



# Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2023 AP<sup>®</sup> World History: Modern Set 1 Free-Response Questions

• Number of Students Scored	350,353		
• Number of Readers	1,722		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	53,716	15.33
	4	76,889	21.95
	3	96,027	27.41
	2	78,127	22.30
	1	45,594	13.01
• Global Mean	3.04		

The following comments on the 2023 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> World History: Modern were written by the Chief Reader, Craig Miller, Professor, Pennsylvania College of Technology. 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.

## Short Answer Question 1

**Task:** Short Answer Question

**Topic:** Pagden Fall of European Empires Secondary Source

**Max Score:** 3

**Mean Score:** 1.40

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The intent of this question was for students to analyze a secondary source related to anti-imperial resistance and the fall of European colonialism. Part A asked students to identify one claim that the author makes in the passage. Part B asked students to explain how one development in the second half of the twentieth century could be used to support the author's claim about nationalism in the second paragraph. Part C asked students to explain how one development from the nineteenth or twentieth century could be used to challenge a claim that the author makes in the first paragraph.

The question was focused on analyzing historical evidence and interpreting secondary sources.

The question tested content primarily from Topics 6.2, 6.3, and 8.5 of the course framework.

### ***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 did an excellent job identifying claims such as that modern European empires rose and fell rapidly; that nationalism was the cause for resistance to colonial empires; that subject peoples were willing to remain subjugated by a colonial power if a significant number of them saw benefits from such subjugation.
- Many responses successfully explained developments, such as increasing nationalist sentiments that led revolutionaries to overthrow governments; Vietnamese resistance against French rule; nationalist resistance in Africa, such as Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana.
- A fair number of responses earned the point for part c by correctly explaining several challenges to Pagden's arguments, most often using examples of empire using force (rather than persuasion) to maintain their hold over colonial territories (e.g., as in the case of the French suppressing local revolts in Algeria, or the Belgians using a campaign of terror to maintain power in the Congo.)

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

- Some responses misidentified the author's arguments, for example, stating that European empires maintaining power of their colonies to use their natural resources, which is not a claim made in the passage.
- Some responses incorrectly explained the situation in Haiti on the eve of the Haitian Revolution, or the situation in the Belgian Congo in response to part b, but neither of these examples supports Pagden's argument or fits the chronological bounds of part b.
- Some responses used the French Revolution as an example that challenges the author (for part c), which it does not.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“One development from the nineteenth or twentieth century that challenges the authors claim is that force and threat of force could easily maintain rule in an empire. As long as the people are not able to rebel, there is no threat of not maintaining rule. This is a way that empires a long time ago used to keep rule.” The response does not address a development beyond "threat of force" from the nineteenth or twentieth century or how it would support Pagden’s argument about how empires “maintained their rule” in the first paragraph.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“One claim the author makes in this passage is that Empires often fall very similarly to another. For example, the Roman Empire, British, French, German, and Russian all fell because the people in the Empires only remained subject to the powers until there was no benefit in doing so, leaving for resistance for better living conditions. This, in turn, usually marks the fall of the Empire, especially because the ruling of these Empires was based off of the acceptance of the people living in them, instead of using force.” The response correctly identifies that empires “fall very similarly to another” as an argument the author makes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“One development in the second half of the twentieth century is the civil war which used vision and courage to fight for a better future.” The response identifies “civil war” as a development and does not explain how it challenges Pagden’s argument about nationalism in the second paragraph.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“One development of the nineteenth and twentieth century that directly challenges the claim that empires maintained rule through the acceptance of the ruled is that many empires did indeed use force and threat to maintain their Empires. For example, the Belgian Empire in Congo used extreme violence and force to maintain their power. Belgium’s King Leopold II killed millions of Congolese in the free Congo to force populations of their work to be done, especially when producing rubber. This maintained the rule for a period of time, with direct violence, meaning Empires did not always use acceptance of the people, since, of course, the Congolese did not accept this way of ruling.” The response expresses the use of violence in the “Belgian Congo” as a development in the nineteenth century that challenges Pagden's argument of how empires “maintained their rule” in the first paragraph.</li> </ul>

**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?**

- Practice addressing the very specific nature of each task in a short answer question. Have students identify key words, including the task verb, and have them practice crafting responses that adequately identify, explain, or otherwise clearly address the verb task presented.

- Practice identifying arguments in secondary sources by having students highlight the portion where the argument is made and highlighting any evidence used to support it.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes” on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an SAQ on nationalism and resistance to empires:
  - Unit 6, Topics 6.2 and 6.3 focus on imperialism, colonialism, and indigenous responses to that expansion. Unit 7, Topic 7.5 focuses on anti-imperial resistance. Unit 8, Topics 8.5 and 8.7 focus on decolonization and global resistance to established power structures. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022, and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content but skills specifically used for answering an SAQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 2 and 6 for 2023, Review Session 6 for 2022, and Review Sessions 4 and 8 from 2021.
  - 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 an 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.
    - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple-choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
<https://cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/worldhistory>
  - Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, 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/>

## Short Answer Question 2

**Task:** Short Answer Question

**Topic:** Ibn Khaldun on the Mamluks Primary Source

**Max Score:** 3

**Mean Score:** 1.66

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The intent of this question was for students to analyze a primary source document from Ibn Khaldun, an Arab scholar and historian writing about the Mamluk dynasty of Egypt in the late fourteenth century. Part A asked students to identify one claim that the author makes about the Mamluks in the first paragraph. Part B asks students to identify one way the passage illustrates the political situation of the Islamic world in the period before circa 1450. Part C asks students to explain one way the passage could be used to illustrate differences in forms of coerced labor in the period before circa 1750.

