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# AP<sup>®</sup> Comparative Government and Politics

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

### Inside:

#### Free-Response Question 2

- ✓ Scoring Guidelines
- ✓ Student Samples
- ✓ Scoring Commentary

**Question 2: Quantitative Analysis****5 points**

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- (A)** Using the data in the graph, identify the country with the second highest amount of natural resource rents as a percentage of GDP in 2014. **1 point**

**An identification includes the following:**

Russia

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- (B)** Using the data in the graph, describe a pattern in the amount of natural resource rents as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria from 2010 to 2018. **1 point**

**Acceptable descriptions include:**

- The amount of natural resource rents fluctuated as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria from 2010 to 2018.
- Resource rents increased from 2010 to 2011, decreased from 2011 to 2016, and increased from 2016 to 2018.
- The amount of natural resource rents as a percentage of GDP decreased in Nigeria from 2010 to 2018.
- The amount of natural resource rents as a percentage of GDP decreased in Nigeria from 2010 to 2018, though it increased between 2010 and 2011.

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- (C)** Describe political legitimacy. **1 point**

**An acceptable description includes:**

- Legitimacy refers to whether a government's constituents believe their government has the right to use power in the way it does.
- People's belief that the government has the right to rule.

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- (D)** Using the data in the graph, draw a conclusion about natural resources rents in Iran. **1 point**

**An acceptable conclusion includes:**

- Because the Iranian economy largely relies on sales of oil, it is not very diversified.
  - The government's reliance on natural resource rents encourages corruption such as in the oil sector, state-owned enterprises, or government spending.
  - The amount of natural resource rents as a percentage of GDP decreased in years where there were international economic sanctions on Iranian oil.
  - Because Iran is a member of an international organization (OPEC) it is subject to external pressures to reduce (or increase) trade production.
  - The world financial crisis in 2008 led to a decrease in oil revenues in Iran due to a decrease in global demand and oil prices.
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**(E)** Explain what the data in the graph imply about political legitimacy in authoritarian states. **1 point**

**Acceptable explanations include:**

- Authoritarian states have fewer sources of political legitimacy than democratic states, so successful economic performance is more important for legitimacy in authoritarian states. Therefore, fluctuations in natural resource rents are likely to have a greater effect on political legitimacy in authoritarian states.
- Revenues from the sale of natural resources in authoritarian states help the government maintain legitimacy by using the money to implement policies that are popular with citizens. So, when money from the sale of natural resources decreases, political legitimacy may also decrease.

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**Total for question 2    5 points**

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

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

- A. Russia
- B. In Nigeria, natural resources rents as GDP percentage went up from <sup>1.5%</sup> 2010 to <sup>close to 12%</sup> around 2011, where it then fell until 2016. <sup>to 5%</sup> From 2016, it rose until 2018, <sup>to 12%</sup> where it then fell to 9%.
- C. Political legitimacy is the belief of a population that the government has a right to rule over it based on the effectivity of the decisions made by those in office.
- D. Natural resources rents in Iran varies from year to year greatly but is <sup>almost</sup> always above ~~20%~~ 20%, which is high compared to other rentier states. In 2000, 35% of Iran's GDP came from natural resources rents compared to Nigeria, where it was 25%. In 2010, where GDP percentage of natural resources rents fell for every country, Iran maintained a 20%. Their Percentage of GDP from natural resource rents only fell below 20% from 2015 to mid 2017.
- E. In authoritarian states, it is much harder to gain political legitimacy because of the resource curse. As shown in the graph, authoritarian states such as Iran and Russia are more likely to rely on resources rents as a higher part of their GDP compared to an illiberal democracy such as Mexico, where Iran and Russia had 24% and 15% of <sup>natural</sup> resource rents as GDP respectively, Mexico had 3%. <sup>the resource curse, which causes GDP to</sup> This subjects these authoritarian states to ~~the resource curse, which causes GDP to~~

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

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

fluctuate based on the prices of fossil fuels. This in turn can decrease legitimacy because the government has an inconsistent supply of funding for programs for its citizens. This can cause them to question the government's rule because they believe it is not effective in addressing the needs of citizens.

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● **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

### Question 1

### Question 2

### Question 3

### Question 4

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

The country with the second highest amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP in 2014 was Russia. From 2010 to 2018, the amount of natural resources ~~rents~~ rents as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria fluctuated much with an increase from 2010 to 2011, a steady decrease from 2011 to 2016, then another increase from 2016 to 2018. Political legitimacy is the overall acceptance of a government's/individual's right to rule. The more political legitimacy a government has, the more people believe in its authority. Oil being plentiful and being the main economic product of Iran, Iran has retained the highest amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP from ~~2010~~ 2000 to 2018 out of these four countries. However, because Iran has focused their time and money only into the oil company, its natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP experiences much fluctuation. The data in the graph implies that, generally, a state with more political legitimacy experiences a higher amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP.

