
AP[®] United States History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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Short-Answer Question 4

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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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

A Briefly describe one political debate in the United States between 1910 and 1929. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- A growing Progressive movement led to political debates about the federal government's role in society.
- The First Red Scare resulted in political debates about labor, socialism, and free speech.
- The First World War contributed to larger political debates about civil rights during wartime.
- Americans debated whether to restrict immigration to the United States.
- Americans argued over whether to support joining the League of Nations or whether to return to a policy of isolationism.

B Briefly describe one effect of the New Deal from 1932 to 1945. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- The New Deal established a Civilian Conservation Corps [CCC] that had a lasting impact on public lands.
 - The New Deal created a limited welfare state in many ways, including through the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935.
 - The New Deal increased jobs by employing people to build infrastructure.
 - People were paid to paint murals by New Deal programs.
 - The New Deal increased government spending on public infrastructure, including such projects as the construction of hydroelectric power plants by the Tennessee Valley Authority [TVA].
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- C** Briefly explain how one group responded to debates about government power from 1945 to 1970. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Conservatives criticized the expansion of the welfare state by calling for limiting the role of the federal government.
 - Supporters of the Great Society praised President Lyndon Johnson and the federal government for waging a War on Poverty.
 - Members of the New Left argued that political leaders were not doing enough to transform the racial and economic status quo.
 - Communities questioned the federal government’s role in desegregation efforts following the decision in *Brown v. the Board of Education* [1954].
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A. One political debate in the United States between 1910 and 1929 was whether or not to get involved in the first World War. America had a precedent of isolationism and neutrality, starting with George Washington's farewell address. So, many Americans believed that the United States shouldn't get involved in a European war. However, due to other events, like the Zimmerman Telegram, which was a telegram from Germany to Mexico trying to convince them to invade the United States, public opinion turned, and America eventually joined WWI.

B. One effect of the New Deal from 1932 to 1945 was the expansion of federal power. Roosevelt, the President at the time, used unprecedented federal power to create social programs, such as the AAA, which allowed for farmers to artificially increase the price of their goods. Some of these powers and rules during the New Deal, were even ruled unconstitutional, including the AAA. However, it still set the precedent for increased federal power, and the New Deal overall made the federal government stronger.

C. One group that responded to debates about government power from 1945 to 1970 were student protestors and riots. Many college students protested the Tonkin Resolution, which gave the President Johnson a blank check to support Vietnam. Riots occurred outside the DNC over this. This shows how people responded to debates about government

A. One political debate in the United States between 1910 and 1929 was the debate concerned isolationism and the involvement in the first World War. Some argued that America should stay a neutral state, while others felt it was America's duty to support other countries in the World War. The isolationist movement was a key debate in American History as it greatly divided the country and the differing opinions shared regarding America's power and stance on war.

B. One effect of the New Deal from 1932 to 1945 was a growing unrest in the working class. With the industrialization at its peak, people of all types, (women, children, men, immigrants) were working in unsafe and unfair working conditions, which usually consisted of long hours and low pay. This lifestyle caused a distrust between citizens and the government and overall gave American's less confidence in the government.

C. In 1945 to 1970, the way in which one group responded to the debates about government power was through protests. In this time period, the Civil Rights movement was at its peak, led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, peaceful protests began to sweep through the nation in efforts to abolish Jim Crow laws. With the debates regarding racial justice, many African American's protested for their rights rather than resorting to violence, which proved successful and changed the way in which people view conflict.

One political debate in the United States between 1910 and 1929 was the debate upon if the U.S. should join the alliance of NATO. Many contradictions resulted from the fact that the U.S. should focus on isolationism and should not engage in foreign policy because of the American integrity it held. Others debated that the U.S. should become more involved in foreign policy to gain alliances between other countries, focusing on the evolution of trade and commerce, improving economical and political institutions.

B. One effect of the New Deal was the Foreign Trade Post 1940, which allowed for the U.S. to involve themselves in the war, providing resources such as ammunition or food to Britain, Russia, and other countries that need assistance to fight against the German military. This was the introduction of U.S. intervention in foreign policy and led to the involvement of future situations from the U.S. in order to establish peace and democracy amongst the world.

C. In response to government power, the Black Panthers, a group of African Americans with Black Separatist ideals, responded to the discrimination held by white superiority. Under the influence of Malcolm X, they used militaristic tactics to defend the rights of African American and to use direct action in changing the laws of segregation, enforcing equality rather than peacefully protesting.

Short Answer Question 4

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: 4A

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 describing the political debate between isolationists and those who supported entrance into the First World War because of developments such as the Zimmerman Telegram.

The response to Part B earned 1 point by describing the expansion of federal power, through programs such as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), as an effect of the New Deal.

The response to Part C earned 1 point because it explains how college students responded to the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and President Johnson's expansion of the Vietnam War through protests.

Sample: 4B

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 by accurately describing the debate over isolationism in the United States prior to its entry into the First World War.

The response to Part B did not earn a point because it does not accurately describe an effect of the New Deal. The description does not link dissatisfaction over working conditions to the New Deal.

The response to Part C earned 1 point by accurately explaining how the Civil Rights movement responded to Jim Crow laws through peaceful protests "for their rights."

Short Answer Question 4 (continued)

Sample: 4C

SAQ Part A Score: 0

SAQ Part B Score: 0

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Total Score: 1

The response to Part A did not earn a point because the description of the political debate over isolationism related to United States entrance into NATO is not in the time frame of the prompt.

The response to Part B did not earn a point because the response does not make clear how United States involvement in the Second World War was an effect of the New Deal.

The response to Part C earned 1 point by accurately explaining how the Black Panthers used militant tactics and direct action to “defend the rights” of African Americans and change “the laws of segregation.”