

2025



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

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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#### **Short-Answer Question 1**

- Scoring Guidelines**
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**Question 1: Short Answer Secondary Source****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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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 major difference between Pollard’s and Patterson’s historical interpretations of the origins of the Cold War. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- Pollard argues that the origins of the Cold War were primarily rooted in economic differences while Patterson argues that the actions of the Soviet Union brought on the Cold War.
- Source 1 argues that it was the actions of the United States that initiated the Cold War while Source 2 argues that it was the fear of communism.

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**B** Briefly explain how one event or development from 1940 to 1960 not directly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Pollard’s interpretation of the origins of the Cold War. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- The United States attempted to create a free-market global economy, in the face of Communist ideology, and this supports Pollard’s argument that economic concerns were a significant driver of the Cold War.
- The United States began a campaign of economic sanctions against the Soviet Union in 1948, which supports Pollard’s interpretation that the origins of the Cold War were primarily economic.
- The United States international aid to noncommunist countries illustrates how the origins of the Cold War were primarily economic, which supports Pollard’s interpretation.
- The United States creation of economic institutions to bolster non-Communist nations and prevent Soviet expansion supports Pollard’s argument about the origins of the Cold War.

- The United States used the Marshall Plan to connect European economies with the United States.
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**C** Briefly explain how one event or development from 1940 to 1960 not directly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Patterson’s interpretation of the origins of the Cold War. **1 point**

**Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:**

- Patterson’s argument is that concerns about the spread of communism contributed to the start of the Cold War, and the usage of controversial methods to expose suspected communists during the Second Red Scare supports this claim.
  - The focus of United States policymakers after 1945 on containing communism through the Truman Doctrine supports Patterson’s argument that concerns about the spread of communism led to the start of the Cold War.
  - The United States justified intervening in Korea with the argument that it was preventing the territorial expansion of communism, which supports Patterson’s arguments about the United States’ fears about communism’s territorial expansion contributing to the Cold War.
  - The United States justified covert actions in countries to overthrow governments thought to be too close to the Soviet Union.
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A) One major difference between Pollard's and Patterson's historical interpretations of the origins of the Cold War is the main cause of the Cold War; Pollard believing the cause was due to conflict over economic issues, while Patterson believed it was due to the United States' fear of the spread of communism.

B) One development from 1940 to 1960 that could be used to support Pollard's interpretation of the origins of the Cold War was the institution of the Marshall Plan, which sent approximately 13 billion dollars to European countries in economic aid to build up democratic nations. This supports Pollard's claim because this plan was an economic plan that later created more tension between the US and Soviet Union, as the Soviets did not like how the US was extending economic aid to other countries.

C) One development from 1940 to 1960 that could be used to support Patterson's interpretation of the origins of the Cold War was the US policy of containment. This policy stated that the US would support any country that was in need of defense from the spreading of communism due to Soviet take over. This supports Patterson's claim because the US was willing to send military and economic aid to foreign countries out of fear of the spread of communism.

A) One major difference between Pollard's and Patterson's historical interpretations of the origins of the Cold War would be Pollard's interpretation is focusing on economic security, while Patterson's interpretation is focusing on political security. Patterson is explaining the possible effects the Soviet Union could have on the U.S. with Communism being terribly dangerous, having to accomplish territorial expansion. While Pollard is explaining economic security of trade networks, domestic prosperity and imports and exports.

B) One event from 1940 to 1960 that could support Pollard's interpretation of the origins of the Cold War that was not directly mentioned would be the rise of counter culture. As many new inventions were becoming invented, like the radio and television, many economic businesses rose during the time. This led to an increase of profit, job wages, and prosperity within the country, needing to continue commercial industry and competitive spirit.

C) One event from 1940 to 1960 that could support Patterson's interpretation of the origins of the Cold War that was not directly mentioned would be from NATO and the Warsaw Pact. As many countries saw the Soviet Union rising in power, countries like Canada, United States, and Italy sought to protect and eliminate communism the best they could. Which eventually led to NATO, a pact between countries that would back one up in a fight, against the USSR, keeping security between the countries.

1A. One major difference between Pollard's and Patterson's historical interpretation of the origins of the Cold War was that Pollard believed that the Cold War originated over the economic issues after World War II. Pollard believed that the key of U.S. foreign policy after WWII was economic security, he believed that if we entered the war and won we would have access to cheap raw materials that would help us advance our economy to later boost industries like steel, oil, and railroads. While Patterson believed that the Cold War originated from Americans being scared about the psychological appeal of the Soviets' ideas like communism. Americans were concerned about the spread of communism in western territories so they entered the fight.

1B. One event that is not directly mentioned but could be used to support Pollard's interpretation of the origins of the Cold War is after WWII the reform movement helped steady the economy and helped create a working middle class, so getting involved in another war could help evolve the economy into another social class.

1C. One event that is not directly mentioned but could be used to support Patterson's interpretation of the origins of the Cold War is Communism starting to spread in the Soviet territories just like how WWI started with dictatorship. Patterson believes that the war could turn the U.S. into countries like Europe during WWII.

## Short Answer Question 1

**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

**SAQ Part A Score: 1**

**SAQ Part B Score: 1**

**SAQ Part C Score: 1**

### Total Score: 3

The response to Part A earned 1 point because it correctly describes that Pollard’s interpretation of the origins of the Cold War is that it was rooted in economic conflict and that Patterson’s interpretation was that the Cold War originated from the fear of the spread of communism.

The response to Part B earned 1 point because it explains how the economic aid of the Marshall Plan increased tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, supporting Pollard’s interpretation that economic tensions were an important part of the start of the Cold War.

The response to Part C earned 1 point because it explains how the United States attempt to stop the spread of communism through the policy of containment support Patterson’s interpretation of the origins of the Cold War.

### Sample: 1B

**SAQ Part A Score: 1**

**SAQ Part B Score: 0**

**SAQ Part C Score: 1**

### Total Score: 2

The response to Part A earned 1 point because it correctly describes that Pollard’s interpretation of the origins of the Cold War is that it was rooted in concerns about economics and that Patterson’s interpretation is that the Cold War was rooted in politics, specifically that communism was perceived as “terribly dangerous” by the United States.

The response to Part B did not earn a point because it does not explain how the adoption of new technologies is related to the origins of the Cold War. In addition, its discussion of counterculture is historically inaccurate.

The response to Part C earned 1 point because it correctly explains how the creation of NATO to “protect and eliminate communism” supports Patterson’s interpretation that fear of communism contributed to the origins of the Cold War.

### Short Answer Question 1 (continued)

**Sample: 1C**

**SAQ Part A Score: 1**

**SAQ Part B Score: 0**

**SAQ Part C Score: 0**

**Total Score: 1**

The response to Part A earned 1 point by correctly describing Pollard’s interpretation of the origins of the Cold War as being rooted in economics and correctly describing Patterson’s argument that Americans’ concerns about Soviet expansion brought on the Cold War.

The response to Part B did not earn a point because its explanation about reform movements is outside of the time period, and the response’s explanation about the growth of the middle class is vague and does not support Pollard’s interpretation.

The response to Part C did not earn a point because its explanation of the spread of communism is vague and inconclusive and therefore does not support Patterson’s interpretation.