

2024



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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Short-Answer Question 4

- Scoring Guidelines**
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Question 4: Short Answer No Stimulus**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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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.

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- [a]** Describe one difference between the challenges faced by democracies in Europe in the interwar period [1919 to 1939] and the challenges faced by democracies in Europe in the post-War period [1945 to 1989]. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- In the interwar period, democracies were confronted by two major alternative ideologies [fascism and communism], while in the post-World War II period, they were only confronted by one, communism.
- The United States played a much more active role in supporting European democracies in the post-WWII period than it had in the interwar period.
- In the interwar period, Europe faced economic crisis [e.g., Great Depression], whereas in the post-War period, economic problems were addressed through financial aid [e.g., Marshall Plan].
- Western European democracies attempted more economic and political cooperation in the post-War period [NATO, the gradual creation of the EU].
- After the Second World War, many democratic countries faced the challenges of strong anticolonial movements and eventual loss of most of their overseas colonies.
- The Soviet Union and communism posed a much larger military threat in the post-WWII period.
- Attempts by women to gain political and economic rights were more successful in the post-World War II period compared to the interwar period.

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- [b]** Describe one similarity between the challenges faced by democracies in Europe in the interwar period [1919 to 1939] and the challenges faced by democracies in Europe in the post-War period [1945 to 1989]. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- In both periods, democracies were confronted by powerful ideologies and non-democratic regimes that at times seemed more stable and capable, such as fascist regimes and the Soviet Union.
- In both periods, communism posed a threat to the legitimacy of capitalist and democratic governments.
- In both periods, democracies had to contend with economic instability.
- In both periods, democracies faced social and economic upheaval associated with re-adjustment/reconstruction after a major conflict.
- Nationalism challenged democracies in both periods.
- In both periods, the United States played an increasing role in European economic and political affairs.

[c] Explain one reason why democracy spread in Europe in the period 1975 to 2000. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- The collapse of the Soviet Union ended support for non-democratic regimes in Eastern Europe.
- The fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, caused largely by internal failings, vindicated democratic approaches to government.
- The creation of the EU and its expansion during this period reinforced the principles of democratic governments.
- The continued prosperity of democratic countries provided justification for the value of democracy.
- The influence of American capitalism and consumerism demonstrated the value of economic freedom and democracy to European states.
- The death of Spanish dictator Franco eliminated an authoritarian alternative to democracy that had persisted since the Second World War.

Total for question 4 3 points

Important: After you have completed your response to either Question 3 or Question 4, completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you answered.

Question 3

Question 4



Write your answer to **SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 3 or 4** on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

- a) One difference in the challenges faced by European democracies in the post-WWI vs. post-WWII periods was that the Great Depression occupied them post-WWI economically, while the Marshall plan limited economic turmoil post-WWII. Economic strife was at an all-time-high during the Great Depression from 1929-39, partially caused by WWI. Economic strife was conversely avoided post-WWII, largely thanks to the Marshall plan.
- b) One similar issue these democracies faced after each world war was attempting to strengthen diplomatic relations to avoid further conflict. Post-WWI, European countries founded the League of Nations as a peace-keeping organization to prevent the next war, and post WWII, many of these same nations founded the UN or United Nations to achieve the same goal as last time, stop the next war.
- c) One reason democracy spread in Europe from 1975-2000 was the collapse of the USSR. The newly independent nations were looking to form new governments, so they went for the farthest thing from what the USSR had been, which was democracy, causing it to spread.

End of response area for Question 3 or Question 4

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Important: After you have completed your response to either Question 3 or Question 4, completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you answered.

Question 3

Question 4



Write your answer to **SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 3** or **4** on this page only. Do **NOT** write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

One difference between challenges faced by democracies in Europe in the interwar period and challenges faced by democracies in Europe in the post-Second World War period is that, unlike democracies in the interwar period, democracies in the post Second World period had significant financial and economic aid from the United States under the Marshall Plan. This plan significantly boosted the economies of these countries, leading to an "economic miracle" the interwar democracies did not have.

