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

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

### Inside:

#### Free-Response Question 4

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

**Question 4: Argument Essay****5 points**

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<b>Row A</b> <b>Claim/Thesis</b>  <b>(0–1 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.	<b>1 point</b> Responds to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
	<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>	
	<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>Do not make a claim that responds to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<b>Responses that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt and establish a line of reasoning.</li> <li>Provide a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning as to whether environmental issues increase or decrease political legitimacy using one or more of the provided course concepts: demographic change, globalization, sovereignty.</li> </ul>
	<b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b> <b>Restate the prompt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Climate change related to events such as flooding is bad for a country’s economy.”</i></li> <li><i>“Political legitimacy is affected by environmental issues in China.”</i></li> </ul> <b>Do not respond to the prompt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Every country is negatively affected by environmental issues.”</i></li> <li><i>“Environmental disasters are worse in developing countries than in developed countries.”</i></li> </ul>	<b>Examples that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“When governments tackle environmental issues that transcend sovereign borders such as global warming, they can increase political legitimacy by getting public buy-in and participation.”</i></li> <li><i>“Climate change related events will cause governments to forcibly relocate people which will cause resistance and loss of political legitimacy.”</i></li> <li><i>“Environmental crises like uncontrolled air pollution resulting in part from globalization have the potential to decrease political legitimacy if the government cannot effectively respond to them.”</i></li> <li><i>“Improvements in the environment and health of citizens encouraged by abiding by international agreements or rules set by supranational organizations often lead to increased domestic political legitimacy.”</i></li> </ul>
<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The claim or thesis must consist of one or more sentences that may be located anywhere in the response.</li> <li>A claim or thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
Row B Evidence  (0–2 points)	<b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.	<b>1 point</b> Provides <u>one</u> piece of specific and relevant evidence from a course country relevant to one of the course concepts in the prompt.	<b>2 points</b> Provides <u>two</u> pieces of specific and relevant evidence from one or more course countries relevant to one or more of the course concepts in the prompt.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
	<b>Responses that do not earn points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Do not provide any accurate evidence.</li><li>Provide evidence that is not relevant to the course concepts in the prompt.</li></ul>	<b>Responses that earn 1 or 2 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide specific and relevant evidence from required course countries, relevant to the course concepts in the prompt.</li></ul>	
	<b>Examples that do not earn points:</b> <b>Provide evidence that is not specific</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Environmental disasters are bad for China’s economy.”</li></ul> <b>Provide evidence that is not relevant to course concepts in the prompt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Iran has adapted well to an increase in global temperatures.”</li></ul>	<b>Examples of acceptable specific and relevant evidence (one example is one piece of evidence):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“In China, people have been relocated away from vulnerable areas—such as when people were relocated for the construction of the Three Gorges Dam.”</li><li>“In Russia, the permafrost thaw is endangering key infrastructure such as oil pipelines used to connect Russia to the global economy, causing methane and anthrax pockets to emerge and release into water supplies and air.”</li><li>“In Russia, drought in the breadbasket areas of the Black Earth region is expected to reduce agricultural production which could increase Russia’s dependence on foreign grain imports.”</li><li>“In the UK, heat waves have increased and intensified and pose a threat to public health.”</li><li>“The UK government has reduced emissions by 51% since 1990 in response to requirements imposed by international agreements. Their emissions are now half-way to net zero, their goal for 2050.”</li><li>“Demographic change in Nigeria forced by environmental consequences of climate change may increase conflict.”</li><li>“Economic consequences of environmental changes in Nigeria due in part to globalization include loss of agricultural production and land degradation.”</li><li>In Mexico, landfalling storms with heavy rains damage property, leading to secondary events such as mudslides, endangering life and property, which may cause large-scale migration from vulnerable areas.”</li><li>“Because of industrialization demands of globalization in Mexico, air pollution is a major problem in large cities.”</li><li>“Deforestation is a problem in Mexico to meet global demands for lumber.”</li></ul>	
	<b>Additional Notes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A response does not need to earn the point in Row A to earn points in Row B.</li><li>A response does not need to explain the relationship between the evidence and the claim or thesis to earn points in Row B. (That explanation is evaluated in Row C.)</li></ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<b>Row C Reasoning</b>  <b>(0–1 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.	<b>1 point</b> Explains how or why the evidence supports the claim or thesis.
	<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>	
	<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to the claim or thesis.</li> <li>• Restate the prompt without explaining how the evidence supports the claim or thesis.</li> </ul> <b>Examples that do not earn points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Climate events put a strain on a country’s economy and are difficult to plan for.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Environmental issues affect political legitimacy and have a global impact.”</i></li> </ul>	<b>Responses that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis.</li> </ul> <b>Examples of reasoning that explain how evidence supports the claim or thesis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Climate change related events, combined with urbanization put citizens at risk of suffering property loss, injury, and death. Without effective governmental responses, political legitimacy will decline as citizens feel alienated and endangered.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Working to solve environmental issues that transcend international borders can increase political legitimacy because people see the government establishing regulations and rules that are for the greater good for all citizens of the world.”</i></li> </ul>
	<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A).</li> <li>• The explanation of the relationship between one piece of evidence and the claim or thesis is sufficient to earn this point.</li> </ul>	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<b>Row D</b> <b>Responds to Alternate Perspectives</b>	<b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.	<b>1 point</b> Responds to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.
<b>(0–1 points)</b>	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restate the opposite of the claim or thesis.</li> <li>May identify or describe an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective.</li> </ul> <b>Examples of responses that do not earn the point:</b> <b>Restate the opposite of the claim or thesis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Many scholars disagree about the impact that environmental issues have on globalization and political legitimacy.”</i></li> </ul> <b>Describe an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Not all environmental crises negatively impact a political legitimacy.”</i></li> </ul>	<b>Responses that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must describe an alternate perspective AND refute, concede, or rebut that perspective.</li> </ul> <b>Examples of acceptable responses to an alternate perspective may include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Some people argue that environmental crises like uncontrolled air pollution resulting from globalization have the potential to decrease political legitimacy. However technological advances provide the necessary solutions to many environmental crises so that governments will be able to respond without losing legitimacy in the eyes of their citizens.”</i></li> <li><i>“Some people argue that recognizing and responding to climate change with constructive policies will increase legitimacy. However, governmental policies addressing climate change will damage the economy and will actually reduce domestic legitimacy.”</i></li> </ul>
	<b>Additional Notes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A).</li> <li>Responses that demonstrate an incorrect understanding of the alternate perspective do not earn this point.</li> </ul>	

