

2023

AP[®]



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

Set 1

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Short-Answer Question 4

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Question 4: Short Answer, No Stimulus, Cold War**3 points****General Scoring Notes**

- Each point is earned independently.
- **Accuracy:** These scoring guidelines require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- **Clarity:** Exam responses should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and practices described below.
- **Describe:** Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic. Description requires more than simply mentioning an isolated term.
- **Explain:** Provide information about how or why a historical development or process occurs or how or why a relationship exists.

(A) Describe one cause for the development of the Cold War in the mid-1900s. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- The previously existing fear of the spread of communism in the West after the Bolshevik Revolution.
- The Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe and the installation of communist regimes (Iron Curtain/Eastern Bloc).
- The Soviet fear of another invasion by Germany/the West as had happened in the World Wars.
The development of nuclear weapons first by the United States and then the Soviet Union.

(B) Explain one way in which the Cold War affected Europe in the second half of the 1900s. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- Both sides created economic unions (EEC/COMECON) to bind nations together and advance their economic ideologies.
- Alliance systems of mutual security were created in the West and the East (NATO/Warsaw Pact).
- The United States played a much greater role in Western European culture, economics, and politics than it had before the Second World War (Marshall Plan, Truman Doctrine).
- Eastern and Western Europe followed very different economic and social paths, as the West embraced individualism, capitalist consumerism, and social welfare programs, and the East pursued a more collective system based on central planning and suppression of dissent.
- Fears of nuclear conflict and mutually assured destruction (intensified by arms race) loomed over European society.

(C) Explain one reason why the Cold War ended in the late 1900s.

1 point

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- Economic discontent in the Eastern Bloc grew, manifesting in opposition movements such as Solidarity in Poland.
- Soviet Premier Gorbachev implemented economic and political reforms that allowed for more criticism of the government and openness to the West.
- A western arms buildup, in addition to the drain of the Afghanistan War, pushed Soviet military spending beyond the state's capacity to maintain.
- Unlike prior uprisings against communist rule in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union refused to intervene against the uprisings in Eastern Europe in 1989.

Total for question 4 3 points

a. Especially following World War II, there was great mistrust between major powers like Russia and the US. The Soviet Union wanted to have communism govern the whole world, while the US wanted democracy and feared the possible spread of communism by the Soviets, leading to great tensions and the development of the Cold War.

b. With the tension between the Soviet Union, who wanted communism, and the US, who wanted democracy, Europe started splitting into East and West Europe. The US formed NATO, which united Western Europe and declared that the US would help any Western European countries fighting communists, and through the Marshall Plan, they granted Western Europe a great sum of money in order to recover from the war, leading to great economic prosperity in the West. As a response, the Soviet Union established the Warsaw Pact, which stated that the Soviet Union would help any satellite states which were fighting or threatened by democracies or the West, and this pact reflected NATO. These two organizations ultimately caused more polarization in Europe in the second half of the 1900s, and the Soviet Union established a wall to prevent Soviets from crossing to Western Europe.

c. In the Soviet Union, Gorbachev established the principle of perestroika, which allowed for more free trade, opposing the ideals of communism, as well as the idea of Glasnost, which allowed for more free speech. Also, he declared that the Soviet Union would stop using physical force to crush uprisings. Thus, nationalist sentiments grew in ethnic communities throughout the Soviet Union, leading to uprisings and revolutions, ultimately leading to the fall of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War.

- a. One cause of the development of the Cold War is the technological advances in warfare, specifically the atomic bomb. The United States and Russia had both succeeded in creating this weapon of mass destruction, causing further tension between both sides. However, they resisted utilizing the atomic bombs due to the immensely destructive nature of the weapon.
- b. The Cold War affected Europe in the second of the 1900s by splitting eastern and western Europe, more specifically eastern and western Germany. The communists struggled to recover from the financial losses caused by World War 2 compared to the western hemisphere. Lack of ability to freely trade with other countries brought hardship to eastern Germany and Berlin, separated from the western by the Berlin Wall. Inhabitants on the western side were able to provide more for their families and recover from the devastating war.
- c. The Cold War ended in the late 1900s due to the inability to compromise and communicate between the communists and the rest of Europe.