The question was focused on analyzing historical evidence and analyzing primary sources.

The question tested content primarily from Topics 1.2, 2.2, and 4.4 of the course framework.

### ***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?***

- For part a, students did a good job identifying claims made by the author, including that the Mamluks were guardian rulers and devoted defenders of Islam or that the Mamluks were chosen by God, or that the Mamluks successfully unified the Muslims living in Egypt, or that the Mamluks had the steadfastness and determination of true believers.
- Many responses earned the point for part b by successfully identifying the political situation of the period by noting how many Muslim rulers used the practice of recruiting military slaves to expand or defend their states (including references to Mongol attacks) or that the Islamic world was fractured politically.
- Some responses successfully explained the differences in coerced labor between the Mamluk system in Egypt and chattel slavery, indentured servitude, and the *mit'a* in the Americas. Most of these responses noted that other forced labor systems generally did not allow slaves to become soldiers, amass wealth, or become politically powerful.

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

- Some students incorrectly interpreted the passage to read that the Mamluks imposed Islam on Egypt.
- For part b, many students struggled to identify the political situation, making statements about the spread of slavery across the Islamic world or details about the roles played by Mamluk slaves with no connection to politics.
- For part c, a number of responses did not explain relevant differences by describing other systems of coerced labor but failing to complete the comparison by noting similarities or differences between those systems and the Mamluks in Egypt.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“One way this passage illustrates the political situation of the Islamic world is by laying out what has happened with the Turkish slaves. It says that the Turkish slaves embraced Islam with the determination of true believers.” The statement that “the Turkish slaves embraced Islam with the determination of true believers” does not identify a way in which the passage reflects the political situation in the Islamic world in the period before circa 1450.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“The author claims that the Mamluk rulers of Egypt derive their authority to rule and serve as soldiers from divine sources. They also claim that the Mamluks were all devout Muslims.” The response correctly identifies the author’s claim that the Mamluks were divinely inspired to rule and defend Egypt.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“One way this passage could be used to illustrate differences in forms of coerced labor is They were trained to use a bow and a sword. This meant that they were going to be most likely apart of the people who will fight when needed.” The response does not include any information on a second form of coerced labor and therefore does not explain one way in which the passage could be used to illustrate differences in forms of coerced labor in the period before circa 1750.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“The passage describes an unusual form of coerced labor where slaves are trained into soldiers, trained to read and study religious texts. and can be appointed as rulers and given large amounts of land and wealth. This differs significantly from other forms of slavery which existed at the time such as chattel slavery in the America’s where enslaved people were not allowed to own property, rule, or read. Comparisons between the two could show differences between these two forms of slavery, which both existed before 1750.” The response correctly explains that the Mamluks could own property and even be appointed as rulers despite being enslaved, which was very different from chattel slavery in the Americas, where slaves could not own property, rule, or read.</li> </ul>

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

- Practice addressing the very specific nature of each task in a short answer question. Have students identify key words, including the task verb, and have them practice crafting responses that adequately identify, explain, or otherwise clearly address the verb task presented.
- Practice making connections or comparisons between historical developments in different periods and across geographical regions. This will help students across different types of prompts. One way would be to select a recurrent category or a theme from the course (for example, coerced labor systems) and to have students explore specific iterations of that category from different units in the course framework.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes” on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an SAQ on Mamluks, the Islamic World, and labor systems:
  - Unit 1, Topics 1.2 and 1.6., which focus on the fragmented Abbasid Caliphate, the rise of the Turkic peoples, the spread of Islam and Islamic traditions, and labor systems in Europe. Unit 4, Topic 4.4, which focuses on enslaved labor in the Americas. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022, and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content but skills specifically used for answering an SAQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 2 and 6 for 2023, Review Session 6 for 2022, and Review Sessions 4 and 8 from 2021.
  - 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 an 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.
    - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple-choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
<https://cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/worldhistory>
  - Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, 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/>

### Short Answer Question 3

**Task:** Short Answer Question

**Topic:** Enslaved Peoples and Social/Cultural Changes, 1450–1750

**Max Score:** 3

**Mean Score:** 2.26

***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The intent of this question was for students to address questions related to slavery from 1450–1750. Part A asked students to identify one reason for the increase in the movement of enslaved peoples across the Atlantic Ocean during the period circa 1450–1750. Part B asked students to identify one way the increasing number of enslaved peoples resulted in social or cultural change in the Americas during the period circa 1450–1750. Part C asked students to explain one way the increased demand for enslaved peoples affected African populations during the period circa 1450–1750.