● 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.

Within both democratic and authoritarian regimes, environmental issues ~~are a huge problem for~~ decrease a country's legitimacy. ~~These issues cause many often~~ ~~these~~ challenge a leader's sovereignty within a country ~~because of that~~ because these issues may challenge a ~~leader~~ country's policy on globalization ~~and~~ led to demographic changes in search for better opportunity challenge a leader's sovereignty because of <sup>disagreements on</sup> how they are addressing environmental issues.

Globalization can be viewed as a positive, but one of its major issues is the impact it has on the environment, particularly in developing countries. Larger nations may exploit the resources found in one country and take advantage of the situation because of the lack of regulation. This issue has occurred in Nigeria where larger oil production companies have established oil rigs ~~within the country~~. Nigeria has become a rentier state, solely reliant on one ~~single~~ commodity, which is dangerous because oil is a finite resource. Additionally, because these ~~given~~ are private companies, there is a lack of regulation upon how they are extracting oil and how much of it they are extracting. Furthermore, this has led to economic issues within the country because Nigerians do not profit from the oil. As a result, there has been much dissatisfaction within the country leading to insurgent groups like

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~~the Boko Haram~~ and MENVD to <sup>commit</sup> ~~led~~ violent actions and target these oil companies. Because of groups like this, the legitimacy of the Nigerian government has been challenged because they have not <sup>suppressed</sup> ~~addressed~~ these <sup>groups</sup> ~~issues~~. The impact that globalization can have on developing countries is great ~~and can affect~~ ~~too~~ because it can create environmental degradation or the exploitation of resources within a country.

Environmental issue may also lead to the challenging of a leader's policies if the impact of these problems greatly affects citizens living within a country. Within China, the authoritarian regime has done little to address major environmental issues within their country like air pollution. As a result of several larger corporations being nationalized the government is directly responsible for these issues, particularly in large cities. Air pollution has become so severe in some parts of the country that it has led to health problems for Chinese people. There has been many cues for change in these policies but the government shuts down any of these protests, which only fosters greater dissent among the Chinese people ~~and has led to~~ a lack of trust in the government to fix these problems. Furthermore, within China, because there has been a great shift of people from rural areas into the cities

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to find jobs, moving from the West to the East, this is only adding to the pollution problem within the cities. Not only does air pollution continue to be an issue, but also several people of the working class have ended up living in cramped quarters, where sanitation is very poor. It is the culmination of issues and the lack of concern for these problems that not only because an internal problem but also a concern globally, affecting the perception of countries like China.