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**Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

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

An example of this is Mexico. Mexico lacks political legitimacy, mainly due to the fact of how corrupt it is. Compared to Iran, Russia, and Nigeria, Mexico has consistently had the lowest amount of natural resources rents. The greater the support of the people within a state, the greater the revenue from natural resource production.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4



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

2. A) Russia had the second highest amount of resource rents as a percentage of GDP in 2014.
- B) It has fluctuated. At first it went up until 2012, then it steadily decreased until 2015 when it slowly decreased till 2016. Then from 2016-2018 it rose. But as a whole, in 2018 Nigeria was getting less of its percentage of GDP from rents than in 2010.
- C) This is Political legitimacy is how a leader stays in power. It is what keeps it so the people recognize them as leader and support them.
- D) Natural resource rent in Iran is a very important part of their economy. It provides a large source of income.
- E) Russia and Iran are both partially authoritarian states. Russia claims to be a democracy, and Iran is partially a theocracy, but they both have large aspects of authoritarian regimes. In both of these countries have a high amount of percentage of GDP from rents, so they would both have more traditional legitimacy.

Page 3

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## Question 2

### Quantitative Analysis

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

#### Overview

The intent of this question was to assess students' ability to interpret, describe, and draw conclusions from quantitative data presented in a graph. In addition, the question was designed to assess students' ability to draw connections between natural resources rents and political legitimacy in authoritarian regimes. Students were presented with a graph of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP for the countries of Iran, Russia, Nigeria, and Mexico for the period covering 2000–2018. Students were expected to correctly identify a data point on a line graph and to describe a pattern in the data. Students were then tasked with describing political legitimacy. The next two prompts asked the students to draw conclusions using the data in the graph. First, they were asked to draw a conclusion about natural resources rents in Iran. Then, students were asked to explain what the data in the graph implies about political legitimacy in authoritarian states.

#### Sample: 2A

##### Score: 4

(A) The response earned 1 point for identifying “Russia” as the country with the second highest amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP in 2014.

(B) The response earned 1 point for describing a pattern in the amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria from 2010 to 2018 by stating, “In Nigeria, natural resources rents as GDP percentage went up from 15% in 2010 to close to 19% around 2011, where it then fell until 2016 to 5%. From 2016, it rose until 2018 to 12%, where it then fell to 9%”

(C) The response earned 1 point for describing political legitimacy by stating, “Political legitimacy is the belief of a population that the government has a right to rule over it.”

(D) The response did not earn a point for drawing a conclusion about natural resources rents in Iran. The response describes changes in the data on natural resources rents, but the response does not draw a conclusion related to natural resources rents, such as the lack of diversification of the economy or the reasons for fluctuations in natural resources rents, such as economic sanctions.

(E) The response earned 1 point for explaining what the data in the graph imply about political legitimacy in authoritarian states. The response stated that GDP can “fluctuate based on the prices of fossil fuels,” which “in turn can decrease legitimacy because the government has an inconsistent supply of funding for programs for its citizens” and “can cause them to question the government’s rule because they believe it is not effective in addressing the needs of citizens.”

#### Sample: 2B

##### Score: 3

(A) The response earned 1 point for identifying “Russia” as the country with the second highest amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP in 2014.

## Question 2 (continued)

(B) The response earned 1 point for describing a pattern in the amount of resources rents as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria from 2010 to 2018 by stating, “From 2010 to 2018, the amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria fluctuated.”

(C) The response earned 1 point for describing political legitimacy by stating, “Political legitimacy is the overall acceptance of a government’s ... right to rule.”

(D) The response did not earn a point for drawing a conclusion about natural resources rents in Iran. The response identifies that Iran is the country with the highest percentage of natural resources rents as a percent of GDP and that those percentages fluctuate over time, but it does not draw a conclusion related to natural resources rents, such as the lack of diversification of the economy or the reasons for fluctuations in natural resource rents, such as economic sanctions.

(E) The response did not earn a point for explaining what the data in the graph imply about political legitimacy in authoritarian states. The response does not discuss an authoritarian regime and, thus, does not explain how natural resources rents are related to political legitimacy in authoritarian regimes.

### **Sample: 2C**

#### **Score: 2**

(A) The response earned 1 point for identifying “Russia” as the country with the second highest amount of natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP in 2014.

(B) The response earned 1 point for describing a pattern in the amount of resources rents as a percentage of GDP in Nigeria from 2010 to 2018 by stating, “It has fluctuated.”

(C) The response did not earn a point for describing political legitimacy. The response attempts but does not correctly describe political legitimacy.

(D) The response did not earn a point for drawing a conclusion about natural resources rents in Iran. The response identifies oil as a large segment of the Iranian economy, but the response does not draw a conclusion related to natural resources rents, such as the lack of diversification of the economy or the reasons for fluctuations in natural resource rents, such as economic sanctions.

(E) The response did not earn a point for explaining what the data in the graph imply about political legitimacy in authoritarian states. The response states that authoritarian regimes such as Iran and Russia have significant natural resources rents; the response does not explain how natural resources rents would influence political legitimacy in authoritarian regimes.