

2025



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# AP<sup>®</sup> Human Geography

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

### **Inside:**

#### **Free-Response Question 3**

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

**Question 3: Two Stimuli****7 points**

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<b>A</b> (Point 1)	<b>Identify the scale of analysis used for Finland’s political divisions in Map 2.</b> <b>Acceptable identification:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A1. Local scale (e.g., city, town, rural municipality) or subnational scale.</li></ul>	<b>1 point</b>
<b>B</b> (Point 2)	<b>Define geometric boundaries as shown in Map 1.</b> <b>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• B1. Border lines on a map (two-dimensional plane) that are straight, angled, and/or curved to form a geometric shape (e.g., straight line, square, rectangle, circle, other polygons).</li><li>• B2. A boundary or border drawn based on lines of latitude and longitude, a grid system, and/or a township and range system (baselines and meridians).</li><li>• B3. Boundary lines drawn without regard to the physical or cultural landscape.</li></ul>	<b>1 point</b>
<b>C</b> (Point 3)	<b>Describe one function of internal boundaries.</b> <b>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• C1. Internal boundaries define the limits of sovereignty or government control between one subnational region and another.</li><li>• C2. Internal boundaries delimit or unify different types of subnational regions (e.g., voting districts, states, provinces, territories, special administrative regions, autonomous zones).</li><li>• C3. Internal boundaries can unify or separate distinct ethnic, cultural, or national groups.</li><li>• C4. Internal boundaries can delineate, divide, or fragment zones of public infrastructure and/or local government (e.g., water districts, school districts, voting districts).</li><li>• C5. Internal boundaries can reflect, preserve, or reduce cultural, linguistic, or historical identities.</li><li>• C6. Internal boundaries can prevent, resolve, or exacerbate conflicts.</li><li>• C7. Internal boundaries can facilitate or hinder the collection or analysis of data.</li><li>• C8. Internal boundaries can facilitate or hinder the management, protection, or distribution of natural resources or ecosystems.</li></ul>	<b>1 point</b>

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<b>D</b> (Point 4)	<b>Explain how the spatial organization of a country such as Canada is affected by a federal system of governance.</b>	<b>1 point</b>
	<b>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• D1. Federal systems of governance affect the spatial organization of a country by creating locally based, dispersed power centers (e.g., subnational state or provincial capitals).</li><li>• D2. Countries with a federal system of governance are typically organized into subnational units (e.g., autonomous regions, semiautonomous regions) and/or have regional capitals that may help reduce centrifugal forces and/or limit ethnic separatism.</li><li>• D3. Federal systems tend to divide large amounts of land area into subnational divisions that may be difficult to govern from a centralized or single capital.</li><li>• D4. Federal systems tend to divide multicultural countries into subnational divisions based on cultural differences (e.g., ethnic, religious, and/or linguistic diversity) that may be difficult to govern from a centralized or single capital.</li></ul>	
<b>E</b> (Point 5)	<b>Explain how the supranational organization shown in Map 2 may limit the actions of Finland as a member state.</b>	<b>1 point</b>
	<b>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• E1. The EU may enact international laws or policies that limit the economic actions of Finland or other member states (e.g., reducing or eliminating trade barriers, introducing a common currency, regulating industry).</li><li>• E2. The EU may implement international laws or policies that limit the political actions of Finland or other member states (e.g., requiring common border policies, observing elections, sharing a common foreign policy).</li><li>• E3. By joining the EU, Finland has agreed to allow the EU government to make laws and regulations on behalf of Finland and the other member states.</li></ul>	
<b>F</b> (Point 6)	<b>Describe one characteristic of a cultural landscape that may reflect cultural beliefs and identities.</b>	<b>1 point</b>
	<b>Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• F1. Art, music, toponyms, clothing, architecture, and/or evidence of sequent occupance may indicate elements of a culture or cultures.</li><li>• F2. Religion, language, social institutions, and/or systems of governance may be based on a culture or cultures.</li><li>• F3. Land use, land survey patterns, agriculture, resource use (e.g., hunting, fishing, crafts), and/or trade may indicate the practices of a culture or cultures.</li><li>• F4. Foods, social interactions, holidays, and/or festivals are based on or have elements of a culture or cultures.</li><li>• F5. Attitudes towards ethnicity or gender (e.g., the role of women in the workforce) may help shape the use of space in a given society.</li></ul>	