The question was primarily focused on the reasoning process of causation.

The question tested content primarily from Topics 4.3, 4.4., and 4.5. of the course framework.

***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?***

- For part a, many students were able to correctly identify reasons for the increased movement of enslaved people across the Atlantic. Reasons mentioned in the responses included Native Americans suffering from new diseases, which incentivized Europeans to pursue enslaved labor from Africa, the establishment of cash-crop plantations, and competition for territories and profits between European states.
- Many responses identified the increasing number of enslaved peoples (both African and indigenous), as one of the contributing causes to the establishment of the *casta* social hierarchies in colonial American societies. A smaller number of responses mentioned the role of enslaved people in the creation of syncretic religious practices, or their role in enriching the musical or culinary heritage of American societies.
- For part b, responses most commonly explained that increased demand for enslaved labor led to distorted gender ratios (more women than men) in parts of Africa. Other responses explained that the impact of the increased demand for enslaved labor was that it helped coastal African states that participated actively in the slave trade become richer or more powerful.

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

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “One way the increasing number of enslaved people brought about social change in the America’s is the way people thought of slaves. They became people’s property and weren’t given</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “One reason for the increase in the movement of enslaved peoples across the Atlantic Ocean during the period circa 1450–1750 was the rise of the plantation system in the Americas. The</li></ul>



<p>and human rights by most of their owners.” The response does not identify a specific social change that resulted from the increasing number of enslaved peoples in the Americas.</p>	<p>plantation system, such as the sugar plantations in Brazil and Barbados, and the various rice, indigo and tobacco plantations in the southern colonies of North America, required grueling and intense labor in order to produce the cash crops. With the failure of the use of the indigenous peoples (Native Americans) due to their susceptibility to disease, their knowledge of the land which allowed them to escape, and moral arguments against their enslavement, such as those of Bartholome de las Casas, the Europeans switched to using the system of chattel slavery. This led to an increase in the movement of enslaved people from Africa to the Americas, across the Atlantic Ocean through the Middle Passage.” The response identifies the “rise of the plantation system” as a reason for the increased movement of enslaved Africans to the Americas. The response also identifies the loss of Native Americans due to disease.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One way increased demand for enslaved people affected african population during the period circa 1450–1750 is by bringing the population down because of disease. When the Europeans would travel to Africa to get slaves they would have diseases that the African people would not be immune to.” The response mistakenly applies knowledge about different rates of disease immunity between Europeans and Native Americans to European-African encounters in Africa. In fact, Africans and Europeans shared similar rates of disease resistance due to Afro-Eurasia’s long history of cross-cultural contacts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One way the increasing number of enslaved people resulted in cultural change in the Americas was that they brought over African cultures and religions, which they kept alive even after being transplanted in the Americas. Religions, such as voodoo, and various tribal dances and languages were brought over by the Africans to the Americans, which led to cultural change in the Americas, which had previously been dominated (after the arrival of the Europeans and the resulting radical decrease in native populations) by European cultural traditions. Such traditions brought over to the Americas by Africans continue to influence culture today.” The response explains how African language and religious traditions such as “voodoo” led to cultural change in the Americas.</li> </ul>

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

Practice addressing the very specific nature of each task in a short answer question. Have students identify key words, including the task verb, and have them practice crafting responses that adequately identify, explain, or otherwise clearly address the verb task presented.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes” on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an SAQ on enslaved peoples and social/cultural change:
  - Unit 4, Topics 4.4, 4.5, and 4.7 focus on the Atlantic slave trade, existing and new labor systems, the demographic, social and cultural changes that resulted, including syncretic belief systems and practices. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022, and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content but skills specifically used for answering an SAQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 2 and 6 for 2023, Review Session 6 for 2022, and Review Sessions 4 and 8 from 2021.
  - 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 an 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.
    - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple-choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
<https://cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/worldhistory>
  - Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, 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/>

## Short Answer Question 4

**Task:** Short Answer Question

**Topic:** Industrialization, Government Reactions, and the Environment

**Max Score:** 3

**Mean Score:** 1.42

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The intent of this question was for students to address questions related to industrialization and the environment between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Part A asked students to identify one way that environmental conditions contributed to the beginning of industrialization in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Part B asked students to explain one way that societies or governments reacted to industrialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Part C asked students to explain one way that human activity led to environmental changes in the twentieth century.

The question was primarily focused on the reasoning process of causation.

The question tested content primarily from Topics 5.3, 5.5, 5.8, and 9.3 of the course framework.

### ***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?***

- For part a, many students correctly identified access to natural resources such as coal and waterways as a key environmental factor in early industrialization.
- For part b, many responses explained that the formation of labor unions was a societal response to industrialization. Other responses explained that some governments subsidized industry or launched government-sponsored industrialization programs.
- Most students were able to explain how the increased use of fossil fuels for transportation and energy generation in the twentieth century increased water and air pollution and had other negative environmental impacts.