Some may argue that environmental issues actually increase a country's political legitimacy. Like in democratic nations such as the UK that was a part of the Paris Climate Accord, which joined many countries together to deal with the current environmental issues. Nevertheless, this is a short sighted perspective because environmental issues overall pose more problems for countries that if not handled properly will lead to decrease of legitimacy.

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### Question 4

For China and Nigeria, environmental issues caused by globalization ~~can decrease~~ political legitimacy if left unaddressed or if no action is taken.

Nigeria and China have both engaged in globalization and have experienced harmful environmental issues that affect their populations. China has engaged in trade through exporting manufactured goods like technology. Its cities are full of factories that have caused air pollution and water pollution. Lower air quality and unusable water has become a reason for interest groups to protest and promote greener policies. If the government continues to ignore their voices, the citizens will not consent to be ruled, decreasing political legitimacy. This is because globalization with no concern for the environment benefits the minority of the rich at the expense of the majority poor who would not view the government as legitimate. Nigeria has also engaged in globalization by allowing multinational corporations to control and extract their oil. Nigeria is a rentier state with most of its profits earned by oil. They would rather earn these giant profits, as oil is highly valuable, than correct its environmental problems. Oil extraction has polluted water in the Niger River Delta, and the air when oil is purified. Because the government would rather earn revenue than take care of its people that live in these highly polluted areas, citizens decrease their legitimacy for government. These big profits rarely benefit the citizens in social welfare programs because

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the government is corrupt and multinational companies take most of the share. Foreign investors ~~would~~ ~~not~~ ~~profit~~ off of harming Nigeria's ~~profit~~ environment ~~by~~ <sup>instead of</sup> enforcing policies to take care of it because this would cost them. Nigerians would find the government even less legitimate because their voice against corrupt MNCs were suppressed when Shell anti-Shell activists were killed.

Although some may believe environmental issues can increase legitimacy, they decrease <sup>legitimacy</sup> when unaddressed because people ~~are~~ become oppressed and their wants are ignored, so they do not consent the government to rule over them.

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### Question 4

Environmental issues decrease political legitimacy. We can see this across the globe's many nations, but ~~namely~~ <sup>namely</sup>: Nigeria and China.

To start, legitimacy is the people's ~~belief~~ <sup>belief</sup> that the ruling government has the authority ~~to~~ <sup>or</sup> right to rule them. Nigeria has seen much trouble in growing legitimacy, with many Northern Nigerians being Muslim and opposing secular rule. To add to that, many Southern Nigerians are becoming discontent due to environmental impacts of Globalization. Globalization is the increased trade and communication of people across the globe due to improvements and use of technology. Nigeria opened up (Globalized) its economy to allow foreign countries to extract oil from its land. These companies, however, made many Nigerians angry, as oil ~~markets~~ <sup>markets</sup> were ~~damaged~~ <sup>damaged</sup>, which led to boot-leg oil extraction and an Oil war, which hurts the environment. This Oil war has seen millions of gallons of oil being spilled into Nigeria's vital water supplies, and farming land. Many people have lost faith in the government, as they cannot find a way to resolve this conflict or heal the environment. The deterioration in the environment has led to militant groups fighting the foreign oil extractors, and mass disapproval of the Government, ~~as more and more jobs, lives, and higher costs for~~ <sup>lowering its legitimacy.</sup>

China, although not as intensively as Nigeria, also has similar problems. Since 2000, China has slowly opening up and Globalizing its economy to foreign investors, and letting more aspects become privatized. This has led to many cities becoming ~~highly~~ unsafe to live in, as many factories are emitting hazardous air and chemical

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~~pollution. This, coupled with the countries limited action to stop it, has led to people a massive dent in China's sovereignty~~

Additionally, the increased jobs from the factories has led to a major demographics change, where many Chinese citizens are moving West to East (Rural to City) to make more and/or live better.

Both of those conjoined means more people living in evergrowing less healthy ~~china~~ environments, hurting China's political legitimacy as peoples opinion on it's effectiveness it decreased, and with support weakened, the CCP's (Chinese Communist Party) ~~sovereignty~~ <sup>sovereignty</sup> is weakened.

Some counterpoints might argue that, if responded to properly and effectively, an environmental issue could benifit a country's legitimacy, which I concede is true, but happens so little to where the scope of the point is ineffective and the point becomes null. Of the six AP countries in this course; not one of them ~~has~~ resolved the Climate change issue, or fix local issues in a timely manner, which causes all of their citizens to feel less belief that their government works for ~~their~~ <sup>their benefit</sup>, hurting their legitimacy ~~across~~ across all six.