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<b>G</b> (Point 7)	<b>Explain how communication technologies may affect the cultural patterns of indigenous languages.</b>	<b>1 point</b>
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**Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- G1. Communication technologies (e.g., the Internet) may encourage members of indigenous communities to adopt more commonly used languages (e.g., English), resulting in indigenous language loss.
  - G2. Language loss may occur due to cultural convergence, which is accelerated by the use of communication technologies.
  - G3. Communication technologies may increase the availability of indigenous language resources (e.g., via websites, apps, social media), resulting in language preservation.
  - G4. Communication technologies may be used to increase awareness of indigenous identity issues, which may result in language preservation.
  - G5. Limited access or cultural resistance (e.g., reliance on oral tradition) to communication technologies can restrict or prevent significant changes in the cultural patterns of indigenous languages.
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## Sample 3A 1 of 2

- A) The scale of analysis used for Finland is a local scale of analysis. We are able to see different cities and towns within the country.
- B) Geometric boundaries, like those shown in map 1, are boundaries that have straight lines as borders. Another example of geometric boundaries would be those drawn for some African countries during the Berlin Conference.
- C) Internal boundaries are boundaries within a state, like those dividing the provinces and territories in Canada. One function of these boundaries are to establish the areas that local government officials are able to control. Since Canada has a federal government, there are smaller powers of the government that can have control of different provinces. Within the internal borders of the territories, local government can, to an extent, control the people and resources within it.
- D) The spatial organization of countries like the United States and Canada are affected by their federal systems of government. Both countries have federal governments, which is when power is divided into states or provinces so that they have some local government power. This process is called devolution, or the giving of power from the main government down to smaller local governments. These smaller powers create the organization that these countries have, which is broken up into states or provinces.
- E) Because Finland is a member of the European Union, a supranational organization between countries in Europe, there are some drawbacks in terms of the states sovereignty, or freedom to control its people and things inside its country. When part of a supranational organization, some decisions cannot be made without the approval of the whole organization. Since the EU is a trade organization, if Finland wanted to change something about its trade policies, it may not be allowed to without the approval of other member states.
- F) Cultural landscape reflects cultural beliefs and identities of a certain nation, ethnicity, or culture group. One example or characteristic could be architecture. Architecture in an area can lead us to make assumptions about the religion practiced, the historical culture, or the effects of subsequent occupation on the land. Certain styles of buildings can allow us to determine cultural or religious beliefs about those that are a part of that culture.
- G) As the world globalizes, or becomes more interconnected, especially through communication technology, lingua francas may be spoken much more frequently. A lingua franca is a common language that is spoken among many people around the world so that they're able to communicate, despite their differing native languages. An example of a lingua franca today is English. This can threaten indigenous languages and their existence because they become less common compared to the

## Sample 3A 2 of 2

common languages spoken among people. For example, in America, many Native American languages are endangered or extinct due to the majority of the population speaking English.

# Sample 3B 1 of 1

A. The scale of analysis used for Finland's political divisions in Map 2 is national because it is zoomed in on just Finland. The other map in the Map 2 section is international because it shows more than one country.

B. Geometric boundaries are boundaries that follow an almost perfect longitude or latitude line. In Map 1 you can see how the border between Canada and America is almost completely straight and how the border of Saskatchewan is also almost a perfect rectangle.

C. One function of internal boundaries is to identify specific cities and other regions of a country. This can be used to determine political zoning both for voting and control over governing powers in federal states as well as to better see the demographics of a country in surveying.

D. The spatial organization of a country such as Canada is affected by a federal system of governance because it causes the country to be divided into multiple provinces, all of which have their own governing powers, instead of being a unitary country.

E. The supranational organization shown in Map 2 may limit the actions of Finland as a member state by implementing rules that Finland and the other members of the EU must follow. These rules limit the actions of Finland as well as remove part of their sovereignty due to the EU controlling some ways that Finland can act and be run.

F. One characteristic of a cultural landscape that may reflect cultural beliefs and identities are temples and other forms of architecture used for worship being built in that area. This shows a distinct religion in the region that is most likely practiced by majority of the people in that region.