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

- In attempting to earn the points for part a, some responses identified specific climate events (such as the Little Ice Age or global warming) and unsuccessfully tried to connect them to eighteenth and early twentieth-century industrialization.
- Some responses offered only vague or unspecific in their response to part b. Such responses attempted to explain government or social responses to industrialization, often limiting themselves to repeating truisms such as governments like money from taxes or regulations.
- Although most responses earned the point for part c, a minority of the responses did not raise to the level of an explanation, instead simply stating that deforestation or species loss happened as a result of human activity.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“With changes of empires, political leaders, and economics, came hand-in-hand changes of environment. Migration was a prominent idea in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Not only was this due to working conditions and a lack of money, but it was also due to environmental issues, for example, places being too hot or too cold. This marked the beginning of industrialization, as forms of transportation were formed. This included trains, cars, and soon enough planes as well. This sparked more ideas in people’s heads. Sometimes it would be environmentally impossible to travel, so they created new forms of communication, including the telephone and more. More so, now that they had created coal powers, this also created heat for the cold and provided individuals with less of a reason to travel in emergencies, but instead for leisure.” The response incorrectly identifies weather as not a contributing factor to the start of the Industrial Revolution and tries to argue that transportation or communication contributed to the Industrial Revolution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Environmental conditions contributed to the beginning of industrialization in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries through the topography of a nation. The topography of a nation was important to the types of goods they could make or receive, or the natural resources they could import or gain. In Britain, they had a lot of waterways, which allowed for ease in transportation of goods into and out of the country.” The response identifies the abundance of waterways that “allowed for ease in transportation of goods.”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Human activity led to environmental changes in the twentieth century through the increase in the trade of natural resources and goods. With the developments in industry and technology, humans were able to create more efficient methods of transportation, such as the steamship or the airplane. This allowed people to greatly cut down on the time needed to import and export goods.” The response focuses on the speed at which goods were transported but does not explain a change in the environment brought about by human activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Societies or governments reacted to industrialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the changing of family and home dynamics. Before industrialization, many people lived in rural areas and worked on a farm, allowing them all to interact with one another throughout the day and be close. After industrialization many families moved to crowded urban areas in hopes of higher wages, but all members of the family worked long, strenuous, and often different hours, which undid the close-knit family dynamic that had been more common before.” The response correctly explains that after industrialization, “many families moved to crowded urban areas in hopes of higher wages.”</li> </ul>

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

Practice addressing the very specific nature of each task in a short answer question. Have students identify key words, including the task verb, and have them practice crafting responses that adequately identify, explain, or otherwise clearly address the verb task presented.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes” on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an SAQ on industrialization, government reactions, and the environment:
  - Unit 5, Topics 5.3 and 5.8 focus on the Industrial Revolution and government reactions to industrialization. Unit 9, Topics 9.1, 9.3, and 9.5 focus on environmental changes as a result of industrialization, along with calls for reform and change. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022, and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content but skills specifically used for answering an SAQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 2 and 6 for 2023, Review Session 6 for 2022, and Review Sessions 4 and 8 from 2021.
  - 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 an 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.
    - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple-choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
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  - Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, 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 1—Document-Based Question

**Task:** Document-Based Question

**Topic:** Collapse of the Qing Empire

**Max Score:** 7

**Mean Score:** 3.06

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

Students were expected to identify developments and processes related to the extent to which foreign involvement led to the collapse of the Qing Empire. This included the ability to evaluate the prompt in a broader historical context and to describe and analyze the content of documents. They also needed to construct an argument and use the documents and outside evidence to support an argument. The question tested content primarily from Units 6 and 7 of the course framework while also providing students with opportunities to bring up knowledge from Units 4 and 5 to earn the contextualization and evidence beyond the documents points.

Responses to the question were expected to show students' ability to use the content of the documents, as well as their own content knowledge and historical thinking skills, to construct an argument regarding the extent to which foreign involvement led to the collapse of the Qing Empire. The documents provided students with a variety of perspectives on the issue, including the perspectives that emphasized domestic factors (poverty in the countryside, banditry, Han resentment of Manchu rule) and perspectives that emphasized international factors (the role of the opium trade, unequal treaties, foreign powers carving spheres of influence in China) in the collapse of the Qing Empire.

The question primarily addressed content from Topics 6.1, 6.3, 6.5, and 7.1, with contextualization and evidence-beyond-the-documents opportunities from Topics 4.7, 5.7, 5.8, and 6.5.

### ***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 had minimal issues understanding the prompt or documents and there was little misinterpretation of either.
- The organizational structure of the essay set students up for success, with the majority of responses beginning with introductory attempts at thesis and context.
- Additionally, body paragraphs bookended by topic and concluding sentences made responses clearer. There were also several successful attempts at evidence beyond the documents, including the Opium Wars, Boxer Rebellion, and the Treaty of Nanjing.

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

- Some responses had trouble distinguishing between foreigners and Qing government officials among the names mentioned in the documents.
- Relatively few responses attempted to source the documents and, of those that did, many merely repeated information provided in the document source lines (or language from the documents themselves) without explaining the relevance of the author's point-of-view, purpose, audience, etc.
- A fair number of responses failed to incorporate evidence from more than five documents which prevented them from earning the second evidence point.

