also showed a notable global perspective, with many responses addressing multiple trade routes and discussing the development of trade economies and cultural diffusion.

Students struggled with deploying evidence in a way that clearly supported their argument. Many students presented a summary of developments, listing those developments, rather than explaining how or why the development impacted trade. Chronology also continues to be a significant struggle for students, as demonstrated by frequent responses citing the development of steamships and railroads, which are significantly outside the time period. Students who were able to recall specific developments in trade tended to earn more points; however, most students struggled to demonstrate complexity with this question.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

The most significant and common misconception or gap in knowledge was chronology. Students often wrote accurate evaluations of the impact of developments such as the railroad or Columbian Exchange on trade; however, these were outside of the time period of the prompt and could not earn credit. Students also were more likely to struggle with the specific expectation of the prompt to address “economic and/or commercial practices,” choosing instead to focus on the more familiar cultural diffusion facilitated by trade routes.

Students also struggled with the concept of contextualization for this question. Notably, students might have avoided the point because they focused on the aspect of contextualization as “in the period immediately before,” and the course begins in 1200. It is important for teachers to emphasize to students that contextualization can also be in the same time period, and outside the topic of the prompt, and for students to practice this type of contextualization. Students who addressed the development of large empires, which increased the need for trade, or who described the growth of cities along trade routes, facilitating the spread of these economic and commercial practices, could earn the contextualization point. Some students simply rewrote the background information provided before the prompt; however, this did not earn contextualization as restating the prompt does not earn a point.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “In the period circa 1200–1450, commerce along exchange networks such as the Silk Road involved many new economic and commercial practices.” (<i>Attempt at contextualization simply repeats the source material.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Throughout the time period of 1200–1450 societies were becoming more and more connected. As travelers along the Silk Road stopped in the same place to rest, cities began to grow up. The development of cities like Samarkand and Damascus allowed traders to share commercial and economic developments to make trade easier.” (<i>Earns contextualization by identifying the development of cities as hubs for shared practices.</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The development of the railroad allowed merchants to move more goods quickly, impacting trade significantly.” (<i>Attempt at evidence is outside of chronological time period.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The implementation of flying money, or paper indications of larger amounts of gold and silver, allowed merchants to travel with less risk and lighter packs, making travel much faster and more safe.” (<i>Successful evidence provided—“flying money”— is then attached to an argument that this development made travel “faster and more safe.” With a second piece of evidence this could earn both evidence points.</i>)

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

It is important for teachers to provide opportunities for students to practice making arguments and responding to prompts with chronological structure. This can be an excellent opportunity for review at the end of a unit or at the end of the course. Provide students with notecards or terms and have them place these concepts on a timeline around the classroom. They can work in groups or individually, and they can use notes and books as resources or attempt first from memory and then “check” themselves with books and notes. This same activity can work as practice for contextualization. Once the timeline is created, the teacher can ask students to brainstorm a list of “What else is going on?” in different topics or geographical areas. For example, if we have just created a timeline of trade developments, I might ask students to address what cultural developments are present, and then connect them to economics. Another opportunity for students to work on contextualization is to provide a prompt for students but only require a contextualization response or to develop a contextualization together as a class. Students benefit from repeated modeling of this skill in class and the opportunity to connect their knowledge to other topics similar to the prompt.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a LEQ on the topic of economic and commercial practices in Afro-Eurasia and the impact on trade between 1200 and 1450:

- Unit 2, Topic 2.1, “The Silk Roads,” addresses the topic of the expansion of trade routes, the growth of interregional trade, innovations in transportation and commercial technologies, and an increased demand for luxury goods. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 2, Topic 2.3, “Exchange in the Indian Ocean,” addresses the topic of the expansion of trade routes, transportation and commercial innovations, the growth of states, and technological and cultural transfers. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 2, Topic 2.4, “Trans-Saharan Trade Routes,” addressed the topic of the expansion of trade routes and empires. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include LEQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the required skills needed to successfully answer a LEQ.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching the skills of argument development, comparison and continuity and change and include handouts for students.
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Question #3**Task:** Long Essay
Question**Topic:** Impact of European Expansion
on South/East Asian Economies,
1450–1750**Max. Points:** 6**Mean Score:** 2.17***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This question addressed Topic 4.4: Maritime Empires Established and Topic 4.5: Maritime Empires Maintained and Developed of the AP World History Curriculum and Framework. The question was open geographically to allow responses about multiple areas, with the main student responses focused on South Asia (India) and East Asia (China and Japan); however, areas in South East Asia were also accepted if presented correctly. The question was designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the impact of European expansion on the countries located in South and East Asia, with a specific focus on economic impacts such as the choice to isolate from the global economy or the growing dependence on the European nations. 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 European expansion on two areas, discussed specific elements of European expansion along with their specific impacts, or evaluated the way impacts of European expansion changed over the time period provided.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