In conclusion, no country has been able to formulate a quick and effective solution to their climate issues, only loosing their citizen's trust; such is proven in Nigeria, fighting armed citizens because their legitimacy is low, and China, where they're dealing with mass protests over poor or no legislation to improve air quality. ~~environmental issues~~

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## **Question 4**

### **Argument Essay**

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

#### **Overview**

The intent of this question was to assess students' understanding of how environmental challenges impact government legitimacy using one or more of the following course concepts: demographic change, globalization, or sovereignty. Students were expected to articulate a defensible claim/thesis with two pieces of relevant evidence from a course country; use reasoning to explain why the evidence provided supports the thesis; and respond to an alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal. Students were expected to write an argumentative essay, demonstrating each of the skills mentioned above. Specifically, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of environmental issues and their impact on political legitimacy using the course concepts to establish the link between the two. Students needed to further demonstrate their knowledge of the course countries by providing appropriate evidence from the countries that involve course concepts the students used in their thesis. Students also needed to be able to demonstrate their understanding of how the evidence they described was linked to the relationship between environmental issues and political legitimacy. Finally, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of alternative perspectives by describing an alternative thesis and then either refuting that thesis, rebutting it, or conceding it.

#### **Sample: 4A**

**Score: 5**

**Claim/Thesis Score: 1**

**Evidence Score: 2**

**Reasoning Score: 1**

**Alternative Perspectives Score: 1**

(A) The response earned 1 point for establishing a clear line of reasoning using one or more of the provided course concepts by stating “environmental issues decrease a countries legitimacy, because these issues may challenge a country’s policy on globalization.”

(B) The response earned 2 points for supporting the prompt with two pieces of evidence from one or more of the course countries related to the topic and course concept. The response earned 1 point for stating that “environmental degradation” in Nigeria has led to “dissatisfaction within the country leading to insurgent groups like MEND.” The response earned 1 point for evidence from China by stating, “Air pollution has become so severe in some parts of the country that it has led to health problems for Chinese people.”

(C) The response earned 1 point for using reasoning to explain how the thesis is supported by the evidence by stating that “the legitimacy of the Nigerian government has been challenged because they have not suppressed these groups.”

(D) The response earned 1 point by addressing an alternate perspective by stating, “Some may argue that environmental issues increase a countries political legitimacy. Like in democratic nations such

### Question 4 (continued)

as the UK that was a part of the Paris Climate Accord.” It then rebuts this line of reasoning by stating that “environmental issues overall pose more problems for countries that if not handled properly will led to decrease of legitimacy.”

**Sample: 4B**

**Score: 4**

**Claim/Thesis Score: 1**

**Evidence Score: 2**

**Reasoning Score: 1**

**Alternative Perspectives Score: 0**

(A) The response earned 1 point for establishing a clear line of reasoning by stating, “For China and Nigeria, environmental issues caused by globalization decreases political legitimacy if left unaddressed or if no action is taken.”

(B) The response earned 2 points for supporting the prompt with two pieces of evidence from one or more of the course countries related to the topic and course concept. It earned 1 point for stating that in China “cities are full of factories that have caused air pollution and water pollution.” It earned 1 point for stating that in Nigeria, “Oil extraction has polluted water in the Niger River Delta, and the air when oil is purified.”

(C) The response earned 1 point for using reasoning to explain why the thesis is supported by the evidence by stating that “globalization with no concern for the environment benefits the minority rich at the expense of the majority poor who would not view the government as legitimate.”

(D) The response did not earn a point for establishing a clear line of reasoning. While the response acknowledges the rebuttal, it does not demonstrate understanding of this alternative perspective.

**Sample: 4C**

**Score: 2**

**Claim/Thesis Score: 0**

**Evidence Score: 2**

**Reasoning Score: 0**

**Alternative Perspectives Score: 0**

(A) The response did not earn a point for establishing a clear line of reasoning using one or more of the provided course concepts.

(B) The response earned 2 points for supporting the prompt with two pieces of evidence from one or more of the course countries related to the topic and course concept. It earned 1 point for stating, “This Oil war has seen millions of gallons of oil being spilled into Nigeria’s vital water supplies, and farming land.” The response earned 1 point for stating that in China, foreign investment “has led to

**Question 4 (continued)**

many cities becoming unsafe to live in, as many factories are emitting hazardous air and chemical pollution.”

(C) The response did not earn a point for using reasoning to explain why the thesis is supported by the evidence because it does not have a valid thesis.

(D) The response did not earn a point for describing an alternative perspective.