- While complete misreading of documents was relatively rare, a number of responses showed that students struggled to understand the Image (Document 6), despite the extensive glossing provided with it.
- The point for complexity was rarely attempted and even more rarely earned. Some of the successful attempts at complexity involved a nuanced reading of the documents and brought up robust evidence from outside the documents, for example pointing out that foreign involvement and domestic problems and weaknesses often worked together as causal factors, as seen, for example, in the Taiping and Boxer rebellions. Other successful approaches to the complexity point involved comparisons between the Qing Empire’s encounter with the West and analogous events in other Asian imperial states (Meiji Japan being the most frequent choice).

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vague, unspecific attempt at a thesis that does not contain a discernible line of reasoning: “The Qing empire fell to the same fate as the Mongols caused to others but that was because of foreign involvement. Before this they did not have many problems as they were a large empire with a large military, but they collapsed as new people became involved.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptable thesis that includes a line of reasoning and sets up the analytical categories that would be explored in the body of the response: “Although China had thrived as a dominant power for centuries, ultimately Spheres of Influence in China, Opium, and internal rebellion caused the downfall of the Qing Empire.”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An unsuccessful attempt to earn the contextualization point that makes some statements about long-term dynastic processes in China that are broadly accurate, but does not describe a specific context relevant to the collapse of the Qing Dynasty: “The dynasties that ruled over China all had success at some points, but an ultimate downfall. Many were overthrown by revolutions coming from a society that demanded a better power structure or the next dynasty. Many dynasties isolated themselves from any foreign outside influence.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful contextualization: “During the period between 1750 and 1900, the European powers had industrialized their economies and developed as leading powers of the world. This industrialization, however, caused them to turn to foreign lands to gain access to new markets, access new resources, and have population outlets. In China, spheres of influence were established by the Europeans granting them economic control of East Asia. These spheres of influence, however, caused economic instability in East Asia.”</li> </ul>

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

- Emphasize that students should attempt to earn all points of the rubric in their responses, including the points for evidence beyond the documents, sourcing of the documents, and complex understanding.
- Spend more time having students working with primary sources, emphasizing the distinction between the content/argument/claim of the source versus the elements of historical sourcing, such as authorial point-of-view, purpose of the document, intended audience of the document, historical situation that helps explain or understand the content of the document. Students should be instructed to plan on using both the content and the elements of sourcing for each document, to give themselves an opportunity to earn the maximum number of points.
- Practice approaches to earning the complexity point that explore the nuances of the perspectives provided in the documents. The documents for the Document-Based-Question are usually selected to provide a complex cross-section of perspectives on the historical developments addressed by the question, rather than a simple “for-and-against” grouping of documents. An analysis of the full scope of these perspectives could be a pathway for students to earning the complexity point.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes” on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for a DBQ on the fall of the Qing Empire.
  - Unit 6, Topics 6.2, 6.3, and 6.5 focus on state expansion, early resistance to European imperialism, and the rise of economic imperialism. Unit 5, Topic 5.8 introduces the first attempts at reform by the Qing Empire and how that reform often led to resistance. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022 and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content, but skills specifically used for answering the DBQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 4 and 8 for 2023, Review Session 8 for 2022, and Review Sessions 4 and 8 for 2021.
  - 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.
    - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
<https://cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/worldhistory>



- Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, 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/>

## Long Essay Question 2

**Task:** Long Essay Question

**Topic:** Mongol Expansion and Peoples of Eurasia

**Max Score:** 6

**Mean Score:** 3.26

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

Students were asked to develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which Mongol expansion affected the peoples of Eurasia in the period 1200–1450. The question primarily addressed content from Unit 2 in the course framework, while also providing students with opportunities to bring up content knowledge from Unit 1 to earn the contextualization point.

The question was mainly focused on the reasoning process of continuity and change, requiring students to evaluate the extent to which Mongol expansion affected or did not affect Afro-Eurasian societies.

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.

The phrasing of the question suggested but did not require responses to focus on the Mongol conquests' impact on trade and communications.

The phrasing of the question suggested but did not require that student responses address impacts on peoples that were conquered by the Mongols.

The question tested content primarily from Topics 2.2 and 2.5 of the course framework.

### ***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 who selected this prompt typically demonstrated a higher level of content knowledge and a stronger command of the historical thinking skills than students who selected LEQ 3 or LEQ 4.
- Most of the responses earned the thesis point, with many presenting nuanced thesis statements addressing both negative impacts (in the initial period of warfare and from the spread of diseases) and positive impacts (from long-termed increased economic and cultural interconnectedness and Mongol tolerance of religious diversity).
- Students who selected this prompt did very well on context, with many successfully describing how the Mongols untied various nomadic groups in the steppe.
- Many responses contained successful attempts to earn the point for using historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument, describing the causal effects of the Pax Mongolica, the spread of Buddhism and other religions under Mongol rule, Mongol policies of religious tolerance, and the diffusion of specific technologies like gunpowder and the compass because of the Mongol political unification of large parts of Eurasia.
- Many responses demonstrated good level knowledge about the destructive side of the Mongol conquests, discussing the spread of the bubonic plague, the Mongol conquest of Baghdad and large

parts of the Muslim world, the Mongol invasion of China and the collapse of the Ming Dynasty, and the Mongol incursion into Europe.