This question was the least frequent choice for students, possibly because students felt less comfortable with the the history of East and South Asia during the time period of the prompt. Students who chose Question 3 often struggled because of a lack of chronological knowledge, writing well-developed essays centered on the Opium Wars and the Boxer Rebellion in China, two events that were not relevant to the period referenced in the prompt. Successful responses were more likely to address the impacts of British expansion in India or on efforts by China and Japan to prevent European expansion through the implementation of isolation policies. If they stayed within the time period, students were generally successful in creating a thesis/claim for their argument, though these claims were sometimes too vague to earn points. Successful responses often showed a detailed grasp of East Asian and South Asian government systems and were able to discuss specific European economic actions such as joint-stock companies and the development of the Dutch trading systems in the Indian Ocean. Students struggled at times with deploying this evidence in a way that supported their argument, defaulting to simpler skills such as summarizing European actions or describing South/East Asian economic systems. Geography also posed a problem for some students, with the time period leading to discussion of European expansion in the Americas—content which could be effective contextualization if applied accurately but did not respond directly to the prompt.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

The most significant and common element of struggle for students was the chronological element of the question. Students often wrote accurate evaluations of the impact of European expansion on the development of the Opium Wars, and while evidence about the Opium **trade** could be effectively argued, responses that focused specifically on the Opium Wars and the Boxer Rebellion were common and ineffective because they fell outside the time period.

Students continue to struggle with the concept of complexity, with many responses focusing on “retelling” the process of European expansion rather than developing a complex and nuanced argument about the impact of this expansion on the economies of East and South Asia. Responses focused heavily on the European actions, often expanding on the

negative impacts of this expansion on the social and political realms of the East and South Asian populations (explaining the British banning of widow sacrifice, or Sati, for example) but did not connect the impact to the economies of these locations.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The first Opium War showed how the British had used their sale of opium to take over Chinese economy.” (<i>Attempt at evidence through reference to Opium War outside the time period.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “In an effort to counter the flow of silver into China, British merchants began to provide opium, developing a customer base that was heavily dependent and needed a constant supply of the drug, giving the British an increasing ability to impact the Chinese economy.” (<i>Deploys evidence successfully by focusing on opium sales, rather than the Opium War.</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The British needed to keep more money, so they sold the Chinese Opium.” (<i>Presents evidence in a straightforward way as factual description. Does not demonstrate complexity.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “As the British solidified their control over India, they were increasingly able to dictate Indian production, including increasing the production of opium. This drug could then be sold to the Chinese, who had otherwise no desire for any European products. Through this process, the British built an economic triangle of power, allowing them to profit through both controlling the production and creating demand for a product that also rendered their customers less able to create market competition.” (<i>Begins to demonstrate a complex understanding of the nuance of the opium trade, going beyond a simple presentation of the sale of opium to a nuanced understanding of the economic integration of markets.</i>)

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

To address complexity, teachers can continue to challenge students to think beyond “what” happened to a continued exploration of the topic by asking the question “so what?” This might also be accomplished by discussing a given development and considering what other causes or explanations might be applied (i.e., a counterargument). One way to do this is through in-class discussion. Another way is to have students keep a journal focused on higher-level questions as topics are discussed in class and occasionally have them choose one question to develop as a short written response, specifically challenging a “typical” explanation.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an LEQ on the topic of European expansion and its impact on the economies of East and/or South Asian states:

- Unit 4, Topic 4.4, “Maritime Empires Established,” addresses the topic of Asian states that tried to limit the disruptive economic and cultural effects of European-dominated long-distance trade as well as intra-Asian trade which continued to flourish during this period. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 4, Topic 4.5, “Maritime Empires Maintained and Developed,” addresses the topic of mercantilist policies, European expansion, the new global circulation of goods, and Chinese demand for silver. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include LEQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the required skills needed to successfully answer a LEQ.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching the skills of argument development, comparison, and continuity and change and include handouts for students.
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Question #4**Task:** Long Essay
Question**Topic:** The Great Depression and
Economic Policies Change**Max. Points:** 6**Mean Score:** 1.82***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

