

2024



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# AP<sup>®</sup> United States History

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

### **Inside:**

#### **Short-Answer Question 4**

- Scoring Guidelines**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

**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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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]** Briefly describe one United States Cold War policy from 1945 to 1991. **1 point**

**Examples that earn this point include the following:**

- The main Cold War policy of the United States was containment.
- The United States fought in the Vietnam War as part of the Cold War.
- The United States fought a war in Korea as part of the Cold War.
- The United States created collective security treaties like NATO.
- During the Cold War, the United States often supported non-Communist regimes even if they were not democratic.

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**[b]** Briefly explain one similarity OR difference in how TWO groups in the United States responded to a Cold War policy from 1945 to 1991. **1 point**

**Examples that earn this point include the following:**

- Young Americans protested the Vietnam War, while many in the government argued that the war had to be fought to contain communism.
- Democratic and Republican administrations during the Cold War both used military power to try to prevent communism from spreading.
- Environmentalists criticized the development of nuclear weapons as dangerous, while political officials argued that a nuclear stockpile was necessary to deter the Soviet Union.
- Conservatives generally argued that high defense spending during the Cold War was necessary, while liberals sometimes argued that money spent on national defense would be better spent on social programs.
- Youth activists and Civil Rights advocates argued in favor of supporting decolonization movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America rather than containment.

- [c]** Briefly explain how one specific historical development after 1980 contributed to the end of the Cold War. **1 point**

**Examples that earn this point include the following:**

- During Ronald Reagan's presidency there was an increased U.S. military spending which was important in ending the Cold War because the Soviet Union could not keep up.
- The United States supplied resistance movements in Afghanistan as a way of weakening the Soviet Union in its war there.
- During Ronald Reagan's presidency he used diplomatic initiatives to weaken the Soviet Union, which was important in ending the Cold War.
- Economic problems in Eastern Europe led to political instability that was important in ending the Cold War.
- The fall of the Berlin Wall signaled the inability of the Soviet Union to maintain control over its spheres of influence.
- Political problems in the Soviet Union weakened the country and contributed to the end of the Cold War.

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**Total for question 3 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. The Cold war policy of containment was a ~~states~~ model that stated that Communism should not be allowed to spread from ~~to~~ to other countries for fear that America would be the only country left to hold off an impending Soviet threat.
- b. ~~The Americans~~ During the Vietnam War & before the Tet Offensive, many people middle age & older individuals ~~typical~~ approved of the actualization of the Cold war policy of containment in Vietnam whereas those of the younger counter cultural generation were strongly against US involvement in Vietnam.
- c. The destruction of the Berlin wall, which kept the Capitalist West Germany & the Communist East Germany apart from shortly after WW2 to the late 80's symbolized the end of hostilities between the US & the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 & its impending <sup>economic</sup> downfall in the 80's brought on by protests in many Eastern Bloc countries saw the ~~Soviet~~ Cold War end ~~because~~

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.

a. During the Cold War the US engaged in a very controversial "proxy war" in Vietnam known as the Vietnam War. It was ~~was~~ a great display of interventionism by the US as they got greatly involved in a foreign war all in hopes of preventing any spread of communism in that region, which they believed would lead to a "domino effect" (also known as the Domino Theory) further spreading communism.

b. The Vietnam War was very controversial for many. Politicians showed much support for the war (especially early on) because losing or backing down from war would show the USSR weakness and put the US at risk. While the public and most of the people resented the war because it dragged out much longer than expected and the cost (the great number of deaths) was too high. Additionally they saw much more of the war due to the technology such as tv and radio which caused them to see the damage of the war and begin to doubt the government and its choices.

c. One major event which led to the end of the cold war in 1991 was the Cuban missile crisis, as the presence of missiles (by the USSR) so close to the US ~~was~~ forced the president to seek ~~the~~ de-escalation methods with the USSR and agreements to have the missiles removed were made. After this the tensions continued to decrease, until finally in 1991 the fall of the USSR ultimately led to the end of the cold war.

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.

a) The ~~was~~ most prevalent of the policies during the Cold War was the containment policy. ~~The~~ Containment was the idea of distrust in communism and that it should be contained and not allowed to spread to other places. Many Americans saw communism as a threat to Democracy making the U.S. act as an Imperialist state.

b) Two groups who reacted to the Cold War include isolationists and industrial merchant-working people. The isolationists believed that it wasn't America's business to join and even cited Washington's farewell address as evidence. Meanwhile Industrialists had booming business in manufacturing vehicles, equipment and weapons for the war.

c) ~~The current presidential elections changed the opinion on the war~~ College antiwar protests began to be noticed eventually ~~300~~ more people began to question reasons for entering the war and whether it was ethical to stay.

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

- This question asked students to demonstrate an understanding of United States Cold War policy.
- The question required students to describe one United States Cold War policy from 1945 to 1980.
- The question required students to explain a similarity or difference in two groups response to a Cold War policy from 1945 to 1980.
- The question required students to explain a specific historical development after 1980 that contributed to the end of the Cold War.
- This question primarily addressed Topics 8.2, 8.7, and 9.3.

#### Sample: 4A

##### Score: 3

The response to (a) earned 1 point by describing the Cold War policy of containment of the spread of the Soviet threat.

The response to (b) earned 1 point by explaining how older individuals generally supported containment in Vietnam prior to the Tet Offensive, while younger members of the counterculture were strongly opposed to intervention in Vietnam.

The response to (c) earned 1 point with a sophisticated explanation of how the fall of the Berlin Wall symbolized the end of the Cold War and foreshadowed the economic collapse of the Soviet Union, which enabled protests in other Eastern bloc countries to go unchallenged.

#### Sample Identifier: 4B

##### Score: 2

The response to (a) earned 1 point by describing American involvement in a proxy war in Vietnam to prevent the spread of communism under the domino theory.

The response to (b) earned 1 point by explaining the responses of two groups to the war in Vietnam. It discusses United States politicians who supported involvement in the war, especially early on, and the broader United States public, whose opposition increased over time with growing negative media coverage of the war.

The response to (c) did not earn a point because the explanation of the Cuban missile crisis is outside the time period of the prompt.

### Short Answer Question 4 (continued)

**Sample Identifier: 4C**

**Score: 1**

The response to (a) earned 1 point by describing the Cold War policy of containment of communism.

The response to (b) did not earn a point because it fails to explain how two groups responded to a Cold War policy. The explanations of the response of “isolationists” and “industrialists” to the Cold War are too generic to be clearly historically accurate.

The response to (c) did not earn a point because it does not explain a relevant historical development after 1980 that contributed to the end of the Cold War.