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

- Some responses provided factually incorrect information about the Mongols claiming, for instance, that the Mongols were the first to use horses for military applications, that the Mongols were the first to domesticate horses, or that the Mongols created the Silk Roads.
- Some responses provided evidence about the Mongols disconnected from the prompt. For example, some responses included factoid information about Genghis Khan, the course of the Mongol conquests, or Mongol society, without connecting it to impact on peoples in Afro-Eurasia
- In common with the responses to the other LEQs, the complexity point was infrequently attempted and rarely earned. Few students managed to construct nuanced arguments that featured multi-pronged causal explanations or provided a wealth of evidence regarding multiple relevant historical developments.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempted thesis that is overgeneralized and, while it contains a line of reasoning (the Mongol conquests affected the peoples of Eurasia “through religion” it remains too vague to earn the point: “In the period circa 1200 to 1450 the Mongol expansion greatly affected the peoples of Eurasia through religion. While some religions were diffused, others were liberated.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful thesis that provides a line of reasoning and sets up two categories of analysis that would be developed in the body of the response: “The Mongols started as a group of nomads in the early 13th century, but quickly grew to be one of the biggest empires in the world. They did this through their reintroduction on the Silk Roads trading route and their religious tolerance.”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overgeneralized, largely historically inaccurate attempt at contextualization: “They are known as the gods of trading so they obviously had a huge impact of it specifally is Eurasia and they helped trade grow and become more popular. Not to mention even though they didn’t control a specific culture or force religion upon anyone they still helped spread because they were constantly traveling around the world.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful contextualization: “Between the thirteenth and the fifteenth century, the feudalism and establishment of larger trade routes were on the rise. Trade routes, such as the Indian Ocean, the Silk Roads and the Sub-Saharan trade routes, allowed goods cultures and religion to spread across Afro-Eurasia.”</li> </ul>

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

- Teachers should continue to emphasize the importance of deploying the relevant historical thinking skills and reasoning processes when crafting responses to the LEQ prompts. Highlight the distinction between responses that merely provide evidence and responses that use the relevant historical thinking skills or processes to frame or structure an analytical argument. Have students peer review each other’s writing to identify when they are deploying the relevant skills and/or reasoning processes.
- Teachers should emphasize that LEQ prompts are evaluative tasks that require students to construct an argument supported by evidence, not just list facts. Practice developing argumentation with students, both in the thesis-evidence (argument-first) and in the evidence-conclusion (argument-last) formats.
- Teachers should emphasize that students must attempt to earn all points of the rubric in their responses, including the points for using the historical thinking skill and, the point for demonstrating a complex understanding.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes” on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an LEQ on the Mongol expansion.
  - Unit 2, Topics 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, and 2.6 focus on the Mongol Empire, cross cultural interactions and trade and cultural consequences of those connections and interactions. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022 and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content, but skills specifically used for answering the LEQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 3 and 7 for 2023, Review Session 7 for 2022, and Review Sessions 4 and 8 for 2021.
  - 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 an 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.
    - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
<https://cb.academicmerit.com/n/pl#/worldhistory>
  - Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, 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/>

### Long Essay Question 3

**Task:** Long Essay Question

**Topic:** Land-Based Empire and Consolidation/Expansion of Power

**Max Score:** 6

**Mean Score:** 2.98

#### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The question asked students to develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which a land-based empire successfully consolidated or expanded its power between 1450–1750. The question primarily addressed content from Unit 3 in the course framework, while also providing students with opportunities to bring up content knowledge from Units 1, 2, and 4 to earn the contextualization point.

The question was mainly focused on the reasoning process of continuity and change, requiring students to evaluate the success of a land-based empire of their choice in consolidating or expanding its power.

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.

The introductory sentence of the prompt mentioned the Mughal, Ottoman, and Safavid empires as examples of land-based empires, but the prompt left the door open for students to focus on another empire/other empires.

The introductory sentence of the prompt referred to religious, political, and economic methods of consolidation or expansion of state power, but students were free to choose the type of method or methods that they wanted to explore in their responses.

The question tested content primarily from Topics 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 of the course framework.

#### ***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 who selected this prompt generally did well on the thesis point, although they earned the thesis point at a lower rate than students who selected LEQ 2 or LEQ 4. Commonly used thesis statements referred to successful imperial consolidation and expansion through the use of strong militaries armed with gunpowder weapons, ruler supporting or promoting religious traditions, and states creating large bureaucracies and/or adopting policies to increase tax revenues.
- Many responses contained a good amount of factual information and, in general, students who selected this prompt did well on the two evidence points. Responses demonstrated knowledge of relevant evidence, such as use of empires' use of cannon (nearly universally noted in student responses), Ottoman janissaries, *devshirme* tax, and use of the title of Caliphate, Mughal *zamindar* tax collection and (usually) exemption of Hindus from the *jizya* poll tax, and Safavid promotion of Shi'ism in the context of ongoing Sunni-Shi'a rivalries.