One similarity between these democracies was the massive amounts of destruction experienced by the countries. Countries such as Britain and France both had their capitals bombed and heavily damaged in both WW1 and WW2, with both needing time to recover from the destruction in both the interwar period and the Post WW2 period, proving that both democracies in the interwar period and Post WW2 had to recover from mass war related destruction.

One major reason why democracy spread in Europe in the period 1975 and to 2000 was the weakening and eventual collapse of the USSR. The USSR kept Eastern Europeans in a communist-authoritarian headlock, but as the financial problems relating to Soviet communist economic policy became more apparent, Russia lost its grip on these countries, as evidenced by the fall of the Berlin wall and the reunification of democratic West Germany and Communist East Germany, into democratic (unified) Germany, and the fall of the USSR itself into democratic Russia in the 1990s.

End of response area for Question 3 or Question 4

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Important: After you have completed your response to either Question 3 or Question 4, completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you answered.

Question 3

Question 4



Write your answer to SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 3 or 4 on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

During the interwar period, democracy struggled with support of the people, while democracy in post war WW2 struggled to rebuild. During the war, some argued that this large scale war would just result in large numbers of casualties, while others argued that it was crucial to stop the Nazis. After WW2, the people were dissatisfied with the economic state of their countries, as they were destroyed.

One similarity between the two periods was that there were struggles regarding the divide of the people. People within European countries had many different views and ultimately the government could not make everyone happy. This caused constant tensions between people and the government would struggle on how to handle this.

Democracies spread in Europe between 1975-2000 because of the choice of Gorbachev not to stop the spread of democracy. The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 shocked many as democracy was created peacefully, but in reality, this was due to Gorbachev's lenient foreign policies. The collapse of the Berlin Wall inspired other European countries to revolt peacefully, which were ultimately successful for the most part.

End of response area for Question 3 or Question 4

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Short Answer Question 4

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

Overview

Responses to part (a) of the prompt were expected to offer a minimally accurate description of a difference faced by European democracies in the interwar period from those faced by democracies after the Second World War. For the interwar period, student responses that earned the point might include references to the Versailles settlement, the Russian/Bolshevik Revolution, the Great Depression, and rise of extremist political movements such as Fascism and Nazism. For the postwar period, correct student responses includes references to the Cold War, the division of Europe, decolonization, and the need to rebuild after the war.

Responses to part (b) of the prompt were expected to offer a minimally accurate description of a similarity in the challenges faced by European democracies in the interwar period with those faced by democracies after the Second World War. Relevant course content would be the same as (a) above, except in this case, emphasizing what was similar across the periods, such as the Soviet Union/communism, far-right political movements, and economic issues.

Responses to part (c) of the prompt were expected to provide a higher level of understanding based on the task of explaining rather than describing why democracy spread in Europe between 1975 and 2000. Examples might include the economic problems in the Soviet bloc that led to its collapse, the end of the right-wing Franco and Salazar regimes in Spain and Portugal, and democratization of Eastern European countries after 1991.

Sample: 4A

Score: 3

The response earned the point for part (a) by contrasting the turmoil caused by the Great Depression in the interwar period with the stabilizing effect of the US Marshall Plan in the post-1945 period.

The response earned the point for part (b) by noting the similar goals of promoting diplomacy and peace through the League of Nations in the interwar era and UN in the post-1945 era.

The response earned the point for part (c) with its explanation of how the collapse of the USSR allowed the satellite states to move toward democracy.

Sample: 4B

Score: 2

The response earned the point for part (a) with its contrasting of US Marshall Plan support after World War II with the lack of any such aid during the interwar period.

The response did not earn the point for part (b) by incorrectly stating that the capitals of Britain and France experienced widespread devastation after both world wars and needed rebuilding.

The response earned the point for part (c) with its full explanation of the collapse of the Soviet Union, freedom for its satellites, and reunification of Germany as democratic trends.

Short Answer Question 4 (continued)

Sample: 4C

Score: 1

The response did not earn the point for part (a), as its references to popular support and rebuilding were not clearly explained as a difference between the two periods.

The response did not earn the point for part (b) because it did not provide specific historical content to support its reference to division among the peoples of Europe.

The response earned the point for part (c) by explaining how Gorbachev's policies caused the fall of the Berlin Wall and transition of states into democracies.