G. Communication technologies may affect the cultural patterns of indigenous languages due to globalization causing the creation of lingua francas. Lingua francas are languages that are used in large amounts of the world even if it isn't the country's primary language. Communication technologies lead to globalization due to it being easier to connect with people from all around the world. This may lead to indigenous languages being ignored or forgotten in favor of a more universal language. For example, communication technologies like social media, as well as increased global power in English speaking countries, has led to many people picking up English as another language and even as their primary language. As English gets more widely adopted the use of indigenous languages decreases, risking said indigenous languages to be forgotten as time goes on.

A: The scale of analysis used for Finland's political divisions is National because it shows only the country of Finland.

B: Geometric boundaries are boundaries that line up with the the earth. To further explain, these are boundaries that line with the latitude of the earth.

C: A function of internal boundaries can be political. For example, gerrymandering can be a function of having internal boundaries and we can also have politicians figure out how to place everything so that they can win elections and things like that.

D: Canada is affected by a federal system of governance so areas that are further away from Saskatoon have a harder time reaching them and maybe are not accounted for as much as people who live closer to Saskatoon.

E: Finland in a way is under the power of the European Union (EU) and so the decisions that it makes as a country have to follow a certain set of rules or match up with the beleifs of the EU making Finland have slightly less power.

F: A characteristic of a cultrual landscape that may reflect cultural beleifs and identities is the fact that Helsinki is quite far South so the strongest beleifs and the strongest identities might reside closer to Helsinki in the south.

G: When people started to live in Finland, the indigenous language that was already there or that people created was there but different technology that helps them communicate with other countries might affect their dialect or the way they speak.

### Question 3

**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: 3A

**HG Point 1 Score: 1**

**HG Point 2 Score: 1**

**HG Point 3 Score: 1**

**HG Point 4 Score: 1**

**HG Point 5 Score: 1**

**HG Point 6 Score: 1**

**HG Point 7 Score: 1**

**Score: 7**

The response to part A earned 1 point. The response correctly identifies the scale of analysis used for Finland’s political divisions in Map 2 by stating, “a local scale of analysis.”

The response to part B earned 1 point. The response correctly defines geometric boundaries as shown in Map 1 by stating that, “Geometric boundaries, like those shown in map 1, are boundaries that have straight lines as borders.”

The response to part C earned 1 point. The response correctly describes one function of internal boundaries by stating that, “Within the internal borders of the territories, local government can, to an extent, control the people and resources within it.”

The response to part D earned 1 point. The response correctly explains how the spatial organization of a country such as Canada is affected by a federal system of governance by stating that, “when power is divided into states or provinces so that they have some local government power. This process is called devolution, or the giving of power from the main government down to smaller local governments. These smaller powers create the organization that these countries have, which is broken up into states or provinces.”

The response to part E earned 1 point. The response correctly explains how the supranational organization shown in Map 2 may limit the actions of Finland as a member state by stating that, “When part of a supranational organization, some decisions cannot be made without the approval of the whole organization. Since the EU is a trade organization, if Finland wanted to change something about its trade policies, it may not be allowed to without the approval of other member states.”

The response to part F earned 1 point. The response correctly describes one characteristic of a cultural landscape that may reflect cultural beliefs and identities by stating that, “Architecture in an area can lead us to make assumptions about the religion practiced, the historical culture, or the effects of sequent occupance on the land. Certain styles of buildings can allow us to determine cultural or religious beliefs about those that are a part of that culture.”

### Question 3 (continued)

The response to part G earned 1 point. The response correctly explains how communication technologies may affect the cultural patterns of indigenous languages by stating that, “As the world globalizes, or becomes more interconnected, especially through communication technology, lingua francas may be spoken much more frequently. A lingua franca is a common language that is spoken among many people around the world so that they’re able to communicate, despite their differing native languages. An example of a lingua franca today is English. This can threaten indigenous languages and their existence because they become less common compared to the common languages spoken among people.”