- A smaller, but still substantial portion of the responses earned the point for using historical reasoning to construct or frame an argument. These responses often featured multi-causal or multi-tiered explanations of imperial consolidation and expansion, explaining, for example, how the recruitment system of the janissaries ensured their loyalty to the empire, while Ottoman sultans' religious claims and support for charitable institutions and monumental architecture increased popular support.

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

- While misreading the prompt was relatively rare, some responses focused on non-land-based empires, like the Spanish or British. Others discussed empires outside the time period, such as the Mongols.
- Students who selected this prompt generally struggled to place the question in a suitable historical context. The responses that earned the contextualization point often provided background information regarding the spread of gunpowder weapons, the early expansion of Islam and the Muslim caliphates, or the collapse of the Byzantine Empire.
- In common with the responses to the other LEQs, the complexity point was infrequently attempted and rarely earned. Some responses earned the point for complexity by constructing arguments that were not only causal but also comparative. For example, arguments examining similarities and difference in the way in which the Ottoman and Mughal empires consolidated or expanded their rule or comparing Muslim gunpowder empires approaches to imperial rule with the approaches of the Aztec or Inca empires in the Americas.
- A fair number of responses did not fully address the processes of imperial expansion or consolidation. Such responses sometimes merely asserted that rulers were powerful, or that empires used religion, without providing any elaboration.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsuccessful attempt at a thesis that repeats the generic categories of analysis provided in the prompt without adding a discernible line of reasoning: “The Mughal, the Ottoman, and the Safavid empires used multiple techniques to legitimize and consolidate their power. These include the use of religious, political, and economical.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful thesis that has a historically defensible claim and a clear line of reasoning: “The Ottomans faced challenges in expanding their empire due to religious conflicts with other land-based empires. However, they were able to expand significantly through the use of gunpowder weapons and trained soldiers called Janissaries.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsuccessful attempt at contextualization that provides overgeneralized information about the Ottoman Empire but does not offer a relevant context for understanding Ottoman imperial expansion or consolidation: “The ottomans are muslim country in the middle east they are the second longest empire in the world behind the roman empire and they legitimized their power through many different means.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful contextualization: “After the downfall of the Byzantine empire around 1200, the Ottoman Empire rose to power. It started off as a small Islamic country but grew dramatically very quickly. This is because of the ruler Suleyman the Magnificent. He expanded the empire and strengthened his authority under his rule.”</li> </ul>

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

- Teachers should continue to emphasize the importance of deploying the relevant historical thinking skills and reasoning processes when crafting responses to the LEQ prompts. Highlight the distinction between responses that merely provide evidence and responses that use the relevant historical thinking skills or processes to frame or structure an analytical argument. Have students peer review each other’s writing to identify when they are deploying the relevant skills and/or reasoning processes.
- Teachers should emphasize that LEQ prompts are evaluative tasks that require students to construct an argument supported by evidence, not just list facts. Practice developing argumentation with students, both in the thesis-evidence (argument-first) and in the evidence-conclusion (argument-last) formats.
- Teachers should emphasize that students must attempt to earn all points of the rubric in their responses, including the points for using the historical thinking skill and, the point for demonstrating a complex understanding.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on “Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes” on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an LEQ on a land-based empire’s success at consolidating or expanding its power.
  - Unit 3, Topics 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 focus on the establishment and expansion of land-based empires and the methods they used to legitimize and consolidate their power. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022, and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content, but skills specifically used for answering the LEQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 3 and 7 for 2023. Review Session 7 for 2022 and Sessions 4 and 8 for 2021.
  - 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 an 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.
    - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple-choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
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- Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, 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/>

## Long Essay Question 4

**Task:** Long Essay Question

**Topic:** Twentieth-Century Challenges to Power Structures

**Max Score:** 6

**Mean Score:** 2.87

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The question asked students to develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which an individual, group, or movement in the mid-to-late twentieth century successfully challenged existing power structures. The question primarily addressed content from Unit 8 in the course framework while also providing students with opportunities to bring up content knowledge from Units 6, 7, and 9 to earn the contextualization point.

The question was mainly focused on the reasoning process of continuity and change, requiring students to evaluate the success of an individual group or movement in challenging existing power structures in the second half of the twentieth century.

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.

The introductory sentence of the prompt referred to political, military, and nonviolent methods of effecting change, but the wording of the question did not preclude students from focusing on other methods of effecting change.

The introductory sentence of the prompt referred to political and social change, but the use of the term “power structures” in the question left the door open to address other types of change (e.g., economic) in their responses.

The question was global in scope, allowing students to bring up developments from United States history (for example, individuals and events related to the U.S. Civil Rights movement).

The question tested content primarily from Topics 8.5, 8.6, and 8.7 of the course framework.