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.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

This question was a common choice for students, emphasizing their familiarity with content associated with the World Wars, despite this content coming at the end of the course when teachers might have been pressed for time at the end of the school year. Students who chose Question 4 often scored very well in the Evidence and Evidence Analysis categories, providing multiple examples of evidence connected to government responses to the Great Depression including discussing the economic struggles of the Weimar Republic, the rise of the Nazi party in Germany, and the implementation by totalitarian governments of strict economic control motions. Students were extremely successful in demonstrating success with contextualization due to understanding of (and application of) the Treaty of Versailles. In contrast, students typically struggled and did not address the “government response” and “economic” elements of the prompt. Rather than focus on these requirements, responses that were not successful addressed the development of the Second World War itself, conflicts therein, and the rise of new political entities without connecting to the economic policies.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

The most significant and common element of struggle for students was the thematic focus on economics and the specificity of government responses (versus general developments). For example, it was fairly common for students to address the idea of inflation as a specific government response, rather than a result of government policy. In addition, students struggled with providing a general political history of the time period between the First World War and the Second World War, without demonstrating understanding of the economic impacts that were the focus of the question.

Chronology was also a problem with student responses centered on the Soviet Union. Many responses presented the Russian Revolution and rise of communism in the Soviet Union as a government response to the Great Depression, a chronological error. While these responses might have been well developed and supported by detailed content, they were not an accurate response to the prompt provided. A similar error was found in responses that focused exclusively on the United States and U.S. government responses to the Great Depression. While extensive, accurate information might be presented, it was outside the scope of the prompt.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Adolf Hitler rose as the head of the Nazi party, and took over the government of Germany after the Great Depression.” <i>(Focuses on political developments with no connection to the economic policies of the government.)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “As Germany struggled with the economic depression as a result of reparations and global economic issues, the fascist leader Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party implemented significant government building projects such as the autobahn and other significant government investments like rebuilding the military.” <i>(Connects the rise of the Nazi party with the economic policies issued as a result of the Great Depression.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Lenin’s ideas led to the overthrow of the Tsar and the establishment of the communist government.” <i>(Addresses content from outside the time period. This content might be successful, if presented correctly, as contextualization, but it does not address the prompt.)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Stalin’s complete control of production under communist policies allowed him to dictate what and how much would be produced. The communist structure isolated the USSR from the global economy in many ways, and led to less need for government policy to change in response to the Great Depression than was found in many other nations.” <i>(Accurately addresses Soviet policy within the time period of the prompt, as well as indicating the impact of communism on the Soviet economy.)</i>

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

It remains important for teachers to provide opportunities for students to practice with chronological structure. One way to practice this is to provide students with a window of dates or a specific time period (i.e., “Twentieth Century” or “1450–1900”) and ask students to list as many specific details as they can from different regions of the world. This can be done on large sheets of butcher paper around the room labeled with different regions. Have students travel from page to page adding any specific details they can think of that fall within the presented time period and also cross off details added by other students that are outside the time period. This activity encourages both critical thinking and memory of content.

To work on thematic recognition, encourage students to deconstruct all prompts they see, identifying the key elements of the prompt: time period, thematic focus, and task. To scaffold, consider doing this together as a full class prior to the first few essays, then with a partner or in a small group, and eventually individually. Remind students that on the AP Test they have a reading period during which they can focus on this task as they brainstorm for their essays.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a LEQ on the topic of governments’ economic responses to the Great Depression:

- Unit 7, Topic 7.4, “Economy in the Interwar Period,” addresses the topic of the Great Depression and how some governments took a more active role in economic life. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
- Unit 7, Topic 7.6, “Causes of World War II,” addresses the topic of the global economic crises caused by the Great Depression and the rise of fascist and totalitarian regimes. It includes resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.

- AP Classroom has Personal Progress Checks for each unit that include LEQs and scoring guidelines that will allow students to practice the required skills needed to successfully answer a LEQ.
- The Question Bank within AP Classroom contains examples of AP exam questions, both MCQs and FRQs, that can be used to assess student understanding and allow for further practice of the required skills.
- Additionally, AP Classroom contains Skills-Based Modules, under the Professional Learning tab, that focus on teaching the skills of argument development, comparison, and continuity and change and include handouts for students.
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