

2025



AP[®] United States History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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Short-Answer Question 3

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Question 3: 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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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.

A Briefly describe one political debate in British North America from 1763 to 1783. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- The end of the Seven Years' War spurred debates over whether colonists in British North America should be taxed to help pay for war debts.
- The Proclamation of 1763 contributed to political debates about westward expansion in British North America.
- The continued presence of British soldiers, who the colonists legally had to quarter according to British laws, resulted in increased political debates about the rights of colonists.
- Colonists debated whether they should declare independence or remain loyal to Great Britain.

B Briefly describe one effect of the ratification of the United States Constitution from 1789 to 1800. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- The Constitution created a new stronger central government for the United States.
- The ratification of the United States Constitution created lasting debates over states' rights versus federal power under the federalist system of government.
- The ratification of the United States Constitution led to debates about economic policies such as creating a national bank.
- The ratification of the Constitution resulted in the eventual addition of the Bill of Rights.
- The executive branch was created as a result of the ratification of the Constitution.
- The establishment of a new government under the Constitution led to the formation of political parties.

- The ratification of the Constitution created a new government that included the separation of powers.

C Briefly explain how one group responded to debates about federal government power from 1800 to 1840. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- In response to states that passed laws that took power from the federal government, the Supreme Court asserted the power to strike down state laws through judicial review.
 - Democratic-Republicans believed that the power of the federal government was too high, so they sought to return power back to the states through legislation.
 - Loose constructionists called for the federal government to have more involvement in promoting economic development.
 - Advocates of internal improvements claimed that the federal government had the power to promote economic development.
 - Native Americans resisted the federal government’s encroachment onto their sovereign lands.
 - Jacksonian Democrats asserted the power of the federal government to enact tariffs.
 - A growing antislavery movement pushed for the federal government to end United States participation in the transatlantic slave trade.
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A.) One political debate in British North America from 1763 to 1783 was the debate over taxation without proper representation. At the time, Britain ended its policy of salutary neglect (following the 7 years' war) and began passing a number of taxation acts, including the sugar act and stamp act, which led to a debate by the colonists and their British rulers over the ability of Britain to tax the colonies. The colonists claimed that they had no representation in parliament, and that therefore they should not be taxed, whereas the British argued that parliament considered the colonists when making decisions and indirectly represented them through virtual representation, overall showing a political debate in British North America between colonists and British authorities.

B.) One effect of the ratification of the United States Constitution from 1789 to 1800 was the drastic increase in federal authority. The constitution granted the government abilities that it had not been given under the previous Articles of Confederation, allowing it to directly tax people and to establish a standing army. This represents an effect of the constitution's passage, since it led to the government being able to exert greater authority and to more directly rule the country.

C.) One way that one group responded to debates about federal government power from 1800 to 1840 was the enforcement of federal power by Andrew Jackson and the democrats during the 1832 nullification crisis. During this crisis, South Carolina threatened to nullify the Tariff of 1828 (better known as the "Tariff of Abominations") because they viewed it to be unconstitutional and hurting their economy, believing that federal power could not establish such a tariff. In response, Jackson passed the force bill, which authorized the use of force to make states comply with federal authority and legislation, and in general shows how the Democrats responded to the debate over the extent of federal government power over the states by asserting that the federal government reigned supreme over them and had the right to do so.

a. One political debate in British North America in the period 1763-1783 was on the authority of the British government to impose laws and taxes onto the colonies, such as the Stamp Act, without representation in Parliament by a colonist official elected by the colonies, when for years for the most part they generally ran independently of the empire with their own colonial governments and enjoyed salutary neglect.

b. One effect of the ratification of the US Constitution from 1789-1800 was the creation of the first two party system, consisting of the Federalists and the Democratic Republicans. These groups, because of the Constitution, differed by their different interpretations of it. The Federalists enjoyed a loose interpretation, in which the doctrine of implied powers would arise, in contrast to the Democratic Republicans who preferred a strict interpretation of it.

c. The Federalists responded to debates about federal government power in the period 1800-1840 by arguing that it is implied in the constitution that Congress has the power to create institutions and tools if it allows them to execute their job easier and more effectively. This reasoning was used to justify the creation of the First National Bank, which Democratic Republicans resented and said was an abuse and overreach of Federal power.

One debate in British North America in this time period was the debate on taxes. Britain gave colonists taxes on everything including tea, this led to colonists throwing the tea into the Boston Harbor as a way to denounce the tax. This was a large debate on taxes from Britain towards the colonists for a while.

One effect of the ratification of the United States Constitution was that America could govern for itself. Colonists had been experiencing salutary neglect from the British crown in earlier years. So once the United States Constitution was ratified Americans could live without the empty promises from the British crown and rely on itself to be efficient.

A group that responded to debates about the federal government power in this time period was southern states. Many of them supported slavery and many people of power in the United States had been kicking the can down the road on this issue, but they had to stop when the Dred Scott case came about. This was a case distinguishing state laws and federal laws, Scott was enslaved by his state laws but under federal laws he was free, the ruling came that federal laws trumped state laws, causing southerners to be upset.

Short Answer 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

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 by accurately describing the political debate between British North American colonists and British authorities. The response includes examples of colonial debates, such as those over economic policy and virtual representation.

The response to Part B earned 1 point by accurately describing how the increase in federal authority resulted from the ratification of the United States Constitution. The response uses examples of the federal government's ability to tax and establish a standing army under the Constitution in contrast to the limited nature of government power under the Articles of Confederation.

The response to Part C earned 1 point by accurately explaining how Andrew Jackson and the Democrats responded to debates about federal government power during the Nullification Crisis. The response explains economic and political disputes during the Jacksonian era, as well as Jackson's use of federal power to limit state power.

Sample: 3B

SAQ Part A Score: 1

SAQ Part B Score: 1

SAQ Part C Score: 0

Total Score: 2

The response to Part A earned 1 point by accurately describing the debate over the authority of the British government to tax the North American colonists without their consent, such as through the Stamp Act, following a period of salutary neglect.

The response to Part B earned 1 point by accurately describing how the formation of the First Party System in the 1790s was an effect of the ratification of the United States Constitution. The response demonstrates an understanding of disputes between loose constructionist Federalists and strict constructionist Democratic-Republicans over federal power and policy.

The response to Part C did not earn a point because the response's explanation about the Democratic-Republican reaction to the creation of the first national bank as an example of the debate over federal government power is outside the time frame of the prompt.

Short Answer Question 3 (continued)**Sample: 3C****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 accurately describing the political debate between the British North American colonists and British officials over taxation, including an example of colonists throwing tea into Boston Harbor as a form of tax protest.

The response to Part B did not earn a point because it fails to describe an effect of the ratification of the United States Constitution from 1789 to 1800. The response attempts to contrast United States self-government with its previous position as a British colony but ignores the initial period of self-governance under the Articles of Confederation.

The response to Part C did not earn a point because the explanation of the debate over federal power, including debates about slavery, is too broad and the example of the Dred Scott case is outside of the time period of the prompt.