
AP[®] African American Studies

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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Question 1: Exam Day Validation

2 points

General Scoring Notes

- The question is a written response to the student’s individual project.
- Answers must be in complete sentences: an outline or bulleted list is not acceptable.
- Students must reference their source or sources by name—either by author or title—in order to receive credit.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
Exam Day Validation (0–2 points)	“Explain why one of your sources is more reliable than another.”		
	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Responds to the Exam Day Validation prompt with relevant descriptive information and includes reference to specific sources as appropriate in response to the prompt.	2 points Responds to the Exam Day Validation prompt with a relevant explanation and includes reference to specific sources as appropriate in response to the prompt.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
	Responses that do not earn points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are too vague and do not provide an indication of sources used in the Individual Student Project. Do not reference the specific Exam Day Validation question. May be overly general discussions of or reflections on the project. Examples that do not earn points: <p>Provide a response that is overly vague:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Of the many sources I used, there were generally ones that that were more valid than others.” “My project would not have been possible without the use of these sources.” 	Responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe one source's reliability and another source's reliability using specific and relevant information in response to the prompt. Examples of specific and relevant evidence include the following with appropriate elaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The authors' backgrounds Summary of the sources Describing what determines the reliability of each source Example of a statement that earns one point for evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “(Source 1) was written by an acclaimed African American historian. (Source 2) was taken from a newspaper and was written by someone who has a background in journalism and investigative reporting but who has a more generalist background.” “(Source 1) contains a bibliography that includes dozens of sources all relating to (the topic). (Source 2) is an opinion piece that appeared in an online blog dealing with (the topic).” 	Responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how one source is more reliable than another using specific and relevant information in response to the prompt. Examples of specific and relevant evidence include the following with appropriate elaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explanation of how the background of the authors relates to the reliability of each source Summary of the sources to explain what makes one more reliable than another Explanation of how the authors' previous work on similar topics contributes to one being more reliable than another Examples that earn two points for providing an explanation of how one source is more reliable than another: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Because (Source 1) was written by someone with a PhD in African American Studies who is considered the foremost expert on this topic, their current research is considered the most credible and reliable information in the discipline right now. While (Source 2) was relevant and credible, this author referred to and relied on the research and work of the author of (Source 1) for their work.” “When looking at my sources, (Source 1) stands out for its reliability. The bibliography for it contains dozens of scholarly publications relating to (the topic). This—along with the author's own works—demonstrates the reliability of the source. (Source 2) is an editorial from a newspaper, and while the author of (Source 2) makes valid observations, his qualifications are less known and so it is more difficult to corroborate his arguments without further research.”

One of my sources is a direct report from the Tuskegee University about the Tuskegee Experiments. Another source of mine is an interview of Black women in a Youtube video about their opinions on healthcare. The source I am using from the Tuskegee University is more reliable than the interview on Youtube because I was able to research and determine the credibility of the writers of the Tuskegee Experiment report. They also include citations from their research so that I can connect and check the information for accuracy. In the interview, there was no description of the Black women's backgrounds and no way for me to check if they were credible. They just gave opinions and touched on topics such as the Tuskegee Experiment, and other historical Black medical experiments. Therefore, their information in the interview is not as reliable than that of the Tuskegee University report.

2 of my sources are from researchgate.net, and one is from cambridge university, and another one is from a book describing Ethiopia's military impact. They are all written by individuals whom hold PHD's or Master's Degrees in the general field of study in which my research is based off of, the impact that Ethiopia's military has had on african societies, due to their efforts in never being colonized. The first researchgate source is written by Yigermal Atawork, and he is a profound phd graduate who graduated in the field of african american studies, thus with his numerous years of work he has a comprehensive understanding of Ethiopia's impact on the formation of other African militaries. Furthermore, he is an Ethiopian himself so he is familiar with the topic being discussed. In addition to that my other source was created by a cambridge proffesor, who also has a phd in the field of African American studies. This is extremely credible because cambridge is a prestine university that doesnt allow just anyone to publish, the sources are throughly academically peer-reviewed, alllowing for only the highest quality of work to be published. One other source that I have is from a book created by a famous Ethiopian author, who has a MD(master's degree) in African history, this shows his extended knowledge in the history of Ethiopia, and Africa's military systems as he was able to get multiple publisher's to analyze his writing and ensure that it was valuable enough to be published.

History.com is more reliable than NAAHC because it helped me get more information about my research question and my topic. It also has and gets more into the topic making it more informatinal for me. History.com also gives me websites to visit in that artical and i can get more information or learn more about something eales that i might want to add to my presantation.

Question 1, Exam Day Validation

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

Overview

NEW for 2025: The question overviews can be found in the *Chief Reader Report on Student Responses* on [AP Central](#).

Sample: 1A

Score: 2

The response earned 1 point by accurately describing/summarizing two of the sources used in the research and information lending to each source’s credibility.

The response earned a second point by explaining in detail why one of the sources was more reliable than the other when it referenced that “they also include citations from their research so that I can connect and check the information for accuracy” and then juxtaposing this with their other source where “there was no description of the Black women’s backgrounds and no way for me to check if they were credible. They just gave opinions.”

Question 1, Exam Day Validation (continued)**Sample: 1B****Score: 1**

The response earned 1 point for effectively describing the reliability of several sources.

The response did not earn the second point. Although this is a lengthy response, it merely describes the sources and their authors instead of explaining the difference in reliability (“The first researchgate source is written by Yigermal Atawork, and he is a profound phd graduate who graduated in the field of african american studies, thus with his numerous years of work he has a comprehensive understanding of Ethiopia’s impact on the formation of other African militaries”; “In addition to that my other source was created by a cambridge proffesor, who also has a phd in the field of African American studies. This is extremely credible because cambridge is a prestine university that doesnt allow just anyone to publish”). Stating that one source is “extremely credible” is not enough to earn the point.

Question 1, Exam Day Validation (continued)

Sample: 1C

Score: 0

The response did not earn a point because it did not adequately address the prompt.

Although two sources are mentioned (“History.com is more reliable than NAAHC”) any description or explanation regarding the reliability of the sources is omitted. The response focuses instead on the quantity of information available on the websites: “it helped me get more information about my research question and my topic”...“i can get more information or learn more about something eales that i might want to add to my presentation.”