### ***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 who selected this prompt generally did well on the thesis point. Commonly used thesis statements referred to the success of the decolonization movement or, less commonly, the success of the women’s rights movements. Responses that focused on individuals often referred to the success of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, or Nelson Mandela in challenging existing power structures.
- Approximately half of the responses earned the contextualization point. The responses that were successful in doing so often linked the First and/or Second World War to the post-war decolonization movement or, alternatively, they linked the establishment of communist governments

in Russia and China to the subsequent spread of communist movements and the activism of communist leaders across the world.

- Most students who selected this prompt were able to bring up a good amount of evidence in support of their arguments. The individuals that were most commonly cited as examples of challenging power structures were Mohandas Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King. Specific examples of movements that challenged existing power structures through military means included the anti-colonial movements in Vietnam and Algeria. Other responses discussed the Cold War and various proxy wars that arose from it as a means of challenging economic and/or political systems.
- Responses demonstrated that very few students who selected this prompt had any trouble understanding the term “power structures.”

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

- While misinterpretations of the prompts were not common, some responses focused on revolutions or political movements from outside the time period (for instance the late-nineteenth-century suffragette movement in Western Europe and the United States or the French and American Revolutions).
- Students were less successful in earning the point for using historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument, compared to other rubric points. These responses often featured multi-causal or multi-tiered explanations of resistance to established power structures or added an element of comparison to their main continuity-and-change argument (for example by comparing violent versus non-violent movements for change).
- In common with the responses to the other LEQs, the complexity point was infrequently attempted and rarely earned. Some responses earned the point for complexity by constructing nuanced arguments that pointed to the irony of the situation of individuals or movements starting out as agents of changes but becoming part of the existing power structures after successfully achieving their goals. Other responses successfully earned the complexity point by offering insightful connections between late-twentieth movements of change and earlier historical events, for example the Haitian revolution or the Latin American wars of independence.

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A thesis attempt that includes a historically defensible claim, but the claim is not a response to the prompt, nor does the statement contain a line of reasoning: “The United States challenged the Soviet Union as well as communism in the world.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A successful thesis that includes a historically defensible claim and a line of reasoning: “In the United States, MLK and the Civil Rights Movement were only partially successful in challenging the existing power structures as rampant socioeconomic inequality continue to persist in the country.”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An attempt at contextualization that is too overgeneralized (and historically inaccurate) to earn the point: “Power structures have existed since the beginnings of the earliest societies. Throughout time these power structures have</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful contextualization: “During the nineteenth century, many European empires began imperializing African and Asian societies as a result of industrialization and the desire for more resources and economic opportunities. However,</li> </ul>

gone mostly unchallenged until relatively recently when people began demanding for what they believe they deserve, rather than what they're given. People now fight for the rights they believe they're owed using several different methods violent and nonviolent alike."

during the early and mid-19th century, events such as the World Wars and the Cold War weakened these European empires."

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

- Teachers should continue to emphasize the importance of deploying the relevant historical thinking skills and reasoning processes when crafting responses to the LEQ prompts. Highlight the distinction between responses that merely provide evidence and responses that use the relevant historical thinking skills or processes to frame or structure an analytical argument. Have students peer review each other's writing to identify when they are deploying the relevant skills and/or reasoning processes.
- Teachers should emphasize that LEQ prompts are evaluative tasks that require students to construct an argument supported by evidence not just list facts. Practice developing argumentation with students, both in the thesis-evidence (argument-first) and in the evidence-conclusion (argument-last) formats.
- Teachers should emphasize that students must attempt to earn all points of the rubric in their responses, including the points for using the historical thinking skills and the point for demonstrating a complex understanding.

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

- The Course and Exam Description provides a section on "Developing the Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes" on pages 180–191. This section provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for incorporating the course skills into classroom instruction.
- The following resources are available in AP Classroom to provide instructional support for an LEQ on successful challenges to established power structures in the mid to late twentieth century.
  - Unit 8, Topics 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.7, and 8.8 focus on the Cold War, the impact of the Cold War, the spread of Communism, Decolonization, newly independent states, and resistance to established power structures. All of these topics include resources, such as AP Daily videos and topic questions that serve as formative assessment tools.
  - AP Classroom contains AP Exam On-Demand Review videos for 2023, 2022, and 2021 that have helpful information for students that review not only content but skills specifically used for answering the LEQ—this is addressed in Practice Sessions 3 and 7 for 2023. Review Session 7 for 2022 and Sessions 4 and 8 for 2021.
  - 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 an 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.
  - Using AP Classroom, teachers may assign multiple-choice questions and free-response questions specific to skills that they believe students often find challenging in the Question Bank feature. These skills can be selected in the “Skill Category and Skill” tab located within the Question Bank tab.  
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- Additionally, AP Classroom contains resources under the Overview/Teacher Resources/Professional Learning tab that includes videos and other instructional resources to provide strategies for teaching and assessing course content and skills. These Skills-Based Modules focus on teaching analysis of primary sources, the skills of argument development, comparison, continuity, and change and include handouts for students.
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