One cause for the development of the Cold War in the mid-1900s was the high tensions between the USA and the Soviet Union. After World War II, tensions were high in many places, but two main powers, the USSR and the United States, had a large difference in opinion of ideals with similar amounts of power. This evidence shows that, without the difference in ideals between the two powers, the Cold War would not have occurred at all.

One way the Cold War affected Europe in the second half of the 1900s was the decrease in currency and gold, leading to a falling economic system. After the Soviet Union spent a large amount of currency due to the rising tensions and the preparation for war, they were left vulnerable with a large decrease in economic systems and currency. This explains and leads to the, not-long-after, fall in the economic system and decline in gold and money in Europe.

One reason the Cold War ended in the late 1900s was due to the fact that the USSR didn't want to experience the detriments of the loss of soldiers and materials they would feel after the war. After the Soviet Union and United States prepared to battle, the USA had proven themselves to be more powerful than the USSR. The Soviet Union soon backed off, not wanting bloodshed or loss of resources. Overall, the actions of the USSR in Europe led to an end to the bloodless battle later named the Cold War.

Short Answer Question 4

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

Overview

a) Describe one cause for the development of the Cold War in the mid-1900s.

Responses were expected to describe at least one cause for the development of the Cold War in the mid-twentieth century and could include such points as the development of nuclear weapons or Soviet security concerns and the establishment of the Iron Curtain (topic 9.3).

b) Explain one way in which the Cold War affected Europe in the second half of the 1900s.

Responses were expected to explain an effect upon Europe, such as closer ties to the U.S. in the West, or to the U.S.S.R. in the East, to the development of NATO and the Warsaw Pact (topics 9.2, 9.4). These concepts are addressed in the curriculum framework in topic 9.2 (Rebuilding Europe), topic 9.3 (The Cold War), and topic 9.4 (Two Superpowers Emerge). Students could also explain as an effect of the culture of fear that growing stockpiles of nuclear weapons created or explain the economic consequences of the Cold War as expressed in the Marshall Plan or COMECON in more detail (topics 9.2 and 9.4).

c) Explain one reason why the Cold War ended in the late 1900s.

Responses were expected to make connections between the collapsing Soviet economy and empire and the end of the Cold War and provide contextualization on how the collapse of the Soviet Union or the dismantling of the Berlin Wall was a symbolic ending to the Cold War. Successful responses explained Gorbachev's attempts at Perestroika or Glasnost or noted the growing demands for less suppression in various Eastern Bloc Soviet satellites that were no longer met with violence. These concepts are addressed in the curriculum framework in topic 9.4 (Two Superpowers Emerge) and topic 9.7 (The Fall of Communism).

Sample: 4A

Score: 3

The response earned the point for part (a) by correctly describing how one cause of the Cold War was American fear of the Soviet desire to spread communism.

The response earned the point for part (b) by thoroughly explaining how the East vs. West split affected and further polarized Europe through the creation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

The response earned the point for part (c) by explaining how Gorbachev's changing policies of Glasnost, Perestroika, and no longer using force to crush dissent led to the end of the Soviet Union and the Cold War.

Short Answer Question 4 (continued)

Sample: 4B

Score: 2

The response earned the point for part (a) by correctly describing the creation of nuclear weapons as a cause of the Cold War.

The response earned the point for part (b) by explaining how the Cold War affected economic life on either side of an East vs. West division of Europe.

The response did not earn the point for part (c) because the claim about the “inability to compromise and communicate” does not clearly explain a reason for the Cold War’s end.

Sample: 4C

Score: 1

The response earned the point for part (a) by correctly describing how a “difference in ideals” and “high tensions between the USA and the Soviet Union” were causes of the Cold War.

The response did not earn the point for part (b) because its explanation of a “decrease in currency and gold, leading to a falling economic system” does not correctly explain the effect of the Cold War on Europe.

The response did not earn the point for part (c) because its explanation that the Cold War ended because the Soviets feared war with the US is incorrect and not fully explained.