**Question 3 (continued)****Sample: 3B****HG Point 1 Score: 0****HG Point 2 Score: 1****HG Point 3 Score: 1****HG Point 4 Score: 1****HG Point 5 Score: 1****HG Point 6 Score: 1****HG Point 7 Score: 1****Score: 6**

The response to part A did not earn a point. The response incorrectly identifies the scale of analysis used for Finland’s political divisions in Map 2 by stating, “national because it is zoomed in on just Finland.” The response would have earned the point if it had identified the local scale or subnational scale.

The response to part B earned 1 point. The response correctly defines geometric boundaries as shown in Map 1 by stating that, “Geometric boundaries are boundaries that follow an almost perfect longitude or latitude line.”

The response to part C earned 1 point. The response correctly describes one function of internal boundaries by stating that they “can be used to determine political zoning both for voting and control over governing powers in federal states as well as to better see the demographics of a country in surveying.”

The response to part D earned 1 point. The response correctly explains how the spatial organization of a country such as Canada is affected by a federal system of governance by stating that, “it causes the country to be divided into multiple provinances, all of which have their own governing powers, instead of being a unitary country.”

The response to part E earned 1 point. The response correctly explains how the supranational organization shown in Map 2 may limit the actions of Finland as a member state by stating that supranational organizations may implement “rules that Finland and the other members of the EU must follow. These rules limit the actions of Finland as well as remove part of their sovereignty due to the EU controlling some ways that Finland can act and be run.”

The response to part F earned 1 point. The response correctly describes one characteristic of a cultural landscape that may reflect cultural beliefs and identities by stating, “temples and other forms of architecture used for worship being built in that area. This shows a distinct religion in the region that is most likely practiced by majority of the people in that region.”

The response to part G earned 1 point. The response correctly explains how communication technologies may affect the cultural patterns of indigenous languages by stating that, “Communication technologies lead to globalization due to it being easier to connect with people from all around the world. This may lead to indigenous languages being ignored or forgotten in favor of a more universal language.”

**Question 3 (continued)****Sample: 3C****HG Point 1 Score: 0****HG Point 2 Score: 1****HG Point 3 Score: 1****HG Point 4 Score: 0****HG Point 5 Score: 1****HG Point 6 Score: 0****HG Point 7 Score: 0****Score: 3**

The response to part A did not earn a point. The response incorrectly identifies the scale of analysis used for Finland's political divisions in Map 2 by stating, "National." The response would have earned the point if it had identified the local scale or subnational scale.

The response to part B earned 1 point. The response correctly defines geometric boundaries as shown in Map 1 by stating that geometric boundaries line up with lines of latitude.

The response to part C earned 1 point. The response correctly describes one function of internal boundaries by stating that, "A function of internal boundaries can be political. For example, gerrymandering can be a function of having internal boundaries and we can also have politicians figure out how to place everything so that they can win elections and things like that."

The response to part D did not earn a point. The response incorrectly explains how the spatial organization of a country such as Canada is affected by a federal system of governance by stating that, "Canada is affected by a federal system of governance so areas that are further away from Saskatoon have a harder time reaching them and maybe are not accounted for as much as people who live closer to Saskatoon." The response would have earned the point if it had stated that federal systems of governance affect the spatial organization of a country by creating locally based, dispersed power centers.

The response to part E earned 1 point. The response correctly explains how the supranational organization shown in Map 2 may limit the actions of Finland as a member state by stating that, "Finland in a way is under the power of the European Union (EU) and so the decisions that it makes as a country have to follow a certain set of rules or match up with the beliefs of the EU making Finland have slightly less power."

The response to part F did not earn a point. The response incorrectly describes one characteristic of a cultural landscape that may reflect cultural beliefs and identities by stating that, "Helsinki is quite far South so the strongest beliefs and the strongest identities might reside closer to Helsinki in the south." The response would have earned the point if it had stated that art, music, toponyms, clothing, architecture, and/or evidence of sequent occupation may indicate elements of a different culture or cultures.

The response to part G did not earn a point. The response incorrectly explains how communication technologies may affect the cultural patterns of indigenous languages by stating that, "When people started to live in Finland, the indigenous language that was already there or that people created was there but different technology that helps them communicate with other countries might affect their dialect or the way they speak." The response would have earned the point if it had stated that communication technologies may encourage members of indigenous communities to adopt more commonly used languages, resulting in indigenous language loss.